

Understanding UNH Cooperative Extension

UNH Cooperative Extension Mission Statement

UNH Cooperative Extension provides New Hampshire citizens with research-based education and information, to enhance their ability to make informed decisions that strengthen youth, families and communities, sustain natural resources, and improve the economy.

UNH Cooperative Extension Statement of Values

We value ...

Our position as a primary outreach unit of the University of New Hampshire, one of the nation's few comprehensive land, sea and space-grant universities.

Our formal partnerships at the county, state, regional and national levels, enabling us to serve New Hampshire people.

Our collaborations formal and informal working relationships with University faculty, community and statewide organizations, and regional partners.

Our volunteers their knowledge, contributions and commitment to our mission.

Our responsibility to involve citizens in identifying the needs of diverse audiences and tailoring our educational programs to meet those high priority needs.

Our accessibility to engage learners where they are, when they are available, providing diverse educational opportunities, and reaching out to new audiences.

Our accountability a dedication to New Hampshire citizens and decision-makers, insuring that our educational efforts remain relevant, efficient, grassroots based and continuously evaluated.

Our staff comprises well-educated, informed, resourceful professionals with the expertise and desire to work collaboratively. They are committed to accomplishing our mission through applied research, proven and innovative delivery methods and new technologies.

UNH Cooperative Extension Vision Statement

UNH Cooperative Extension will engage individuals, citizen groups, public agencies and key decision-makers throughout New Hampshire with diverse educational programs that concretely and meaningfully reflect the University of New Hampshire's five core values: *engagement, responsiveness, resourcefulness, effectiveness* and *community*. In so doing, we envision earning statewide recognition and acclaim as the University's premier outreach arm.

Overview of UNH Cooperative Extension

UNHCE provides a direct link between UNH and people throughout the state. In partnership with local residents and volunteers, Cooperative Extension plans and conducts educational programs responsive to N.H. people and the issues they identify that are important to them. We have a proud history of serving people throughout the state for over a century. UNHCE state specialists and Extension educators serve as an outreach arm for UNH, providing applied research and practical education in agriculture and natural resources as well as in youth, family and community development. This programming not only helps participants but also results in many indirect benefits for non-participant taxpayers. As a University outreach program, we have a network of professional Extension educators (UNH staff) located in 10 N.H. counties. Our staff work with local volunteers and specialists on the UNH campus to design and conduct educational programs that meet societal, environmental and economic needs. UNHCE reaches one in four N.H. residents with information or assistance, and recruits, trains and supports over 4,000 trained volunteers who work with staff to conduct educational programs to reach a greater number of N.H. citizens (e.g., Master Gardeners, UNHCE Education Center Info Line volunteers, Lakes Lay Monitors, Marine Docents, Wildlife Coverts Cooperators, Natural Resources Stewards and 4-H Leaders)

Building a Stronger Future for UNHCE: UNHCE Re-Extension Final Report
January, 2012

A Brief History of Extension

In 1862 the Morrill Act, commonly called the Land Grant Act, provided federal support in the form of grants of public land to any state that would establish colleges to teach agriculture and mechanical arts, without excluding other scientific or classical studies.

In 1897 the Hatch Act allowed for the establishment of Agricultural Experiment Stations at one Land Grant College in each state. This is important because this act established agricultural research as a recognized function of the Land Grant University.

Farmer's Institutes became one of the primary means of disseminating research findings of the Experiment Stations to general audiences and Agriculture and Home Economics teaching faculty served as institute resource persons.

Demonstrations became the medium by which experiment station programs were delivered and the term "demonstration agents" was coined to identify personnel engaged in this effort.

In 1906, the first County Demonstration Agent, W.C. Stallings, was hired in Texas. Private funding spurred the spread of agent hires and home demonstration agents were soon added to address topics of interest to homemakers.

In 1907, the first 4-H Club was organized in Mississippi. In 1909, the 4-H Cloverleaf was first used.

In 1911, the Cloverleaf was adopted as the 4-H national emblem.

In the early 1900's extension work began to flourish and the single most important piece of legislation became law in 1914, the Smith Lever Act.

The Smith Lever Act of 1914 provided for mutual cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture and Land Grant Colleges in conducting agricultural extension work; it specified that the work... "shall consist of instruction and practical demonstration in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident in said colleges in the several communities, and imparting to such persons information on said subjects through field demonstrations, publications and other wise ..."

As the nation's needs continue to change, Cooperative Extension's role has changed to meet them and regardless of the labels given to Extension programs, it is the people served who are important. Extension's overall objective will be to continue to plan, execute, deliver and evaluate learning programs consistent with locally identified needs. Extension will help people acquire the understanding, capabilities, attitudes and skills essential to solving farm, home, environmental and community problems.

Pennsylvania State University
Cooperative Extension