Preamble

We are pleased to present the 2015–2020 Purdue University College of Agriculture Strategic Plan. Our 2009–2014 strategic plan provided an important roadmap for our College’s success over those five years. Building on that success, we began the process of developing our next plan in the fall of 2014 by assembling a 35-member task force made up of faculty members, staff members, and students broadly representative of our College. Five teams were formed: Undergraduate Education, Research and Graduate Education, Engagement/Extension, International, and Climate/Community—and each team began working through a series of questions organized in the following framework:

Understanding Our World/Assessing Our College

• Looking Outside: What are the most important opportunities and significant threats/challenges you see for Purdue Agriculture?
• Looking Inside: What are the most important strengths Purdue Agriculture has to build on and what are our most significant weaknesses/barriers to success that must be addressed?

Defining Global Leadership

• What are the most important attributes of global leadership—what does it look like?

Making It Happen

• What goals/measures of success for Purdue Agriculture would reflect global leadership?

• What bold initiatives and specific actions should we take to move Purdue Agriculture to a position of global leadership?

To help answer these questions, the Task Force teams conducted multiple surveys of the faculty, the staff, and students, and (with much help from the Purdue Extension staff) held 27 listening sessions around Indiana, engaging nearly 800 stakeholders, to learn more about their key opportunities and challenges and what changes and investments would help position us to better meet their needs and expectations.

The Task Force used the information gleaned from these surveys, listening sessions, and other sources to develop the first draft of the strategic plan, which was vetted both inside and outside the College during April 2015. Three open forums on the draft plan were attended by more than 100 faculty, staff, and students, with others around the state participating online. These forums generated a number of thoughtful, pertinent observations that helped us produce the final version of the plan.

My thanks go to all the Task Force members who contributed so much to this effort and to all whose input helped us shape this plan. With much momentum generated by implementation of our last strategic plan, our 2015–2020 strategic plan is a bold roadmap for taking the College to even higher levels of excellence in all we do.

Jay T. Akridge
Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture
OUR VISION
Purdue Agriculture will be the world’s leading land-grant college of agriculture, food, life, and natural resource sciences. We will embrace the land-grant ideal in all we do:

- Engaging with our students, stakeholders, and partners in Indiana and around the world.
- Developing solutions to address society’s most important issues.
- Working across disciplines in creative and productive ways.
- Integrating our learning, discovery, and engagement missions.
- Creating an inclusive culture that supports innovation, excellence, and respect for all.

OUR MISSION
Purdue Agriculture will help make Indiana, our nation, and our world better through:

- Students prepared to make a difference.
- Research with purpose, leading to discovery with impact.
- Engagement/Extension that strengthens lives and livelihoods.
- An inclusive culture that supports excellence in all we do.

OUR VALUES
We value:

- **Passion**, for the students we educate, the stakeholders we serve, the work we do, the places we work and study.
- **Stakeholder engagement** with purpose, and the impact it makes possible.
- **Creativity**, bringing bold, new thinking to our scholarship and our work.
- **Excellence**, being the very best that we can be, in all we do.
- **Diversity**, in the fullest and richest sense of the word, across our people, our stakeholders, our ideas, our work.
- **Respect**, for all individuals, for all perspectives, for all missions.

OUR FOCUS

**Building a sustainable and secure food production system**
We play a critical role in assuring a safe, nutritious, and sustainable food supply for a growing world.

**Utilizing molecular approaches to expand the frontiers of agriculture, food, natural resource, and life sciences**
We tackle the most basic science problems using molecular tools to improve agricultural production, preserve diverse landscapes, and positively affect human health.

**Developing a robust bioeconomy to feed and power the world**
We work to understand and develop renewable energy sources and bio-products in support of a society transitioning to a bio-based economy.

**Enhancing food and health**
We work at the interface of food and health, making food safer, improving nutrition, reducing waste, and adding value.

**Strengthening ecological and environmental integrity**
We address issues of climate change and global sustainability, taking an ecosystems approach to answer fundamental questions affecting our air, land, water, and other natural resources.

**Facilitating informed decision-making to improve economic and social well-being**
We help farmers and industry develop solutions to increase economic vitality, build human capacity and capacity within communities, and contribute to important policy debates.
LEADERSHIP: Living Our Land-Grant Mission

**Goal:** Become the world’s leading land-grant college of agriculture, food, life, and natural resource sciences, serving Indiana and the world through sustained excellence in, and integration of, our land-grant missions of learning, discovery, and engagement.

**INITIATIVE 1:** Identify and address the most important opportunities and challenges facing Indiana, our nation, and our world in the areas in which we work.

