

November 6, 2003 Fruit & Vegetable Seminar  
Lancaster, New Hampshire  
95 People Attending

## Needs Assessment

### 1. *What are the needs of Farmers, Agricultural Businesses and Organizations?*

- Alternative uses for former dairy farm land for continued income.
- Provide a quality product in least amount of time to the public - plant needs, environment needs, marketing strategy.
- Lists of wholesalers that work with small farmers.
- Videos of research at the University.
- I would suggest the two marked below (Entomology/IPM Specialist and Agricultural Business Management Specialist). (Some system)
- Knowledge of how to apply the latest techniques and technology on our north country soils and country-side in our climatic conditions.
- I think we should all be kept abreast of the most current research - good practices can lead to big money and best environmental.
- Better marketing.
- Better education for kids.
- Education and networkship.
- Accurate information; timely information.
- More processing facilities, especially USDA slaughter plants.
- Enforcement of anti-trust laws to prevent loss of competitive buyers and to maintain farmer access to the market place.
- To become educated, as we are today, on everyday issues; on better management practices.
- Better awareness of regulations - tabulation of regs. in condensed form.
- To be kept abreast of innovation and new research to farm more profitably with environmentally soundness.
- For those doing Organic Farming - Information on the best procedures.
- Unbiased research of direct benefit to farms in New Hampshire that can be used to make our smaller farms more profitable. We need to be more outspoken in supporting Agricultural Extension's budget so you have enough people and other resources to do your job as well in the future as you have in the past.
- Communication within the Ag Community.
- More seminars in Grafton / Coös County areas. In a more 'local' area, Southern NH too far to drive for some meetings.
- Consumers are looking for organic at farmstands and markets. Organic soil amendments and fertility are big hurdles.
- Guidance and education on newest developments and findings in research.
- Business management, marketing.
- Programs like this one with good solid information; on problems in the field.
- How to grow the fruits and vegetables in a more environmentally friendly way

also trying to keep the amount grown as high as possible.

- Pest care, website that's interactive so questions and answers are ongoing.
- The needs of these people, organizations are for UNH Cooperative Extension to get them updated through seminars, articles, programs on issues and to update people on grants available.
- As an Agricultural Teacher, I can only speak to that. My needs center around being able to find information that can be passed on to students. Knowing what is available and where to get it are my needs.
- The latest research on cultural practices, new plant varieties, etc. Assistance for 'starter farmers' or new combers on establishing and networking.
- Well, the info about pesticides is amazing, especially at the 'overdosage' of pesticides is scary. More needs to be done here!
- You are doing a good job.
- Maybe a local marketing organization.
- I'm not familiar enough with them to comment.

2. *What should Extension **actually do** to address them over the next few years?*

- Educational programs, research.
- Through questionnaires and seminars such as these address those needs through periodicals.
- I wish I knew.
- Use time-tested education techniques to assist our farmers and related business to help them apply Ag research and new technology.
- I believe that in addition to research at UINH and trials at local farms, Extension should be visiting all growers to assess all the issues, success etc.
- Continual educational sessions.
- More programs.
- Offer list of suggested program possibilities.
- Workshops – seminars.
- Play a coordinating role with relevant agencies, legislature, etc. Continue to provide information on the take over of ag markets by large multi-national corporations.
- Newsletters; annual meetings.
- Continues to hold seminars.
- Continue field work, research - hire and keep Extension Specialists in place! Vegetable & Fruit Specialist Positions should not be left vacant.
- Maybe include more organic information on controls for weeds, nutrients and insect control.
- Your leaders need to be more outspoken in support of NH Farmers and Ag Agents and Specialists. I attend many statewide meetings and don't remember ever having seen them talk about how important this is to NH's way of life. Get more professors at UNH and others to get out into the state to help you do more agricultural educating and research. Don't they have some responsibilities to do this? Do they care about the rest of the state? Work more with the tourist

industry since they benefit from farmland resources.

- Continue to sponsor seminars such as this one.
- More one on one.
- I would be interested in more education on soil composition, fertility, cover crops, etc.
- Get involved in helping local farmers get new development and findings.
- Fill critical positions so resources are at UNH.
- Keep doing the work they are doing.
- Workshops and conferences, publications, taking telephone calls, tips through TV and radio advertisements.
- Replace Fruit Specialist and continue with pruning workshops.
- Proper communication with these groups, getting feedback on issues, problems, needs.
- I don't know what more can be done. Extension has been more than helpful to us.
- Continue putting out the information.
- Simple explanations and warnings via organizations. Suggesting alternatives to pesticides.
- More meetings like the grafting workshop.
- Work with other local organizations like garden clubs, farmers' market groups, co-ops.

3. *What's the **best way** to deliver Agricultural Education programs and information?*

- Seminars for most part, individual advice, internet.
- Seminars, newsletters.
- Seminars and twilight meetings, bus tours around the state or New England.
- I think you are doing very well.
- Adapting the traditional Extension techniques to transfer appropriate information and education to Ag and Forestry Growers, producers and businesses. Get out to these people, find out what they need and work to fill the local needs.
- I personally like the twilight meetings. Also these annual seminars. Be sure to build in more time for Q & A. We can all learn from others successes and failures. What about monthly newsletter updates via the internet, during the growing season most don't have time to get away from the 'farm'.
- Regional Programs
- The way you are doing it.
- On site seminars and field study sites.
- Word of mouth.
- One on one farm visits and seminars, workshops, twilight meetings.
- Newsletters, more farm programs, meetings, maybe demonstrations.
- Seminars and specialized meetings.
- Hands on demonstrations. Twilight meetings at different sights. Seminars / meetings. Working closely with growers encouraging on-farm trials and research.

- The luncheon meetings are helpful.
- No best way, but lots of different ways is the best. Do this in the ways you do best. Everybody does not do best learning in a classroom, outside how-to's important way. Use newspapers to tell how farmers work to benefit everybody.
- Personal contact, websites, 'Across the Fence' newspapers articles and trade journal articles.
- Mail, email, seminars.
- These one-day events are great.
- Local TV exposure, local newspaper articles.
- Twilight meetings, farmers' discussion groups.
- Just the way they are doing.
- The best way in my opinion is through conferences and workshops, where people can talk, pass ideas back and forth.
- Increase twilight workshops at local farms. Interactive websites with links to specialists.
- It would be ideal if NH could get an Extension program on a local TV station (example: VT's Across the Fence on channel 3 @ 12:00). Through high schools FFA or other agricultural programs. Articles in magazines/books. At fairs (local - Lancaster Fair / Fryeburg Fair) and Big E Fair.
- I don't think there is one best way. These types of meetings today work well. An electronic newsletter might be useful.
- Conferences like today are great! Twilight meetings are as well. How about an emailing list for information delivery. (Not just about events but also for practical information).
- How about local access TV? It's amazing how many people watch Littleton's channel 2, for example. (I did 2 shows on gardening and about 8 on local artists. Much to my surprise loads and loads of people saw them!)
- Re-running programs is good. What about articles in local papers? Public radio? You are doing a good job.
- Local meetings like today.
- You're doing a wonderful job - especially since we're so far from UNH. Interactive TV & continuing to offer the Master Gardener course would be great.
- Councils have to get the L/A University Extension people to understand the local needs.

#### *Other Comments*

You can see at some of the farmer markets that what Extension has been saying about diversifying and selling the concept of 'farm fresh' - and diversifying selling cut flowers with veggies, etc. It's a great concept and it works!!