

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

The United States Department of Agriculture  
Research, Education and Economics and Natural Resources and Environment  
Mission Areas

And

Cooperative Extension Section (CES) and Experiment Station Section (ESS) of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Board on Agricultural Assembly as represented by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) and the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP)

Coordination between the USDA Regional Climate Hubs for Risk Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change and the Cooperative Extension Section and Experiment Station Section

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### I. PARTICIPANTS

The Participants of the Memorandum of Understanding (the MOU) are the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional Climate Hubs (Hubs) and the Cooperative Extension Section and Experiment Station Section of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Board on Agricultural Assembly as represented by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (CES/ECOP) and Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy (ESS/ESCOP), hereafter referred to as "the Participants".

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to develop and maintain an active partnership between the Hubs and the US Cooperative Extension System (CES) and the US Agricultural Experiment Station System (ESS) to work jointly, as resources allow, to develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technologies to agricultural and natural resource managers, communities, families, and individuals, and to motivate climate-smart decision-making.

The CES is composed of organizations within the Land Grant Universities (LGUs) established by the first Morrill Act of 1862, second Morrill Act of 1890, Smith-Lever Act of 1914 and the Equity in Educational Land-grant Status Act of 1994. As a public-funded, non-formal collaborative national educational network, CES provides research-based information, non-formal educational programs and technical advice directly to individuals, families and communities, enabling them to be self-reliant and improve lives. The CES of each state also strives to interpret and extend relevant research-based knowledge in an understandable and usable form; and to encourage the application of this knowledge to solve the problems and meet the challenges, including climate change and variability, that face the agricultural and natural resources sectors.

The ESS is also composed of organizations predominantly within the LGUs, as referenced above. The mission of the LGUs was further expanded by the Hatch Act of 1887, which provided Federal funds to States to establish a series of agricultural experiment stations under the direction of each State's land-grant college, as well as pass along new research-based information. The ESS specifically represents the Agricultural Experiment Station directors at the 1862 and the 1890 LGUs in their collective dealings,

research and outreach, with other units of APLU, agencies of the Federal government, farm organizations, commodity and agricultural business groups, and the public.

Climate change and variability present threats to domestic agricultural production, forest and coastal resources and rangeland, and rural and personal economies. These threats have significant implications not just for farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners, but also for all Americans. An important part of USDA's mission is to help farmers, ranchers, and forest owners manage risks and ensure access to food, fiber, and a range of ecosystem services across generations. As such, USDA has an obligation to address the risks associated with climate change. To meet this challenge, USDA established ten Hubs for risk adaptation and mitigation from climate change. These Hubs are service centers for science-based risk management. These Hubs will enhance coordination of the science assets of USDA and its partners to accelerate the development and delivery of science, promote best practices for risk management, facilitate the creation of new knowledge, help integrate climate risk into overall risk management processes, and provide risk-management training.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### United States Department of Agriculture-Regional Climate Hubs Agree To:

Administer a cohesive and collaborative network within the USDA and with external partners such as Federal science agencies, universities, Tribal nations, State and local governments, the private sector and the non-profit sector with and through CES and ESS at LGUs to advance the delivery of science-based information and tools, stakeholder workshops, education, research and evaluation, learning, policies and procedures.

Working with and through CES and ESS Directors and Administrators (or their designees) at the LGUs (1862, 1890, and 1994) to:

- Understand the most pressing needs of agricultural producers, forest and rangeland owners, urban and rural communities in the face of climate change that are addressed by USDA Hubs, CES, and ESS.
- Collaboratively develop and deliver science-based information and decision-making tools with and to agricultural producers and land managers, communities, families, and individuals.
- Promote climate literacy among CES professionals through professional education.
- Create new opportunities and initiatives that engage and integrate researchers, educators, and Extension professionals in capacity building to address climate-related issues.
- Plan and facilitate a collaborative working relationship with LGU faculty, subject matter experts, and CES staff, including electronic communications and meetings with progress reports.
- Provide leadership to engage with other departments and agencies within the Federal government and other Federal climate centers to identify, seek, and leverage resources to support the climate change CES and ESS programs.
- Collaborate with other Federal climate centers to identify and engage stakeholders through mechanisms such as joint listening sessions and workshops.
- Enhance and leverage climate-related research collaborations and partnerships across Federal and State science agencies.

Cooperative Extension System (as represented by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy) and the Experiment Station System (as represented by the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy) Agree To:

Foster collaboration among state-level CES and ESS Directors and Administrators (or their designees) and USDA Hubs to:

- Develop and deliver relevant educational programs for agricultural and natural resource managers, communities, families, and individuals.
- Conduct research to advance the discoveries and practices leading to science-based, region-specific information and technologies to adapt to and mitigate the impacts from climate change on agricultural and natural resource systems and other facets of communities.
- Engage targeted audiences to identify problems related to climate change and then seek resources to conduct research and deliver educational programs, including on-site demonstrations to alleviate problems.
- Encourage continuing education of CES professionals on the topic of climate change as it relates to natural resources and agriculture, communities, families, and individuals.
- Build adaptation and mitigation information into [www.extension.org](http://www.extension.org).

Work with State CES and ESS Directors and Administrators (or their designees) to identify points of contact to facilitate the cooperation with the Hubs.

The success of this MOU lies in maintaining proactive communication among the leadership of the Participants. It is incumbent upon the representatives of each participant to this MOU to communicate within their respective organizations about this MOU and develop a culture of regular, clear, and collaborative communication for the benefit of agricultural producers, land managers, and others.

#### IV. GENERAL TERMS

- A. This MOU does not establish any agency relationship among the Participants. No Participant is authorized to sign contracts, correspondence, or other documents in the name of the other Participant.
- B. Nothing in the MOU shall obligate the USDA Hubs, CES, or ESS to obligate or transfer any funds or staff time. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among the various agencies, institutions, subsidiaries, and offices of the Participants will require the execution of separate agreements and be contingent upon the availability of funds and staff time. Such activities will be independently authorized by appropriate statute. This MOU does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such agreement must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.
- C. Participants and their respective agencies and offices will handle their own activities and utilize their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing these objectives. Each Participant will carry out its separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner.

#### V. DURATION AND TERMINATION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This MOU shall remain in effect for five years from the date of the last signature to this MOU, unless terminated earlier by the Participants. This MOU may be terminated by mutual agreement of the

Participants or by either Participant providing 30 days written notice to the other. This MOU is subject to renewal at any time.

**VI. MODIFICATION PROVISION**

This MOU can be modified by mutual written agreement of the Participants.

**VII. MISCELLANEOUS**

This MOU does not preclude any of the Participants from participating in any activity with other public or private agencies, organizations, or individuals.


This MOU is strictly for internal management purposes for each of the Participants. It is not legally enforceable and shall not be construed to create any legal obligation on the part of either Participant. This MOU shall not be construed to provide a private right or cause of action for or by any person or entity.

This MOU is not intended to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or trust relationship or responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by a Participant against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.



Robert Bonnie  
Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, USDA

Date: 10/20/14



Dr. Catherine Woteki,  
Chief Scientist / Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, USDA

Date: 10/24/14

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Jimmy Henning, Chair  
Extension Committee on Organization and Policy  
Cooperative Extension Section of the APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Steven Slack, Chair  
Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy  
Experiment Station Section of the APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly