

2021 Plan of Work Outline

Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities

- **Local & Regional Food Systems – SERA 47** – Continue to facilitate progress on the group’s efforts as they write and launch a new 5-year plan. Current working groups are:
 - Successful models for structuring multi-disciplinary Land-Grant University initiatives
 - Learning Community to strengthen local foods efforts
 - Impact Measures – identify and implement a shared measurement system
 - Resource Bank – develop a repository for Extension and Research resources related to local foods work.
- **Broadband Access and Adoption:**
 - National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET) – facilitate work on:
 - Policy education and analysis
 - Helping communities organize to connect to broadband
 - Supporting adoption through digital literacy skill development
- **Heirs’ Property**
 - Complete research initiative funded from original AFRI seed grant – estimating the extent of heirs’ property issue in the South
 - Support regional Extension and research working groups established in spring 2020:
 - Partnership development
 - Research
 - Funding
 - Education and outreach
 - Policy implications
 - Launch the new AFRI grant - *The Racial Wealth Gap, Persistent Poverty, and Heirs’ Property: Analysis, Connections, Solutions.*
- **Coming Together for Racial Understanding** – support the 26 pilot states that began working in August 2018 and October 2019. Facilitate continued research following the teams’ efforts.
- **COVID-19 Impact on CRD Efforts** – Convene a team to explore how COVID emphasized the need for CRD support to address rural resilience and equitable access to resources for underserved communities. Examine CRD capacity in the South across the system to respond to these needs, role of LGU system and partners, and issues facing the different systems within the region. Possible deliverables: policy paper, success stories, lessons learned, infographics.

Building Strategic Partnerships

- **CREATE BRIDGES**, Walmart project – Continue efforts with the three pilot states to explore ways to strengthen the retail economic sector in rural places; looking for opportunities to expand in subsequent years.
- **USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement** – provide evaluation for 2018-2020 efforts, survey current needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, provide a coaching workshop to build capacity to support underserved communities.
- **Southern Region Program Leadership Network (PLN)** – continue to support the annual work of PLN along with helping support the Program Leadership Committee’s efforts to plan for the annual joint meeting.
- **Southern Region Community Resource Development (CRD) Indicators** – facilitate gathering and reporting of southern region CRD indicators.

Mobilizing Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities

- **Disaster Resilience** - Assist in national scan of priorities for Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)