A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CROP AND SOIL SCIENCES

VISION:
The **Department of Crop and Soil Sciences** will continue to be recognized by its clientele*, partners, colleagues, and policy-makers as a leading authority in the crop, soil, and environmental sciences and a respected provider of leading edge technology and science-based knowledge.

MISSION:
The mission of the **Department of Crop and Soil Sciences** is to provide quality education in the basic and applied sciences as they relate to crops, turf, and soils; to seek, verify and apply knowledge related to agriculture and the environment.

More specifically, the purpose of the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences is to:

- Provide baccalaureate and graduate education in crop, soil, and environmental sciences that prepares students to effectively contribute and excel in a global community.
- Inquire into the nature of crops, soils, and the environment, through scientific discovery of new knowledge, and to apply that knowledge in sustaining environmental quality and enhancing the viability of agricultural systems.
- Serve the public through timely technology development and education of producers, consumers, policy makers, and agribusiness using relevant, accurate and unbiased information.

VALUES
The **Department of Crop and Soil Sciences** shares the values of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences:

Communication

We have a responsibility to communicate useful, research-based information. We listen to our clientele and value their input.

Cooperation and Respect

We value the contributions of each individual. We believe diversity in people and ideas is a strength. We value cooperative efforts.

Economic and Environmental Focus

We strive to strengthen the economic future of Georgia agriculture and to protect and conserve the natural resources.

Excellence

We strive for excellence in our work. We value creativity, originality and innovation in the pursuit of knowledge and service.

Integrity and Accountability

Our credibility, objectivity and honesty must be beyond reproach. We seek to interpret and deliver unbiased, relevant information effectively and quickly.

*Our clientele=farmers, agri-industry, environmental interests, food processors, consumers, urban interests, educational interests, governmental agencies, financial institutions, general public, and wholesale/retail trade.

Quality Education

We are dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for youth, adults and families in the classroom and the community.

The Vision to Lead

We are committed to shaping the future. We accept our role to provide leadership and to develop leaders in the agricultural and environmental community.

ISSUE 1. Communication to fit Clientele Needs

Communication is the single greatest bridge between the department and our clientele. We must excel in transferring the unbiased research-based information.

STRATEGIES:

1. Continue traditional communication strategies.
- *a. one-on-one and group meetings*
- *b. publications and mass media*

2. Utilize electronic technology..
- *a. distance learning technology*
- *b. internet*

3. Develop partnerships with other universities and public, private and international agencies.

4. Seek advisory feed-back from public, private and international agencies.

ISSUE 2. Clientele competitiveness and profitability

The market-place competitiveness of the Georgia farmer is dependent on the efficiency of crop production systems and the profitability of the on-farm management strategies. Systems need to be developed that decrease input costs and reduce on farm production risks. The production risks can be reduced with diversification and improved management systems.

STRATEGIES:

1. Develop best management practices for agronomic crops

2 Develop value added crops (e.g. neutraceuticals, pharmaceuticals and improved oil, protein, starch, and fiber quality.

3. Develop products for tomorrow's customers (e.g. improved crop varieties, software programs, new and emerging crops).

4) Develop production systems and technology (e.g. tillage and irrigation).

ISSUE 3. Natural resource management for sustainability

Challenges facing agriculture today are daunting with world population projected to double in the next 40 years and most of the arable land already under cultivation. Each year we see a greater strain on the supply of food, feed, and fiber. Georgia is a key contributor to the success of American agriculture which is the envy of the world. However, in order to sustain high levels of production and ensure a healthy environment, agriculture will have to be both profitable and environmentally sound. Our instruction, research, and public service programs must be structured to foster the twin goals of enhanced production and natural resource preservation and nurture the system that is socially acceptable and in the public good. The Agricultural Sciences are poised with the tools and knowledge that, with prudent investment, can be used to meet these challenges. Modern technology is revolutionizing agriculture. There are major gains to be made in productivity, biological diversity, and natural resource stewardship.

STRATEGIES:

1. Develop basic concepts and transfer information for:

-----land use planning

-----water management
-----soil quality management
-----waste recycling.
------energy conservation and biomass production and conservation
2. Cultivar development for resource conservation.
3. Develop strategies for ecosystem restoration and management (e.g. vegetation management for rights-of-way and wildlife habitats.

ISSUE 4. Development, evaluation, and delivery of technologies
The technologies currently being developed will increase the rate of change in agriculture over the next decade, will enhance our capabilities as custodians of the environment and will help us be better communicators of unbiased information to our clientele.

STRATEGIES:
1. Develop and utilize molecular and genomic technologies that exacerbate the development of value-enhanced crop and turf cultivars.
2. Develop and utilize spatial and information transfer technology.
3. Form partnerships with industry and public, private, and international agencies.

ISSUE 5. Partnership development to enhance our mission
Two way street–what can we do for our partners –what can they do for us and the ethics of partnerships.

STRATEGIES:
Evaluate
1. Evaluate existing partnerships.
2. Develop new partnerships with:
----industry
----universities
---- regional, national and international public and private agencies

ISSUE 6. Recruit, retain, and educate students to meet the present and future needs of clients in a rapidly changing world
The educational programs in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences must be attractive to the students, must fulfill the needs of the students, and must prepare the students to meet the needs of employers in Georgia and throughout the world. The needs of students, as they prepare for careers as contributing members of society, and the needs of employers in Georgia are the bases upon which the educational programs in our department will be built. It is recognized that student needs are constantly changing and that educational programs must be dynamic.

STRATEGIES:
1. Quality teaching will be a major objective.
2. Construct courses and curricula to best meet the needs of our students and optimize the educational environment.
3. Enhance efforts in promotion of programs and recruitment of superior students.

4. *Enhance awareness of diversity and support for students from under represented groups.*
5. *Enhance quality and support of graduate training.*