

agInnovation
science that feeds the world



REBRANDING INITIATIVE UPDATE & ROLL-OUT PLAN

7/19/23
Joint COPS Meeting, Kansas City



PIVOT CREATIVE & CONSULTING 2023
PRESENTED BY ERICA MIRICH

ESS is proud to rebrand to



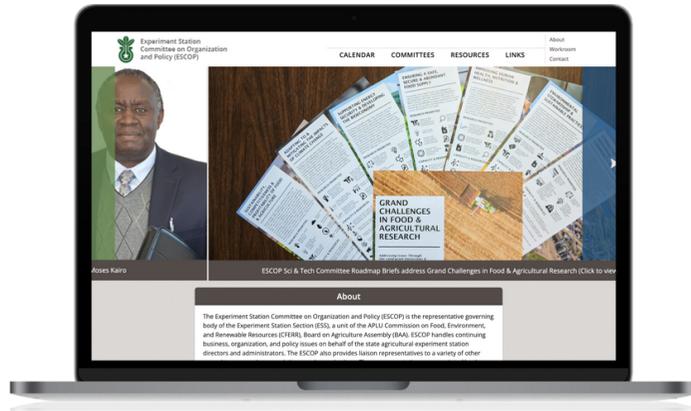
This brand identity will reinvigorate excitement for the agricultural experiment stations and research projects taking place within the land-grant university system

Then.



Experiment Station
Committee on Organization
and Policy (ESCOP)

- Stale
- "Pig & Pineapple"
- Not updated in 40 years
- Unclear
- Lacking WOW factor



- Not engaging
- No impact stories!
- Unclear what you do
- Goals? Priorities?
- Internal facing

Now.

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- Modern & Engaging
- Clear tagline
- Global
- Inviting/Clear
- Easy to understand



- Engaging & Welcoming
- Impact is front and center
- Clear about who you are
- Clear goals and priorities
- Accessible



OUR WHY.

Industry Trends & the Path to Our New Identity



Leading Edge.

National trend to modernize outdated, ineffective and confusing naming in the agricultural research.



TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
RESEARCH

Future-Proofing Ag.

AES/ESS is a brand with 118 years of history

- It has been **under-communicated for way too long**, even though it has a rich history and tremendous accolades within.

Failure of getting this right & failure of stakeholders to adopt/ embrace means:

- **An erosion of funding**
 - **Funding/investment has been flat.** During COVID, while most other industries got enhanced funding ag got very little.
 - Why? ESS meant nothing to policy creators, and decision-makers in Congress; **if you don't understand it, you won't invest in it!**
 - Every dollar invested in ag research and development typically returns \$20 to the economy
 - There is **a direct correlation between the investment we make in ag innovation and the American GDP.**
- **An erosion of geopolitical status**
 - As an innovator, America has been a top performer in the globe since our founding, but **we are losing ground to China, India, and the EU** who see ag innovation/research/technology as a foundation for global power.
 - This **causes us to lose our agency & relevancy among global partners**
 - The Russian occupation of Ukraine is a good example of
 - how geopolitical instability destabilizes global food security on a macro level and
 - how food security in general is national security issue on a micro level.

Clarity of Purpose & Impact.

- We know we are confusing
- We are an alphabet soup! So many acronyms!
 - **Acronyms are exclusionary language**
 - Isolate those "on the inside" from the general public
 - Power dynamic of those "in the know"
 - Non-welcoming to potential investors, partners, supporters
- Need to appeal to next generation of ag researchers, workers and educators
 - **Ag is so much more than farms!**
 - Natural Resources
 - Climate Intelligence/Resilience
 - Community Impact
- Ag is essential
- Ag is for EVERYONE!

NCRA	CFERR
NERA	BAA
ARD	PBD
WAAESD	CARET
SAAESD	BHHS
APLU	CES
NIFA	ESS
USDA	IAS
ESCOP	APS
ACOP	AHS
ICOP	BNR

Our New Identity.



