



UNIVERSITY
of NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cooperative Extension

Sullivan County UNHCE

Sullivan County UNH Cooperative Extension is part of a statewide network of county offices bringing the University of New Hampshire resources directly to the people who live and work in Sullivan County. Sullivan County Extension is backed by more than 30 campus-based Extension specialists.

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

County government in partnership with UNH Cooperative Extension

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Support for Cooperative Extension Makes Positive Impacts in Sullivan County *Selected Highlights 2012-2013*

Agricultural Productivity

Agriculture in Sullivan County is a thriving economic sector, illustrated by the high value of agricultural products sold, exceeding \$14.9 million.

- Cooperative Extension addresses the needs of agricultural clientele through technical assistance and educational



events. In the past year, Extension provided more than 75 farm visits and 12 workshops. Sullivan County producers also attended other statewide events. Below are some examples of the impacts that have resulted from this work.

- A longstanding multi-generational dairy farm—once a thriving operation—was on the brink of closing. The county educator and three Extension specialists worked as a support team, helping the farm analyze its entire business and assess new production methods and alternative enterprises. Extension recommended ways to cut expenses and generate enough revenue to sustain the multiple farm families that rely on the farm for income. The farm looks very different today, but it is in business and generating income for the families.

- A diversified farm turned to Extension for assistance on how to increase farm profits. A team of Extension educators and specialists examined new revenue sources and explored economic losses and under-utilized resources. They presented the farm with several strategies and options. The farm implemented one of these strategies, adding a commercial kitchen for processing crops they couldn't sell directly to consumers due to blemishes or dings.

By adding the kitchen, the farm converted non-saleable resources into a value-added product and expanded its direct market sales. This resulted in an additional \$20,000 in yearly farm revenue, greater efficiency, less physical stress and a growing business.

- A mixed enterprise farm turned to Extension for help understanding why they were not as profitable as they thought they should be. They were grossing more than \$250,000 a year, yet they couldn't make enough profit to provide for their family needs. Extension helped the farm assess its current financial data, set up a system to collect more precise data, and worked with the farm family to explore ways to cut expenses, raise prices, and change their enterprise mix.

The farm implemented a new recordkeeping system that allows it to track financial data more precisely and changed its acreage allocation, shifting it to more profitable crops. Net yearly farm profits now exceed \$30,000, and the farm continues to implement practices to provide enough profit to reinvest in needed farm infrastructure.

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Forest Resources:

Eighty-eight percent of the county's land base—311,500 acres—is forestland. Partnering with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Sullivan County Conservation District, Extension implemented the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP). These federal programs provide cost-share dollars for practices that improve and protect forestland, wildlife habitat and water quality projects.

- County landowners have received more than \$1.25 million in cost-share dollars since 2009 from EQIP and WHIP. These include long-term stewardship plans, timber stand and wildlife habitat improvement, access roads, invasive plant control, and water quality improvement.
- In 2012, Extension foresters examined 42 woodlots with more than 5,500 acres, providing information about cost-share opportunities, wildlife and forest management plans, and harvesting.

- Extension provided nine communities with technical assistance, including management suggestions for two town forests, and helped in wood supply analysis and obtaining grant money to install a wood-burning system at the County Farm, saving the county in future fuel costs.

Building Strong Families

Sullivan County has more individuals living below poverty level than the state average—10.4 versus eight percent.

- Extension delivers the Managing Money Wisely program, bringing personal finance education to inmates at the Sullivan County Department of Corrections (DOC). Since its inception, 92 inmates have agreed to follow a spending-savings plan. DOC Program Director Jane Coplan said, "Managing Money Wisely is a program that greatly benefits the inmate population to enhance their knowledge regarding their own budget. It gives them the necessary tools and resources."



- Extension brings the 4-H LIFE (Living Interactive Family Education) program to children of incarcerated parents or grandparents. One inmate said the program "brought my family closer together and taught us how to reach out to each other," while another

said it provided "undivided family time" and "a better understanding about the responsibilities and family support necessary to make a family successful."

Youth Development:

- With the help of 100 volunteer leaders, the 4-H Youth Development program fosters life skills development in youth. This year, 343 youth participated in 26 community and three family clubs to build personal skills in communication, leadership, and management.

- The Rogue Robots of 4-H continue innovating while also building critical science, technology, engineering, and math skills. Building from the club's efforts at the Granite State regional competition, the high-schoolers unveiled a climbing attachment at the Pine Tree Regional in Maine in April.

- Following a visit to UNH's Chase Ocean Engineering Lab to learn more about Seacoast SeaPerch, the club has begun building eight underwater robots. www.roguebotsof4h.org.

Nutrition Education:

- Limited income residents from Claremont, Newport, Charlestown, Acworth, South Acworth, Lebanon, West Lebanon, and Cornish participated in a series of food, nutrition, and physical activity lessons.

- Nutrition Connections programming reached 63 families or individuals, either in a group series, home study course, or individual visits.
- More than 645 youth from Acworth, Claremont, and Newport completed a series of nutrition, food safety, and physical activity lessons. Students learned how germs are spread using the "glo-germ" light and powder, and they learned the importance of washing hands properly. Teachers reported improvement in students' hand-washing habits.

- Eight "Smart Choices" and "Smart Choices for Seniors" newsletters with information on nutrition and health reached 2,275 households.

County Investment:

- For the \$224,004 investment Sullivan County makes in UNH Cooperative Extension programs, an additional \$319,718 of state and federal funds are invested directly toward county staff, programming, administrative costs and computer support for Sullivan County.

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