

University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension (UNH CE)

Overview of State, County and Federal Funding

Overview

Cooperative Extension is a partnership program which relies primarily on three-way funding through annual appropriations from the state, county and federal government. Grants, contracts, program fees and private contributions supplement core funds. A memorandum of understanding between the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/Extension Service and UNH defines the University's responsibilities for program leadership and management. Memoranda of understanding exist between the University System of New Hampshire and County Commissioners to carry out the provisions of state law as reflected in RSA 24:10a: In addition to RSA 24:10a, there are two additional references in New Hampshire's RSAs pertaining to UNH Cooperative Extension including Chapter 24:10 and Chapter 187-A:6.

State and County Funding

State funding is provided through state legislative appropriations to the University of New Hampshire. Within the University System of New Hampshire's biennial budget are Program Appropriation Units (PAUs). Two of the PAUs in the budget pertain specifically to Cooperative Extension:

06-050-COO504010 UNH Cooperative Extension (for State Extension work)

06-050-EXT505010 Extension Work in Counties (for County Extension work)

Prior to 1987, county legislative delegations were routinely asked by UNH CE to pick up the increased salary costs for Extension employees. These increased costs were the result of USNH salary guidelines coupled with level federal funding. Recognizing that legislators wear "two hats" (i.e., legislators at both the "county" and "state" levels), their attention focused on whether the costs for salary increases should be provided by the county legislative delegations or through the state legislature. This question was the impetus behind creation of the "Legislative Study Committee on UNH Cooperative Extension," (established on May 25, 1987 – Chapter 315:1 laws of 1987 – HB #367FN-A). The conclusion of this study was that fringe benefits and the cost of future salary increases (including the county and federal share) would be funded by the state through the University System budget.

In 1994, another Legislative Study Committee was established (Chapter 157 of the laws of 1994). One of the key charges to the committee was to determine the extent to which recommendations of the 1987 legislative study committee were implemented. The 1994 legislative committee concluded that the cost of salary increases for UNH Cooperative Extension employees had been provided by USNH/UNH since 1988. The

committee recommended continuation of the “1988 agreement,” that the cost of salary increases be provided by USNH/UNH through its state appropriation. In 1995, new memoranda of understanding (MOUs) were negotiated in all ten counties and are scheduled for review every six years. The current memoranda of understanding (MOUs) recognize the establishment of a County Extension Advisory Council in each of the ten counties for the purpose of sponsoring, guiding and advising Extension work in accordance with a Statement of Operating Procedures filed with the county commissioners and with the Board of Trustees of the USNH. The county Extension councils operate in every county and are each comprised of 14 members. In addition to the 12 citizen volunteers, one member of the county delegation and a representative of the county commissioners serve on the council.

In 2011 the University System of New Hampshire received a 48% reduction in its biennial budget (FY12 & 13) which included the two PAUs dedicated to UNHCE. University of New Hampshire administration, in a demonstration of the value it places on UNHCE, made the decision to keep the CE reduction to 23%. As a result of these cuts in the state appropriations UNHCE can no longer operate as in the past. New county funding partnerships are being developed to acknowledge the need for cost reduction at all levels of government while still keeping a strategic local presence throughout the state.

Federal Funding (Smith-Lever)

Federal funding for Cooperative Extension is provided primarily through the Smith-Lever Act which was the legislation establishing Cooperative Extension in 1914.