

Subject: Agency Update: June 12, 2020

Date: Friday, June 12, 2020 at 2:13:09 PM Central Daylight Time

From: Blair L. Fannin <Blair.Fannin@ag.tamu.edu>

To: All Extension Employees <AllExtensionEmployees@ag.tamu.edu>

SENT ON BEHALF of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Director Dr. Jeff Hyde

June 12, 2020

Extension colleagues,

Please see important agency updates:

Budget Update

As you know, we are responding to a request from state leadership regarding a “rescission” to our currently allocated biennial budget. In this response, we must indicate how we will give \$4.85 million back to the state within this biennium. This budget “rescission” will be met primarily through cost saving measures that were taken by not filling open positions and reductions in travel and other operating costs. We have also shifted some federal funds to cover salaries. (This is possible on a one-time basis because the federal government allows us to carry over a portion of our federal allocation for up to five years.) At this point in time, Extension has not laid off anyone due to the budget rescission. That does not mean that we are out of the woods, though....

It is important to understand that a rescission represents a one-time request for return of funds. Because it is one-time, we can meet that through the savings that were generated as described above. This is very different from a budget “reduction,” which represents a permanent drop in the total amount of funds received. It is quite possible that long-term economic uncertainty related to COVID-19 and other factors will cause the state to reduce its budget or even lead to additional rescissions on the current budget. Because of this uncertainty, we continue to manage conservatively and assess options that would allow us to meet a permanent budget reduction should that occur. We will keep everyone informed as the situation continues to progress.

4-H Youth Activities

While the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is not a business, we are a state agency and follow the guidance provided by the Texas A&M University System. There may be some variation in each county based on local and health authority guidance. AgriLife Extension and Texas 4-H is following all protocol and guidelines to ensure its employees, volunteers and youth participants are taking part in a healthy, safe environment.

[Texas 4-H Events](#) are taking place across the state including the State shooting sports games, State Horse Show, Outdoor challenge and Summer Camps at the Texas 4-H Conference Center. Our primary goal is to ensure our clientele are safe, especially youth and vulnerable populations. Extension agents or specialists may submit preparedness plans to have larger events approved if needed. Counties can develop plans to host shooting sports as well as other events. However, volunteers will be needed to work with the agent and submit a preparedness plan for approval. These plans must be best for the county program and that follow guidelines.

COVID-19 Weekly Digest

The weekly COVID-19 Digest webinar will be moving to every other Friday. The next digest is scheduled for Friday, June 26th. These digests provide agency updates as well as case updates, evidence-based practices and

other discussion. Replays are available on the [Texas EDEN Employee website](#) (pwd: 77843).

Agency Webinar: Lunch with Leadership June 19

The next Lunch with Leadership agency webinar is scheduled for **noon Friday, June 19**. In this session, we will address a number of topics of current interest including some of those raised in response to the call for questions/comments related to the Sounding Board's first meeting as well as a budget update.

To access the Teams webinar: <https://bit.ly/37pDnNJ>.

COVID-19 Reopening Guidance

The current situation is ever changing and daily we are revisiting our guidance and protocols. The Vice Chancellor sent an update this week. AgriLife Extension will provide a guidance follow up early next week with any adaptations. Employees should continue to follow the guidance and protocol released on May 20, 2020.

Blair L. Fannin

Associate Director of Extension Communications

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service | Texas A&M University System

600 John Kimbrough Boulevard, Suite 509

2142 TAMU | College Station, TX 77843-2142

979.845.2259 | Blair.Fannin@ag.tamu.edu

<https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu>