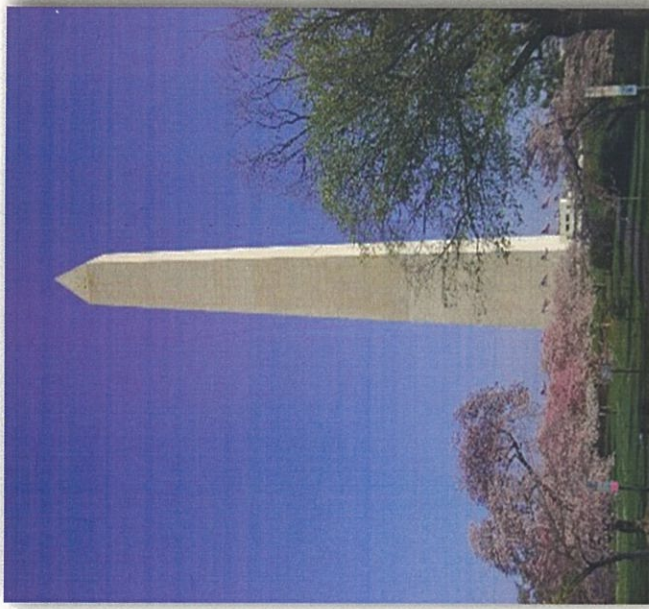

2005
Northeast Extension
Directors'
Award of Excellence
Program



February 1, 2006
Washington, DC



About the Award of Excellence...

The Northeast Extension Directors' Award of Excellence is the highest award presented by the Directors of Extension in the northeast. It recognizes Extension outreach education programming that has achieved outstanding accomplishments, results, and impacts in addressing contemporary issues in the 12 northeastern states and the District of Columbia. The award may be given annually to recognize up to three programs, which represent the work of an individual or multidisciplinary team within a state or multistate setting. One of the three awards may be designated for a multistate program. Honorable mention awards may be granted, if deemed warranted by the committee.

The Northeast Extension Directors Recognition Committee

A special thanks to:

Roger Adams, Connecticut
Lavon Bartel, Maine
Douglas Lantagne, Vermont
Mary Jane Willis, New Jersey

For their service on this committee.

Awards are announced at the Winter meeting of the Northeast Extension Directors at which time the recipients have an opportunity to share their program/project.

A commemorative plaque is presented. A monetary award of \$1,000 is deposited at the respective institution of the Award of Excellence Winner to be used to advance the work of the program/project, career advancement or professional development.

The Process

The Northeast Recognition Committee oversees the Awards Program by soliciting nominations and applications from the region's Extension systems. The nominations request, their submission, and their review by the committee are conducted through telecommunications and electronic technology.

Criteria Used in Rating Applications

Please note that all criteria are not equally weighted.

1. ISSUE & SITUATION Presents clearly the needs/situation of the issue addressed. Why is the issue important, and what was the situation prior to the implementation of the program?

2. STAKEHOLDERS & INPUT Identifies audiences/customers/stakeholders, and clearly describes the process(es) used to obtain their input into program development and implementation. Who does the program target, and how was their input obtained?

3. EXTENSION FOCUS & RESEARCH BASE Emphasizes the Cooperative Extension outreach education focus of the program, while presenting the key research and/or experiential learning upon which the program is based. A brief bibliography citing key references used in developing the program should be listed on page 4, if needed.

4. MULTIDISCIPLINARY & COLLABORATIVE COMPONENTS Presents the key multi-disciplinary components and collaborations/partnerships needed for success of the program. Explains the key role of each to the program. Do not just list disciplines, collaborators and partnerships without a statement of why/how they were important to the program.

5. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES Describes innovative approach(es) used to effectively address the issue. Clearly explains why the approach, method, program, etc. is viewed as innovative. Note: While innovation is strongly encouraged, and will be considered in the ratings, all program proposals submitted that show significant impacts/outcomes/results will be considered for an award.

