

## Program Work Team (PWT) Status Assessment and Alternative Futures

May 2011

**Preamble** The last comprehensive status assessment of the applied research and extension PWT structure and process was conducted in 2003. This document addresses many of the same questions and aims to guide decisions on the future of PWTs. To develop this report, we consulted the 2003 review document, analyzed the FY10 annual reports and membership rosters of active PWTs, surveyed current PWT co-chairs, and compiled observations of program liaisons within the CCE Program Team.

### I. Background

The Program Work Team (PWT) structure was launched with release of the CCE “Committed to Excellence” plan in January 2001 with key elements endorsed and supported by the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station and subsequently the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station.

The intent of the PWTs was to “conduct the on-going business of program development” including engaging stakeholders; conducting, interpreting, and applying research; planning and conducting extension needs assessment; developing external funding and program proposals; completing implementation and design; and conducting impact evaluation.

As the modified program development process was being considered, differing philosophies emerged:

- Should PWTs be identified completely through a “bubble up” process? OR Should PWTs be actively solicited in priority areas?
- Should PWTs be expected for all existing and emerging major program investments? OR Should a completely self-selective process be used wherein only those groups who choose to form do, regardless of resulting gaps?
- Should as many PWTs as emerge be supported? OR Should attention and resources be focused on particular, priority program investments?
- Should PWTs focus on sustaining existing program efforts? OR Should PWTs focus on gaps in program coverage with the premium placed on developing new initiatives?
- Should support of PWTs consist of promoting information exchange? OR Should PWTs receive active facilitation and assistance?

A largely *laissez-faire* approach was adopted apparently strongly influenced by several considerations:

- Strong interest in the potential benefits self-directed teams, as was being promoted broadly in industry and some academic settings
- Vocal reaction to the previous program development structure (Statewide Program Committees) that was largely determined centrally
- Interest of the Director of Extension in promoting ways to “democratize” CCE
- Appeal of a team-based model in use by Michigan State Extension

The PWTs thus were intentionally established via self-identification of affinity groups in response to a call for petitions. Petition specifications included: that there be co-leaders representing campus and off campus; that membership represent campus, off-campus, and external stakeholders; that there be specific stakeholder involvement strategies; that priority needs or opportunities be identified along with the process used for identifying them; that intended outcomes, program strategy, and evaluation plans be specified. PWTs were established with fixed terms ranging from one to three years as per request of petitioners.

These general approaches were reaffirmed after the 2003 review with minor modifications. The structure of formal terms was abandoned. Routine allocation of \$4,000 for PWT operations was discontinued later to be replaced by opportunity for PWTs to request up to \$1,000 annually for “special need” projects. Efforts were made to foster development of PWTs in priority areas for which none had emerged (for example, Northern New York Dairy followed by Statewide Dairy Program) but still with no intent to “cover” all content areas or audiences. Early efforts to foster PWT leadership development such as convening co-chairs to exchange best practices fell by the wayside with staffing changes. An expectation that active PWTs provide annual reports of activities and membership was implemented. The reporting expectation was linked to eligibility for special needs funding.

## II. Detailed Status

Content analysis of PWT annual reports provided a good window on PWT structure and operations (see Appendix A). A total of 45 PWTs were formed between 2001 and 2010 of which 26 are currently known to be active based on submission of FY10 Annual Reports. Among the remainder, 4 are of uncertain status, and, 15 either completed their work or were otherwise decommissioned. Approximately 435 individuals were listed as PWT members for an average of 19 per PWT. Of these, about 40% were campus based, 40% were off-campus educators, and 20% were external stakeholders. Four PWTs used one or more external advisory committees to provide stakeholder interaction.

Primary activities reported included conducting inservice education for CCE educators, conducting events for external audiences, providing Internet-based resources, and conducting applied research. Ten to fifteen PWTs conducted each of these activities. Three PWTs identified policy education as an important activity.

For the past three years, PWTs were invited to petition for special needs funding. Five awards were made in FY09 and eleven in FY10. Most requests are for specific events or activities while two have involved website6. While less than half of the PWTs have requested funds, those that have indicated that support is important to their success.

