**Outcomes *and* Impacts: The difference between ho-hum and projects with punch!**

**A Memo to NEAFCS Members from the Public Affairs Education Subcommittee.**

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“Our Impact statements look good, but they sure don’t have many Impacts,” declared several of the 2016 NEAFCS IMPACT content editors. When you Share your Story in the on-line submission form, for NEAFCS IMPACT statements you need to share the most significant Impact that you have available.

Outputs, Outcomes and Impact are easily confused, because they all sound results oriented. What is the difference? Outputs, generally, are numbers of classes you offered or the number of participants that were reached. Outcomes and Impacts answer the question, “So What?” Impacts, generally, are the numbers with “$” or “%” next to them. See formal definitions on page 2.

Outputs show where you directed your efforts, but Impacts show the strongest results of your efforts! We need both Outputs and Outcomes and/or Impacts to tell a compelling story; one that gets attention, funding or continues to get funded.

If you only have Outputs to report and no Outcomes or Impacts, you need to take the time to plan for impact data collection when you plan your project. Think ahead and incorporate the generation of Impact data in your plan of work.

Impacts, the best quality data, considered the Golden Egg in reporting project results, is what our legislators and stakeholders need to make compelling arguments to support or sustain Extension efforts. Without a large industry base to advocate for FCS Extension, it is up to us all to share powerful results of our work.

Here are 2016 NEAFCS IMPACT example sections that show Outputs *and* Outcomes and/or Impact:

**Kansas** educated 7,117 Kansans through Medicare plan comparisons and benefits covered explanations. Nearly half of participants changed prescription drug or Medicare advantage plans to a plan that better met their needs. This resulted in total savings of $3,699,295, or an average savings of $1,180 per person changing plans.

**Wisconsin** has over 16,000 children experiencing their parents’ divorce each year. To help families in need, *Supporting Children with Parent’s Divorce or Separation* was offered in 268 co-parenting programs to over 3000 participants that affected over 2400 children. Results included a reduction of inter-parental conflict and increased cooperation.

**Arkansas** taught personal finance in 200 communities reaching 5,896 people. As a result, program participants reported a total of $15,553 saved and in reduced debt.

In 2000 classrooms in **Michigan,** Extension educators provided classes to 54,329 students. Ninety-nine percent of teachers reported that children have an improved awareness about good nutrition with 85% reporting improvement in trying new foods, 73% increase in fruit and 67% increase in choosing vegetables. Overall, children are making healthier food choices.

Join us to help elevate the quality of our 2017 NEAFCS IMPACT statements. Data is due on February 1st!

For more information, contact NEAFCS Vice President of Public Affairs, [glenda.hyde@oregonstate.edu](mailto:glenda.hyde@oregonstate.edu).

Here are formal definitions reprinted from the Glossary of Terms in Developing a Logic Model: Teaching and Training Guide February 2008 Ellen Taylor-Powell, PhD, Distinguished Evaluation Specialist Ellen Henert, University of Wisconsin Extension. <https://fyi.uwex.edu/programdevelopment/files/2016/03/lmguidecomplete.pdf>

**Outputs.** The activities, products, and participation generated through the investment of resources. Goods and services delivered.

**Outcomes.** Results or changes from the program such as changes in knowledge, awareness,

skills, attitudes, opinions, aspirations, motivation, behavior, practice, decision-making, policies, social action, condition, or status. Outcomes may be intended and/or unintended: positive and negative. Outcomes fall along a continuum from immediate (initial; short-term) to intermediate (medium-term) to final outcomes (long-term), often synonymous with impact.

**Impact.**

The social, economic, civic and/or environmental consequences of the program. Impacts tend to be longer-term and so may be equated with goals. Impacts may be positive, negative, and/or neutral: intended or unintended.

**eXtension Class Available!**

A wonderful resource is now available to help you improve your planning and results reporting skills. Look for the ***Impact Statement Reporting*** class on eXtension.org. Enjoy the videos and real-world examples. Produced in short modules, with short video segments in each module, you can break it up to fit your schedule.