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Who We Are.

**COLLABORATIVE
RESPONSIVE
SOLUTION-ORIENTED
IMPACTFUL
LEADERS
INNOVATIVE
SCIENCE-BASED
GLOBAL
RESEARCH-FOCUSED
CUTTING-EDGE
PROBLEM SOLVERS**



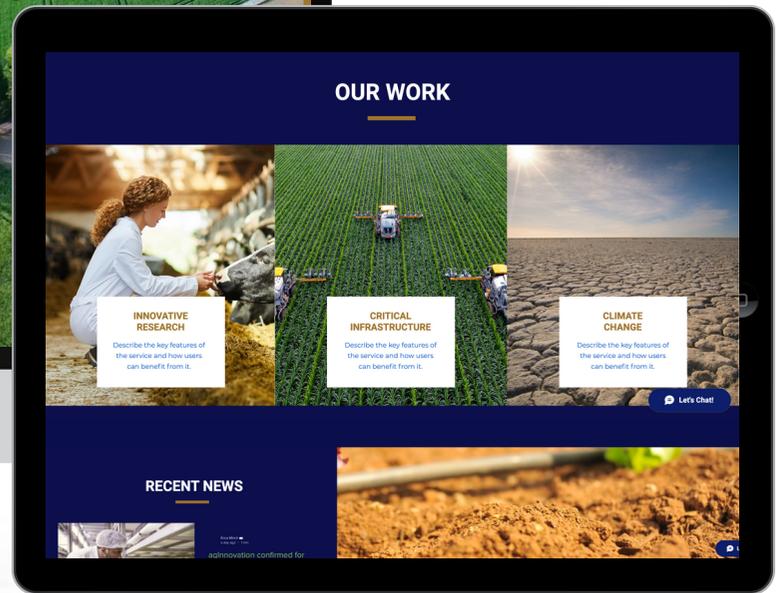
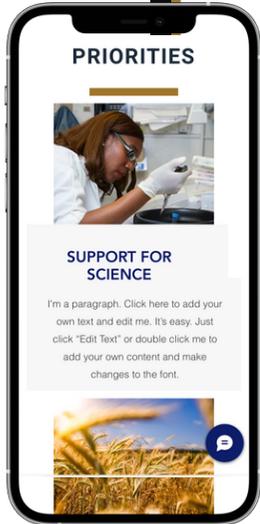
Our Purpose.

Our purpose is to promote and elevate agricultural research that improves lives and makes the world more food secure.



Our Vision.

**Enhanced human and world well-being
through agricultural innovation.**






www.aginnovation.info





Roll-out Plan.

How we will socialize the rebrand with our most important partners, colleagues, supporters and investors.