The unique perspective of current PWT co-chairs was gained through a brief survey (see Appendix B). Some of the highlights included that among the original purposes of PWTs, the function met best was providing a mechanism for collaboration among campus-based faculty and staff and educators. The function least likely to be seen as addressed was identifying and pursuing funding. When considering various aspects of current PWT operations:

- 77% indicated the results generated by PWTs were well worth the time and effort involved
- 74% of respondents supported maintaining the on-campus/off campus co-chair structure
- 71% agreed that availability of \$1,000 annually for special needs was essential
- 66% agreed that having external stakeholders “at the table” is essential
- 91% found the expectation for an annual report to be reasonable
- 54% agreed that co-chairs should have a role in reviewing S-L and Hatch pre-proposals
- 51% agreed that eligibility to receive S-L funding should be linked to active involvement with PWT(s)

In terms of areas of improvement, respondents were split as to whether expectations of PWTs were clearly communicated by CCE, CUAES and NYSAES and whether PWT leaders and members understood the expectations of PWTs. Only 26% of respondents agreed that the contributions of PWTs to applied research and extension efforts are understood and valued by relevant Cornell leaders and administrators.

Relative to current roles, the most important across PWTs were: providing inservice to CCE educators, developing and implementing events for external audiences, developing instructional resources and teaching materials, and communicating the value of the work of the PWT to internal and external audiences. The least important role identified was conducting policy education for decisionmakers.

When asked for actions to strengthen PWTs, respondents suggested a wide variety of approaches. The items being cited more than once were:

- Seven cited changes in special needs support most indicating it should be increased
- Promote and enhance use of distance technology to offset travel costs and logistics
- Communicate the value of PWTs on and off campus
- Standardize reporting; build into S-L reporting

General comments cited more than once included:

- We are not really operating as intended; the whole PWT approach should be reconsider (7)
- There is great value in PWTs (3)
- Need to clarify and communicate expectations and roles
- Need to enhance use of technology

### III. Considerations to be Explored

**Intensity of Activity** It is clear from the annual reports that the scope and intensity of work varies greatly across the PWTs. Some engage in limited, discrete tasks while others engage in comprehensive applied research and extension program development. The range of efforts and approaches can be seen either as appropriate to needs or as evidence that the PWT approach as defined needs modification..

**Membership Composition** The original formulation of PWTs required membership roughly equally distributed among campus representative, off-campus educators, and external stakeholders. Only 4 of the currently active PWTs literally meet this formula but all but 4 directly include external stakeholders. Those with limited stakeholders typically recruit stakeholders representative of important audience groups. While flexible approaches for stakeholder engagement seem appropriate, there appears to be need to reaffirm the expectation that meaningful stakeholder engagement is a key aspect of the PWT model.

**Program Coverage** Concerns about lack of comprehensive coverage across the PWTs that were prominent in discussions when they were first established reoccur periodically, particularly among senior college administrators concerned about external relations and perceptions. From another direction, CCE includes as one of its accreditation standards and expectation that senior staff engage in one or more PWTs. Some extension associations have pushed back saying that there are not relevant PWTs for all of their senior staff. There appears to be ongoing need to consider program coverage and at least to promote the opportunities presented by PWTs, if not actively promoting formation of PWTs for major program gaps.

**Linkage to Funding of Applied Research and Extension Project Proposals** One criticism of the PWT structure identified in the 2003 review was that many faculty saw little incentive for being engaged since there was not formal link to program funding. While this concern has not been expressed as vocally of late, it seems safe to assume it still is an issue, perhaps even of greater intensity in these tight times. There are options for more formally linking PWTs to program funding. For example, eligibility for Hatch and Smith-Lever project funding could be linked to PWT participation. Another possibility is that PWT co-chairs might be expected to participate in the proposal review process. Note that these approaches would elevate the importance of the Program Coverage consideration above. Requiring PWT participation could de facto bias funding decisions again emergent foci not currently represented among PWTs.

**Accountability for Results** A clear original intent of PWTs was that they actively promote and assess program impacts. Annual reports typically focus on activities and often are devoid of specific program outcomes. If that expectation holds, it likely needs to be re-communicated and it may be necessary to identify program evaluation assistance mechanisms.

**Facilitation and Support** For the first five years or so, support provided to PWT leadership was quite active with CCE program liaisons often serving direct facilitation roles and efforts made to promote experience and best practice sharing through means such as convening co-chairs. Today, only a very few PWTs enjoy direct facilitation support and we have not promoted cross-PWT exchange for some time. The need for, appropriateness of, and capacity for more active support of PWTs should be explored.

**Relationships to Program Council** In the original construct, the PWTs “reported” to relevant program councils with the councils expected identify gaps and generally assess performance. It is questionable whether those roles ever really were carried out for more than one or two of the councils. With the consolidation of five councils into one, relationship of the PWTs to the council, if any, should be determined. In our recent Program Council Conference, many PWTs provided displays but there was no formal interaction.

