

Cheshire County Gap Session October 27, 2003

Group A

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

- Affordable housing. [8 votes]
- Affordable, accessible health care, dental care and child health care. [8 votes]
- Agriculture and environmental (issues) – effects of interface between urban and rural settings. Sensible management of resources in relation to agriculture/environment. [7 votes]
- Neighborhood/community networks. [7 votes]
- Youth substance abuse – need prevention and early intervention. [6 votes]
- Childhood obesity – nutrition early age. [4 votes]
- Parenting education, including future parents – pre-school families – early childhood development. [4 votes]
- Political issues - voting (in general) [4 votes]
- Youth programs ('the younger the better'.) [3 votes]
- JOBS (Integrating families from TANF into workforce.) [3 votes]
- Land conservation/protection. (Retaining large tracts of land and protection of that land.) [3 votes]
- (Urban) sprawl and growth/bypass issues. [2 votes]
- (More organized) partnership between affordable housing and land conservation. [2 votes]
- Zoning and planning regulations – less restrictive. (City and county relaxing laws so more housing can be built.) [1 vote]
- Request for public transportation for seniors (at volunteer center, especially seniors.) [1 vote]
- Need more youth organizations. [1 vote]
- On the job training/skills (especially for teenagers.) [1 vote]
- Programmatic partnership. Affordable housing/land conservation. [1 vote]
- Awareness of invasive species and plan to get rid of them. (Education and programs on how to address issues.) [1 vote]
- Waste management. [1 vote]
- People improve their credit status, credit counseling.
- Parent involvement in organizations.
- Better informed town government (decision makers) on land issues.
- Communication among service organizations and also communicate with general public. (Communication among agencies and the public around the services and work they are involved in.)
- Increase in violence.

- Children – homeless – class issues – 600,000 homes.
- Building neighborhoods – Creating Connections - assisted housing.
- Affordable child care.
- Community land trust awareness.
- Water resources – increase awareness of youth involvement (junior and senior high schools being more involved with communities in solving issues.)
- Parent education particularly early childhood development starting with preschool families (also parent education and pregnant education) (parenting skills)
- College opportunities for low-income. (Helping college be seen as an option for low income families.)
- Water source knowledge. (Understanding the source of water in Cheshire County and keeping it clean.)
- Retaining forest land and the stewardship of that land.
- Educate families on how to keep large land tracts intact.
- Bullying in the schools.
- Disaster planning and preparedness.
- Decreasing resources for health and human services.
- Environmental/community programs for middle income. (Types of programs that appeal to middle class to increase their environmental understanding.)
- Schools under stress, with decreasing (diminishing) resources.
- Focusing on making available opportunities for children K-6 including scholarships for camp, etc.

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

Affordable housing

- Affordable housing/land conservation. [13 votes]
 - Bring groups together.
 - Models.
 - Explore alternatives. (Conservation set asides in housing.)
 - Research based information.
- Training – unbiased, standardized for zoning/planning board members (and decision makers.) [3 votes]
 - Legal/political issues around making appropriate decisions.
 - Potential collaboration with Antioch.
- Financial planning to afford housing.
 - Partnering with land conservation groups.
 - Cooperative Extension liaison between affordable housing and land conservation.
 - Exploring alternatives.
- Research – how to best develop land/housing and get it to the people.
- Educating tenants/landlords about rights & responsibilities.
 - College students – pay more than a family.

Affordable, accessible healthcare

- Be proactive – prevention – healthy lifestyles – wellness – be responsible for own health care and healthy living. [6 votes]
- Awareness of “simple care” options that are available. [3 votes]
- Cities and towns as group providers of healthcare insurance. [1 vote]
- Educate new work-force entrants about options. College population left out – educating people new to the workforce (graduating college or high school students) about the need for health insurance and making available bridging insurance.
- Educate families about their qualifications for existing insurance opportunities.
- Financial planning for (individuals and families in general.)
- (Accessibility including) transportation to services. (Extension help build transportation networks.)
- Healthy lifestyle education, nutrition, obesity issues etc
- Having individuals become responsible for their own health issues
- Make education of family health programs more fun.

