


*Reducing the  
impact of disaster*



*As long as communities are affected by disasters, people need resources for disaster education. As the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) looks to the future, its overarching goal is to improve the nation's ability to mitigate, prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from disasters. EDEN's land-grant university members want to strengthen Extension's capacity and commitment to address disaster issues and to be the premier national provider of research-based disaster education.*



# RESOURCES



EDEN's mission is to reduce  
the impact of disasters  
through research-based education.



## About EDEN

Disasters of all sizes and kinds pose a continual threat to communities. While these disasters cannot always be prevented, people can reduce their impact—and that's the goal of EDEN.

EDEN's goal is to use education to reduce the impact of disaster. Because the impact of all disasters is local, the network gives county-based educators the tools they need to help communities and individuals prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters.



More than 200 EDEN delegates with expertise in more than 75 different disciplines represent member institutions from land-grant universities in every state and territory. One delegate from each member institution serves as the institution's point of contact. EDEN delegates contribute to network discussions on disaster needs and issues from their institutions' perspectives. In turn, they serve as liaisons, not only between the network and their institutions, but also between their institutions and other local, state, and federal agencies—adding depth and breadth to Extension's overall capacity to serve in a disaster education-related role. Credit for much of EDEN's success goes to these delegates from around the country who incorporate EDEN service into their already-busy schedules.

EDEN's growth from a North Central Region group in 1993 to today's national organization, including the sea grant system (2007), testifies to the value of the network and its place in local programming. Only since 2002 has EDEN invested in staff support (four part-time, one full-time for approximately 2.5 FTEs) dedicated to its work.






## EDEN'S Beginning

EDEN was conceived and developed as a direct result of lessons learned by Extension's work before, during, and after the catastrophic Mississippi and Missouri river floods of 1993. The major lessons learned from those floods were:

- Devastated states lack the capacity and resources to effectively deal with the magnitude of requests for expertise, recommendations, technical assistance, community planning, and recovery information.
- Various emergency response agencies need to make more coordinated and standardized recovery recommendations.
- The land-grant system can be a tremendous asset to the emergency management community.



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- Extension programming is locally driven and, in many counties, Extension plays an educational role in emergency management.
  - Citizens rely on Extension for resources and expertise related to disaster preparedness, mitigation, and recovery. However, individual states lack the capacity, research-based information, and expertise to address the multitude of issues and needs resulting from a major disaster.
  - Long-term community recovery efforts rest with three key groups or agencies: local government organizations, volunteer organizations, and Extension. These three remain in communities long after the initial response and the disaster fade from national news.

Following the 1993 floods, EDEN rewrote Extension professionals' plan for sharing disaster educational information. As the network formed and gathered more information, the Web site became a place to share resources. The growing grassroots network gave educators quick and easy access to experts and needed materials, thus saving precious moments at times when information dissemination was critical.

Three years after the Mississippi and Missouri river floods, EDEN held its first annual meeting in Minneapolis. The following year, Extension staff outside the North Central Region participated in the New Orleans meeting, and EDEN began to evolve into a national network. By 2005, all 50 states and three U.S. territories had institutional memberships.

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# EXTENSION

# EDEN Succeeds by

- ◉ **Managing a network** that Extension and Sea Grant directors and administrators from all 50 states and three U.S. territories see as vital to their local programming efforts. Delegates stay in contact throughout the year, discussing disaster needs and issues from their institutions' perspectives.

Resources and projects result directly from these network discussions. In addition, the network plays a crucial role in identifying and developing just-in-time resources when a disaster occurs.

- ◉ **Maintaining a Web site** that includes information on pertinent issues and topics, learning opportunities, and a database of cataloged resources from member institutions. Today, the EDEN Web site represents 15 years of collaboration and stands as a portal to research-based information that has been collected and organized based on local, state, regional, and national needs. Available materials span topics that include natural, agricultural, animal, family, community, and human health hazards and threats.

- ◉ **Developing a professional organizational structure** where delegates share educational materials and expertise. An executive committee oversees the overall direction of the network. This committee includes a chair, chair-elect, secretary, chairs of all standing committees, representatives from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), and additional representatives if necessary. The committee has representation from the northeast, south, north central and west regions; 1890 institutions; and sea grant institutions.







# EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

- **Building external partnerships with agencies and organizations.** Working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), EDEN co-authored the Pandemic Preparedness for Faith-Based Organizations. Another successful partnership is with the Department of Homeland Security Preparedness Division to develop media messages relating to school, business, multicultural awareness, and family preparedness for National Preparedness Month.