### V. Alternative Futures for the PWT Structure

There are several alternative scenarios for the future of PWTs, and likely additional variations or combinations. These include:

**Status Quo** – continuing on the present course allowing PWTs to come and go as they emerge with encouragement, modest support, and passive facilitation provided.

**Phase Out Formal Sponsorship of PWTs** – shift completely to a *laissez faire* affinity group model phasing out central sponsorship, communication, and support.

**Expansion of Existing PWT Structure to Fill Gaps** – continue affinity approach but aggressively promote gaining complete coverage of major program investments.

**Status Quo with Enhanced Facilitation** – essentially maintain the current approach but more actively assist PWT leadership through providing opportunities for experience and best practice sharing, orientation to PWT functions, etc. and monitor progress and results.

Each of these approaches carries potential benefits and costs. The table below identifies

Alternative	Pros/Benefits	Cons/Risks
Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System is fairly well understood and accepted</li> <li>• Support costs are limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete coverage</li> <li>• Limited ability to undertake initiatives in response to priorities established outside of existing PWTs</li> <li>• Difficulty in maintaining active coordination and facilitation</li> </ul>
Phase Out Formal Sponsorship of PWTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frees modest time in CUAES and CCE</li> <li>• Affinity groups could be recognized through limited communication devices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could devalue the work of PWTs that have succeeded</li> <li>• Would need to develop alternative approaches for promoting collaborative program development</li> <li>• Would need to add other means for stakeholder input as the PWTs currently are identified as a key mechanism for meeting that requirement</li> </ul>
Expansion to Fill Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System is fairly well understood and accepted</li> <li>• Addresses concerns about inadequate coverage</li> <li>• Opportunity to build on emerging strengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining “where to stop” could be highly challenging</li> <li>• Increased difficulty in maintaining active coordination and facilitation; forcing PWT formation hasn’t worked well</li> <li>• Implies a more active role for CCE and CUAES assistant directors than we may have capacity for</li> </ul>
Status Quo with Enhanced Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System is fairly well understood and accepted</li> <li>• Fosters better communication with PWT leadership</li> <li>• Conveys more active support of PWT efforts</li> <li>• May generally strengthen PWT operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn’t address coverage concerns</li> <li>• Would take modest increased effort by all CCE and CUAES assistant directors</li> <li>• Likely would require a designated coordinator/communicator role</li> <li>• May be perceived as lukewarm support for PWTs</li> </ul>

**Program Work Team Status Report – April 2011**

**Current Statement of Purpose** PWTs are affinity groups involving faculty and staff, extension educators, and external stakeholders. PWTs provide a mechanism through which faculty and extension educators connect with stakeholders in identifying issues, studying needs, creating educational materials, and designing learning experiences that address these issues and needs within specific content areas.

**Overview** A total of 45 PWTs were formed between 2001 and 2010 of which 26 are currently known to be active based on submission of FY10 Annual Reports or promised reports. Among the remainder, 4 are of uncertain status, and, 15 either completed their work or were otherwise decommissioned.

**Active Program Work Teams**

<b>Global Food Security</b>
<b>Agricultural Marketing and Management</b>
<b>Agricultural Community Economic Development</b>
<b>Aquaculture Development in NY</b>
<b>Environmental Health Risks in Agricultural Communities</b> (report pending)
<b>Greenhouse Horticulture</b>
<b>Integrated Field Crop, Soil, and Pest Management</b>
<b>Integrated Pest Management</b> (report pending)
<b>Organic Production and Marketing Program Work Team</b> (report pending)
<b>Small Farms</b>
<b>Soil Health - Vegetable Production Systems</b>
<b>Tree Fruit and Berry</b>
<b>Vegetable Crops</b>
<b>Viticulture and Enology</b>
<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Community-Based Biodiversity and Habitat Conservation</b>
<b>Community Forestry</b>
<b>Watershed-Based Management of Water Resources</b>
<b>Sustainable Energy</b>
<b>Community and Energy</b>
<b>Managing Wastes: Composting and Land Application</b>
<b>Sustainable Landscapes - Horticulture</b>

<b>Nutrition and Childhood Obesity</b>
<b>Family and Community Food Decision Making</b>
<b>4-H Youth Healthy Lifestyles</b>
<b>Youth, Family, and Community</b>
<b>4-H Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET)</b>
<b>Family Economics and Resource Management</b>
<b>Parenting Education</b>
<b>Poverty and Economic Hardship</b>

**Teams of Uncertain Status** These PWTs provided no information in response to the annual call for annual reports and membership rosters.

