

## **Overview of UNH Cooperative Extension County Advisory Councils**

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The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is a partnership with the State of New Hampshire, through the University of New Hampshire, the United States Department of Agriculture and the 10 counties, with the support and involvement of UNH Cooperative Extension Advisory Councils. The UNH Cooperative Extension County Advisory Council is the recognized group with which UNH Cooperative Extension cooperates directly in the implementation of local Extension programs.

The UNH Cooperative Extension Advisory Council consists of 14 members. Twelve (12) are individuals who can assist with the identification of the educational needs of county residents and relate them to how UNH Cooperative Extension can meet those needs. The term of office for these Council members is two years. A Council member may serve only three (3) two-year (2-year) terms consecutively. In addition to these 12 persons, one member of the County Delegation and a representative of the County Commissioners will serve on the UNH Cooperative Extension County Advisory Council with undefined terms.

UNH Cooperative Extension County Advisory Councils meet a minimum of six times each year. Council members are responsible to the Council Chair and to the County Office Administrator. UNH Cooperative Extension staff stay in close communication with the Council members by reporting to them regularly and involving them in UNH Cooperative Extension activities.

The UNH Cooperative Extension County Advisory Council is the vital link between the UNH Cooperative Extension and the local county and communities. It functions most effectively when its members freely exchange and solicit ideas, identify major community needs, help implement programs that best meet local needs and otherwise help people put knowledge and research to work.

### **Characteristics of County Advisory Councils**

Councils are made up of members who:

1. Are committed to the educational mission of UNH Cooperative Extension
2. Understand the educational objectives and methods of Extension
3. Are interested in addressing the major issues and needs of the county
4. Are broadly representative of the geographic, social and cultural aspects of the county
5. Attend and participate in regularly scheduled meetings.
6. Are willing to advocate/communicate on behalf of UNH Cooperative Extension with legislators, decision-makers and partnering organizations.