

Tomorrow's Horticulturalists: Who Will Teach Them and How Will They Learn?

Mary Peet

North Carolina State University

March 19, 2009

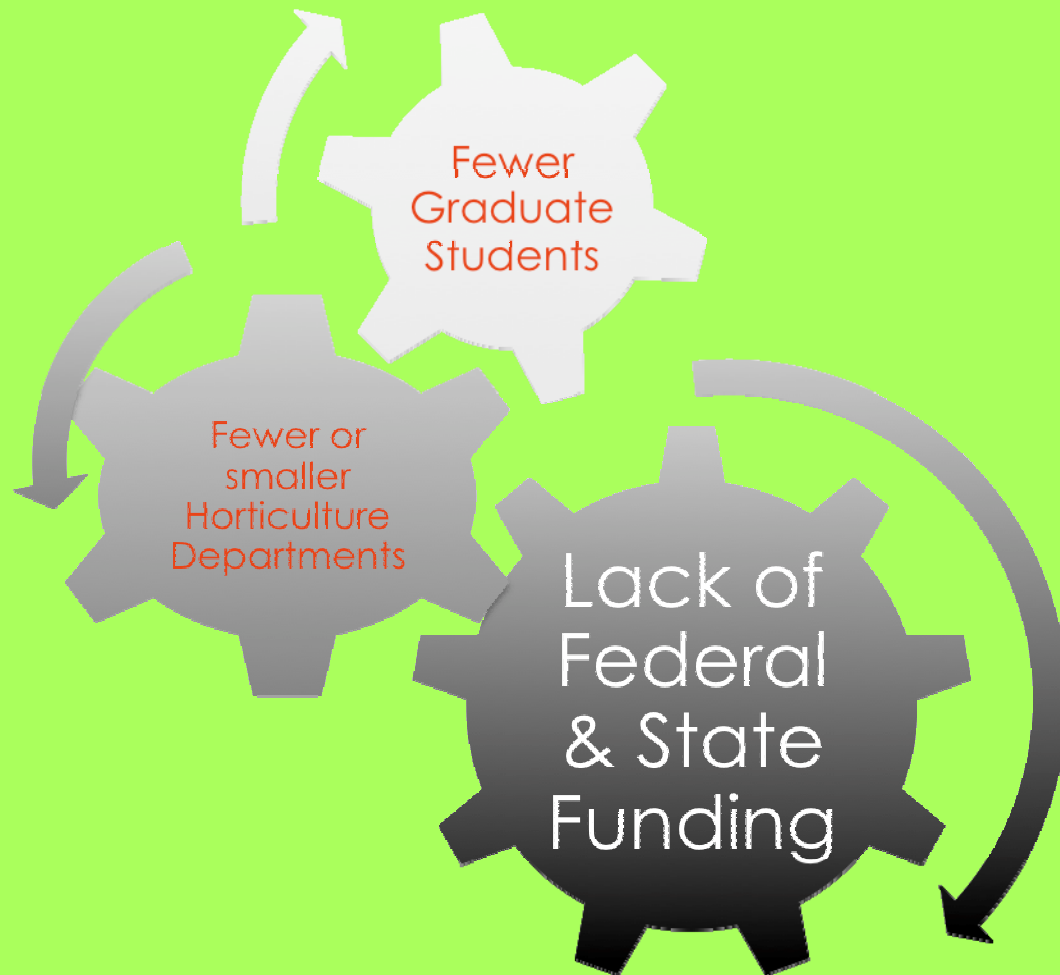
Crystal City, Virginia

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

My background:

- Degrees in Biology, Botany and Plant Physiology and 5 year post-doc in Botany at Duke University.
- 29 years at NCSU in Hort. Science
- Teaching, research, extension
- DE coordinator for Department
- Teach 2 courses, 1 DE
- Immediate Past-President, American Society for Horticultural Science

ASHS Concerns



ASHS Concerns

Fewer
and
smaller
Hort
Depts.



Demographics
(retirements)



Reduced
courses,
mentoring
advising for
all students

T(H)ARP PROGRAM

- TROUBLED (HORTICULTURAL) ASSETS RECOVERY PROGRAM



Positive Trends

- Specialty Crops Research Initiative
- Economic stimulus programs
- More appreciation for broad-based, applied research
- Interest in where food comes from and how produced (speaker requests)
 - Local (home garden)
 - organic
- Opportunities to recruit students

T(H)ARP Components

- Increase Undergrad Enrollment

- Recruitment and partnering with community colleges

- On-campus recruiting

- DE courses to non-traditional audiences

- Increase/maintain courses?