<b>Global Food Security</b>
<b>Dairy Program</b>
<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Agroforestry and Private Woodland Management</b>
<b>Invasive Species</b>
<b>Sustainable Energy</b>
<b>Renewable Energy-Energy Conservation</b>

**Inactive and/or Decommissioned Program Work Teams** These PWTs are confirmed to be inactive or decommissioned.

<b>INACTIVE PROGRAM WORK TEAMS</b>
<b>Advancing the Practice of Youth Development</b> (inactive)
<b>Agricultural Work Force, Family and Community</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>American Indian Communities</b> (decommissioned)
<b>Community Food and Nutrition Education for Low Income Audiences</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>Early Childhood Care and Education</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>Entrepreneurship and Family Businesses</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>Food Systems Workforce Development</b> (decommissioned)
<b>Health Care Support</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>Integrated Nutrient Management</b> (proposed to merge into Dairy Program team)
<b>Healthy Living and Learning Environments</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)

<b>Local Government</b> (inactive)
<b>Managing Human-Wildlife Conflicts</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>North Country Dairy Viability Education</b> (supplanted by Northern New York agriculture initiative)
<b>Public Issues Education</b> (plan of work completed, decommissioned)
<b>Youth Community Action</b> (plan of work completed, ongoing work incorporated in other youth PWTs)

**Membership Guidelines** Initial guidelines encouraged membership to be roughly balanced among campus faculty and staff, field-based educators, and external stakeholders. No specific formula has been communicated recently but the petition form asks that external stakeholders be identified and that any additional efforts to engage external stakeholders be described.

**Membership Analysis** These data are derived from membership rosters provided for FY10. In some instances, annual reports indicated that external stakeholders were engaged via various advisory structures. Those have “Yes” in column AC.

**2010 Membership Composition**

<b>Global Food Security</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
Agricultural Marketing and Management	9	8	5	
Agricultural Community Economic Development	4	12	0	
Aquaculture Development in NY	2	1	3	
Greenhouse Horticulture	9	14	15	
Integrated Field Crop, Soil, and Pest Management	11	9	9	
Small Farms	8	4	4	Yes
Soil Health - Vegetable Production Systems	0	0	0	
Tree Fruit and Berry	7	5	2	
Vegetable Crops	35	23	0	
Viticulture and Enology	25	11	5	Yes
<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
Climate Change	14	7	11	Yes
Community-Based Biodiversity and Habitat Conservation	0	0	0	
Community Forestry	2	2	2	Yes
Watershed-Based Management of Water Resources	8	6	0	
<b>Sustainable Energy</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
Community and Energy	5	8	5	
Managing Wastes: Composting and Land Application	6	5	20	
Sustainable Landscapes - Horticulture	11	25	1	
<b>Nutrition and Childhood Obesity</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
Family and Community Food Decision Making	4	10	4	
4-H Youth Healthy Lifestyles	3	18	0	
<b>Youth, Family, and Community</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
4-H Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET)	11	11	0	
Family Economics and Resource Management	2	10	0	
Parenting Education	2	12	1	
Poverty and Economic Hardship	2	4	2	
	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Off-campus</b>	<b>External</b>	<b>AC</b>
	173	177	85	4

**Special Needs Funding** When first established, all approved PWTs received \$4,000 in operating support. That practice was discontinued. For the past three years, PWTs were invited to petition for special needs with a limit of \$1,000 imposed starting FY10. Five awards were made in FY09, two in FY10, and four requests have been received for FY11. Most requests are for specific events or activities while two have involved website development.

**Activities Reported** This is a rough characterization of activities reported in FY10 PWT Annual Reports. “Inservice” refers to professional development for educators delivered face-to-face or via distance education. “Events” are educational activities for external audiences. “Website” indicates that the PWT has responsibility for a public-facing website. “Resources” refers to educational materials development or collation. “Applied Research” indicates that research was specifically included among reported accomplishments. “Policy Education” is indicated when activities directed to informing regional, state, or federal policy were reported. Note that the annual reports varied greatly in the detail provided so this should be interpreted as a minimal representation of activity. Other potentially important activities like development of strategic partnerships and funding proposal development were mentioned occasionally but could be inferred in most reports. We may want to consider additional instruction of information of interest in the annual reports.