agInnovation

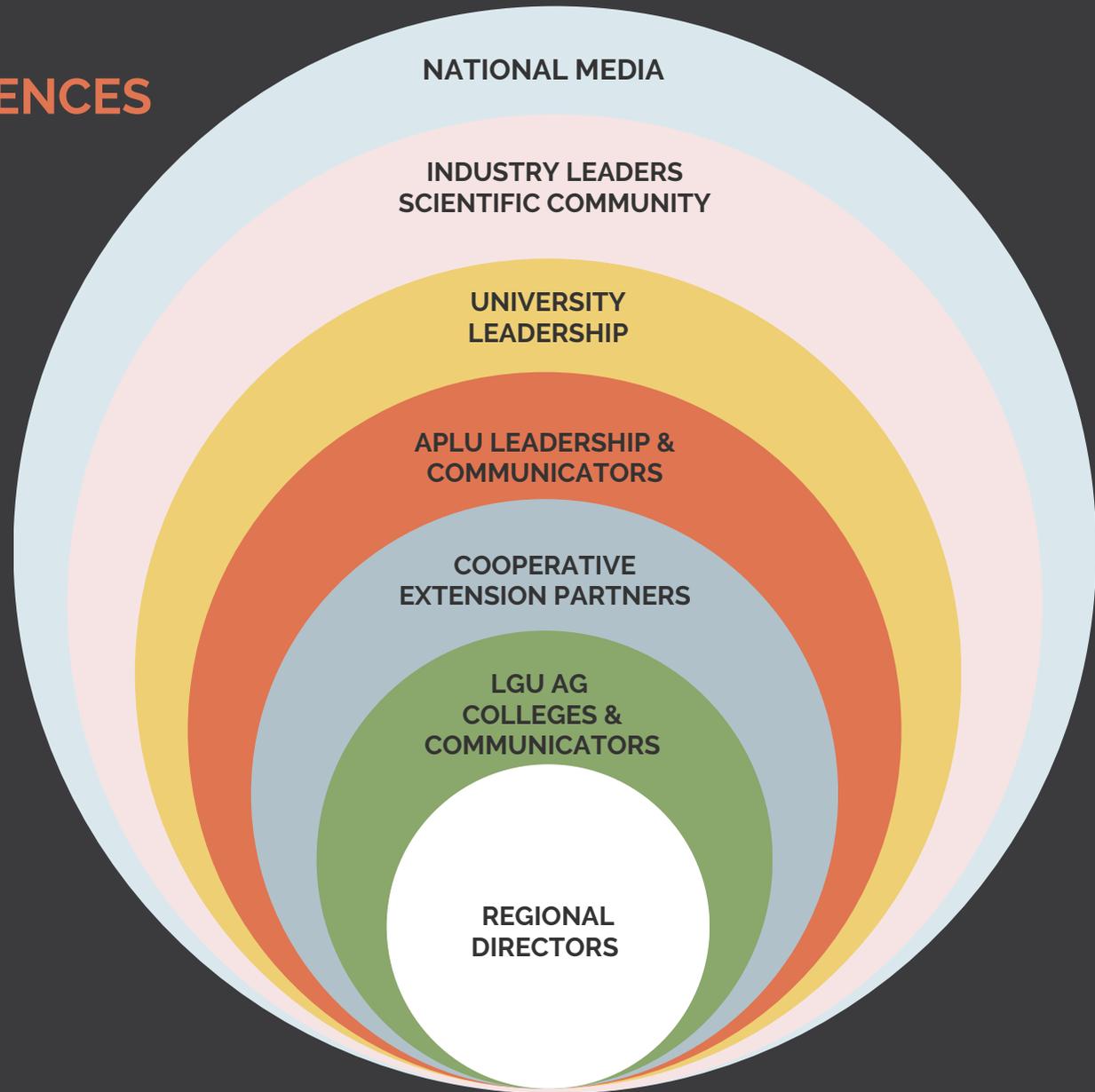
COMMUNICATING INTERNALLY, AND BEYOND

Prior to launching the rebrand globally, agInnovation needs to communicate within its own system and stakeholder audiences the merit of this rebrand so they can be better informed and more motivated to echo the news.

WE START WITH YOU!

agInnovation

KEY STAKEHOLDER AUDIENCES



agInnovation KEY STAKEHOLDERS

REBRAND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



agInnovation

REBRAND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN



STAKEHOLDERS 01

- Direct email outreach
- Engagement templates
 - Social media
 - Blogs
 - Newsletters
 - Press release

STAKEHOLDERS 02

- Direct email outreach highlighting purpose, process, and outcome to leaders and communicators
- Communicator-specific templates

STAKEHOLDERS 03

- Curated message for Cooperative Extension, and relation to agInnovation
- Collective impact
- How to work together
- Communicator-specific templates

STAKEHOLDERS 04

- Curated messaging to APLU leadership offices
- Focused direct messaging on impact of rebrand to APLU and partners

STAKEHOLDERS 05

- Curated messaging to leadership offices
- Press-release focused on impacts for university level

STAKEHOLDERS 06

- National press release
- Follow-up media interviews
- Focused industry messaging
 - templates for blogs, newsletters, journals