**Actions**
- Develop and utilize proactive approaches for identifying the highest priority issues facing the stakeholders we serve.
- Engage faculty members, staff members, and students in developing joint agendas and building teams focused on addressing emerging issues at community, state, national, and global levels.
- Engage stakeholders and partners across the University, in industry, and in government and nongovernmental organizations in addressing priority issues.

**INITIATIVE 2:** Create and support a culture of innovation and excellence across the College.

**Actions:**
- Recognize and support the importance of the creative process and the idea of excellence in all we do.
- Streamline administrative processes to enable more creativity and innovation.
- Provide seed funds to support test cases, models, and pilots of new ideas, areas of work, and approaches.
- Engage with appropriate economic development organizations to support innovation on campus and around Indiana.
- Invest in dedicated co-working spaces to foster informal collaborations and creativity, and for idea and strategy incubation.
- Engage the public in a discussion of the science we do and the technology utilized by our industry stakeholders.
**INITIATIVE 3:** Expand and deepen integration across our learning, discovery, and engagement missions.

**Actions:**
- Invest in teams that integrate across mission areas and disciplines to demonstrate global leadership in addressing priority issues by incentivizing, valuing, and rewarding cross-mission and interdisciplinary collaborations.
- Explore opportunities to further engage undergraduate and graduate students in Extension programming.
- Improve College infrastructure—physical, technological, and/or human talent—to enhance cross-mission activity.

**INITIATIVE 4:** Support leadership growth and development for our students, faculty, and staff.

**Actions:**
- Build a leadership model that serves as a framework for a common approach to leadership growth and development throughout the College.
- Create internal leadership development programs and utilize existing programs to support professional growth of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff members, and Extension educators.
- Utilize University, state, and national leadership programs to build leadership capabilities of faculty members, staff members, and students.
- Aggressively promote faculty and staff members for campus, state, national, and international leadership positions, including policy-making committees.

**INITIATIVE 5:** Communicate and celebrate the breadth and importance of the land-grant mission and the work of our College.

**Actions:**
- Pursue national and international recognition for students, faculty members, and staff members in all phases of our land-grant mission.
- Communicate accomplishments of students, faculty members, and staff members to state, national, and international audiences.
- Recognize through College and department awards all three areas of the land-grant mission for work done both in the United States and internationally, and create an award for integration of these areas.
- Provide training for leaders, faculty and staff members, students, and promotion committee members on the land-grant ideal and the importance of all three areas of the land-grant mission.
TEACHING:
Students Prepared to Make a Difference

**Goal:** Ensure that Purdue is globally recognized as the preferred source of agriculture, food, natural resources, and life-science undergraduates who are prepared to lead and make a positive impact, whatever their career paths. Cultivate Purdue Agriculture students’ expectations to work hard, rise to challenges, and make a difference.

**INITIATIVE 1:** Increase recruitment and retention of well-qualified students in support of University initiatives to broaden access to the Purdue experience.

**Actions:**
- Increase accessibility by managing hurdles to enrollment at Purdue University.
- Strengthen the P–14 and Science/Technology/Engineering/Agriculture/Mathematics (STEAM) education pipeline to support student recruitment.
- Build a robust transfer pipeline with community colleges and regional campuses.
- Develop and implement a recruiting strategy to increase the number, participation, and success of underrepresented minority undergraduate students.
- Enhance recruitment of students currently enrolled at Purdue in Exploratory Studies.
- Engage learners who are not able to benefit from traditional lecture and lab formats by enhancing nonresidential, online, and modular learning opportunities.

**INITIATIVE 2:** Develop students’ abilities to adapt the knowledge and technology of their disciplines to collaborate effectively with people of different cultures.

**Actions:**
- Build a learner-centered environment where the land-grant mission is valued and student interdisciplinary achievement and success is celebrated.
- Assist students as they take control of their lives and choose the best experiences for their professional and personal well-being.
- Strengthen leadership programs to meet the intentional learning outcomes of all cocurricular opportunities and to encourage leadership engagement across the university and beyond.
- Create new and update current curricula using innovative instructional technologies to enhance the learning experiences of resident students and to provide flexible access to the undergraduate program.
INITIATIVE 3: Integrate the development of cultural awareness into all on-campus, cocurricular, and study-abroad student experiences.

Actions:
- Broaden students’ worldviews through intercultural development on campus as well as domestic and international study-away experiences.
- Integrate instructors’ international experiences and expertise into their courses and learning experiences.
- Enhance on-campus and study-abroad strategies to emphasize the Purdue Undergraduate Core Curriculum learning outcomes of Human Cultures, Global Citizenship and Social Responsibility, and Intercultural Knowledge and Effectiveness.
- Ensure that training is provided for instructors on creating inclusive classroom environments and that a diversity statement is included in all course syllabi.

