



Homeowner and Fruit/Vegetable Production

Situation:

Each year UNH Cooperative Extension receives thousands of requests from New Hampshire citizens for education on a wide range of topics including home gardening, wildlife, water quality, household pests, backyard livestock, food preparation and food safety, urban forestry and many other topics.

UNH Cooperative Extension developed a variety of methods to simultaneously meet this need and reduce the burden on staff. Using over 500 Master Gardeners (who volunteered 11,000 hours in 100 communities last year,) Extension expanded its impact by responding to over 10,000 phone inquiries, conducting more than 50 workshops in schools and communities and working on a diverse range of projects that resulted in aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits for both New Hampshire citizens and volunteers.

UNH Cooperative Extension's Public Value:

Master Gardener and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs for homeowners and fruit and vegetable producers increase the safety and health of the people in Carroll County through public education, availability of fresh produce, and education about the appropriate use of pesticides.

UNH Cooperative Extension's Response:

Tina Savage, Carroll County Agricultural Resources Extension Educator, along with many Extension educators and specialists, provides training to Master Gardener volunteers in soil science, IPM, fruit and vegetable production, lawn care and landscaping. Currently, there are 30 active Master Gardeners in Carroll County working with Extension programs and contributing to local community service projects. In addition to the 230 phone and email inquiries by the public handled by Tina Savage this past year, 219 phone calls from Carroll County citizens were answered by Extension's Family Home and Garden Education Center. The most common topics were vegetable gardening, fruit tree pruning, lawn care, poisonous plant identification, landscaping, household pests, water quality and backyard livestock.

The sixth successful year of the Veggie Volunteer Program (VVP) is complete. Under Tina's direction, and with the efforts of several Master Gardeners and the generosity of the Sherman Farm, volunteers from youth groups, schools and private individuals met at the Sherman Farm in East Conway on Monday and Wednesday mornings during the growing season. Volunteers picked, washed, boxed and delivered donated vegetables to food pantries and kitchens in the Mount Washington Valley, Ossipee, Wakefield and Wolfeboro. This year, volunteers also picked and distributed 65 bushels of apples from an orchard in Freedom.

How We Make a Difference:

- Carroll County staff help homeowners who come directly to the local office by identifying plant disease, insect specimens and weeds and provided recommendations for control. These clients benefited by having 25 insects, diseased plants and weed specimens identified with appropriate treatment recommendations.
- A total 18,862 pounds of fresh vegetables and fruit were collected and distributed through the Carroll County Veggie Volunteer Program with a total value of over \$26,200. Recipient organizations reported serving 20,012 meals with these vegetables.
- Master Gardener volunteers worked with staff and volunteered 380 hours, reaching youth and adults with gardening education and information. Volunteers for the VVP contributed a total of 500 hours. This represents a cost benefit to the county of \$17,169 when calculated at the 2007 value of \$19.51/hour for volunteer time (independentsector.org).
- Master Gardeners, through the Master Speakers Bureau, presented 12 gardening seminars at local garden centers, schools and libraries, providing youth and adults with research-based gardening education.

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