<b>Global Food Security</b>	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
<b>Agricultural Marketing and Management</b>	Y	Y	Y	Newsletters		
<b>Agricultural Community Economic Development</b>	Y			Collating		
<b>Aquaculture Development in NY</b>		Y	Y		Y	
<b>Greenhouse Horticulture</b>	Y	Y	Y		Y	
<b>Integrated Field Crop, Soil, and Pest Management</b>		Y		Guide	Y	
<b>Small Farms</b>		Y	Y	Multiple	Y	
<b>Soil Health - Vegetable Production Systems</b>		Y			Y	
<b>Tree Fruit and Berry</b>		Y			Y	
<b>Vegetable Crops</b>	Y	Y	Y		Y	
<b>Viticulture and Enology</b>		Y		Newsletters	Y	
<b>Climate Change</b>	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
<b>Climate Change (new PWT)</b>						
<b>Community-Based Biodiversity and Habitat Conservation</b>		Y				
<b>Community Forestry</b>			Y	Multiple	Y	
<b>Watershed-Based Management of Water Resources</b>		Y		Multiple		Y
<b>Sustainable Energy</b>	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
<b>Community and Energy</b>	Y					Y
<b>Managing Wastes: Composting and Land Application</b>		Y	Y		Y	Y
<b>Sustainable Landscapes - Horticulture</b>	Y		Y			

<b>Nutrition and Childhood Obesity</b>	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
<b>Family and Community Food Decision Making</b>		Y		Multiple	Y	
<b>4-H Youth Healthy Lifestyles</b>	Y		Y	Curriculum		
<b>Youth, Family, and Community</b>	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
<b>4-H Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET)</b>	Y			Curriculum		
<b>Family Economics and Resource Management</b>	Y	Y	Y			
<b>Parenting Education</b>	Y		Y	Multiple		
<b>Poverty and Economic Hardship</b>		Y			Y	
	<b>Inservice</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Appl. Research</b>	<b>Policy Education</b>
	<b>Counts</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>Counts</b>	<b>Counts</b>
	10	15	11	11	12	3

**1. Are you a campus-based co-chair, an off-campus based co-chair, or other?**

#	Answer	Response	%
1	On-campus	22	60%
2	Off-campus	13	37%
3	External stakeholder	0	0%
	Total	35	100%

**2. The original purposes of the Program Work Teams included the items listed below. For each item, please indicate the extent to which your PWT meets that purpose.**

Question	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a significant extent	To a great extent	Mean
Provide a mechanism for collaboration among campus-based faculty and staff, extension educators	0	1	9	13	12	4.03
Provide a mechanism for collaboration with external stakeholders	3	8	10	6	8	3.23
Identify needs for and implement applied research	1	8	10	13	3	3.26
Develop and implement extension programs	1	4	9	13	8	3.66
Assess the efficacy of current extension and applied research efforts	3	10	11	7	4	2.97
Identify and pursue funding resources for applied research and extension efforts	6	8	12	5	4	2.80

**3. The following statements have to do with how the PWTs are being implemented currently or might be in the future. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.**

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	% Agree or Strongly Agree
1	Expectations for PWTs are clearly articulated by CCE, CUAES, and NYSAES administration	1	7	12	15	0	3.17	43%
2	Expectations for PWTs are understood among PWT leaders and members	0	10	8	17	0	3.20	49%
3	Maintaining the expectation that PWTs have both a campus and off-campus co-chair is important	0	5	4	10	16	4.06	74%
4	Availability of \$1,000 annually to PWTs for special needs is essential to their success	1	4	5	14	11	3.86	71%
5	The expectation that active PWTs provide an annual report and membership update annually is reasonable	0	2	1	19	13	4.23	91%
6	Having external stakeholders as "at the table" members is essential	0	4	8	13	10	3.83	66%
7	Eligibility to receive Hatch or Smith-Lever funding should be linked to active participation on one or more PWTs	2	7	8	13	5	3.34	51%
8	PWT co-chairs should have a role in reviewing Hatch and Smith-Lever funding proposals	0	1	14	16	3	3.62	54%
9	Results generated by PWTs are well worth the time and effort it takes to operate one effectively	1	2	5	16	11	3.97	77%
10	The contributions of PWTs to applied research and extension efforts are understood and valued by relevant Cornell leaders and administrators	0	10	16	9	0	2.97	26%

