

Promoting Collaboration between Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers and Cooperative Extension Home Economics County Agents: Results of a Pilot Study

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Although collaboration activities between Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers and Cooperative Extension Service Home Economics (CES-HE) county agents have not been studied, collaboration appears logical given commonalities. FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents were invited to meetings designed to promote collaboration. Pre-surveys were administered to assess current collaborative efforts, opinions about collaboration, and factors impacting collaboration. Results from the pre-surveys revealed that FCS teachers were not collaborating with their CES-HE colleagues. Post-surveys determined that the meetings had altered FCS teachers' opinions about the need for collaboration, factors impacting collaboration, and the success of the workshop. Results indicated that FCS teachers, given the opportunity to network with their colleagues, held more favorable opinions about increasing collaboration with CES-HE county agents.

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers and Cooperative Extension Service Home Economics (CES-HE) county agents share a body of knowledge, philosophy, history, values, and interests. In many universities, FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents follow similar curricula, and many CES-HE county agents hold FCS teacher certification. The career paths are fluid, with people often holding FCS teaching positions and CES-HE county agent positions during their careers. Content information is provided in the areas of nutrition, personal and family financial management, clothing, food safety, child development, and parenting by both groups, with the primary differences occurring in the educational setting and the ages of audiences.

If FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents provide similar content to similar audiences in counties across the nation, collaboration would be assumed, especially in times of scarce resources. Collaboration between the two groups would allow effectiveness to increase through use of synergy to develop new ideas, share expertise and resources, and create solutions to old and new problems.

Review of Literature

Collaboration means working together in ways that exchange mutual benefit (Erickson, 1989). Goulet, Krentz, & Christiansen (2001) defined collaboration as people working together towards a common purpose, but others have argued that collaboration requires some kind of transformation in the participants beyond that of simply sharing work (Clark, et al., 1996). Although dialogue is seen as the center point of collaboration, a necessary requirement for successful collaboration includes an understanding by each participant of the work of the others (Clark, et al., 1996). John-Steiner, Weber and Minnis (1998) reported that true collaboration

required people to have “complementary domains of expertise” where all share expertise, power, and talent; no one group dominates, but all contribute within the focus of their shared spheres of work.

When one considers FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents as potential collaborators, all the appropriate requirements to successful collaboration appear to be met. FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents understand the work of the other, have complementary domains of expertise, and each would allow members to contribute in their separate but connected spheres of work. However, a review of the literature failed to discover any studies on collaboration between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents; a study of agriculture teachers and CES county agents indicated a lack of collaboration between those two groups of similar professionals (Grage, Ricketts, & Place, 2004).

Collaboration between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents would appear to benefit each group. Certainly the necessity to explain one’s work would be eliminated as these two groups would find in each other kindred spirits who understand issues specific to their professions. Teachers have reported feelings of isolation, especially when they are the only FCS professional in a school, as frequently occurs (Bull & Cummings, 2002). Feelings of isolation, coupled with an inability to collaborate with other professionals in similar roles, can result in people who are frustrated, exhausted, and discouraged (Dodor, Sira, & Hausafus, 2010). Carroll (2004) reported that feelings of isolation caused teachers to leave the profession and suggested that collaboration with colleagues would alleviate some of the stresses associated with the profession and lead to an improvement in teacher retention. Cookson (2005) reported that teachers have difficulty collaborating due to professional restrictions, such as overly rigid schedules or unavailability of other professionals. Although authors (Heider, 2005; Hirsch, Koppick, & Knapp, 2001) have suggested mentoring as a way to reduce isolation, collaboration has been less often mentioned.

Purpose of Study

The first goal of the study was to assess the degree to which collaboration occurred between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents in subject matter content areas and specific FCS activities prior to the workshops. A second goal was to compare the FCS teachers’ opinions about collaboration with CES-HE county agents before and after the workshops. A third goal was to compare pre- and post- workshop data regarding factors FCS teachers perceived to impact their collaboration with CES-HE county agents. The fourth goal was to determine the effectiveness of the workshop format.