INITIATIVE 4: Emphasize faculty and academic staff development, recognition, and support in teaching and learning as it relates to the student experience.

Actions:
- Elevate the priority of hiring, retaining, promoting, and rewarding faculty members for their efforts and commitment to academic programs and to student engagement, mentoring, growth, and development.
- Create a support structure, a culture, and the on-campus learning facilities/space that emphasize excellence of teaching and learning, and especially experiential learning, undergraduate research, service learning, and student engagement with industry partners and projects.
- Support the faculty in delivering relevant, cutting edge, and broadly applicable curricula using contemporary pedagogies.

INITIATIVE 5: Deepen collaboration with partners who seek Purdue Agriculture graduates.

Actions:
- Establish new and strengthen existing ties with employers and industry partners from agriculture, food, natural resource, and life science areas.
- Leverage industry partnerships in co-curricular offerings, including research, leadership, interdisciplinary experiential and service-learning, and internship opportunities.
- Establish new and strengthen existing ties with peers—together training the next generation of agriculture, food, natural resource, and life science professionals.
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: Discovery with Impact

Goal: Create and support a community of engaged, productive, and collaborative scholars who are world leaders in their respective disciplines, pushing back the boundaries of science, and addressing society’s most pressing opportunities and challenges through creative and high-impact disciplinary and cross-disciplinary research.

INITIATIVE 1: Drive interdisciplinary research by creating a culture of “we” in approaching our science.

Actions:
- Develop a process for envisioning and creating the next “Big Thing(s)” in the College, including soliciting ideas regularly from all College faculty members, being mindful that both translational and basic science are essential to creating short-term and long-term impacts.
- Foster innovative research and interdisciplinary collaborations that jointly benefit the faculty, the College, and society, emphasizing informal, bottom-up, team approaches.
- Establish a competitive, well-funded, internal program attractive enough to fully engage interdisciplinary teams.
- Build strategic partnerships with other Purdue Colleges, universities, industry, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies to enhance the science of the College.
- Pursue strategic and targeted hiring of mid-career faculty members to advance thrust areas of research and to maintain a diverse faculty.
- Work with the Purdue Foundry to enhance entrepreneurship and pursue commercialization of research discoveries and with departments to facilitate release time for faculty members who wish to translate their discoveries into the marketplace.

INITIATIVE 2: Enhance research facilities by building new facilities and improving existing facilities both on and off campus to promote world-class, interdisciplinary research. Create functional and attractive spaces that draw faculty members, staff members, and students to the workplace.

Actions:
- Create a coordinated plan to maintain research space integrity, especially in older buildings and facilities, both on and off campus.
- Identify and prioritize facilities (such as those related to food safety, insect/disease, isolation quarantine units, etc.) that make us unique.
- Require that all new and renovated buildings have research space allocated for cross-departmental, interdisciplinary collaborations.
- Create and implement a balanced in-house and outsourcing plan for services to eliminate any perceived need to own all equipment or facilities.
• Involve the faculty in development activities for new facilities; tap into existing relationships between faculty and staff members and potential donors; build linkages with Development and Agricultural Communication to support relationships and find imaginative ways to help sponsor research.
• Create a mechanism for industry sponsorship of facility upgrades.

**INITIATIVE 3:** Enhance shared resources by creating and supporting infrastructure that spans departmental boundaries.

**Actions:**
• Provide full and uninterrupted access to state-of-the-art equipment to support basic, translational, and social sciences; field facilities; and trained personnel to enable and expedite research that otherwise is not possible within the confines of an investigator-managed laboratory.
• Create a multidisciplinary, shared-facilities working group that monitors and makes recommendations on the optimal use and management of shared facilities.
• Provide clear and easy access to information on the training requirements, access, and technical expertise available at all core facilities, and on a cost structure for the facilities.
• Institute a mechanism for upgrade and replacement to keep equipment and technologies current and state-of-the-art.
• Ensure that core facility managers and professional staff have access to professional-development opportunities.

**INITIATIVE 4:** Invest in the future of science through holistic graduate and postdoctoral training programs that prepare our students to be successful leaders in their chosen fields.