**4. In reviewing the FY10 PWT Annual Reports, the following emerged as common activities across the teams. Please consider how important each is to the work of your PWT.**

#	Question	Not important at all	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Important	Very important	Mean	% Important or Very Impt.
1	Providing inservice education for CCE educators	2	5	6	8	14	3.77	63%
2	Developing and implementing events for external audiences	4	6	5	6	14	3.57	57%
3	Providing a website for internal audiences	6	4	8	9	8	3.26	49%
4	Providing a website for external audiences	5	5	5	11	9	3.40	57%
5	Developing instructional resources/teaching materials	3	5	6	11	10	3.57	60%
6	Conducting applied research	4	4	12	9	6	3.26	43%
7	Conducting policy education for decisionmakers	10	5	5	7	7	2.88	40%
8	Documenting program outcomes	1	10	6	11	6	3.32	49%
9	Communicating the value of the work of the PWT to internal and external audiences	1	5	8	14	7	3.60	60%
10	Other	0	0	0	1	5	4.83	17%

**Other**

Cultivating relationships with faculty and on-campus STEM group part of my professional development

Sharing Information/leading to submission of funding proposals with a research and/or extension component

Linking CCE and private consultants who have more contact time with producers

Collaboration with faculty

Interaction with stakeholders through the Advisory Committee

## 5. What specific actions would make the PWT structure and process more effective and valuable?

### Text Response

It seems that we could use a refresher on expectations and purpose of PWT's. Also executive directors should be encouraging staff to be involved on pwt's and I am not certain that always happens.

Communicating the importance of participation to on-campus partners, providing an incentive for Smith-Lever projects to include a youth component

Funding for annual workshop travel for PWT members (outside of \$1K)

clear expectations for participation by county and campus educators articulated to educators as well as supervisors, department chairs and EDs . How can participation become part of campus and county's job descriptions? culture? What tools do we have available to facilitate participation in two way communications between campus and county and external stakeholders? Travel is expensive? Webinar tools isn't ideal for two way communication. Conference calls cost money? Might administration cover conference call costs? We could take it out of \$1,000 but that could easily take up that whole small pot of money.

I think some older PWTs are struggling because there is very little faculty drive/interest in working collaboratively, and/or there hasn't been one burning project/issue identified for the PWT to work on. Its very difficult as an office campus co-chair to be constantly trying to tug for the time/attention of on-campus faculty/staff to stay engaged, and it can feel like the off campus extension educators are doing the bulk of the administrative work to keep a PWT functioning without strong interest from faculty. Perhaps PWTs should have a required life of two years, after which they will either be "retired" and/or there has to be a shorter petition to keep them active...because without that strong interest from both faculty and extension, they can merely be another structure or "task" for extension educators who are already overburdened. Perhaps faculty with an extension component to their funding should be "required" to lead/participate in a PWT - and identify projects that the PWT can work on collaboratively. The \$1000 funding is nice, but to really be effective, it would really need to be @\$2000-2500 to get anything meaningful done...i.e. printing materials, covering travel, etc. With the \$1000 limit, its hard to find something useful to do with the funds, because its not really enough to cover anything adequately.

PWT's should be given access to funds that could be allocated to field staff (especially those with

More involvement and active participation by external stakeholders.

Provide a reasonable budget to facilitate greater cooperative efforts .

One barrier is the perceived cash expense (mileage, travel) the Association incurs. I feel ED's should strongly encourage PWT participation by budgeting for this kind of expense and making it clear to county staff that it is to be used.

Regularly scheduled Meetings with specific agenda items to advance the work of the PWT; formation of Sub-Committees based on interests; active participation outside of the regular Meetings.

Perhaps a standardized template for reporting, with results shared among all PWTs for a little benchmarking?

I think that the original purpose and function of the PWT's dropped off considerably in the last few years after funding was reduced to \$1,000. This indicates a low level of interest and support by administration.

1. Since PWTs have taken on many forms and structures, how about using the phrase 'program work team' as a descriptor and a concept rather than as the name of these entities. E.g., use lower case letters when spelling out the term and give leaders/members the freedom to organize as makes most sense for the topic and project. 2. The \$\$ allocation used to be more valuable when it came with fewer restrictions. E.g., there is no better way to bring people around the table for conversation than providing them with a meal. I think it would be most effective to distribute the available funds in the form of petty cash, with few holds barred, so it can be used for things that are difficult to purchase or justify using most other grant/contract funds. Oversight would be maintained by required reporting.