6. IMPACTS ACHIEVED Identifies the evaluation methods used and clearly presents the significant impacts, outcomes and results achieved by the program in addressing the issue.

7. SCHOLARLY PRODUCTS DEVELOPED Presents the scholarly products developed for use by clientele and peers in support of the program. Scholarly products developed may include, but are not limited to: Journal articles, magazine articles, education manuals, fact sheets, new curricula, new web sites, videotapes, CD-Roms, etc.

2005 Award of Excellence Recipients

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West Virginia University Extension Service
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West Virginia University2

Blueberry Harvester Safety Program
University of Maine Cooperative Extension3

**Massachusetts 4-H Benchmarking Study and
4-H Community Planning Program
University of Massachusetts Extension**

Kathleen Chatwood, Volunteer and Risk Management Specialist
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Abstract:

"The Massachusetts 4-H Benchmarking Study and 4-H Community Planning Program" is an innovative research and experiential learning program involving the Massachusetts 4-H community in learning about and creating change. Research was conducted using on-line surveys and telephone interviews to present ten 4-H state program leaders descriptions of financial, organizational and social trends, best practices, and challenges impacting their programs. The resulting 137 page study was mailed to all advisories and was posted on the web to enable 4-H community discussion.

Educational presentations, a series of community planning meetings, and review teams further engaged 4-H volunteers, youth, staff and partnering organizations in discussing the information. Extension staff and the 4-H community raised concerns, suggested new ideas and identified priorities which were shaped into target goals to strengthen Mass 4-H. Community members continue to be involved in task forces and on program teams to create action steps for new programs and methods.

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2005 Award of Excellence

CHOICES: Steps Toward Health

University of Massachusetts Extension

Team Leader:

Jean Anliker, PhD, RD, LDN, Associate Professor and Director
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Team Members:

Meredith Pearson, PhD, FNP Director, University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD
Lynne Ivers Thompson, MS, Graphic Designer,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Elena Carbone, DPh, RD, LDN,
Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Joye Norris, EdD, President, Learning by Dialogue, N. Myrtle Beach, SC
Julie Haines, MS, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA

UMass Nutrition Education Program Staff, including:

Lisa Sullivan-Werner, EFNEP & FNP Leader, Amherst, MA
Cindy Hubbard, Project Manager, Amherst, MA
Rita Brennan Olson, Former Food Safety Specialist, Amherst, MA
Jeanne Baranek, Project leader, Lynn and Lawrence, MA
Pat Bebo, Project leader, Fall River, MA
Pat Culross, Project leader, Worcester, MA
Liljana Curcija, Project leader, MA
Kristen Johnson Dumaresq, Project leader, Boston, MA
Andrea Gulezian, Project leader, Brockton, MA
Pat Hammen, Project leader, Springfield, MA
Ana Rona, Translator, Amherst, MA

Abstract:

CHOICES: Steps Toward Health is an innovative curriculum designed for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Family Nutrition Program (FNP). Based on current adult pedagogy, CHOICES shows respect for learners by inviting them to become co-teachers and teachers to become co-learners through a process of dialogue and engagement. The curriculum includes seven core lessons: Moving to the Mambo, Whole Grain Twist, 5-A-Day Salsa, Low-fat Limbo, Kitchen Calypso, Food Safety Four-Step, and Foods a Go-Go. It features lively music and movement, personal goal-setting, and a variety of hands-on activities based on Dietary Guidelines. After a training session for pilot educators, CHOICES was pilot tested with an average of 100 EFNEP and FNP participants each in Massachusetts, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. After making appropriate revisions the curriculum was tested for outcome impacts. Results showed improvements in dietary, food safety, and food resource management behaviors of both EFNEP and FNP participants.