Neighborhood community networks

- Continue to focus on 4-H clubs. Promote and expand awareness. [9 votes]
 - More 4-H clubs that help build neighborhoods.
 - More 4-H marketing to reach larger audience – competition with sports, innocence of youth gone out the window, 4-H helps bring that innocence back.
 - Everything organized as competition – too much, bring innocence back, families overextended and stressed, 4-H has something special that needs to be shared in other arenas.
 - In Cheshire soccer coaches continually reminded to promote life and not the sport/win.
 - Still a “farm thing” image. Tell the world it is more.
- Explore development of neighborhood parks/recreation areas to develop citizens. [6 votes]
- Share the 4-H model with other youth organizations. 4-H not only for rural youth. [4 votes]
- Leadership training for community people. (Train the trainer.) [2 votes]
- Continue to be present in community networks.
 - Continue contact with head start sites and programming with other partners.
- Turn off tv.
- Help community help themselves by becoming more aware of their environment. (Train people to help others be aware of invasive species and how to control them.)
- Continue to do workshops that bring people together around environmental issues.
- Master gardener – help build these neighborhood locations.

- Appreciation of arts – painting music architecture etc – help increase this appreciation. Using the arts to bring people together.
- Dovetailing efforts with schools.
- Kids stressed out with how much they can take on after school.
- Be more involved in enhancing school curriculum especially leadership and character development.
- Making public school more accessible to public (evenings and weekends.)

Agricultural/environmental interface

- Community garden in Keene (would answer number of issues – know exactly where it should go. (Are two existing community gardens in area but need help – Stonewall and Cedarcrest.) [4 votes]
 - For education programs.
 - Local food issues. (People understanding where food comes from locally.)
- More research/solutions for small farmer issues. [2 votes]
- Water resources – sources and how to keep clean. (Understanding where water comes from, how to protect it or reclaim it if impure.) [1 vote]
 - Education
 - Research (about local water resources and land use and how it affects water quality. Some cases there just isn't an answer we know of to help farmers deal with the issue – especially on small scale issue – thus local research needed.)
 - Lay-based programs - 'Stream Teams'
 - Increase awareness of research results for decision-makers.
- Continue to find ways to get research out to decision makers and public. Towns don't go to Extension often enough for unbiased info – go to commercial establishments and get biased information. Educate people - let world know about research. [1 vote]
- County Farm/property – promote to schools more – need to use farm to potential to keep it alive. Use as educational tool. [1 vote]
- If research is done education is not getting out there – i.e. Jaffrey sewer issue.
- Is concern about how long farm will be there if use as educational tool is easier to make case for maintaining public ownership

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

Promote Extension

- Radio, newspaper, school newsletters, present information in person.
- Visible in business community.
- Group meetings at Extension office.
- Presentations at service clubs (rotary, lions, etc).

- Being active in Chamber of Commerce.
- Continue to work with media to give Extension space.
- Make media more user friendly, community bulletin board in Sentinel.
- Collaborate with other organizations to get word out.
- Magnetic signs on cars. Visibility wherever we go.
- United Way thermometer – some sort of visual way to show who is participating in Extension.
- Workshops electronically. Work with agencies that offer continuing education credits.
- Live workshops – in person – maybe with credit towards something, free courses, memberships....
- Good quality TV things (across the fence, etc) get loads of mileage – spending money on one or two quality TV promos.

How do we deliver programs?