- **Leading eXtension's Disaster Issues Community of Practice.** This community, established in 2006 and publicly launched in 2008, provides common ground where EDEN delegates and others with disaster-related expertise work together to deliver disaster education directly to the public. While the community initially focused on agrosecurity and flooding, content expands as new work teams are organized.

- **Collaborating** with county and state emergency managers; state departments of agriculture and health; non-governmental organizations, such as Red Cross; and other disaster education entities. State and local collaborations help disseminate a consistent disaster message while enhancing each entity's ability to reach all citizens.

*Since the regional incubation in 1993, EDEN has grown to a nationwide system, with an administrative structure, operational guidelines, and a linkage system with every land-grant university.*

*~ Team member of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) [now National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)] during 2008 formal review of EDEN*

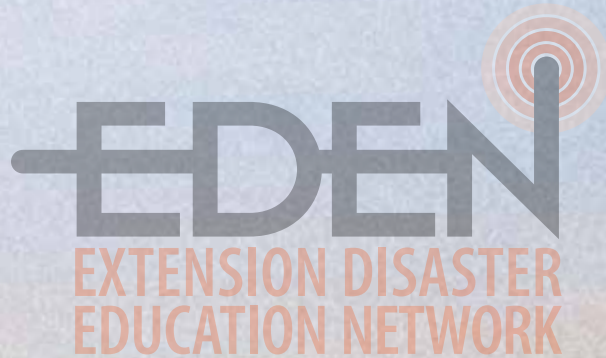
# When our nation faces a cri

## *September 11, 2001*

One of EDEN's first organizational responses came on the morning of 9/11. Within minutes of the Twin Towers' collapse, members were sharing information on how to talk to children about terrorism. By the end of the day, more than 24,000 teachers and childcare providers had downloaded this valuable information and handed it out to parents. In the following weeks, EDEN delegates developed informational Web pages on terrorism and agroterrorism as Americans began asking questions about these issues.



sis, EDEN steps up to help.



### ***BSE—Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy***

Remember December 23, 2003? A cow in Washington tested positive for BSE, consumers drastically reduced their beef purchases, and the cattle industry strove to keep from experiencing negative impacts like those felt by the sheep and cattle industries in the United Kingdom a few years earlier. EDEN delegates quickly came together to provide research-based information about BSE. The BSE–Mad Cow Disease issue page was created as a resource for Extension educators to use with their various audiences.







## *Hurricane Katrina*

When Katrina hit in the fall of 2005, Extension was poised to help with recovery. Through EDEN, Extension supported relief agencies that filled the immediate needs of the people. In many cases, Extension educators and county staff brought together the networking resources that outside agencies needed, but had no other way of getting quickly. Extension was poised to help with recovery because EDEN training provided delegates with information on previous lessons learned. Extension gathered resources and made connections for agricultural producers, small business owners, families, stranded pets, and many others.

Beyond the basic needs of survival and safety, residents needed information on what to do about flooded homes, food safety, crop damage, lost records, fallen trees, generators, and so much more. As an organization, EDEN delegates contributed hundreds of documents with information to meet those needs, and EDEN communicators compiled and shared that information with the most affected states.

*As a state Extension specialist for family and child development in Louisiana, EDEN provided a way for me to find disaster recovery resources to provide to our field faculty for community response and eventually recovery efforts, even while I was myself evacuated to north Louisiana and away from my Baton Rouge office.*

*~ Becky White, Professor and Extension Specialist, Family & Child Development, LSU AgCenter*

## *Influenza*

An outbreak of H1N1 Flu (swine flu) was first detected in Mexico in 2009 and rapidly spread to the United States. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency for this influenza virus on April 26. EDEN responded. Delegates identified resources, indicated cautionary steps their institutions were taking, described state-specific resources, and detailed unmet needs. They compiled these resources, made them accessible on the EDEN Web site, and linked to the Disaster Issues page on eXtension.





## PARTNERING



## Support and Partnerships

To build on lessons learned from the 1993 flood recovery, CSREES initially provided \$80,000 in funding that Extension professionals used to formally develop EDEN as an organization. Since then, CSREES has continued to support EDEN's coordination and communications, Web development and maintenance, curriculum development, training, resources development, special needs grants regarding emergency management, and other disaster-related work.

*EDEN member institutions pay no dues or assessments, but are asked to designate and support at least one representative to participate in network efforts.*

*By conservative estimates, the EDEN network saves land-grant universities about \$1.2 million in staff time per year.*

EDEN is uniquely positioned to provide educational assistance to communities as they deal with long-term recovery issues. Plus, Extension does a great job of partnering with others to facilitate the education of community individuals and organizations to be more prepared for disasters.