Method

Proposal and Funding

In December of 2008, the FCS Education and Family Resource Management Advisory Council in the Departments of FCS and Extension Home Economics at New Mexico State University (NMSU), the land-grant university, raised a concern about the level of collaboration, interaction, and resource sharing that existed between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents. The Council asked for a commitment from university faculty to develop a program to increase collaboration between the two groups. The researchers developed an implementation plan and budget, and presented the plan to the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) administrators at NMSU, who approved the plan and provided financial

support. Upon approval, the researchers developed the specific format for the two workshops held in 2010 and the instruments to be used for the pre-and post-workshop assessments.

Participants

The two highest populated regions in New Mexico (NM) were selected for the pilot meetings: the two counties surrounding Las Cruces, NM, and the three counties surrounding Albuquerque, NM. All middle and secondary FCS teachers, CES-HE county agents, and Advisory Council members in the two regions were mailed invitations. In addition, state-level FCS Extension specialists and college administrators were invited. The mailed invitations were followed up by email reminders. Invitations were also distributed to other FCS professionals through an email sent using the professional organization listserv.

Twenty-three participants attended the meeting in Las Cruces including Associate Deans from the College of ACES at NMSU; CES-FCS specialists from NMSU; a CES-HE county agent; Advisory Council members; FCS teachers from Doña Ana and Otero Counties; the Director of the Graduation, Reality, and Dual Skills (GRADS) program in NM; and the four researchers. The meeting in Albuquerque had 27 attendees, including the CES Northern District Department Head; CES-HE county agents; a CES-HE 4-H/Extension associate; a CES-FCS diabetes coordinator; a CES-FCS specialist from NMSU; Advisory Council members; FCS teachers; a representative from the New Mexico Association of Family and Consumer Sciences; a representative from the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management program at NMSU; and the four researchers. A total of 25 FCS teachers attended the two workshops.

Meeting Format

Each meeting provided opportunities for like-minded professionals to come together with the time and opportunity to talk, share information about their own programs, network, and discuss ways to work together in collaborative efforts. The half-day meetings on Saturdays started at 9 a.m. in the Extension offices with coffee and refreshments. Participants were asked to complete pre-surveys before the meetings began. The meetings were planned to run until noon. Although some of the participants knew each other, many others did not and were meeting for the first time.

The meetings began with introductions, followed by presentations by NMSU ACES administrators. FCS teachers were asked to present an overview of the resources and strengths in their individual programs. Following the teachers, the CES-HE county agents presented the programs and resources that they felt might be appropriate for FCS teachers' classrooms and activities. After the informal presentations, FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents were divided into groups based on their geographical locations and allowed to get acquainted, network, and plan for future collaboration. Just before the end of the allotted time, lunch was provided and participants were asked to complete a post-survey.

Instruments

Three instruments were developed by the researchers: a pre-workshop survey, a post-workshop survey, and a Level One workshop evaluation. All approvals were obtained from the university Institutional Review Board for the collection of data and the protection of human subjects. The pre- and post-survey instruments were similar with the pre-survey asking additional questions about existing collaboration with CES-HE county agents. The collaboration assessment instruments consisted of a combination of Likert scales and check-off formats to determine content areas and types of activities where collaboration existed, opinions about

collaboration, and factors impacting collaboration efforts. The Level One evaluation used a Likert format. Subjects elected to participate, and no perceived risk was associated with participation or non-participation.

The pre-workshop survey asked participants to indicate levels of collaboration that existed between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents in their settings in content areas such as *health and wellness* and *family relationships*, and FCS-related activities such as *service projects* and *FCCLA*. Possible responses ranged from *almost always* to *almost never* on the five-point Likert scale. The survey also asked participants to respond to opinion statements such as “*Current collaboration efforts between FCS teachers and county agents are at an ideal level*” and “*FCS teachers need to increase county agent involvement in schools and school projects*” by selecting *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* responses on a five-point Likert scale. The survey contained a check-all-that-apply section of factors impacting collaboration with items such as “*We have similar areas of interest*” and “*Collaboration is worth my time commitment.*”

Statistical Analysis

For comparing pre- and post-survey results of FCS teachers, the researchers used different procedures depending on the nature of the responses and data, while taking into account that the respondents in the two surveys are dependent (i.e. the same sample). The analyses were conducted using SAS, version 9.3.

