Human Subjects Review Exemption Criteria

Evaluation of Extension and Outreach educational programs delivered by ANR Extension specialists follows Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines for exemption eligibility.

At Iowa State University, research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings involving normal educational practices, such as Extension programs, are eligible for exemption from human subjects review if certain criteria are included through informed consent (such as a survey introduction*). These criteria are:

- Participation is voluntary.
- Participants may skip any questions they do not feel comfortable answering.
- Survey results will be used only for reporting and program improvement.
- Personally identifiable information will be treated as confidential throughout the evaluation process and thereafter.
- No risk is associated with responding to a survey.

If ANR Extension programs are not research studies, evaluation tools and diagnostics used to measure these programs do not require the rigor that a peer-reviewed journal submission requires. Results from evaluations for outreach educational events are not eligible for that level of analysis but are sufficient for stakeholder reporting purposes.

* A companion tip sheet with an introduction example is available under the title The Value of an Introduction for Surveys, # 2.