



Lee Ann Clark  
County Extension Coordinator  
News Release

## **Groundbreaking Web Site New Resource for Consumers**

Auburn, Ala. – The Alabama Cooperative Extension System and its two land-grant universities, Alabama A&M and Auburn, are key partners in a groundbreaking new Web site, eXtension.org, being launched this week.

eXtension.org, will be a gateway to answering many of life’s little questions – from parenting to saving and investing, entrepreneurship and vegetable gardens. The brains behind eXtension.org are university faculty and researchers at land-grant institutions across the nation as well as field staff working with state Extension services.

The new Web site is a sort of “next-gen Google,” where people can find information on a wide range of topics. If consumers can’t find the information they are looking for, they can submit questions to experts through the Web site.

Dr. Gaines Smith, director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, calls eXtension.org a revolutionary step for Cooperative Extension.

“eXtension.org is transforming individual Extension services in states across the country into a cohesive and seamless information resource for people everywhere,” says Smith. “Consumers have questions at all times of the day—not just when the county Extension office is open. eXtension.org provides them access to reliable information based on sound science.”

eXtension offers credible expertise; reliable answers based on sound research; connections to the best minds in American universities; creative solutions to today's complex challenges; customized answers to specific needs; trustworthy, field-tested data; and dynamic, relevant and timely answers. All resources are free.

Consumers will find the site easy to navigate. eXtension currently has 16 resource areas called Communities of Practice. Each is typically a multi-institutional, multistate and multidisciplinary group that brings the "best of the best" educational resources to the public.

Professionals with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System are leaders in a number of these communities, including cotton, imported fire ants, caregiving, parenting, and youth science, engineering and technology. Alabama Extension professionals are also lending their expertise to the communications and information technology aspects of eXtension.org.

Not only does eXtension.org bring consumers the best knowledge from the sharpest minds in higher education, it also enhances the learning experience by using the most innovative and advanced features available on the Web. Users can rate eXtension.org articles based on their usefulness, with the “most useful” articles ranking the highest on searches. If an article does not answer a user’s question, he or she has the option to “Ask an Expert.”

*For more information on this new website, please contact Lee Ann Clark, County Extension Coordinator at the St. Clair County office- (205)338-9416 or email at [clarkla@auburn.edu](mailto:clarkla@auburn.edu).*

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