- On computer in enough ways with enough links so that no matter what folks look for Extension comes up.
- Programs via computer.
- Recruit/collaborate/partner with other organizations.
- Good quality TV show (Across the Fence – UVM.)
- Radio.
- Scouts have badges – can we present to other organizations - yes continue this collaboration.
- Recipe to market program was very successful – collaborations with other businesses, organizations helps get the word out.
- College credit offered or high school credit for extension programs – work with schools to have credits attached.
- Good quality workshops with credits are currently done – expand to other things – CEU's aren't always attached to schools.
- Staff development for teachers.
- Credits toward personal motivations – YMCA, KSC course, etc.
- What are kids into – meet kids where they are at and get them involved in a 4-H experience.

GROUP B

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

- Affordable housing. [7 votes]
- Civic engagement by citizens - public service. (Needs expanding across the board.) [6 votes]
- More promotion of agricultural products. [4 votes]
- More diverse programs for a wide variety of youth. [3 votes]

- Limited number of meat processors for small livestock owners. (Work cooperatively with Farm Bureau, etc.) [3 votes]
- Affordable health insurance plans/education. (Care and educational programs.) [3 votes]
- Protection of open land. [2 votes]
- Good secure jobs. [2 votes]
- Money management skills – stronger emphasis for low income, elderly and youth. (Many folks can't even handle savings and checking accounts, especially low income, elderly, and youth.) [2 votes]
- Use senior citizens as (community) resources. Need a place for them to work out of (senior center). [1 vote]
- More community events: more locations to plan them, smaller and more frequent events. [1 vote]
- Fairly financed good schools. [1 vote]
- Job skills training: communication and interpersonal skills. (Very basic skills such as telephone etiquette, and other core life skills.) [1 vote]
- Stronger connections between students (especially high school) and their community.
- Services for elderly.
- Regional transportation.
- Incentives for very small business owners.
- Student centers in communities with planned/unplanned activities (such as ELMM center in Winchester).
- People need to know about Extension – promotion. (A lot of people have no idea what Extension is and what it is doing.)
- Children at risk or potentially at risk.
- Invasive plants and what to do about them.
- Prevention/intervention around substance abuse – variety of age levels.
 - Better consolidation with court, law enforcement, rehab programs.
 - Improve criminal justice system.
- Communication (collaboration) among agencies, organizations. (Improved awareness and networking - a lot of agencies doing a lot of good things for a lot of reasons.)
- Access to existing vans and transportation resources that sit unused.
- Spin off – new jail, involvement in criminal justice system, better coordination and collaboration of services for this population.

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

Affordable housing

- Extension redefinition at Durham level to ensure consistency statewide with specific resources in each county identified. [3 votes]
- Educating planning and zoning boards (to allow creative solutions.) [2 votes]

- Research on incentives needed for private developers to build affordable housing. (Supply doesn't keep up with demand – market prices many families out of housing.) [2 votes]
- Promote programs to low and moderate income families. [1 vote]
- Have materials for programs already happening – rural housing, etc. – when doing programs for low income, nutrition or money management. [1 vote]
- Provide assistance to create sustainable communities, affordable housing across a spectrum of ages with environmental concerns/awareness.
- Cheshire Housing Trust in this area currently active work in partnership.

Civic education

- Educate throughout communities - community service. (How do you show people that there is a pay off in engaging in their community.) [7 votes]
- Civic engagement by citizens, public service [5 votes]
- Ask specific people for tasks rather than open invitations – be intentional about invitation to participate. (Monadnock United Way very successful but one reason is that it is a limited defined commitment. Communities at meetings say this is what we are doing – specifically pick out people and encourage them to do specific tasks – target wide variety of folks with specific jobs.) [1 vote]
- How do you show people there are payoffs for serving in public office/volunteering and to say nice things.
- People need to give back when they have been given something from the community. Some people do not know what is beyond the project.
- Senior citizens could be more involved in giving back to the community. Great skills and resources.
- Family development – if people get all this help they should give back – add this component to the message of every program – maybe each can give a couple hours back to their community – explore ways that they could become involved
- Some sort of place where folks especially seniors can meet to address needs of community