**Actions:**
• Emphasize creative opportunities unique to Purdue that both attract graduate students/postdocs and make them highly valued in the marketplace.
• Establish a small number of universal learning outcomes in all graduate programs, including written and oral scientific communication, teamwork, and the competencies necessary to function in our “big data”-driven world.
• Increase the incentive to train graduate students by helping accelerate their learning curve and easing the fiscal constraints on graduate education.
• Recruit and retain underrepresented minorities by investing in their success.
• Increase professional development and networking opportunities that enhance international, industrial, and teaching career paths for graduate students and postdocs.
• Create travel scholarships for graduate students and postdocs that allow every trainee to attend a national meeting to present his or her research.
• Take advantage of the resources offered by Extension, including linking graduate students with Extension contacts, making graduate students aware of careers in Extension, and utilizing Extension expertise to help communicate our science to a general audience.
• Develop an external advisory group of graduate alumni who can help provide insight into graduate education and guide graduate students and postdocs as they prepare for careers outside of academia.
• Facilitate the global reach of the College by creating a focused effort to maintain College connections with international students after they graduate and return to their home countries.
• Develop clear metrics (productivity, time to degree, job placement, etc.) to evaluate the impact of graduate and post-graduate education, and use those metrics to develop future goals for programs and in developing training-grant proposals.
EXTENSION/ENGAGEMENT:
Strengthening Lives and Livelihoods

**Goal:** Be recognized as the premier institution engaging stakeholders across Indiana and beyond in identifying and addressing priority issues to enhance quality of life as well as the efficiency and/or effectiveness of organizations through research-based education.

**INITIATIVE 1:** Create innovative, multidisciplinary educational programming addressing issues relevant to Indiana.

**Actions:**
- Conduct a needs assessment to guide program development and evaluation for each audience.
- Develop holistic programs that span Extension program areas, reach across disciplines and engage traditional and new audiences across rural and urban Indiana.
- Empower producers to further develop and diversify agriculture and food systems.
- Demonstrate the importance of natural resource conservation and management practices.
- Educate and inform consumers about agriculture and food production.
- Foster a full continuum of workforce, business, and economic development.
- Enhance health and wellness in ways that embrace the full spectrum of well-being.

- Inspire confidence and conviction among Indiana’s youth to become tomorrow’s leaders by strengthening P–12 educational programs both on and off campus.
- Support families using education in connectedness, communication, and life skills.
- Expand urban outreach and educational programs, engaging new urban audiences as partners and participants.
- Increase community engagement by cultivating leaders, partnerships, and civics.

**INITIATIVE 2:** Diversify and utilize appropriate Extension delivery systems tailored to specific audience needs.

**Actions:**
- Utilize market analysis to guide program development and evaluation for each audience.
- Develop innovative educational programming that utilizes technology appropriate for specific audiences and demographics.
- Enhance existing partnerships to deliver new and innovative programs.
- Develop and implement training programs to educate staff members and enhance employee skill sets.

Ronald Jones is a Purdue Extension Master Gardener volunteer who believes that teaching youths about gardening does more than teach them a valuable skill: it also teaches them how to eat healthy.
• Provide staff diversity training on cultural awareness, immersion experiences, and international opportunities.
• Identify current, innovative Purdue Extension educational approaches to replicate for larger impacts.

**INITIATIVE 3:** Seize new opportunities to effectively raise awareness of Extension resources, programs, and successes.

**Actions:**
- Measure the impact of Extension programming and initiatives using innovative approaches that capture the myriad ways that Extension makes a positive difference.
- Define key messaging and brand positioning statements that can serve as anchors for all components of Extension marketing.
- Showcase the success stories of Extension Educators and Specialists to establish relevance to stakeholders.
- Utilize the full breadth of media (e.g., print, TV, radio, online), including aggressive use of social media marketing and communications, to raise awareness of Extension.
- Develop branded materials that are easily adaptable for use with county-level programs.

**INITIATIVE 4:** Increase the attractiveness of Extension as a career choice.

**Actions:**
- Build precollege student linkages to increase understanding of Purdue Extension.
- Expose undergraduates to the breadth of Extension programming and professional opportunities.
- Enhance University engagement by integrating graduate students in Extension programming and providing opportunities to produce educational materials.
- Increase and diversify the pool of applicants for Extension positions.
- Retain talent through competitive, but fiscally responsible, compensation and regular opportunities for professional development.

Purdue Extension's Getting Ahead class helped Larissa Williams turn her life around. She has a new career and a new outlook on life (top). The St. Joseph County 4-H Aerospace Club competed in the final round of a nationwide Team America Rocketry Challenge (above).
INTERNATIONAL: Creating Global Perspective and Impact

Goal: Build a robust international perspective across the College and with stakeholders, to take advantage of global opportunities and to address challenges in the agriculture, food, natural resource, and life sciences through international learning, discovery, and engagement.