Annual/periodic meeting of PWT cochairs (on and off campus) to discuss the expectations of PWTs and for cross-fertilization of ideas between PWTs Better method for identifying off campus CCE staff that have responsibilities for activities covered by the PWT

providing funds beyond the \$1,000 that is available. even increasing it to \$5,000 would function as seed money to go after grants, conduct trainings at conferences, communicate with and involve stakeholders, etc. the \$1,000 is certainly appreciated but it makes it hard to cover the true "transaction costs" associated with managing and implementing the activities of a PWT

It would be worthwhile to have an occasional (annual?) meeting of PWT on-campus co-chairs to network and exchange ideas.

1. I would like to have comment lines next to the questions above but here goes. I don't know if it is worth having the PWT review the hatch and SL proposals. The process seems to work with current reviewers and PWT have input into the proposals. 2. I think it is good to have a reporting system but it may just be linked to the annual SL/ Hatch reports. The

separate report is a bit redundant but once the info is together it can be either way. We work with a lot of extension programs throughout the state but we have more contact with others than extension at our PWT meetings. We move our meetings around the state and we do have input from different cces as we move. With current economics people try to minimize travel. We have Skyped and have conferencing calling available and conducted a closed webinar(as requested) to get input from regulators.

The strength is county-campus communication, but hard to get campus representation. Tying participation to SM/Hatch funding might help get more campus representation - but see comment below, not sure what role of PWT is for campus-based programs vs what we would do anyway as an advisory committee. Too hard for PWT itself to generate a program - who would do the actual work to make that happen? (I know SET PWT did that somehow but does not feel feasible to me). Same with providing inservice education - not clear how a PWT does that. We tried to get help with re-structuring our PWT and understanding expectations but it's been a struggle to figure out how best to move forward in a way that benefits everyone.

Our PWT is solely linked to funding and the geographic area of the lower Hudson River Valley, which is good, but we would like to broaden the scope of the PWT to be statewide, or at least relevant in other regions. To do so will take some planning, time and funding. I think we might be able to link our "mission" to that of DEC's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy via the State Wildlife Grant Project, which does have some funding. That funding is largely federal pass through dollars, but DEC's ability to administer the program has been very limited as of the past couple years, due to layoffs and other financial dysfunctionalities. DNR is currently doing a very small and limited project with the State Wildlife Grant and it would be relatively easy to expand that project to incorporate the objectives of the Biodiversity PWT.

PWT members need to do more remotely through teleconferencing, etc. However, it is sometimes difficult to link effectively with external stakeholders with out face-to-face meetings.

Engage a broader range of faculty, including beyond CALS for some PWTs. Provide support in developing and maintaining a web presence for PWTs. The \$1000 level of support is not enough to do much.

Our PWT was initiated with a purpose to enhance communication among faculty and staff at Cornell through meetings that were held twice a month. This worked very well for yeas but in recent years the \$1,000 annually tfor PWTs was clearly insufficient for us to maintain activities as a PWT as I could not afford to have a softfunded coordinator in the position. With the formation of a Dairy PWT, merging of the INM PWT into the dairy PWT seemed like the most logic step. We do maintain an active stakeholder engagements schedule in place for nutrient management, with field crops and dairy folks involved, through activities such as annual retreats with extension, inservice training, NRCCA training, and numerous ongoing joint projects, so the core activities are there but the PWT organizational structure just seemed like an added admin layer. Not against reorganizing this either...my main concern is that we do have the stakeholder meetings, a web presense (which we have), and interact among faculty and stakeholder to ensure we have effective research and extension programming in place. Not sure if the current structure is the best way to go. I answered the questions above based on our program activities in nutrient management, not specifically the PWT.

Availability of PWT funds should be increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 based on attainment of assigned targets (means testing)

## 6. Do you have any other suggestions or comments as we look to the future of PWTs?

### Text Response

Strongly encourage campus and on campus staff to be involved and encourage them to engage stakeholders as well  
I think you're doing a good job.

It is an important venue to me to stay connected with other educators with similar issues. It takes advantage of us being a statewide systems. We are good at taking advantage of being locally responsive but are less good at taking advantage of our being statewide. The PWTs are one important way to connect,  
we do need some structure to facilitate campus to county and stakeholder connections.

The role of PWT's and stakeholders needs to be clarified. There is little point in soliciting stakeholder opinions on critical needs in applied research and extension if that information is ignored as departments create their strategic plans for filling vacancies (as seems to be occurring in the current system).

