

**CALS Strategic Planning Meeting – Listening Session #10**  
**Western North Carolina Ag Center, Fletcher, NC**  
**February 8, 2013**

This document is a summary of ideas that surfaced during a Listening Session of 89 participants on February 8, 2013. The session focused on six questions to guide the discussion. You are encouraged to review this document and consider the themes that are emerging from this session. This is the original language used by groups as they discussed the questions (it has not been edited). As the listening sessions continue, these lists of ideas will be consolidated into major themes.

**Question 1** - What do you see as the three most significant POSITIVE trends on the horizon for your area of work over the next five years?

- Expansion of job opportunities and technology
- Greater awareness of agriculture by the public
- Potential for future growth
- Supporting county processing centers
- Sustainability of agriculture/safe and healthy local foods
- Greater population = greater food need
- Globalization
- Economic recovery
- Marketing NC products

**Question 2** – What do you see as the three most significant NEGATIVE trends on the horizon for your area of work over the next five years?

- Over regulation
- Budget cuts
- Losing farm land – various reasons
- Elected officials lack knowledge of agriculture – important for daily living
- Reduction of consumer understanding of agriculture
- Lack of knowledge of ag in the general population
- Sales of farm land
- Diminishing numbers of young people entering the field
- Decline of extension presence in counties

**Question 3** – How would you define the purpose of CALS today and in the near future (next 5 years)?

- Produce students to comp. in global environment
- Promoting and making small farms profitable
- Provides education for future (ag) leaders
- Teaching how to do more with less

- Taking research into the field
- Emphasize economic development of agriculture
- Students and public need to be more educated on agriculture industry
- Realistic research
- Research and Extension
- Ag education at all ages
- Fostering greater diversity of commodities and people
- Positive education to all

**Question 4** – What do you see as the 1 to 3 greatest opportunities for CALS over the next 5 years?

- Distance education
- Career opportunities
- Supporting NC Students (i.e. scholarships, partnerships with private industries)
- Promote value added agriculture
- Student access
- Population and economic growth = more need for extension
- Climate differences can be researched thru broad based research farm
- Embracing agricultural diversity in NC
- Promoting sustainability
- Recruitment of the next generation

**Question 5** – What do you see as the 1 to 3 greatest challenges for CALS over the next 5 years?

- Losing slots for ag students
- Budget and finances, tuition costs
- Keeping door open to NC Students who may not meet SAT & GPA requirements without relying on being transferred in
- Funding & staffing pest management
- Finding economic resources to develop needed programs
- Managing budgetary constraints

**Question 6** – How can CALS best help your area of interest (subject, constituency, program, etc.) over the next 5 years?

- New partnerships for research, funding & programing
- Keep emphasis on research
- Continue and place more emphasis on demonstration
- Marketing and branding
- Continue promoting research farms
- Educating young people and general public
- Market new products in new markets
- Decline of extension presence in counties

- Recruitment of the next generation