

# Vice President's Conversation on the Future: Summary of VP Summit Visioning Data

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As a part of the VP Conversation on the Future of Extension, broad engagement among employees, stakeholders, and potential partners over the last year has brought us a list of trends and issues facing Ohioans in the next 20 years. Scholars conducted research on these trends and reported their findings in trend publications.

Utilizing the trend research, a set of well-considered alternative futures (scenarios) were developed to expose potential directions the future may take and help Ohioans accept the reality that the future will likely be different than what we know today.

Building from the trend research and the scenarios, the visioning portion of the project asks questions related to how Extension might best meet future challenges and capitalize on the opportunities in the years ahead.

This document provides a summary of information obtained during the VP Summit held on December 10, 2014 at OSU Extension Annual Conference & Research Colloquium. Approximately 400 OSU employees were engaged in this conversation contributing ideas about the future.

## ***“What are the Opportunities and Challenges for Ohioans in 2035”***

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### ***Challenges***

- Resources required to offer more digital services
- Aligning OSUE staff and skills with increasing technology
- Helping people find reliable information,
- Navigating the lack of personal interactions and relationships, reduction in interpersonal skills
- Access to technology across the state
- Bridging the divide between the have's and have not's, disparity among income and access
- Uncertainty with the structure of the healthcare system
- Overall data management & security – who owns it and how will it be used?
- Keeping up with employee training to meet skills needed in rapidly changing environments
- People having the appropriate skill sets to meet the job demand without losing critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Shrinking of available farmland with an increase in demand for production
- Avoiding the economic decline when the energy boom busts
- Maintaining personal identity and privacy in the era of technology tracking every move
- Increased governmental oversight and regulations

### ***Opportunities***

- Ability to monitor personal health leading to healthier Ohioans
- Ease of communicating across distances to find quicker solutions to pressing problems
- Use technology to do many things remotely
- Virtual delivery of education & information
- Jobs are more flexible to match skills, interests, & abilities
- Providing targeted job training for newly emerging industries
- Problem solving has a higher value to clientele than just providing information
- Utilizing creative ways to increase engagement in learning both F2F and virtual
- Better connections between producers and consumers

***“we can become an empowerment incubation, empowering businesses, combining tech and relationships”***

***“people have opportunities to take charge of employment through specialization”***



# ***“What can we do to make the most of these opportunities or address these challenges? What opportunities do we have to engage individuals, organizations, and communities in the possible futures?”***

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- Adopt an open mindset to learning new things
- Educate ourselves to disseminate reliable information
- Continuous learning mindset
- Advocacy of Agriculture to medical students & non-traditional ag audiences
- Consumer education
- Assist clientele in recognizing reliable vs unreliable information
- Give clientele the tools they need to adapt
- Build and sustain relationships with legislators
- Teach life skills, soft skills, & technology adaptation
- Leverage our volunteers
- Utilize advisory committees
- Identify collaborative partnerships beyond CFAES
- Capitalize on the connection between education and employment, offer certificates, degrees
- Better evaluate the impact we have on individuals and communities
- Utilize the current technologies
- Leaders in community food systems, direct marketing
- Be the human complement to available technology
- Be the authoritative online resource
- Provide moderated online knowledge communities

***“Collaborate internally, externally, and exponentially...Must be of value.”***

## ***“How does the potential future influence our organization's work and workforce?”***

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- Adopt an open mindset to learning new things
- Educate ourselves to disseminate the information
- Give employees the tools they need to adapt
- Diverse and flexible staff with flexible working arrangements
- Increased specialization
- Reduce internal barriers to promote collaboration
- Create more efficient mechanisms to receive payments from clientele
- Better succession planning, build our leaders
- Become connectors, mediators
- Become ambassadors of Extension
- Adapt positions to and program delivery to individualized culture
- Increased focus on generating alternative funding
- Fundamental change in how we do the work, issues focus vs. program focus
- Need a more technology savvy workforce
- Skills are needed to effectively collaborate across boundaries
- Requires a culturally competent workforce
- A team devoted to marketing our work
- Greater attention to employee job stress and well being
- Attention to factors contributing to employee retention
- Enhanced levels of creativity and innovation on all levels