Delaware 4-H Environmental Education Program

University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

Team Members:

Mark J. Manno, State Extension Educator 4-H
mmanno@udel.edu
Joy, G. Sparks, State Program Leader, 4-H Youth Development
Doris Behnke, Extension Educator 4-H, New Castle County
Matt Webb, 4-H Environmental Educator, New Castle County
Hetty Francke, Composting Educator, New Castle County
C. Douglas Crouse, Extension Educator 4-H, Kent County
Susan Garey, Extension Educator, Animal Science
Heather Gooden, Extension Educator, Health Rocks and New Communities
Marta Pautler, Research Associate, Department of Plant and Soil Science
J. Thomas Sims, Director, Institute of Soil and Environmental Quality (ISEQ),
Associate Dean, Research and Academic Programs
Donald L. Sparks, Professor and Chair of the Department of Plant and Soil Science
Jennifer Crouse and Justin Pink, 4-H Teen Leaders, Kent County
Undergraduate and Graduate Students, ISEQ and
Department of Plant and Soil Sciences

Abstract:

Delaware has numerous environmental issues. Home to a number of large chemical companies, the state has the third highest death rate from cancer in the nation. In addition, the state produces 251 million broiler chickens a year, with Sussex County being the largest broiler producing county in the country. In the northern part of the state, management of industrial wastes continues to be a major issue. In addition, the state's voluntary recycling results in only 15% of potential solid wastes being returned for reuse. Over the past five years, Delaware 4-H has undertaken a comprehensive environmental education program to address these issues among the states youth.

Impacts from the program include 4-Hers reporting increased interest in environmental issues as a result of attending 4-H environmental day camps and overnight camps. These camps are the result of a partnership between Cooperative Extension and Institute of Soil and Environmental Quality at the University of Delaware. Teens have become interested in environmental education and readily serve as camp counselors. Over 5,000 youth per year receive education in backyard composting and compost demonstration facilities have been constructed in each county. Environmental education exhibits in the 4-H Department at the State Fair have increased over 50%. 4-H members have participated in increasing numbers in the 4-H Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) and the state Envirothon program. Three Delaware volunteers have been named National 4-H Wildlife Leaders in the past 4 years. Enrollment in the Environmental and Jr. Scientist camping programs is 60% male and 40% female, the opposite of other 4-H programs.

Delaware 4-H Afterschool Program University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

Team Members:

Mark J. Manno, State Extension Educator 4-H
mmanno@udel.edu

Carol Scott, 4-H Afterschool Coordinator, New Castle County
Kathryn Daly, Extension Educator 4-H New Castle County
Amy Chaplin, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Bayard Intermediante School
Caroline Romeo, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Eastside Charter School
Guy Mazza, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Tally Junior High
Matt Webb, 4-H Afterschool Environmental Educator, New Castle County
Shirley Alloway, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Knollwood
Theresa Lopez, 4-H Afterschool Program Assistant, Knollwood
Steven Anderson, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Sparrow Run
C. Douglas Crouse, Extension Educator 4-H, Kent County
Heather Gooden, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Clarks Corner
Susan DeFard, Extension Educator 4-H, Sussex County
Rhonda Martell, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Woodbridge
Dennis Rhodes, 4-H Afterschool Site Coordinator, Hickory Tree

Abstract:

The need for quality afterschool experiences for children in Delaware continues to be a high priority. Many parents can't afford the cost of some programs, yet require quality afterschool care for their children in order to continue working. Delaware 4-H has met this need by establishing quality afterschool programs in some of the lowest resource schools and communities in the state. These programs are either free or very low cost, and offer a combination of homework help or tutoring as well as high quality 4-H curriculum based enrichment activities on a daily basis. In addition, all participants receive a nutritious daily snack and many receive a hot dinner before they leave for home. These programs operate daily during the school year as well as for six weeks or more in the summer.

The impacts from these programs have been immediate and obvious. Participants are showing improved performance in schools on both report cards and standardized state tests and turn in completed homework assignments. Students show an increased attachment to school manifested in improved school attendance and parents report that their children are learning significant life skills from participation in the 4-H afterschool programs. Many afterschool participants are mainstreamed into the traditional 4-H program and many 4-H teens have become afterschool volunteers.

