

Cowlitz County Program Impacts 2008



**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION IN COWLITZ COUNTY
IS A THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP OF
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY,
COWLITZ COUNTY AND THE UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE.**

**WE PROVIDE RESEARCH-BASED
INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS IN THE AREAS OF
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION,
FAMILY LIVING, FOOD SAFETY, 4-H
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT,
HORTICULTURE AND DISTANCE
DEGREE EDUCATION.**

**THIS REPORT COVERS SELECTED
PROGRAMS AND
ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2008.**

WSU / Cowlitz County Extension Program Impacts 2008

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Gary Fredricks, Director

Community Development & Small Farm Management



Community Development

The public while aware of community concerns will at times lack the resources or organization skills to solve local problems. Faculty worked together to provide programs and form community action committees forums that solved problems facing local communities.

- Only four organizations in Cowlitz County that offer adult education classes annually with WSU Extension offering the only free classes. The Brown Bag Luncheon series offered a variety of classes that address current community concerns.
- **96 people gained new knowledge** on gardening, investing money, how to initiate power of attorney, protecting your home from crime, diet restrictions for a healthier life and preserving your heritage. A local station filmed the programs and aired broadcasts of the program on local T.V. The local paper attended several of the programs and wrote articles highlighting the information that was provided.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

Food drive collected **1417 pounds of food** that was **donated** to the local food banks.

62 participants learned how their septic system worked and understood how they would maintain the system so that it would not fail.



Small Farm Management

To promote local farm products, farmers helped local consumers be aware of the positive impacts of farming on the local economies and open space. The public is often unfamiliar with farming and unaware of the environmentally sensitive management techniques used. Raising consumer awareness about the local food system will help maintain both local food systems and open space in the urbanizing setting.

- A workshop series offered taught management practices to promote sustainability on small acreage farms. Participants learned how to prune trees to increase fruit production, propagate new varieties of plants on their property and manage their land to reduce weed populations.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

27 clientele learned **how to purchase high quality hay** for feeding their animals at a reasonable cost.

97 small farm owners **learned sustainable practices** to effectively grow grass for livestock that **encouraged clean water management, reduced weed populations** and was economically beneficially to the farm.



Sandy Brown

Family Living Extension Faculty



Person In Charge

The Washington State Food Code required that all food facilities have a Person In Charge (PIC) that has extensive food safety knowledge beyond that required to get a food handlers card. WSU Extension partnered with the Health Department to design and deliver a four-hour food safety course that addresses the food rule changes. The training gives food handlers the food safety knowledge to meet the Person In Charge knowledge base, improve or maintain good health inspection scores and eliminate or reduce the number of food borne illnesses in the community. The course has been presented monthly.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

126 food handlers attended courses in Cowlitz county. All participants **increased their knowledge about how food-borne illness** can be prevented.

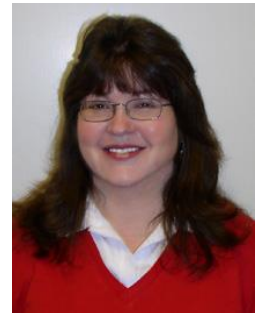
81% have made at least one **procedural change in the facility**, changed practices and/or updated other food handlers in food safety practices.

Inspectors indicate that **businesses that invested in this training got higher inspection scores** and can answer food safety questions more accurately.



Debbie Fredricks

Nutrition Education Assistant



Food\$ense

The **Food \$ense Nutrition Education Program** helps limited resource citizens of Cowlitz County learn how to make better nutritional food choices. Nutrition education can effectively help low-income families, especially the working poor, to achieve more nutritious diets and stretch food resources for more days every month. The goal is to help those on food stamps to reduce their dependency on food stamps and to learn to make more nutritious food choices. The following activities were provided to Cowlitz County residents.

- A monthly class is offered at a day program for the citizens with mental health issues. These classes provide attendees with information on the new My Pyramid, food safety, food preparation and saving money on food.
- A 4-week series of classes is offered quarterly at a **local Senior Center**. