

## **Talking Points for Proposed Budget Cuts to College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences (CAES)**

March 1, 2010

Background – the university system has been ordered to find \$300M in additional cuts beyond those already enacted. The UGA portion of this is \$60M. UGA Administration had less than 48 hrs to develop this plan. This is NOT a budget plan but rather a reaction to the request by the legislature.

Below are some talking point to use in talking with legislators concerning the cuts to the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) budget.

### **Guidelines:**

1. Begin with how you use the College of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service. Include examples such as:
  - CAES supports the largest industry in GA - agriculture.
  - Agriculture is decentralized and we are the research (Experiment Station) and training (Cooperative Extension) arms of the industry.
  - GA agriculture is predicted to continue to grow, but only if we remain competitive by being on the cutting edge of technology and implementation.
  - Our programs bring measurable added value to Georgia's economy and quality of life, providing a stronger, more competitive agricultural industry, needed education for families and proven youth development programs that help Georgia's young people succeed in life.
2. Indicate that the College of Agriculture has been cutting budgets for the past two years. The current round of reductions are beyond the pale of anything ever seen to date, or anywhere else in the U.S. For example, Cooperative Extension will have been reduced by more than 51% if the current recommendations are implemented.
3. Over the past two years CAES administrators have streamlined the organization as tightly as they can without losing people and increasing the impact of unemployment on the state and total loss of services to citizens. Further cuts will have to mean people and loss of service including the ability to meet student

- needs, produce research results in a timely fashion and deliver service to local communities who are depending on the CAES now more than ever.
4. These are permanent losses. Agricultural research can't be stopped and started. Cutting these programs will mean permanent loss of the benefits those projects would produce.
  5. These are vital programs that Georgians depend on. These are programs that affect the livelihoods of one in every six Georgians. They are also programs that affect the quality of life for millions more. These cuts will be felt in local communities and Georgia's agricultural industry. They will have long-term impact on our ability to sustain a profitable, viable, competitive agricultural industry. They will hamper CAES's ability to prepare and train the largest segment of Georgia's workforce. They will limit the support the College can give to emerging sectors like biofuel development, water protection, sustainable crops and food, and further development of environmental stewardship practices.
  6. Further cuts of this magnitude will mean CAES will have to eliminate crucial services, stop important research programs and jeopardize jobs. All of these essential elements are needed to meet the growing demand for increased food, fiber and fuel production. These are permanent losses that cannot be restored when the economic outlook improves.
  7. The return on the investment made in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences by other agencies, commodity commissions, corporations and agribusinesses is extremely high. Every dollar invested in CAES saves taxpayers dollars in the long run. CAES returns \$3 for every \$1 invested in Georgia counties. For every \$1 of state funds in the Research budget, CAES generates an additional \$.83 from contracts and grants, federal and other funds. For every \$1 invested in Cooperative Extension, CAES generates \$1.40 in county, federal and other funds.