2005 Award of Excellence

West Virginia University Extension Service Diabetes Education Program

West Virginia University

Team Leaders:

Guen Brown, PhD, Nutrition and Health Specialist
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Karen Newton, B.S. Program Manager - Diabetes Education
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Ruchi Bhandari, MPA, MBA, Program Specialist
ruchi.bhandari@mail.wvu.edu

Dining with the Diabetes Team Members*:

Sheri Adams	Sue Johnson	Georgy Plaugher
Andrea Bennett	Bob Knight	Michael Pollard
Kimberly Carter	Miriam Leatherman	Brenda Porter
Jennifer Cochran	Mindy Mall	Kelly Quinn
Linda Damron	Judy Matlick	Gary Rapping
Kay Davis	Keiri McCormick	Charlie Rickman
Debbie Friend	Kimmy McNeil	Sue Riggs
Billie Frye	Diane Meadows	Deborah Shiver
Martha Garton	Margaret Miltenberger	Gloria Wagner
Janice Heavner	Lisa Mitchell	Linda Waybright
Kelly Hicks	Patty Morrison	Shirley Wilkins
Louanne Huff	Stephanie Moore	Barbara Wolfe
Sally Howard	Leane Ohnourika	

* Team members are located in counties throughout West Virginia and can be contacted through Dr. Brown. This list does not include health care partners.

Abstract:

The West Virginia University Extension Service Diabetes Education Program is a two-part, comprehensive effort. **Dining with Diabetes**, a program designed for individuals with diabetes and their families, is a five-class series that includes presentations, clinical testing, exercise, food preparation demonstrations, and tasting of healthy foods. Classes are taught by Extension Educators and diabetes health professionals throughout West Virginia. The program is offered free of charge. Since 1999, over 6,000 individuals have participated in the program and evaluation results have shown a significant increase in knowledge, positive lifestyle behaviors, and positive changes in clinical laboratory tests. The second part of our diabetes education program is **Bridging the Gap with Education: Diabetes Symposium and Workshop**, a three-day annual conference targeted to health professionals. Cutting-edge diabetes research findings are presented by nationally recognized speakers to over 300 participants from more than 25 states each year.

2005 Award of Excellence

Blueberry Harvester Safety Program

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

Team Leaders:

Marjorie Peronto, Extension Educator
mperonto@umext.maine.edu
Jennifer Lobley, Extension Educator
jlobley@umext.maine.edu

Team Members:

Tony Smith, Grower Representative, Cherryfield Foods, Cherryfield, Maine
Tara Wood, Secretary, UMCE Washington County, Whitteville, Maine

Abstract:

Youth with limited education or training have fewer opportunities to secure employment. Research shows that work experience is extremely important in building a base for future advancement in the work force. Evidence indicates employers and employees who participate in youth workforce preparation activities benefit through increased job satisfaction, attachment to the workplace, and teamwork skills. Extension Educators Jennifer Lobley and Marjorie Peronto collaborated with Cherryfield Foods, Inc. to create and offer a unique experiential training program that qualifies youth to participate in the mechanical harvesting of low bush blueberries, the largest agricultural crop produced in economically depressed Washington County, Maine. Since 2003, thirty-one youth have successfully completed the program. Twenty-eight of these youth were employed during subsequent blueberry harvest seasons, with no injuries reported. Without qualified laborers such as those in the youth training program, local growers could have sustained an estimated annual crop loss of more than \$1.6 million.

