

“Experiences from an Extension Post Doc: learning to bring the research into the real world”

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In agricultural research, we are often taught to seek the knowledge of the unknown, to ask complex questions, to dig deeper into the intricacies of the science. It is easy to wander down the rabbit hole and lose sight of how the science fits into the real world. At land-grant institutions, agricultural Extension focuses on extending the reach of scientific discovery into the public sector through grower education and applied research. As an Extension Post Doc at Iowa State University, I was mentored through the process of learning to translate research results into practical, applied solutions for agricultural production systems. It was there where I learned how to develop materials and presentations to effectively communicate the science, and how to engage with growers, industry professionals, and agricultural stakeholders. As a result, my post doc training has enhanced my ability to translate applied research questions into applied research solutions, and has allowed me to develop skills that I can carry with me into my professional life.