Linking Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension in Ukraine

Satish Verma, Lakshman Velupillai, and Bill Brown, LSU Agricultural Center

Introduction
Ukraine gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, and has been following democratic and free market reform measures to achieve its development goals. Agriculture has been important and will continue to play a key role in Ukraine’s economy and development. Historical experience of developed nations shows that agricultural development depends on effective, coordinated systems of agricultural research, education, and extension. Prior to privatization, Ukraine agriculture was a complex of large-scale government collective farms, backed by research and education systems servicing the needs of these farms. Smaller production units have now largely replaced collective farms, and a service agribusiness sector for farm inputs, marketing, and credit has emerged. But the research and education infrastructure has not changed, being essentially pluralistic, segregated, and nationally directed.

Purpose
The purpose is to present the currently segregated systems of research, education, and extension in Ukraine, and argue for linking these systems in a manner that meets the needs of the country.

Method
Information about current research, education, and extension systems has been gathered from secondary sources and interviews of knowledgeable individuals. This information will be presented in a discussion format and a linkage model suggested as one approach that policy makers and planners might consider.

Major Points

Agricultural Research System: Fifty one research institutes in the country conduct crop, animal, and function specific research. Recent changes include research coordination by the Ukrainian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, establishment of regional research centers, advisory procedures, and non-duplicative research agendas.

Agricultural Education System: Post secondary level; Governance and institutions; Curricula.

Agricultural Extension System: Developed in last ten years; Extension services have been established after European, private sector and U.S., public sector models.

Conclusion
The approach recommended will provide regional level coordination of research, education, and extension functions and programs through a multi-state (two or more states) resource center serving an audience of private farmers and small household plot owners, with national level coordination by the appropriate government ministries and national universities. Issues arising from such an arrangement will be highlighted and discussed.

Educational Importance
Information on the research, education, and extension systems in Ukraine and possible approaches to mitigate inherent problems in such arrangements has not been synthesized, shared, and discussed in a professional forum such as AIAEE. Such a discussion could lead to ideas for refining the proposed model.