~ Kevin Cox, Hope Crisis Response Network

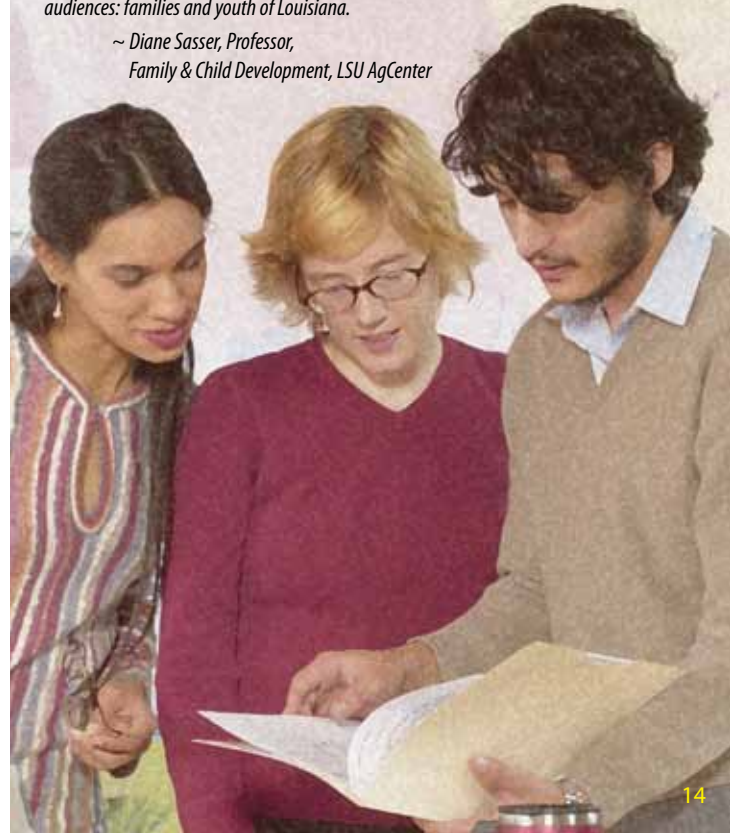


Since the beginning, EDEN has developed formal and informal partnerships with a variety of agencies and organizations to carry out its mission of reducing the impact of natural and manmade disasters by sharing educational resources. Partners include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Protection
- ▶ Department of Health and Human Services
- ▶ Department of Homeland Security
- ▶ Federal Emergency Management Agency
- ▶ National Center for Foreign and Zoonotic Animal Disease Defense, Texas A&M
- ▶ National Center for Food Protection and Defense, University of Minnesota
- ▶ National Plant Diagnostic Network
- ▶ National Weather Service
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture
- ▶ National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

*My counterparts in other states associated through EDEN contacted me immediately after the storms with packets of materials, lesson plans, etc. Letters and e-mails accompanying the wealth of information typically contained the lines "I know you are probably overwhelmed right now, having been there myself. I'm sending what helped us to help our audiences." It was like Christmas in the summer! Their willingness to share and come to our aid so quickly helped direct our focus along the right path to best help our audiences: families and youth of Louisiana.*

*~ Diane Sasser, Professor,  
Family & Child Development, LSU AgCenter*



This conference . . . has shown us what we can achieve by working together to create something that is truly beyond borders ...

~ Shany Silinski, Executive Director Manitoba Farm Animal Council  
(North Central EDEN Regional Animal Agrosecurity Conference participant)

## Resources for Members and Responders

- **Online Learning Opportunities**—EDEN online learning opportunities range from plant and animal biosecurity to business preparedness and pandemic preparedness for the faith-based community. Each is geared toward equipping Extension professionals to teach targeted audiences.



- **Regional Conferences**—Starting in 2007, selected EDEN member institutions hosted regional conferences to explore and explain EDEN's role in animal agrosecurity and food protection and defense.