STAKEHOLDERS 07

- National press release
- Follow-up media interviews
- Focused industry messaging
 - templates for blogs, newsletters, journals

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REBRAND COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE



JULY 19

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Joint COPS Plan Presentation
Kansas City, MO



AUGUST '23

REGIONAL/LGU/EXTENSION

- Initiate personal outreach
- Send Comms tools
- Follow-up
- Send plan



SEPTEMBER '23

APLU/INSTITUTIONAL/INDUSTRY

- Initiate personal outreach
- Send Comms tools
- Follow-up
- Share partner content



OCTOBER '23

INDUSTRY/TRADE/SCIENTIFIC

- Initiate personal outreach
- Send Comms tools
- Follow-up
- Share partner content



NOVEMBER-DECEMBER '23

NATIONAL MEDIA

- National Press Release
- Follow-up with Directors
- Fill Blog with partner content

Sample Roll-out Plan.

REGIONAL agInnovation DIRECTORS & COMMUNICATIONS TEAMS



Communication Tools To Be Shared:

Personal email from Matt Wilson explaining the purpose, process, and desired outcomes of rebranding. The message will include instructions as to how best to share this information with colleagues and regional directors. Communications include:

- Executive Summary
- Key Talking points specifically for Regional Directors
- Sample Blog articles
- Sample social media posts
- Sample e-newsletter stories
- Sample Press release

Timeline:

- **July 19:** COPS Meeting, Kansas City: Present plan, remind of process, assets, purpose, and outcome
- **August 1-15:** Initiative communications to regional directors with all communication tools and templates listed above.
- **September 1-30:** Follow up with each to see if any information was used/shared. Use these posts/stories and share them on the agInnovation News feed
- **November 1-30:** Check in with directors for 2024 calendars and any upcoming events that should be communicated via agInnovation's news feed.



Tools & Templates!

To help us communicate the purpose of this initiative and how to share our new identity with others.



Brand Guidelines & ToolKit.



BRAND GUIDELINES



12

Primary Color Palette

Here are agInnovation's primary colors. Please note that while orange is one of agInnovation's core colors, it should only be used for non-textual elements such as lines and other decorative components. Use this brand guide as a reference for color styling.

NIGHT SKY
#0B124B



GRASS
#8DC63F



EARTH
#A07532



CLOUD
#F1F1F1



The screenshot shows the agInnovation website's 'Tools & Templates' page. At the top is the agInnovation logo and navigation menu. The main heading is 'Tools & Templates'. Below it, there is introductory text about the templates and a link to 'Brand Guidelines'. A large section titled 'AGINNOVATION BRAND GUIDELINES' features a thumbnail image of the tractor and a 'Download Logo Files' button. Below this is another 'Download Font Files' button. The bottom section is titled 'VIRTUAL BACKGROUNDS' and contains three thumbnails with buttons for 'VIRTUAL BACKGROUND CIRCUITS', 'VIRTUAL BACKGROUND GENERAL', and 'VIRTUAL BACKGROUND BASIC'.

Re-Brand Executive Summary.

RE-ENVISIONING THE ESS IDENTITY FOR GREATER IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

THE REBRANDING OF ESS-ESCOPE INTO AGINNOVATION

The Challenge

ReBranding a Historical Organization for Greater Impact

The Experiment Station Section has led global agricultural innovation for more than 160 years, however ESS and other Land-grant enterprises have recently experienced dwindling capital investment, waning public familiarity and support, and—despite consistent cutting-edge agricultural innovation and creativity—diminishing global agency.

The ESS brand has not been revisited in more than 50 years and the time is now for a new identity and fresh engagement strategy to match the organization's global reputation as leader in food system and ecosystem innovation.

The rebrand effort—ESS to agInnovation—follows industry trends and presents an ideal opportunity to recapture the country's attention and favor—endearing the public to the life-changing impacts of its research. With greater support from the general public and potential strategic partners, agInnovation will empower the next generation of global heroes. To achieve this lofty goal, agInnovation must be positioned as the global leader in agricultural research, innovation & discovery.