Agriculture promotion

- UNHCE needs to reach out to these farms – persistent and consistent. Need to think outside of the box. Create linkages, help put things together for ideas. Use County Farm as a model. (If UNHCE could adopt a proactive role in this area – farmers don't have large window of opportunity to attend meetings so may need to bring it to them – persistent and consistent effort of reaching out and addressing issue-would you sell products if this was the scenario?) [6 votes]
- Locate and bring expertise to the farmer. [4 votes]
- Produce and sell milk products locally under a local label. Help build a local market. [1 vote]
- More promotion of agricultural products. [1 vote]

- More involved with problems of small farmers selling their milk – plight of small farmers – fruit, livestock, etc. [1 vote]
- Poor communication – organize a conversation around the issues. County farms how to create a local market – technology is there. (Is there a dairy cooperative – do local farmers get together and discuss and problem solve – could Extension organize a conversation?) [1 vote]
- Education of public around these and related ag issues (apple producers, etc).
- Help farmers adapt to changing technology and farm management.
- New England farmers need to be brought up to date with technologies and changes in environment. (Biggest difference between NE and Midwest farms is that Midwest has adapted to changing environment better – management as well as marketing.)
- Selling to monopolistic purchaser – maybe think about usefulness and practicality of producing variety of other ag products locally – establishment of local brand and marketing of it.
- Cooperative among 4 county farms to meet dairy needs of county nursing homes, schools etc.
- Some farms in Walpole considered cooperating to do Walpole product – don't have financial viability to be able to do local bottling – access small business development center – can it be paid back?
- Lot comes down to communication piece – UNHCE conversation at Stonewall Farm on doing private label – Agrimark did local packaging and labeling – are ways of doing it but farmers need to be willing to attend meetings to address issues – lack of conversation not only in dairy but other ag areas as well (fruits, vegetables, etc).
- Work with the County Farm as a model.
- Use technology to build network.
- Value-added product promotion.
- Promote New Hampshire made campaign.
- Cooperative Extension set up and monies borrowed and leveraged, jobs created – must think outside of box about new construct and possibilities – Community Development Block funds.
- Counties already are selling products at loss then buying replacement products.
- Bring in the Extension flock and use expertise to do creative thinking around issue.
- County farm run very well, efficiently run farm (difference of opinion here).

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

Promotion of Extension – Information Delivery

- Promote earlier.
- Promote wider and in variety of ways.

- Expand message.
- If not at Extension office or in 4-H, how can you access offerings?
- If asked 80% of town wouldn't be familiar with us.
- Target communication (information) to audiences.
- Statewide consistency needed. (More consistent interaction with offices – not consistent statewide.)
- Email newsletter.
- Newspaper insert. (Does it appear in any newspapers locally?)
- Total market coverage vehicles.
- One way to reach everybody is to have a way to regularly insert in shopper or sentinel if could find a way to fund it – such as Scanning the Schools.
- How do we reach out to people that don't know us.

Program delivery

- Remove stigma associated with some programs.
- Making money work for you – amazing what is learned and behavior changes but something about labeling turns low income off.
- Market 4-H in schools – also other youth programs. (Reaching out to schools – 6 out of 1300 involved in 4-H – so many don't know about it. Look at schools where there aren't a lot of members and market not only 4-H but also any youth curriculum/programs.)
- Invite diverse program participants/see community service/public engagement.
- Take advantage of windows of opportunity- child care.
- Consider mixing audience across socioeconomic strata to allow connections to be developed.
- Other groups beyond low income could benefit from topic as well.
- Sometimes co-sponsorship attaches an incorrect assumption of audience.
- Invite diverse audience- as promote community service in programs can increase public engagement.
- Can't expect remainder of staff to handle huge cross section of programs if don't replace retirees – also concern of overextending of existing staff as budgetary issues are addressed.
- If take on added areas of emphasis what will be eliminated?
- Higher Ground pointed out Extension cannot be all things to all people – must consider carefully what arenas we belong or serve best.