

**UNH Cooperative Extension of Merrimack County**  
**315 Daniel Webster Highway**  
**Boscawen, NH 03303**

Phone: 603-796-2151

Fax: 603-796-2271

Office hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**Directions:**

***From Southern NH:***

Head North on I-93. Take Exit 17. Bear right onto Route 3 North. Stay on Route 3 through Boscawen. Road forks at big white church. Bear right at fork and continue on Route 3 toward Franklin. The Extension office is located on the left as you enter the Merrimack County Nursing Home Complex. Approximately 14 miles from Concord.

***From Northern NH:***

Head South on I-93. Take Exit 17W. Bear right from exit onto Route 3 North. Stay on Route 3 through Boscawen. Road forks at big white church. Bear right at fork and continue on Route 3 toward Franklin. The Extension office is located on the left as you enter the Merrimack County Nursing Home Complex. Approximately 14 miles from Concord.

**Visit our website: <http://extension.unh.edu/>**

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UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## Merrimack County

# 2008 HIGHLIGHTS

Helping you put knowledge  
and research to work.

## *UNH Cooperative Extension Family, Home & Garden Education Center*

The Family, Home & Garden Education Center, located at 200 Bedford Street in Manchester, operates a toll-free Info Line staffed by trained Master Gardener volunteers. In 2008, the Center helped 683 people in Merrimack County find answers to their questions on a wide variety of topics, including:



- Gardens, lawns and landscapes
- Growing fruits and vegetables
- Household food safety and preservation
- Pest problems, indoors and out
- Integrated pest management
- Backyard wildlife
- Tree planting and care
- Houseplants
- Backyard livestock

The Family, Home & Garden Education Center's Info Line is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Wednesday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. In-state, call toll-free 1-877-398-4769. For out-of-state callers, the number is (603) 629-9494. You may also email your questions to [answers@unh.edu](mailto:answers@unh.edu).

**Visit the Web site:** [extension.unh.edu/FHGEC/FHGEC.htm](http://extension.unh.edu/FHGEC/FHGEC.htm)

## Natural Resources Forestry & Wildlife

With 80 percent of our land in trees, forestry is the dominant land in Merrimack County. More than 400,000 forested acres—70 percent of the county's forested land—is in the hands of private, non-industrial landowners.



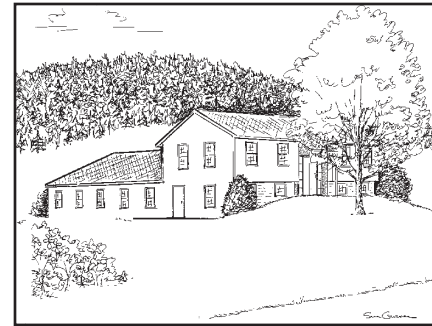
These forest landowners, your neighbors, serve as stewards of the essential services these forest lands provide for us all: clean water, wildlife habitat, and the raw material base for our county's largest manufacturing industry, as well as the scenic backdrop that makes the area such a vital place to live and visit.

### 2008 Highlights

- Walked 62 woodland properties covering 6,019 acres, talking to owners about forest stewardship and encouraging them to develop long-term forest management plans.
- Helped forest landowners place another 641 forest acres under long-term forest management using cost-share assistance provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Organized and participated in 24 workshops attracting more than 588 citizens on topics as diverse as wildlife habitat, current use programs, tree farm tours and timber harvesting.
- Worked with many professional groups: foresters, loggers, conservation groups, business organizations, school groups, and municipal leaders.
- Helped coordinate and conduct tornado-damage information sessions attracting 210 citizens in four affected towns. Advised approximately 20 individual landowners in those communities.

**Tim Fleury**, *Extension Educator, Forestry Resources*

## Responding to your needs . . .



For 94 years, the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Cooperative Extension -- a partnership among county, state and federal governments -- has provided New Hampshire citizens with research-based information and non-formal educational programs to help them make informed decisions that strengthen

youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources and improve the economy.

County Extension field staff bring these programs to county residents through hands-on workshops, site visits, seminars, conferences, phone consultations, videoconferences, satellite downlinks, printed materials, a statewide toll free Info Line, and a large statewide Web site.

A network of subject-matter specialists on the UNH campus and in land-grant universities across the nation enhance our ability to respond quickly to social, economic, and environmental issues of broad public concern.

We're proud of our collective efforts and are pleased to offer these brief snapshots of our work in 2008. If you'd like to learn more, please use the information below to contact us.

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## 4-H Youth Development



Our overall goal hasn't changed since 4-H came into Merrimack County around the turn of the 20th century: fostering development of competent individuals and strong families. All 4-H programs focus on hands-on experiential learning that simultaneously fosters civic responsibility, environmental awareness and essential life skills, such as self-discipline, self-care and informed decision-making. The success of the 4-H program is influenced by many factors, the most important of which is the contribution of local adult volunteers to deliver most of its programs to youth, ages 5-19.



### 2008 Highlights

- 4-H clubs, special interest groups, and camp programs served 751 youth from 25 Merrimack County towns, fostering development of competent individuals and strong families.
- Adult volunteers delivered youth development programs within the county representing a cost benefit to the county of \$368,602 when calculated at the Independent Sector value of \$19.51/hour.
- 233 older youth used and applied leadership, teaching, planning and subject matter skills by serving on committees, teaching, or planning events.
- Among our youth participants, 319 Merrimack County showed increased knowledge and understanding 512 learned, practiced or improved in a new skill, and 306 presented examples of work to the public, showing engagement in learning and increased determination to use knowledge, opinions and skills gained.
- 4-H educators trained 295 adult volunteers in project planning and expansion, middle-management leadership and youth recognition. They delivered leadership training to 130 youth serving as club officers.