For the five-point Likert-scale items, the researchers used the Wilcoxon signed rank test, since the test assumes an ordinal score for each comparison item without the normal distribution assumption (Coussement, Demoulin, & Charry, 2011). For “*select any that may apply*” items, the researchers opted for McNemar’s test to test for differences in response tendencies of teacher before versus after the collaboration meeting (Coussement, et al., 2011). Since test statistics were not computed when at least one of the four cells (2 x 2) had less than two observations, the researchers used the Wilcoxon signed rank test for such analyses. P-values obtained from both McNemar’s and Wilcoxon signed rank tests were identical whenever items could be analyzed using both statistics. Since the sample size was small, the level of significance was set at a lower probability ($p \leq 0.10$) (Rubin & Cole, 2009; Noymer, 2008).

Results

Response Rate

A total of 25 FCS teachers attended the two workshops. Twenty-two FCS teachers completed both pre- and post-surveys for a response rate of 88%.

Pre-Workshop Levels of Collaboration

FCS teachers were asked to report the current level of collaboration that existed between CES-HE county agents and themselves in the pre-workshop survey. Results of collaboration on subject matter content areas are reported in Table 1. Results of collaboration on activities are reported in Table 2. FCS teachers generally reported that they *almost never* collaborated with their CES-HE colleagues. In the content areas, 75 percent or more of the teachers indicated they *almost never* collaborated with their CES-HE colleagues for seven of the nine content areas. While collaboration between CES-HE county agents and FCS teachers appeared more prevalent in activities, more than 50 percent of the teachers reported they *almost never* collaborated in the nine activities listed on the survey.

Table 1
Pre-Workshop Levels of Collaboration with CES-HE County Agents in Content Areas as Reported by FCS Teachers (N=22)

Content Area	Almost Always (%)	Usually (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Almost Never (%)
Housing and Design	0.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	85.0
Clothing, Fashion, and Textiles	0.0	4.8	9.5	4.8	81.0
Family Resource Management	5.0	0.0	5.0	10.0	80.0
Disaster Preparedness	5.0	0.0	10.0	5.0	80.0
Child Development	0.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	80.0
Food Technology	0.0	10.0	10.0	5.0	75.0
Family Relationships	0.0	5.0	20.0	0.0	75.0
Health and Wellness	5.0	15.0	20.0	0.0	60.0
Food and Nutrition	10.0	15.0	20.0	10.0	45.0

Table 2
Pre-Workshop Levels of Collaboration with CES-HE County Agents in Activities as Reported by FCS Teachers (N=22)

Activity	Almost Always (%)	Usually (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Almost Never (%)
4-H Events	0.0	5.0	15.0	5.0	75.0
County Fairs	0.0	9.5	4.8	14.3	71.4
Service Projects	0.0	9.5	9.5	14.3	66.7
Professional Trainings	0.0	9.5	19.0	9.5	61.9
FCCLA Events	4.8	19.0	9.5	4.8	61.9
Presentations	0.0	15.0	20.0	5.0	60.0
Subject Matter Content Sharing	4.8	9.5	23.8	4.8	57.1
Newsletter Articles	5.0	5.0	10.0	25.0	55.0
Material Resource Sharing	9.5	4.8	9.5	23.8	52.4

Comparisons of Pre- and Post-Workshop Opinions on Collaboration

Opinions held by FCS teachers concerning collaboration with CES-HE agents prior to the workshops were compared to their opinions after the workshops. These data are presented in Table 3. For all the eight statements, larger percentages of teachers indicated stronger agreement tendencies on the post-workshop survey. For three of the items, significant changes were found.