The Project

A New Identity for a New Era of Agriculture

In order to address the pain-points shared by the ESS-ESCOPE Rebranding Committee, the group set out to:

- Assess current digital persona and outreach efforts
- Develop an online presence that speaks clearly to an external audience.
- Modernize ESS's identity
- Move past outdated and stagnant branding and messaging
- Develop a modern and fresh voice and brand identity
- Establish a focused and cohesive direction for outreach
- Engage audiences who benefit from ag research, education and innovation

The New Identity

Fresh. Modern. Engaging...and Ready for the Future



ESS Brand & Digital Marketing Committee

Chris Pritsos, WAAESD
 Matt Wilson, NERA
 Leslie Edgar, WAAESD
 JF Meulenet, SAAESD
 Anton Bekkerman, NERA
 Tala Awada, NCRA
 George Smith, NCRA
 Marikis Alvarez, ARD
 Alton Thompson, ARD
 Bret Hess, WAAESD
 Jennifer Tippetts, WAAESD
 Rick Rhodes, NERA
 David Leibovitz, NERA
 Jeff Jacobsen, NCRA
 Chris Hamilton, NCRA
 Gary Thompson, SAAESD
 Cindy Morley, SAAESD

Who We Are

Rooted in history. Forging the future.

At its core, the Experiment Station Section is an amalgamation of scientists, laboratories, and dedicated research facilities housed within the Land-grant university ecosystem. This work is essential to the development of cutting edge agricultural research necessary to lead the world to better food, natural resource and ecosystem sustainability.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to promote and elevate agricultural research that improves lives and makes the world more food secure.

OUR VISION

Enhanced human and world well-being through agricultural innovation.

OUR VALUES

Collaborative
 Solution-oriented
 Impactful
 Global
 Innovative
 Science-based

Thanks to this work, ESS—now agInnovation—has a distinct and modern identity that reflects its global impact. Of even greater importance, agInnovation acts as a collective umbrella—finally enabling all five regional memberships (ARD, NCRA, NERA, SAAESD and WAESD) to be consolidated under one name.

See & Share Our Impact!

A New Digital Presence for a New Era of Ag

The agInnovation team—including brand experts and capacity builders PIVOT Creative & Consulting—collectively designed and developed a high performance website to generate more demand, engagement and interest.

The most important piece of the ESS to agInnovation rebrand is impact. Visitors will see maps that directly link viewers to the real, meaningful impacts of agricultural research. Ag research is not just something that happens in a lab—it changes real lives of real people for the better everyday. The new agInnovation website makes that connection directly and simply.



The ESS to agInnovation rebrand was a much-needed and timely effort to modernize the image of agriculture in the public eye. Making ag sexy again, to the next generation of scientists, educators, farmers and community members.

Today, with a strong brand identity and strategic communications plan, agInnovation stands out in a crowded, and often confusing, industry—positioning itself as the sophisticated and impactful global leader it has always been.

1890s Association
ARD



North Central Region
NCRA



Northeast Region
NERA



Southern Region
SAAESD



Western Region
WAAESD



Communication Templates.

- **Sample blog posts**
- **Sample press releases**
- **Sample social media content and copy**
- **Sample social media graphics**
- **Sample e-newsletter articles with visuals**
- **Branded Collateral**
 - Presentations
 - Social Media
 - Backgrounds
 - Event Announcements
 - So much more!

Next Steps Today and beyond...