Once a year (or every other year) it would be good for PWT co-chairs to have meeting where presentations are given on PWT activities. We can learn from others on how to effectively integrate the three primary members - faculty, cce, and external stakeholders. Unless I go read the annual reports, I'm not sure how many pwt's are out there and what they are doing.

No.

County ED's seem disengaged from PWTs, often because they are so focused on administrative work, rather than campus-county program development. Thus, many staff who would participate do not, because their immediate supervisor may not make it a performance review item. It should be a performance review item.

PWTs are vital to the work of Extension faculty and staff. The ongoing activities of the PWTs should continue to be monitored, and resources allocated, in a manner consistent with activity level.

I think we need to seriously need to reconder PWT;s. Is there a real or perceived need? What are they really supposed to do? How can we develop a mechanism that actually encourages the existencxe of a PWT, gets people excited and willing to participate? An annual 1 or 2 hour PWT meeting is basically useless. I think we either should completely drop PWT's or actually enhance the PWT. The word PWT implies a work group type approach. In my mind, this would mean the group meets 2-4 times/year and actually gets something done. A majotr problem, now is time. Everyone is overcommitted in terms of times and responsibilities. Most of our activities have more importance and take priority for time. Thus, PWT's seem to have waned in terms of actual activity and having people committed to participate.

In reality, the PWT I am involved with does not identify itself as a PWT and members would be surprised to learn they are associated with a PWT. However, the networks of external and internal stakeholders that I consider to be part of this figurative PWT are actively engaged in working together, in several different configurations, and on local, regional, statewide and national scales. I.e., I think we carry out the intent of the program work team concept, but call ourselves (as appropriate for the situation) a conference program committee, a regional advisory group, a topical workgroup, etc.

The FERM PWT has been instrumental in fostering professional development opportunities for our CCE Educators in Family & Consumer Sciences. It has also souhgt out and developed connections with campus faculty who have similar interests and are doing research that is valuable to our work.

it would be helpful to know if PWTs are valued by cornell leaders and administrators

While our 'community' is doing several things on the above list, many are not actions of the PWT per se. I see the PWT as the main networking and communications vehicle in linking the internal (faculty and CCE educators) with external stakeholders. The PWT is also a strategic planning body for extension programming. Since the PWT doesn't include all faculty and CCE educators in the programming area, it shouldn't be seen as synonymous with the entire applied research and extension program area. Some communications from Extension Admin seem to imply this.

In one way or another I have been part of PWT(or Agent Staff Faculty Meetings) for 25 years. They are of great value, we use the formal meeting once a year but encourage our whole mail list to come to us with need and ideas throughout the year. We also have ed events to update people. Currently we have a NY/NJ group that meets to work toward building infrastructure for composting

There is much overlap in my PWT with what I would do anyway as part of running a program and wanting county input via some kind of advisory committee. It has always been unclear whether this should be under PWT or separate. Role of PWT has always been unclear and whether the work involved to meet the expectations would pay off in advantages to what we all need to do in our regular work efforts. Campus co-chair is good idea but in my case has taken very minor role, not ideal.

I may be wrong, but I get the impression that PWTs are just sort of a languishing program of a past CCE administration. The current PWTs are minimally supported and encouraged by CCE, and apparently are doing ok on their own volition, which is good and probably quite efficient from the administration's perspective. However, if the current CCE administration truly wants to see the PWT program thrive and build, I believe they should conduct some promotional

campaign that includes recognition of current successful PWT's and incentives to help lagging PWTs and creation of new PWTs to address new issues. I think the concept is still quite viable and likely could be expanded a bit to be more successful and take on new initiatives.

With limited travel funds and time, it is getting more difficult for people to meet in person and develop the types of interactions that lead to great working relationships and proposals. It is easier just to link with key county educators and stakeholders for projects and programs without the formal PWT structure.

Need training of faculty and Ext staff on new forms of outreach in the "social networking" realm, and begin implementing this in outreach plans.

Our particular PWT is looking to expand into subcommittees to better meet the needs of educators in the field.

Can we brainstorm a bit about what we want to get from the PWT structure that is different from what we get from our individual programs? I work with many others on joint projects, across disciplines, and have been wondering what the PWT structure brings us beyond what our collaborations and stakeholder engagements already so. Is it just one more administrative layer or could it be a mechanism to communicate back to decision makers at the University (advisory committees??)? In other words, I think we need to do what we set out to do (increased interactions among faculty was our main goal) but wonder about how to capture that (what admin structure is concerned).