Initiative 1: Prepare students for international facets of their careers and lives through experiences on and off campus.

Actions:

• Ensure that each undergraduate student obtains international experience and perspective through study abroad or non-travel experiences.
• Provide students with additional exposure to international/global policy and regulatory issues.
• Create opportunities to integrate U.S. and international students for mutually beneficial learning.

Initiative 2: Prepare and support faculty and staff members to engage internationally, and recognize faculty and staff members for their involvement in international activities.

Actions:

• Help faculty and staff members identify how international activity can be part of their professional responsibilities, and help develop their international goals.
• Create awareness of the opportunities offered by international engagement/Extension for faculty and staff members.
• Provide effective project-management support for faculty and staff members engaged in international activities.
• Ensure that the scholarship of international learning, discovery, and engagement is clearly communicated to the faculty and to Primary and Area Promotion Committees.
• Create an international award(s) for the College that recognizes excellence in international learning, discovery, and/or engagement.
**INITIATIVE 3:** Prioritize efforts for global impact by proactively focusing on areas of strength and by working strategically with partners on and off campus.

*Actions:*

- Provide global leadership in focus areas and areas of strength (e.g., plant science, post-harvest loss reduction, commercialization of agricultural technologies for smallholder farmers, utilizing big data for addressing complex problems, etc.).
- Adopt a proactive and visible strategy for international involvement in discovery and engagement activities.
- Work strategically with partners within and outside Purdue to address important global opportunities and challenges.
- Pursue international capacity-building opportunities that have synergistic benefits for Purdue and for Indiana.
- Engage in human-capital-development activities to help create the next generation of leaders in the developing world.

**INITIATIVE 4:** Help Indiana citizens and organizations take advantage of global trends and opportunities.

*Actions:*

- Increase visibility of College international activities utilizing a strategic set of communication activities.
- Identify and bring global opportunities to nonprofits and firms.
- Raise awareness of relevant global regulatory and policy issues for Indiana citizens, organizations, and firms.
CLIMATE/COMMUNITY: Who We Are, How We Work

**Goal:** Build and sustain a climate and culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported and each individual is able to reach one's full potential for success.

**INITIATIVE 1:** Develop and sustain a collegial environment where a diverse community can thrive.

**Actions:**
- Recruit and retain a faculty, staff, and student population that represents the demographics of our ever-changing society.
- Deliberately invest in opportunities to enhance diversity and add at least one “diversity catalyst” to every department.
- In conjunction with increasing diversity among the graduate student body, develop and provide faculty training opportunities to improve cross-cultural and cross-gender mentoring; require diversity training for all faculty members, staff members, and students who mentor graduate students or postdoctoral fellows.
- Promote work/life balance across the College through actions such as increased awareness of scheduled meeting times and considerate deadlines.

**INITIATIVE 2:** Improve capacity of administrators, the faculty, the staff and students to create and operate in a diverse and inclusive environment.

**Actions:**
- Ensure that regular training is provided to department/unit leaders throughout the College to equip them with best practices for advancing diversity, personal development, and management of discriminatory and disruptive behaviors.
- Continue to improve the climate in departments/units through training on how to respond to microaggression and other issues related to diversity to support a positive, respectful, and inclusive climate.
- Require new hires (faculty, staff, grad students, postdocs) to participate in diversity training activities.
- Enhance a culture of “we” by instituting team-building exercises in departments/units as appropriate for professional development.
- Increase participation in SafeZone training and programs such as “Navigating Differences” throughout the College.
IN initiative 3: Enhance policies and procedures and pursue structural changes to reflect our institutional commitment to diversity and inclusiveness.

Actions:

- Continue to establish diverse pools of applicants for administrative, faculty, and staff positions, and for graduate and undergraduate student populations.
- Ensure that communication materials (publications, websites, etc.) reflect the increasing diversity of Purdue Agriculture.
- Establish a College Ombudsperson position to focus on diversity and inclusiveness issues.
- Focus on the importance of diversity and inclusiveness in conversations, tours, etc.
- Create a regular spotlight feature on a diversity/climate champion in the College.
- Create an annual College diversity/climate award for students, the staff and the faculty.
- Ensure that adequate resources and staff members are available for the Office of Multicultural Programs to support and enhance the College’s diversity and climate efforts.

Linda Lee is a professor and associate head in the Purdue University Department of Agronomy. She received the 2015 College of Agriculture Outstanding Graduate Mentoring Award.
PEOPLE, PURPOSE, IMPACT: 2015-2020
STRATEGIC PLAN

Purdue University is an equal access/equal opportunity institution.