- **WEBSITE IS LIVE! Please begin using it widely!**
 - Send us us your feedback!
- **Development of Supporting collateral- Available now!**
 - Digital Templates
 - Print Templates
 - Template presentations/Impact Statements/Program Ads
 - Template print materials (programs/ads/etc.)
- **Trademark Update - will know more in August 2023**
- **Execute Roll-out, socialization and deployment toolkit to 7 main audiences - Starting August 2023**
- **Socialization of new site with key stakeholders - Ongoing**
 - Receive feedback & make adjustments
- **Get busy sharing all of our amazing work!**



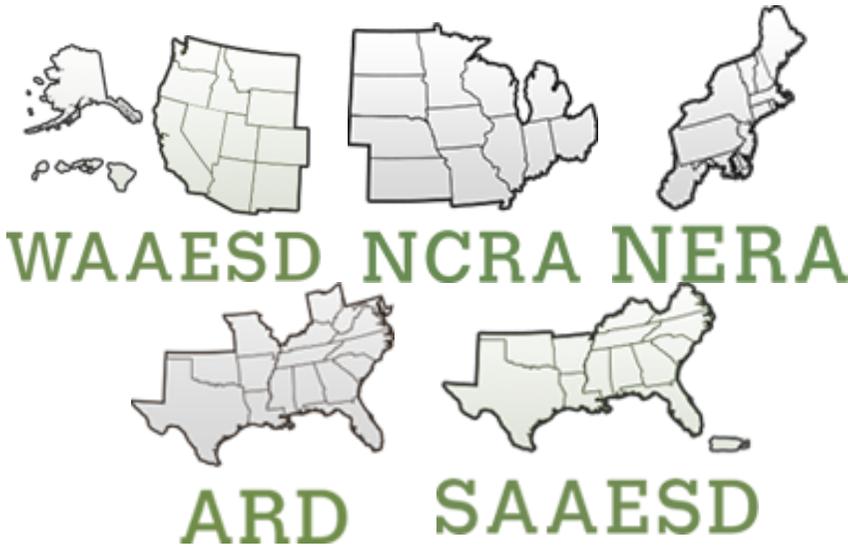
THANK YOU!

**Contact me anytime!
erica@pivotcandc.com**



The Goal.

- **Position AESs as the global leader in agricultural research, innovation & discovery.**
- **Create a modern and engaging website that encourages the general public to learn about our impact and work.**





The Timeline.

ESS Brand & Digital Marketing Committee

May- mid June 2022

Assessment, findings, discovery and initial brand development

August - October

Baltimore presentation & vote
Brand selection
Website content build-out
Socialization with ESS members
Trademark discovery
Committee refinement of brand
Committee website content discovery

Early 2023

Website Finalization & Launch
ESS-ESCOP training on site use
Development of supporting collateral as needed

August - December 2023

Roll-out of rebrand with 7 key stake holder audiences

June- August 2022

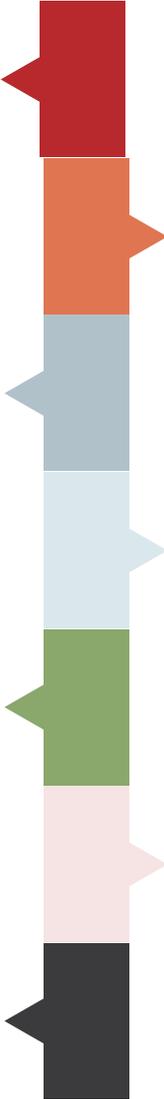
Joint COPS Presentation
Feedback Received from COPS
Further brand development
Brand guidance kit development

November - December

Brand finalization
Brand guidelines kit developed
Trademark application
Website build-out
Website testing

April - July 2023

Website Discovery/testing
Develop Public & Institutional Rollout Plan
Design Brand Guidelines and Print/Digital Templates



Internal vs Impact.

