

# Transforming Cooperative Extension with AI & Data-Driven Insights

## The Urgency of AI Adoption

AI is transforming how information is accessed and delivered. Many stakeholders are changing how they seek and verify information, turning to new and rapidly evolving AI platforms.

Early adoption of AI ensures that Cooperative Extension remains the trusted source for unbiased, research-backed information. Through its investments in [ExtensionBot](#) and [MERLIN](#), the Extension Foundation can help position state Extension services as AI innovators—whether by supporting your adoption of these tools or collaborating on your existing AI initiatives.

## Introducing MERLIN: The Data Powerhouse Behind ExtensionBot

MERLIN (Machine-driven Extension Research and Learning Innovation Network) is the structured data platform that powers ExtensionBot, ensuring Extension professionals have validated, up-to-date, and organized information. MERLIN enables institutions to manage their data, run web-crawling scripts, and contribute to a shared knowledge ecosystem that enhances AI-driven responses.

## How MERLIN Works

- Institutions contribute validated data sets that are updated regularly.
- MERLIN structures and standardizes Extension research, publications, and resources for AI-driven tools like ExtensionBot.
- Institutions can access, manage and download their data through API integrations, crawling scripts, or direct uploads.
- Weekly updates ensure that ExtensionBot and other AI applications have access to the most current, research-backed information.

## Benefits of Structuring Content for AI

- AI-ready content expands the reach and impact of Extension educators, allowing staff to serve more stakeholders efficiently.
- Preparing your data now ensures your organization is ready to leverage emerging AI technologies, enhancing engagement and future-proofing your Extension Service.
- Structured, standardized data enables seamless integration with ExtensionBot and other AI tools, ensuring fast, consistent responses to stakeholder inquiries.

## ExtensionBot + MERLIN:

*The Future of Extension Knowledge Management*

## Get Involved Today!

Join the growing network of innovative Extension Services using AI to expand reach, amplify impact, and solidify Extension's leadership in community education.

Schedule a consultation with the Extension Foundation AI team to discuss your next steps.

### Try ExtensionBot at

[chat.extension.org](https://chat.extension.org)

### Contact us:

[marklocklear@extension.org](mailto:marklocklear@extension.org)

[davidwarren@extension.org](mailto:davidwarren@extension.org)

## Two Options for Providing Content to Merlin/ExtensionBot

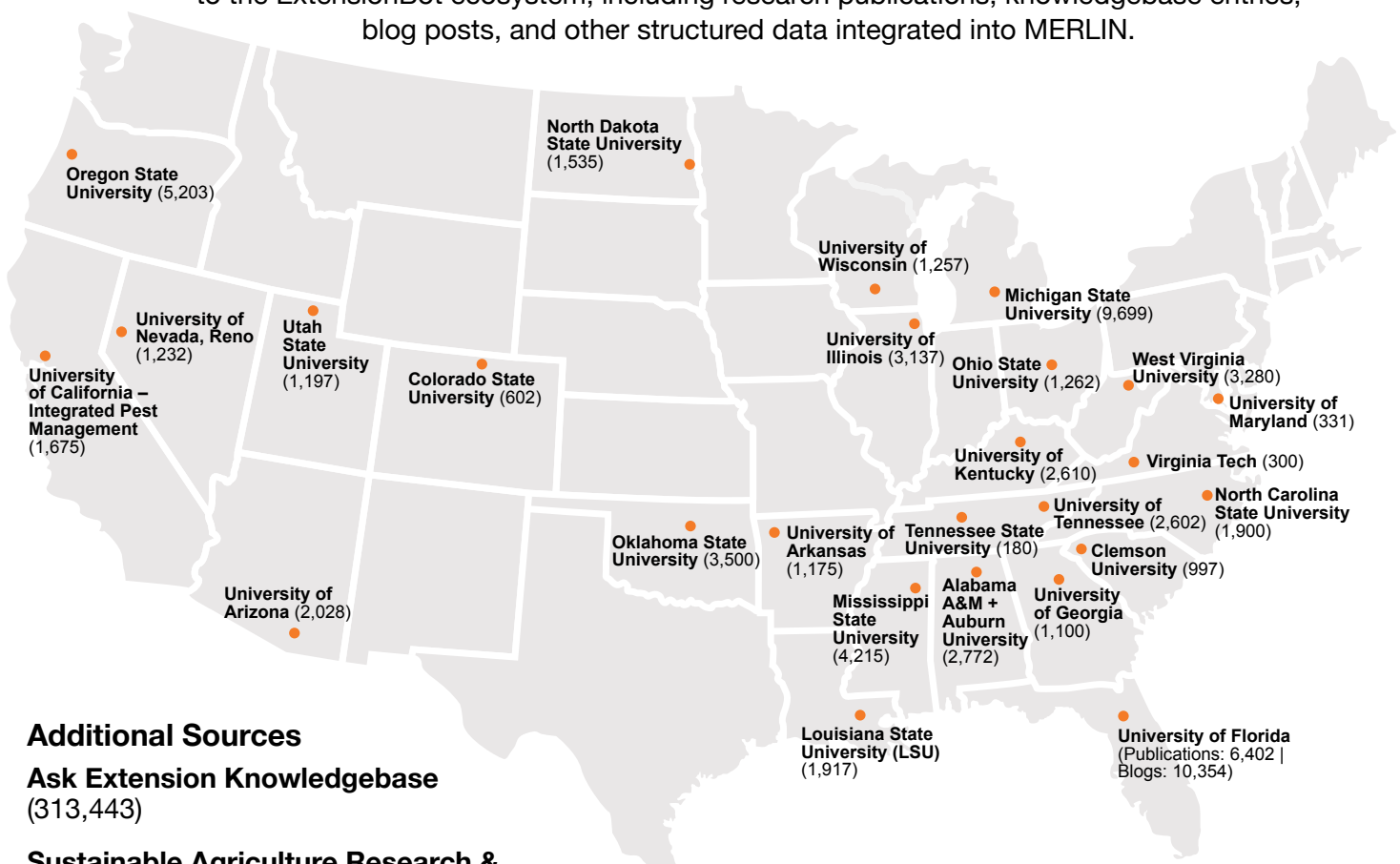
**Preferred Option:** Your institution's technology staff develop structured JSON/XML data feeds. Our technical team provides comprehensive guidance, making the process easy for your staff.

**Alternative Option:** Provide sitemaps or lists of URLs, and our team will handle initial data crawling, reducing your workload while quickly demonstrating AI's potential.

**Ongoing Support:** Extensive technical assistance, training, and implementation guidance ensure your team's success and confidence in adopting AI.

## Who's Currently Participating?

The numbers represent the volume of content contributions from each institution to the ExtensionBot ecosystem, including research publications, knowledgebase entries, blog posts, and other structured data integrated into MERLIN.



### Additional Sources

**Ask Extension Knowledgebase**  
(313,443)

**Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE)** ([sare.org](http://sare.org))