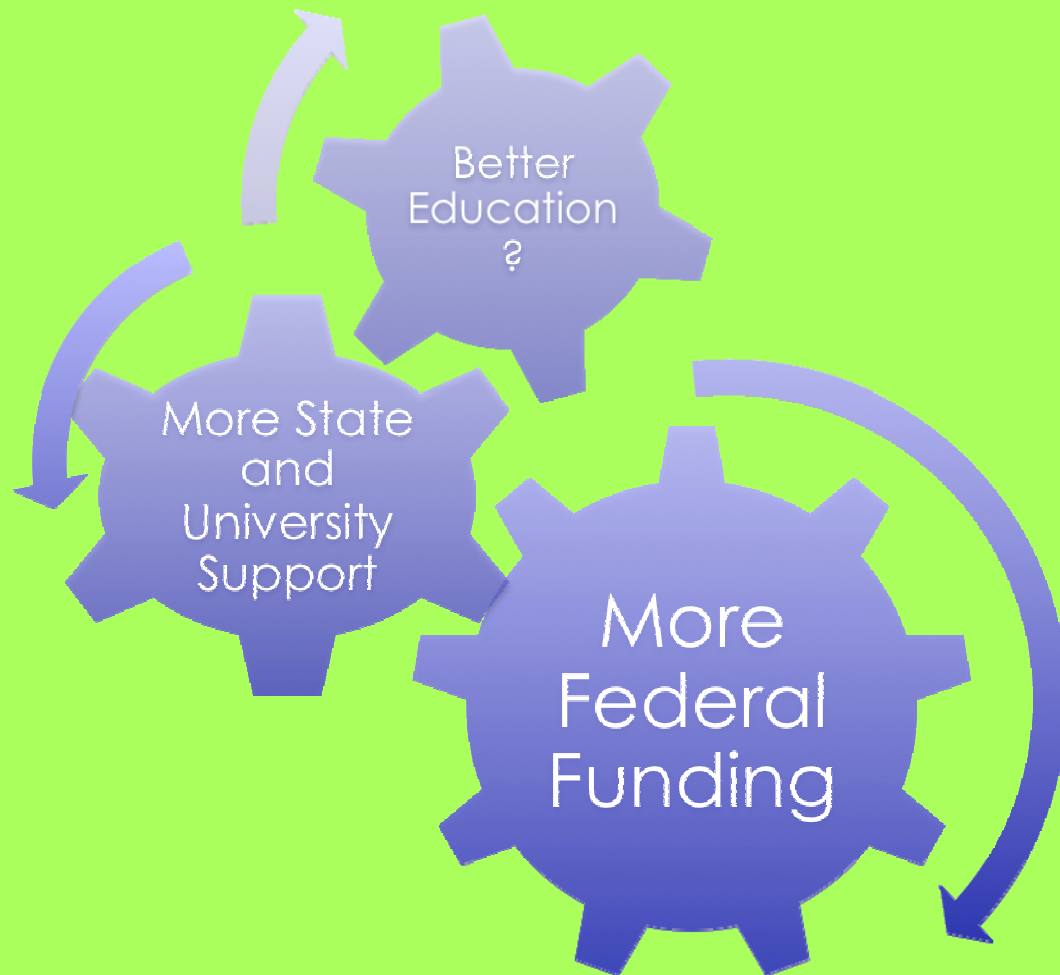
Fewer and smaller
Dept.

Demographics
(retirements)