- For item 1, 35 percent of the teachers *strongly agreed* that county agents are very important to FCS teachers at the pre-workshop time, while 50 percent *strongly agreed* at post-workshop ($p=0.065$). For the same statement, 25 percent of the teachers reported before the workshop that they were *neutral* about CES-HE county agents' importance to FCS teachers. Post-workshop, the neutral opinion concerning CES-HE county agents' importance to FCS teachers had dropped to 4.5%.
- For item 4, all the teachers (100%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that county agents involvement in schools should be increased at the pre- and post-assessments. Teachers moved toward stronger agreement after the workshop ($p=0.065$).
- For item 8, 4.5 percent of teachers disagreed with the statement that they should cooperate with county agents on regular basis at the pre-workshop assessment, while 13.6 percent of the teachers were neutral about cooperating with CES-HE county agents. At the end of the workshop, all the teachers (100%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that CES-HE county agents and FCS teachers should cooperate on regular basis ($p=0.0547$).

Table 3

FCS Teachers' Opinions Regarding Collaboration with CES-HE County Agents in Pre-and Post-Workshop Surveys (N= 22)

Statement	Pre (%)					Post (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. County agents are very important to FCS teachers ($p=0.0649$)	35.0	35.0	25.0	0.0	5.0	50.0	45.5	4.5	0.0	0.0
2. Current collaboration efforts between FCS teachers and county agents are at an ideal level ($p=0.3331$)	0.0	15.0	35.0	20.0	30.0	9.5	23.8	23.8	23.8	19.0
3. Current collaboration efforts between FCS teachers and county agents need to be increased ($p=0.7813$)	50.0	45.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	61.9	28.6	9.5	0.0	0.0
4. FCS teachers need to increase county agent involvement in schools and school projects ($p=0.0654$)	47.6	52.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	77.3	22.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

Statement	Pre (%)					Post (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. County agents need to increase FCS teacher involvement in Extension programming (p=0.1875)	60.0	30.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	72.7	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
6. County agents can significantly add value to FCS teacher effectiveness (p=0.2891)	63.6	36.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	81.8	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
7. FCS teachers can significantly add value to county agent effectiveness (p=0.4316)	52.4	33.3	9.5	4.8	0.0	59.1	36.4	4.5	0.0	0.0
8. County agents and FCS teachers should cooperate on a regular basis (p=0.0547)	50.0	31.8	13.6	4.5	0.0	68.2	31.8	0.0	0.0	0.0

Comparisons of Pre- and Post-Workshop Factors Impacting Collaboration

At pre- and post-survey times, FCS teachers were provided a list of 22 factors that might impact their collaboration efforts with CES-HE county agents. From the list, the teachers were asked to check off the factors that they felt might impact their attempts to collaborate. In Table 4, the six factors that showed at least a 20 percent increase from the pre- to post-workshop assessments are presented. From pre- to post-assessment times, a significant difference was found for one factor, “*we have similar areas of interest*” at the $p \leq .05$ level. Five differences between pre- and post-workshop factors achieved significance at the $p \leq .10$ level.

Table 4

Factors Perceived to Impact Collaboration with CES-HE County Agents as Reported by FCS Teachers in Pre- and Post-Workshop Surveys (N=22)

Factors Impacting Collaboration	Pre (%)	Post (%)
We have similar areas of interest. (p=0.0313)	68.2	95.5
Collaboration is worth my time commitment. (p=0.0625)	76.2	100.0
Geographical location is conducive to our collaboration. (p=0.0625)	63.6	86.4
They need my expertise. (p=0.0625)	45.5	68.2
We have a working relationship. (p=0.0625)	27.3	50.0
Arranging for collaboration is difficult. (p=0.0625)	13.6	36.4

The top five factors that FCS teachers felt impacted the level of collaboration between themselves and their CES-HE colleagues at the conclusion of the workshop were as follows:

Collaboration is worth my item commitment (100% of teachers chose this factor); *I need the expertise offered* (100% of teachers selected this factor); *We have similar areas of interest* (95.5% of teachers chose this factor); *Collaboration enhances my perceived competency* (95.5% of teachers chose this factor); *Geographical location is conducive to our collaboration* (86.4% of teachers chose this factor).