**Deb Cheever**, 4-H Youth Development Educator

**Nancy Evans**, 4-H Youth Development Program Associate

## Family & Consumer Resources Parenting Education

New this year, we collaborated with other county-based UNHCE Educators and other family service organizations to hold the first state-wide conference for grandparents and others serving as parents to a relative's child or children. Participants reported the following results:



### 2008 Highlights

- Listening to grandparents, untangling the complex web of these situations.
- Learning strategies for addressing the generation gap.
- Making connections with other grandparents.
- Became more aware of grandchildren's perspectives.

Our program "Helping children get along: building social competency from the ground up" attracted approximately 150 early-care-and-education professionals.

We delivered a variety of parenting-education programs. After completing these programs, parents reported:

- Increased confidence in their parenting skills.
- Increased understanding of discipline strategies.
- Increased understanding of fair expectations of children at different stages of development.

**Thom Linehan**, Family & Consumer Resources Educator

## *Family & Consumer Resources* *Family Financial Management & Food Safety*

Many Americans have put their financial security at risk with very low savings rates and high levels of debt. At the same time, global economic conditions have put additional pressure on families and their ability to cover basic living expenses. UNH Cooperative Extension's money-management outreach focuses on helping individuals and families establish financial stability and achieve long-term financial security.



Each year 76 million Americans experience a foodborne illness. Through Extension programs, food-service workers, volunteers, and household members gain knowledge and adopt better practices that help prevent foodborne illness.

### **2008 Highlights**

- Delivered single- and multi-session financial education workshops to 185 county residents. Participants learned and applied skills designed to increase savings, decrease debt, and increase confidence in managing money to reach financial goals. Workshop topics included basic budgeting, credit/debt management, retirement and estate planning, bankruptcy education, and identity theft prevention.
- Participated in community coalitions working to improve the economic success of families. The Franklin and Concord Asset Building Coalitions are two local groups that help working families access the Earned Income Tax Credit and other IRS tax credits to build financial assets.
- Conducted food-safety training workshops (SAFE) to employees and volunteers at food-service establishments, including specialty-food businesses, restaurants, schools, food pantries and nursing facilities. The trainings add another level of expertise to staff and volunteers' skills, as well as reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

**Marilyn Sullivan**, *Family & Consumer Resources Educator*

## *Natural Resources* *Agriculture/Horticulture*

New farmers continue to move into Merrimack County and start successful farming operations. UNH Cooperative Extension helps commercial farmers by providing them research-based, scientific information they can use to make decisions about crop- and soil-management practices, pest control, and business development.



### **2008 Highlights**

This year our agricultural resources educator visited 52 farms for individual consultations. She answered questions and helped farmers make decisions that:

- Helped at least 15 new farmers make decisions about what to grow, specific to their needs and property.
- Helped 25 vegetable growers, 10 growers of ornamentals and 6 fruit growers manage pest problems on their crops, allowing them to produce a salable crop.
- Prevented at least 25 applications of pesticides by identifying plant problems as cultural and not pest-related.
- Helped train and support Merrimack County Master Gardeners, who logged more 671 hours of volunteer time in hands-on and educational projects this season.
- Handled 265 phone calls from Merrimack County citizens with questions on a wide range of agricultural, horticultural, and pest-management topics.

**Sadie Puglisi**, *Agricultural Resources Educator*  
**Dot Perkins**, *Agricultural Resources, Program Coordinator*

## Family & Consumer Resources Food & Nutrition

The Nutrition Connections program works statewide with limited-income adults and youth to teach the basics of nutrition, food safety, shopping wisely for food, menu planning and reading food labels. Our staff work with people in small groups, in their homes, or by mail with a learn-at-home series. We work closely with the N.H. Food Stamp Program to provide nutrition education and food-resource-management education for food-stamp recipients. Staff also stress the importance of regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.



The goal of our program is to improve the likelihood that consumers will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose lifestyles consistent with the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and My Pyramid.

### 2008 Highlights

- Mailed three issues of the Smart Choices newsletter to more than 3,200 Merrimack County food-stamp families, and three issues of the Senior Smart Choices newsletter to more than 400 senior food-stamp recipients. These newsletters include nutrition articles, recipes, and tips on saving money at the grocery store. In addition, the Nutrition Connections aired Miss Smarty nutrition tips during the year on broadcast and cable television.
- Worked with UNH Thompson School interns, who researched foods of the various countries of origin for many of the county's refugee families. They then searched the Manchester and Concord areas for markets carrying those cultural foods, and distributed a list of markets to area social agencies.

## Family & Consumer Resources Food & Nutrition (cont.)

- Collaborated with Friends of Forgotten Children (a Concord food pantry) to assemble and deliver Thanksgiving baskets to new refugee families.
- Formed new partnerships with agencies throughout Merrimack County, including one with Operation Frontline, a program of the New Hampshire Food Bank. Two new curriculums—Eating Right, for adults, Side by Side, for children ages 8-12 and their parents—offer hands-on cooking skills, while teaching families about good nutrition, food-resources management, and food safety.
- Delivered a six-week series of nutrition lessons to 42 children in Allenstown Elementary School. Lessons included hands-on activities and taste-testing. Teachers reported that children responded to the program by discussing the healthfulness of snack foods brought to class each day.
- Facilitated discussion about nutrition and fitness with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients.
- Offered a series of classes and home visits offering nutritional information to participants of *In-shape*, a Dartmouth-Hitchcock/Riverbend research project studying the effects of exercise and nutrition mentoring for individuals on specific medication regimens that cause significant weight gain.



**Deborah Luppold**, *Food & Nutrition Specialist*  
**Elizabeth Martin**, *Food & Nutrition Program Associate*