April 2013 Update – Extension Accounting Software Contract

On March 15 ISU Extension and Outreach signed a contract with QCI (Quality Consulting, Inc.) of Des Moines. This is the first step in converting county accounting systems to Microsoft Dynamics GP.

Some benefits of using a Microsoft product are:
- Dynamics GP is compatible with Word, Excel, and Outlook.
- Dynamics GP has reporting and exporting options that bookkeepers and councils desire.
- Dynamics GP is intuitive (according to ISU Extension and Outreach committee who tested the product.)

As the vendor for MS Dynamics GP and our technology partner, QCI will work with the County Fiscal Team and Extension IT to configure the database, define processes, and configure data importing and reporting. We will be busy with these preparations during summer months while the county offices are busy with fiscal year-end and county fairs. We intentionally avoided scheduling any training at the close of the fiscal year and majority of county fair times.

Conversion timeline
QCI will train county bookkeepers in a three wave process – with the first wave of bookkeepers testing the conversion process beginning in early August. Half of the remaining bookkeepers are scheduled to be trained and begin converting to MS Dynamics mid-October, with the final group moving to Microsoft Dynamics GP mid-November. It is anticipated all counties will be up and operational on the system by the end of the calendar year. Several actions taken over the last several years to “review and clean-up” the chart of accounts and grants in county books will simplify the conversion process.

Your support is important
The conversion directly involves bookkeepers across the state and indirectly it will affect all extension staff and council members. You can support the process by anticipating needed reports (i.e. Project, Voucher and Revenue & Expense Statement) and planning ahead. Those being trained on the new software will be asked to spend time practicing on a test system before they go live. Councils can support this effort by making sure staff are allotted the time to practice.

After the pilot testing, more information will be shared system-wide regarding the schedule of county transitions, established configurations and processes, training designed for those besides the bookkeepers and how staff and county council members can support the transitioning.

Emily Ladewig continues to be the contact for county accounting software matters for bookkeepers and council members – reach her at eladewig@iastate.edu.

Thank you,

County Fiscal Team:
Sherry Glenn, Assistant Vice President for Extension and Outreach
Emily Ladewig, Accountant, County Services
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