Evaluation of Workshops

All workshop participants were given the opportunity to evaluate the workshop format using a Likert scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Reactions to the meetings, presented in Table 5, were extremely favorable with scores in the 4.4-4.8 range (out of a possible 5) for 7 of 9 statements. The two statements receiving lower scores (in the 3.77-3.83 range) dealt with the need for additional time for individual input and collaboration planning.

Table 5
Mean Scores on Level One Evaluation for Workshop Format (N=31)

Statement	Mean Score
The meeting was well organized.	4.74
Food/refreshments were appropriate.	4.74
The meeting was helpful and I was able to develop contacts.	4.67
The meeting was held at an appropriate time.	4.65
The facility was appropriate for the meeting.	4.53
The date for the meeting was convenient.	4.45
The meeting met my needs for information.	4.45
Enough time for collaboration was provided.	3.83
Enough time was provided for individual input.	3.77

Discussion

The first goal of the study was to assess the degree to which collaboration occurred between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents in content areas and FCS activities prior to the workshops. As Advisory Council members suspected, collaboration was not occurring between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents. A majority of the FCS teachers reported that they almost never collaborated with their CES-HE colleagues in FCS content areas and FCS-related activities. Although the FCS and CES-HE county agents are similar professionals who meet the requirements for successful collaboration (Clark, et al., 1996), the lack of collaboration reflects the findings of a study between agriculture teachers and CES agents, which reported little collaboration (Grage et al., 2004.)

The second goal of the research was to compare the FCS teachers' opinions about collaboration with CES-HE county agents before and after the workshops. Getting the two groups together clearly resulted in positive changes in FCS teachers' opinions about possible collaboration with CES-HE county agents and perhaps will lead to increased future collaboration. The literature reported the feelings of isolation, frustration, exhaustion, and discouragement associated with the inability to collaborate with other professionals in similar roles (Bull & Cummings, 2002; Dodor et al., 2010). Having the two groups meet and network reminded FCS teachers of the availability of their CES-HE colleagues, many of whom are located in the same county.

Although FCS teachers reported that they felt CES-HE colleagues were important to them before the workshop, the post-workshop data showed a marked change in the degree to which the FCS teachers felt the importance of the CES-HE county agents. One-fourth of FCS teachers expressed a neutral opinion about CES-HE county agents' importance prior to the workshop. After the workshop reminded the teachers of their connections with CES-HE county agents, the neutral opinion response dropped substantially in the post-workshop survey. The ability to network and discuss with the CES-HE county agents served to remind FCS teachers of their CES-HE colleagues and the possibility of collaboration, and may lessen the feelings of isolation that some experience.

Although almost one-half of the FCS teachers felt strongly about involving county agents in school and school projects prior to the workshop, over three-fourths of the FCS teachers responded that they strongly agreed with the need to increase CES-HE county agents' involvement with their schools and school projects after the workshop. Having other FCS professionals available for school projects may alleviate stresses associated with limited resources.

FCS teachers were also asked to respond to the statement that they should collaborate on a regular basis with their CES-HE colleagues. Although a majority of FCS teachers strongly agreed with this statement pre-workshop, some teachers were neutral or disagreed that collaboration should occur. Post-workshop results showed that all of the FCS teachers either strongly agreed or agreed with the need for collaboration. Certainly having the time and face-to-face contact with CES-HE colleagues resulted in an increased desire for collaboration.

The third goal of the research was to compare pre- and post- workshop factors FCS teachers perceived to impact their collaboration with CES-HE county agents. While the workshops allowed FCS teachers to reconnect with their CES-HE colleagues and reminded them of their shared expertise and potential value to each other, they also showed an increased awareness of the difficulty in scheduling collaboration, noted by Cookson (2005).

The fourth goal of the research was to determine the effectiveness of the workshop format. The participants thought the meeting was well organized, helpful, and provided needed information. Bringing FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents together to talk about collaboration did appear to meet the overall goals of the workshops. Statements receiving lower scores on the evaluation concerned the time allotted for individual input and collaboration planning. However, the researchers felt that increasing hours on a weekend would discourage participation.