PRIVATE - KEEP OUT  
TRESPASSING AND  
LOITERING - FORBIDDEN  
BY LAW  
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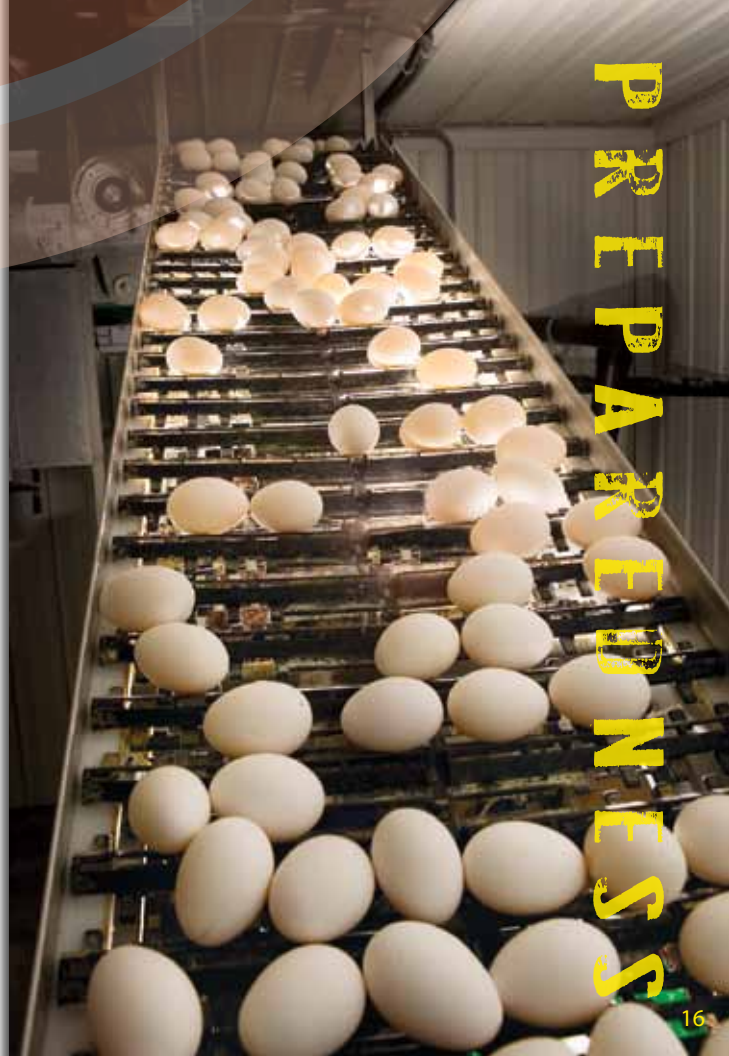
- Strike Teams**—EDEN organizes multi-institutional teams that prepare, and prepare to provide, information and resources for anticipated disasters. Initial strike teams included avian influenza, and food and agricultural defense.



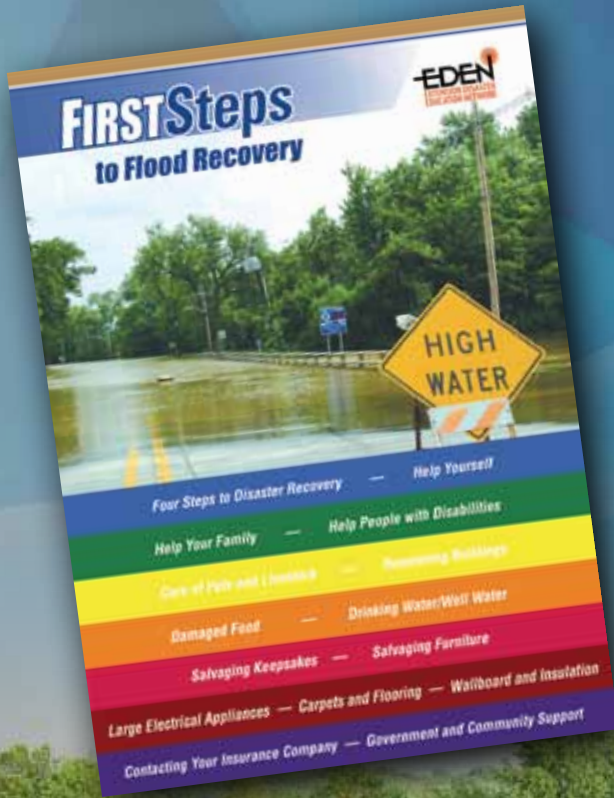
- S-CAP—Strengthening Community Agrosecurity Planning.** S-CAP is a NIFA-funded program through EDEN. Its objective is to research and develop a model toolbox to assist Extension educators to help counties develop an agriculture emergency annex to their county emergency operations plan.

*Thank you for all the expertise brought to us – opening our minds and giving us a perspective on what could happen in our communities and our county and what we need to do to prepare for any kind of accident or disaster.*

*~ Pilot S-CAP workshop participant*







## Extension's Role in Disaster Education

- **Mitigation**—Helping communities learn how to identify and reduce risks, connecting agencies that address those risks.
- **Preparation**—Helping communities prepare for imminent disasters through communication and education.
- **Response**—Working in partnership with other responding agencies to assess damage.
- **Recovery**—Working toward long-term recovery and a return to a state of normalcy through committees and one-on-one work with individuals.



# EXTENSION DISASTER EDUCATION NETWORK

[www.EDEN.lsu.edu](http://www.EDEN.lsu.edu)

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