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## An Extension Context

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## An Extension Context

### Abstract

"An Extension Context" talks about why *JOE* articles must answer the "so what?" question for Extension. "October *JOE*" highlights two Features and mentions the prevalence of two topics, health and information technology.

## An Extension Context

As you know, I review all submissions initially to determine whether they are suitable for blind review (Feature, Research in Brief, Ideas at Work) or publication (Commentary, Tools of the Trade). In 2006, I returned 102 submissions (36%) to their authors for revision before accepting them as suitable for review or publication, and I rejected 49 (17%) as unsuitable for *JOE*.

There are a number of reasons why a submission can get returned for revision or rejected, but a fairly common one is lack of an Extension context. If you read the "Journal Sections/Article Categories" section of the [JOE Submission Guidelines](#), you'll see phrases like "particular interest and significance to U.S. Extension professionals," "importance to U.S. Extension professionals," "interest to U.S. Extension professionals," and "useful to U.S. Extension professionals."

*JOE* is a heterogeneous journal. That is, busy Extension professionals from a wide range of disciplines read *JOE*. *JOE* is unlike more specialized, discipline-specific journals in which the data presented speaks for itself to specialists in the same discipline. In *JOE*, the data must be placed in an Extension context so that it speaks to professionals from many disciplines. In other words, *JOE* articles must answer the "so what?" question for Extension. That way, as many readers as possible will learn from their fellow Extension professionals' work.

It's called "*Journal of Extension*" for a reason.

## October *JOE*

I start by calling attention to two Features.

- "[Using Diffusion of Innovation Concepts for Improved Program Evaluation](#)" takes the tried-and-true diffusion of innovations theories, developed over a half century ago, and puts them to good use as a program evaluation tool.
- "[Use of Computer Technologies by Educators in Urban Community Science Education Programs](#)" takes the assumption that the "digital divide" refers only to issues of access and expands it by discussing three other factors.

There are also three Features that deal with health issues. They're joined by an Ideas at Work article--"[Land Use and Health: What Role for Extension?](#)"--arguing that Extension educators can "bridge the gap between planning and public health."

But probably the most striking aspect of this issue--to me, anyway--is how many of the articles deal in one way or another with information technology. I count 11 out of 29, including all six Tools of the Trade articles.

I hope I've whetted your appetite for an interesting issue.

Laura Hoelscher, Editor

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