

Extension Staff Start New Column

By: Deborah Maes, Extension Educator, Family & Consumer Resources

What are those worms on my broccoli plants? How do I apply for a Current Use variance on my property? Where is the closest 4-H club in my area? Is it OK if I use my grandmother's recipe to make pickles this summer?

If you have wondered where to get answers to the above questions you have probably been told "call the Extension office". There is a team of Educators in every county office ready to answer your questions—or to help you find the answers.

Extension has been in New Hampshire since 1914. The Smith-Lever Act helped put the research and science being done at the Land Grant Colleges across the country into the hands of the people who could use the information. Our own University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension office in Durham provides the leadership and support to county staff to provide educational opportunities for the people of New Hampshire.

Back in Extension's early days, my predecessors, the Home Demonstration Agents, would travel from community to community, staying at private homes and offering hands-on workshops to the homeowner and their friends. Early lessons focused on canning, making mattresses and stretching food resources. Groups of women then formed Home Dem clubs and held monthly meetings to share information.

Today's Extension program owes much to these early offerings. Educators still travel around the county. Topics, relevant to the needs of today's citizens, are still being presented. Agricultural Educator Heather Bryant has started a demonstration garden on the county property. She has initiated a series of workshops to help beginning and experienced gardeners learn how to make the most of their efforts. Family and Consumer Resource Educator Deb Maes plans to demonstrate safe canning techniques at a workshop in North Haverhill in August. Forestry Educator Dave Falkenham helps landowners make decisions about the future of their forested land in terms of a financial asset as well as a refuge for wildlife. Kathy Jablonski, 4-H Youth Development Educator, trains volunteer leaders to work with youth around the county. Youth learn real life skills, resume writing, interviewing, and time management which they will use throughout their lives. Robin Peters, Nutrition Connections Coordinator, guides families to make healthy food choices. Dairy Specialist Michal Lunak helps dairy farmers make financial decisions that sustain their agricultural livelihood.

We plan to use this column to share current information, announce new research findings and talk about current programs and impacts. Our column needs a title. We would like to hear from you about what topics are of interest. Give us a call at 787-6944 to share your ideas. Or reach us through the internet at Extension's website <http://extension.unh.edu/>. If you are in the area, stop by our office located at the Grafton County Complex in North Haverhill. Finally, be sure to look for our column weekly in your local paper. Until next week....