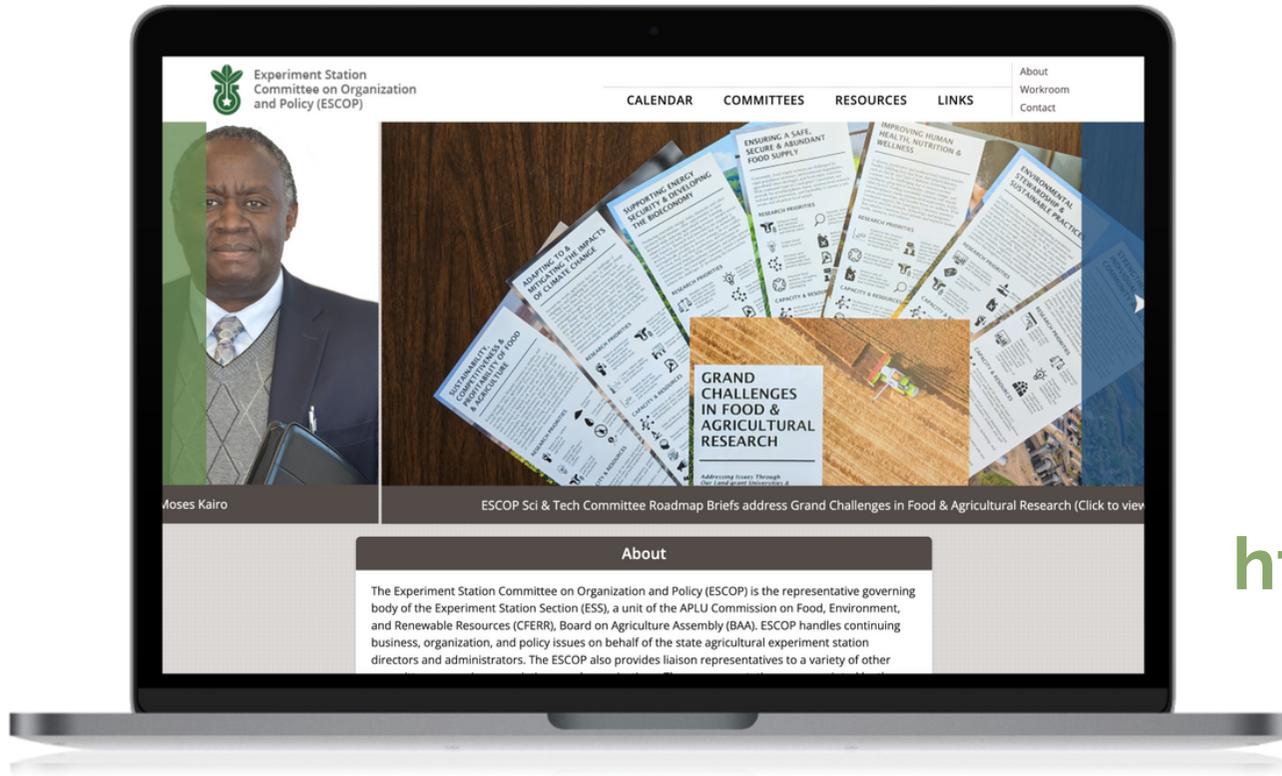
Our current interfaces are designed for internal audiences

Mark/Logo

Internal Website Landing Page



Experiment Station
Committee on Organization
and Policy (ESCOP)



<http://escop.info/>

The Team.

ESS Brand & Digital Marketing Committee

Chris Pritsos, University of Nevada, Reno, WAAESD

Matt Wilson, West Virginia University, NERA

Leslie Edgar, New Mexico State University, WAAESD

JF Meullenet, University of Arkansas, SAAESD

Anton Bekkerman, University of New Hampshire, NERA

Tala Awada, University of Nebraska, NCRA

George Smith, Michigan State University, NCRA

Marikis Alvarez, Delaware State University, ARD

Alton Thompson, ARD

Bret Hess, WAAESD

Jennifer Tippetts, WAAESD

Rick Rhodes, NERA

David Leibovitz, NERA

Jeff Jacobsen, NCRA

Chris Hamilton, NCRA

Gary Thompson, SAAESD

Cindy Morley, SAAESD

*** Joint COPS and ESS Directors
presented to in Baltimore, 2022.**

**VOTED & APPROVED by Joint COPS
September 2022**



Conceptual New Regional Identities?