Land and Water Conservation Program

University of New Hampshire

Team Members:

Julia Peterson, Extension Specialist, Sea Grant & Water Resources
julia.peterson@unh.edu

Frank Mitchell, Extension Specialist, Land & Water Conservation
Jeff Schloss, Extension Specialist, Water Resources
Phil Auger, Extension Specialist, Land & Water Conservation
Amanda Stone, Program Coordinator, NROC/CCAP - Belknap County,
Laconia, NH

Abstract:

Fueled by a 125 population increase in the 1990s, New Hampshire is experiencing rapid land use changes resulting from development pressures. Although there is broad public support within the state for land and water conservation, community leaders are mainly volunteers without extensive backgrounds in natural resources or other disciplines related to land use and water quality.

In response to this situation UNH Cooperative Extension staff developed a comprehensive Land and Water Conservation Program intended to assist NH communities manage growth in ways that protect the environment, maintain community character and energize local economies.

In collaboration with 10 state/regional agencies and organizations this statewide, multidisciplinary extension program has resulted in more than 50 communities improving their ability to protect natural resources and manage growth. Documented impacts of community achievements in four categories: growing community capacity, gathering information and conducting research, engaging in natural resource-based planning and moving from decisions to activities, are listed.

Since 1999, the experiences of the Family Camp program have been that positive changes in participants are evident months after the program when the program included all members of the family. When programming annually, the changes have been evident over several years. The community building aspect of Family Camp has resulted in neighbors who have bonded and resolved differences peacefully. Evaluation data support positive sustainable changes. It was so well received that the Phillipsburg Housing Authority has allocated monies to send families to camp.

Lobster Resource Disaster Extension Program University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension

Team Members:

Nancy C. Balcom, Associate Extension Educator
nancybalcom@uconn.edu

Antoinette Clemetson, Extension Associate, New York Sea Grant,
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Abstract:

In 1999, the Long Island Sound commercial lobster resource, valued at \$25-40 million and supporting 1,400 lobstermen, experienced a severe die-off. A bi-state / federal / industry Steering Committee was established to oversee a comprehensive, multi-state research initiative. Connecticut and New York Cooperative Extension educators developed an extension program to support the Committee and research initiative, serving as the communication 'hub' between researchers, industry, media, and resource managers. Four public symposia, a joint web site, a Journal of Extension article, a special issue of the Journal of Shellfish Research, scientific and popular articles and presentations, a newsletter, a poster, fact sheets, and proceedings comprised the lobster disaster extension program. Evaluation results indicate the web site was a good tool for sharing updated information, the format for the public symposia were appropriate, and the lobster industry and public were kept adequately informed on the research progress through the extension team's efforts.

Other Nominations

Vermont Vegetable and Berry Extension Program The University of Vermont Extension

Vern Grubinger, Extension Professor, Brattleboro VT
Vernon.Grubinger@uvm.edu

Abstract:

Diversity helps sustain Vermont's agriculture. In 1974, there were 6,500 farms, of which three-quarters were dairies. A generation later, only one-quarter were still in dairy. Of 6,571 farms, 413 grew vegetables, 207 produced berries, 98 raised greenhouse vegetables, and 418 sold nursery and floriculture crops. Farmers are becoming more entrepreneurial, getting involved in value-added production and alternative markets such as organic and farm-branded products. To be successful with new markets, new practices, and new consumer interests requires new knowledge on the part of farmers. To help growers prosper in this changing environment, the Vermont vegetable and berry extension program has compiled and disseminated a wide range of University-based information on production, marketing, management as well as insights, experience and innovative practices developed by farmers and industry.

Nursery & Greenhouse Management University of Maryland Cooperative Extension

Stanton Gill, Extension Regional Specialist,
Nursery & Greenhouse Management
sgill@umd.edu

Abstract:

This program is coordinated by Stanton Gill who works as a Regional Extension Specialist for University of Maryland Cooperative Extension. The purpose of this program is to improve the economic viability and increase environmental stewardship of Maryland's green industry. This work includes the specialist working with county-based educators to develop field trials and to provide exceptional educational opportunities for practitioners to include topics such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and nutrient management for commercial nurseries, greenhouses, arborists and landscape managers throughout Maryland. In addition to conferences, clinics, field tours and seminars this specialist communicates using the latest technology and production methods through Extension publications, fact sheets, industry newsletters, websites, CD's, trade journals and Extension teaching/training manuals. His work is complemented by grant funding which has totaled more than \$200,000 in the last year. He has also been innovative in developing training materials in Spanish for the Latino workers.