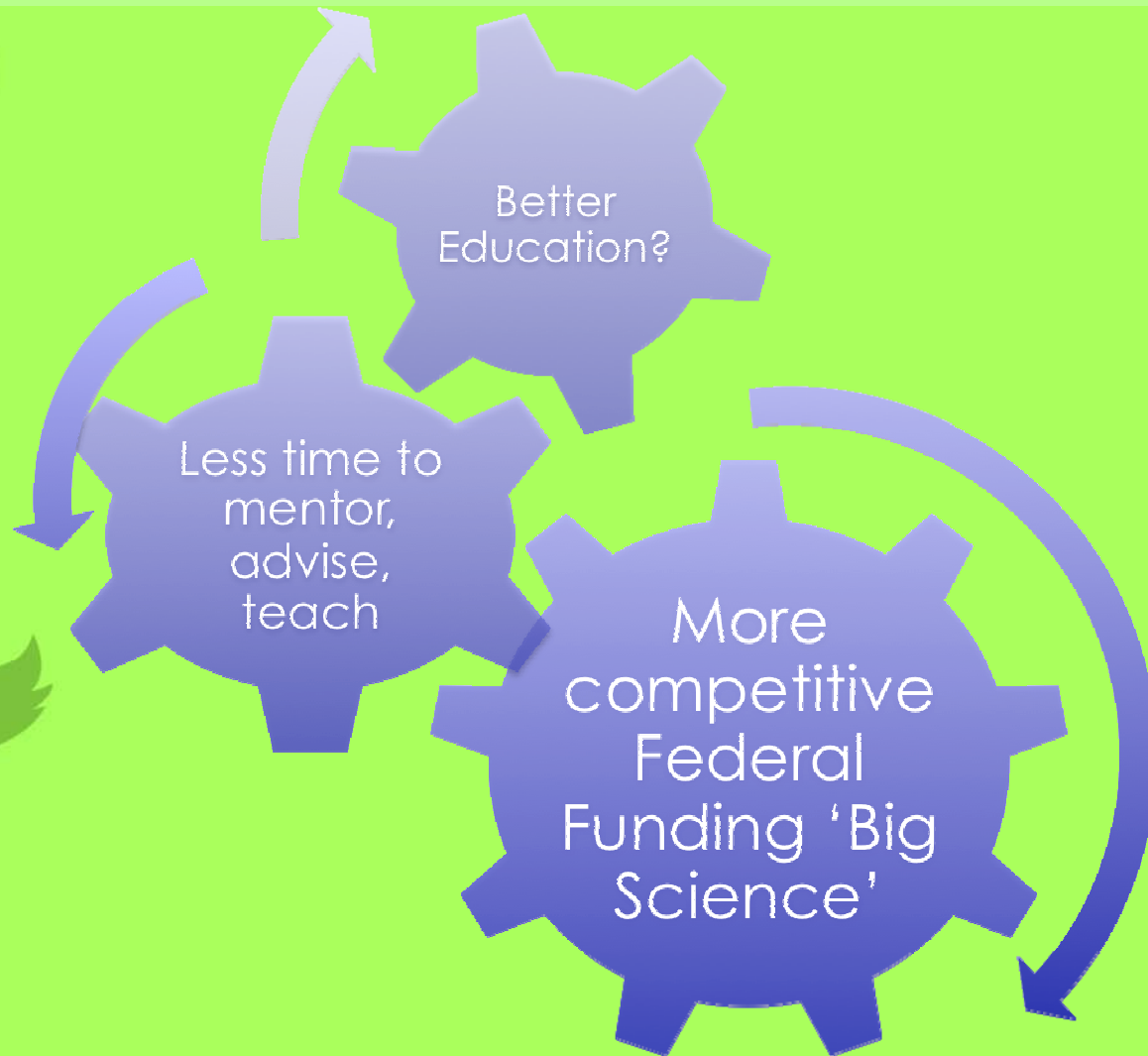
T(H)ARP COMPONENTS



T(H)ARP COMPONENTS



T(H)ARP CONUNDRUM



Survey says: Threatened Hort. Curricula:

- Production, especially fruits and vegetables
- Applied, hands-on courses
- Plant breeding
- 'Service' courses in other departments

Survey says: Needed Hort. Curricula:

- Organic, sustainable
- Pest management
- Propagation
- Practical experience and training (internships)
- International experiences
- 68% say challenges can be overcome with additional resources

Survey says: Solutions

- Shared courses between institutions
- Academies, short courses at different universities
- 88% see more DE in undergraduate education (but many reluctant)
- 75% see more DE in graduate education (but hate idea of online Ph.D.)

Survey says: Quotes

- “Good luck at the conference. Try to make sure that horticulture doesn’t slip into oblivion at the Pathology meeting”
- “We educate too many students in biotechnology and genetics at the graduate level...There are very few individuals with doctoral degrees ..in a broad field.”

Survey says: Quotes

“I’m over 25 years into my professional horticultural career. What keeps me going in my teaching duties. I do not see another generation coming up behind me that is getting the applied, science-rich, in-depth horticultural training I was privileged to have had. I’m optimistic over the future of world horticulture, but less so within the US.”