Introduction
The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and its land-grant partners recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion in the development and implementation of Extension programs. These Extension programs must be handled in a manner that treats every customer and employee with fairness, equality, and respect. This applies to all aspects of the Extension programs including identifying needs, setting priorities, allocating resources, selecting and assigning staff, conducting programs, and getting feedback.

Purpose and Relevant Legislation
The USDA Civil Rights regulations require NIFA to determine whether recipient institutions comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions contained therein. To implement these provisions, State Extension services and USDA are required to carry out regular compliance review inspections designed to measure the overall status of compliance of Extension recipients. The reviews will focus on those aspects that are covered by the Federal statutes prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, and disability.

USDA Civil Rights compliance reviews are conducted consistent with the following major statutes and Departmental Regulations:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990,
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975,
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,

Each State Extension institution is responsible for establishing internal policies and guidelines to ensure that Extension programs and operations do not discriminate and that research projects and activities are done without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Land Grant and other institutions are expected to have available the appropriate documentation, records, and source of information related to the items included in this guide.

Commitment to Civil Rights

Cooperative Extension is committed to the realization of the spirit and letter of federal and state civil rights law and regulations. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent legislation prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

The kinds of discrimination prohibited by Delaware Cooperative Extension policy are those that occur on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national or ethnic origin; physical, mental or sensory disability; marital status, sexual orientation and status as a Vietnam-era or disabled veteran.
The Smith-Lever Act and subsequent amendments dictate that Cooperative Extension programs be designed to serve all the people. This includes all socio-economic classes as well as the protected classes identified in civil rights laws and regulations.

This document outlines the policies and procedures Delaware Cooperative Extension will follow in order to fulfill the intent and requirements of civil rights laws and regulations. The policies that follow provide for the guidelines and support that notion that all paid and volunteer employees are expected to:

- Avoid discriminatory exclusion in both the workforce and program participation.
- Re-mediate situations in which there is under-utilization or under-representation resulting from prior discrimination.

In general, to fulfill these expectations, all paid and volunteer employees are expected to make all reasonable efforts to encourage people from underrepresented groups to seek employment in Cooperative Extension and to participate in programs. All reasonable efforts include:

- Creating awareness (e.g. notification of opportunity by direct contact, mailings and mass media),
- Assuring access (e.g. appropriate selection of time and location for events; preventing inappropriate pre-employment inquiries),
- Providing utility (e.g. offering programs of interest to the targeted audience; using only bona fide occupational qualifications to evaluate candidates).

This document is organized by areas of knowledge as outlined by Civil Rights Review Guide for Extension programs as developed by USDA. Each area addresses a different theme that will need to be addressed, planned for and evaluated for effectiveness. For each policy area the theme is identified, the rationale is given, the procedures to ensure compliance are provided and subsequent appendixes are identified that provide additional resources.

The areas are as follows:

1: Knowledge of Laws, Rules, and Regulations and Staff Training
2. Extension Staff Member Assignments
3. Advisory Committees, Boards and Other Relevant Committees
4. Procedure for Processing Program and Employment Discrimination Complaints
5. Statewide Equal Opportunity/Diversity Plan
6. Accessibility for the Disabled
7. Program Areas (State and Local)
8. Extension Program Participation Data
9. Public Notification
10. Mailing Lists (Electronic and Non-Electronic)
11. Title IX Non-Discrimination On the Basis of Sex
12: Internal Compliance Reviews
13. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
14. Ongoing Administration of Programs and Interaction of 1862 and Other Minority Land-Grant Institutions

All personnel are expected to read and understand the content of this handbook. A summary of activities that front line Extension employees can use to ensure compliance is listed in Appendix I: Suggested Affirmative Action Activities for Extension Personnel. It is expected that all Extension employees have the knowledge and commitment to comply with the federal laws and regulations as well as the Extension and University policies under which we work.