Vegetable Disease Management and the Environment

University of Maryland Cooperative Extension and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

Kathryne L. Everts, Extension Plant Pathologist, University of Maryland and the University of Delaware
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Abstract:

A major contemporary issue for vegetable farmers in Maryland and Delaware is maintaining profitability while complying with new regulations. These regulations, while beneficial to human health and the environment, have reduced fungicide availability and discouraged fungicide usage through implementation of laws such as the Food Quality Protection Act. Cultural practices also are changing. For example use of cover crops is increasing to minimize nutrient runoff, a practice that also impacts diseases. The dual state program of Dr. Kathryne Everts in Vegetable Disease Management and the Environment is founded on applied research to address disease management issues of vegetable farmers. The locally-developed information is used to train farmers, extension educators and agricultural advisors in better vegetable disease management, which complies with new regulations. The program has led to reduced pesticide use, developed new knowledge on the impact of various cover crops on vegetable diseases, and increased the acreage under IPM practices.

New Communities Project: Connecting Parents, Children and Computers

University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension

Team Members:

Urnika R. Taylor, M.S., R.D., CD/N, Educator in Residence,
New Haven Project Director
urnika.taylor@uconn.edu

Wanda Hamilton, Program Coordinator, 4-H Urban Programs
Matt Mutchler, Evaluation Coordinator, Center for Applied Research

Abstract:

New Communities Project (NCP) is a metamorphosis of USDA Youth at Risk Projects, State Strengthening and Connections. Community partners identified the growing importance of technology for life skills. While the former At Risk Projects adult staff educated youth and families respectively in computer lab settings about hardware and software, NCP engages youth as the teachers using transferable teaching techniques. Urban youth are trained using a computer curriculum that encompasses techniques and experiences of the former projects. NCP transcends to a more comprehensive level by incorporating

Internet training. Thirty-six NCP youth leaders, ages 14 to 17 years old were trained. They, in turn, trained 134 youth and adults as the secondary audience. NCP provides valuable workforce skill development for youth, such as public speaking, organization, lesson planning and teamwork while the secondary audience gains valuable technology skills.

Tax Practitioners Education Program The University of Vermont Extension

Team Members:

Glenn Rogers, Extension Associate Professor, Farm Management Specialist
Glenn.Rogers@uvm.edu
Dennis Kauppila, Extension Associate Professor,
Farm Management Specialist

Abstract:

The University of Vermont Extension Tax Practitioner Education Program is a long-running annual education program for anyone who is in the business of preparing Vermont income tax returns. The program attracts about one-half of the tax practitioners in the state annually; these practitioners prepare approximately 100,000 Vermont tax returns - about 1/3 of the total returns filed. Team members Kauppila and Rogers work closely with key stakeholders and the Land Grant Tax Education Foundation in building unique curricula for Vermonters. In 2005 95% of students reported that the Schools help improve the accuracy of returns that they file (4 out of 5 students report attending the Tax School the previous year) and 96% of students strongly agreed or agreed that the Tax Schools gave them the most current state and federal tax information prior to the beginning of the income tax "season."

Family Camp: Strengthening At-Risk Families Through Adventure Based Initiatives

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Alayne Torretta, County 4-H Agent
torretta@cre.rutgers.edu

Abstract:

Working with families can be a challenge but very rewarding, and creating sustainable positive changes in at-risk families can be particularly challenging. Many times professionals create programs that focus on improving skills of youth, only to be discouraged when evidence of the positive changes does not remain. Resistance from family members, especially the adults in the family, can extinguish these behaviors.