Implications for FCS Educators and Researchers

FCS teacher educators should organize efforts to promote collaboration between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents through workshops similar to this pilot study. Pre-service FCS teachers and CES-HE agents should be provided with opportunities during university coursework to develop skills in collaboration and networking. FCS teacher educators should educate university administrators, school administrators, school district career and technical educational directors, and Extension personnel about the advantages of FCS teachers' collaboration with CES-HE county agents. Teachers can collaborate using their extensive education and experience, and the CES-HE county agents can help teachers with the most current research-based knowledge and skills.

The researchers suggest the meeting format utilized in this study will be helpful to promote collaboration between these two groups; findings indicate that given the opportunity,

FCS teachers do want to collaborate with their CES-HE colleagues. However, participants in these meetings wished for additional time in the workshops to talk about collaboration. Such meetings might be held in school settings as well as county Extension offices. Since lack of time and the difficulty in arranging for collaboration appear to be factors in the meetings conducted in this study, future meetings might be longer and held more frequently to allow for continuity in planning and implementation of collaboration efforts.

Academic faculty at land-grant universities and non-land-grant universities need to support collaboration efforts by providing their expertise for professional training, material resource sharing, and presentation content and strategies. Land-grant universities could sponsor collaboration workshops, meetings, and seminars for FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents. FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents need to be encouraged and provided funding by their administrators to attend each other's professional meetings to network and develop opportunities for collaboration.

Additional research is needed on collaboration efforts between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents. Issues that need to be explored are the degree of collaboration that currently exists across the United States, benefits of collaboration, differences in collaboration between urban and rural settings, and factors affecting the levels of collaboration. Longitudinal studies should track results from efforts to increase collaboration between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents.

Conclusion

The purpose of this pilot program was to determine the benefit of bringing together people who have complementary domains of expertise and allowing them to determine what their shared spheres of work might become. The researchers planned the workshop format to determine if collaboration was occurring and to allow participants to network and talk about their programs, needs, and sharable expertise and resources. Results clearly indicated that collaboration was lacking. The FCS teachers left the workshops with a renewed understanding and appreciation of the connectedness between themselves and the CES-HE county agents. After the meeting, FCS teachers saw that CES-HE county agents were very important and collaboration should increase. Collaboration efforts were discussed, and connections were made.

Teachers also changed their opinions about the involvement of county agents in schools and school projects. Many times, an FCS teacher might be the only FCS professional in his/her school. Reminding the teachers of their potential connections with CES-HE county agents might alleviate some of the feelings of isolation and the lack of mentoring support that FCS teachers report (Jalongo & Heider, 2006). The feelings of frustration, exhaustion, and discouragement that teachers reported might be lessened by having another professional locally who understands the work that one does (Dodor et al., 2010).

The outcome of the workshop may have allowed FSC teachers and CES-HE county agents to create new ways to think about collaboration within their complementary domains of expertise, including new and different ways of sharing their work spheres and helping each with the mission of the other. Additional collaboration workshops such as this one would allow FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents to develop relationships to strengthen their resources and broaden their spheres of influence.

Cookson (2005) reported that professional collaboration for teachers was difficult because of their isolation in their classrooms and overly rigid schedules. This study pointed to that difficulty as well. FCS teacher educators and university administrators could develop

possible avenues for teachers and county agents to collaborate in this restrictive environment, including the increased use of technology, such as electronic bulletin boards, social media, and other online meeting venues. Utilizing collaboration with CES-HE county agents would allow FCS teachers to join a larger community of FCS professionals and increase their participation in the FCS community.

The FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents came together to share programs and successes, inform each other about resources, and strategize for collaboration efforts. Discussions focused on FCS school program updates, county FCS Extension programs, and state FCS specialists' areas of emphasis. The meetings improved dialogue between FCS teachers and CES-HE county agents at the county levels and emphasized the contributions, expertise, and resources each could make to the others' programs. The workshops increased FCS teachers' ability to collaborate with like-minded colleagues in their geographical area.

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