Everyday we receive a variety of questions covering a wide range of topics. For this month’s Extension Exchange article, we are going to answer a few of the more common questions we receive. Hopefully these FAQs will answer some questions that you may have.

What is computer memory? How much is enough?

Computer memory (RAM) is the space that your computer uses to perform calculations. It’s not the same as computer storage, which is hard drive space used for saving files. Memory directly affects how fast your computer runs, because all of the programs and data you work with have to be loaded into memory before the computer can do anything with them. If you don’t have enough memory to do the tasks you’re trying to perform, then your computer has to keep swapping things in and out of the memory space, which slows things down. For amounts, Windows 7 needs at least 2 GB to run decently, and below that amount it is painfully slow. At least 4 GB will give you a much better experience, and adding more only improves things. We currently don’t usually buy machines with less than 8GB RAM, and some of our offices are getting 16 or even 32 GB of RAM per machine.

For storage space, you probably need as much as you can afford. No one has ever said, “I wish I had less disk space.”

Why is my Quicken telling me it needs to be updated?

Quicken 2012 is reaching the end of its lifespan, and Intuit has released a new version, Quicken 2015. Ag Finance has once again purchased a copy for each county, and your support person will be installing it soon. It is very similar to Quicken 2012 in usage, but DOES require that you create an Intuit User ID to use it. In counties with service email accounts, the service account should be used; in counties that do not have service accounts, another account can be used, but the password and challenge question/answer need to be stored somewhere where other office members can access them. For further information, please contact your support person.

Do I need to back quicken up to a flash drive?
Yes, it is very important that you backup your quicken to a flash drive. Over the past several years we have seen several incidents with quicken files being accidentally deleted or written over with older files resulting in lost data. Having your quicken backed on a flash drive gives you an extra redundant backup that can be used in case of emergency.

Which Browser should I use?
Personal preference is the best answer for this common question. There are three primary browsers for Windows users: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome. Each of these browsers have their own strengths and their own weaknesses. While there have been vulnerabilities and concerns using each of these browsers, these issues have been corrected. It should also be noted, in the coming months, Internet Explorer will be adopting a new name, Microsoft Edge. Presently, this is only applicable to those upgrading to the new Windows operating system.

How much does it cost to add the Adobe Suite to my work computer?
Free! Last year, OSU entered a license agreement with Adobe making a selection of their software available to OSU employees for free. This software includes: Acrobat Pro, Photoshop, Lightroom, Illustrator, InDesign, and Premier. If you are interested in installing these products on your computer, contact your support specialist.
How can I speed up my computer?
There are several different ways to speed up your computer including reducing the number of items on your desktop, removing unneeded programs, or running a disk cleanup on your computer. For more information on speeding up your computer, please see our blog post covering this in greater detail http://spotlight.okstate.edu/dasnrit/2015/06/09/what-can-i-do-to-speed-up-my-computer/.