



Cheshire County Cooperative Extension

Working to strengthen youth, families & communities, sustain natural resources and improve the economy

Cheshire County's UNH Cooperative Extension office is part of a network of county, state and regional outreach education offices that bring the University of New Hampshire resources directly to the people who live and work in Cheshire County. Cheshire County's Extension staff, along with more than 30 campus-based Extension specialists, provides county residents with research-based education and information, enhancing their ability to make informed decisions that improve their lives.

Cheshire County educators share their knowledge and expertise with county residents through programming efforts focused on 4-H youth development, agriculture, family and consumer resources, and forestry and wildlife. These educators uniquely position themselves to tailor research-based educational programs to meet the needs of Cheshire County individuals, families, communities, agricultural businesses and related natural resource firms. These professionals also forge important partnerships within the state and region, as well as nationally, that enhance their efforts.

What resources do Cheshire County Extension Educators bring to local families, businesses and communities from UNH and the national network of Land Grant institutions?

- For the \$217,875 investment Cheshire County made in 2008 in UNH Cooperative Extension programs, an additional \$384,850 of state and federal funds are invested directly toward county staff, programming, administrative costs, and computer support for Cheshire County.
- The average annual value of state specialists' efforts in each of New Hampshire's 10 counties is \$335,090. In 2008, Cheshire County's investment leveraged a total of \$719,940 to support Extension programming throughout the county.
- The national Land Grant network provides access to innovative research, specialists in every area Extension addresses, curricula evaluated for impact and effectiveness, and grant funding to leverage local and state dollars.
- UNH Cooperative Extension offers Cheshire County residents reliable, practical, and timely information relevant to their local situations. Extension places highly trained and competent professional educators in communities as a direct link to researchers.
- Cheshire County Extension staff work with partners to bring money from grants, awards and cost share programs to the county. These additional resources don't pay for Extension salaries, but directly benefit citizens through program materials, scholarships for afterschool programs, on-farm research, or cost sharing for landowners to implement conservation practices. The following represents these additional resources in the last five years:
 - \$13,000 in grants to farms,
 - \$500,000 for landowners through cost share programs through forestry and wildlife,
 - \$86,871 for afterschool programs in Hinsdale, Winchester, Troy, Gilsum, Marlborough and Harrisville
 - 4-H program staff successfully brought in and collaborated on a grant for another \$200,000 for Hinsdale. Additionally 4-H staff helped with a \$125,000 grant for the Monadnock Voices for Prevention.
 - Volunteers from Master Gardeners, 4-H Youth Development, and participants in the Coverts Project documented 10,151 hours in just in 2008, representing an additional cost benefit to the county of \$198,046 when calculated at the 2007 value of \$19.51/hour for volunteer time (independentsector.org)

Ways Cheshire County UNH Cooperative Extension Educators *make a difference* in the lives of residents in Cheshire County:

The last three years of the state-wide apple Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program resulted in a savings of \$190-200,000 per year in reduced spraying, plus a five percent increase in the incidence of unblemished fruit, compared to pre-IPM levels. For Cheshire County, that represents a \$10,000/year in reduced spraying. In addition to an economic savings, IPM reduces public exposure to pesticides.

A new farmer in the county saved approximately \$2,000 when he took advantage of mid-season nitrogen testing for corn. Instead of applying approximately two tons of nitrogen (N) fertilizer to a large corn field prior to planting, they waited to see if it was necessary. Testing indicated that no N fertilizer was necessary, and the land didn't receive excess N fertilizer that would otherwise leach out to contaminate surface and ground waters. Seven farms, representing approximately 950 acres, have now used mid-season nitrogen testing in the past six years.

Cheshire County Extension's Forest Resources Educator, in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA), implements several cost share programs in Cheshire County. These federal programs provide cost-share dollars for practices that improve and protect forestland, wildlife habitat and water quality and usually act as the catalyst for the forest products industry in New Hampshire.

When appropriate, landowners visited by the Cheshire County Extension's Forest Resources Educator were referred to New Hampshire licensed foresters to oversee the management of their forest resources. When working with a forester, landowners see greater revenues, while at the same time protecting or enhancing public resources such as water, wildlife and landscape aesthetics.

In Cheshire County, for Tax Year 2007, three free tax preparation sites coordinated by an Extension-led Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Alliance filed 422 returns, resulting in a savings for these taxpayers of \$63,300. In addition, these taxpayers received \$58,678 in EITC, \$12,649 in Child Tax Credit and \$238,622 in refunds.

Nutrition Connections, through the national Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE), saves states and families money. In Cheshire County, 600 youth and 150 adults with 67 children participated in Nutrition Connections programming from 2007-2008. Multiple cost benefit analyses in several states highlight the program's value and document that for every dollar invested in EFNEP, benefits can reach as high as \$10.64 from reduced health care costs.

Over the past five years, 178 food service workers and managers from Cheshire County passed the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation's *ServSafe*® food manager certification exam for safe food handling procedures. *ServSafe*® certification is valid for five years and recognized throughout the food industry wherever food manager certification is required. Food safety training for workers helps restaurants reduce the incidence of foodborne illnesses.

4-H staff provided over 69 hours of training reaching 373 people in topics including teen risk behavior, understanding and working with adolescents, positive youth development, behavior management and best practices in youth programming. Some community actions planned as a result include changes to curriculum and/or programs, parenting sessions, the establishment of work teams and implementation of community actions.

The 4-H experience provides a foundation for future success as youth develop and practice critical skills for self-discipline and become more independent, as evidenced by research and a testimonial from a local 4-H member:

- *"4-H came at the perfect time in my life. I was really having a hard time and school was a nightmare. My 4-H leaders were so encouraging.... I can't imagine what I would have been like without 4-H. I am looking forward to college this fall and know that, even more than the subject knowledge I gained from school, I will be using those everyday skills – organizing, being responsible, communicating, taking advantage of opportunities and trusting myself – that 4-H gave me."* 18-year-old 4-Her

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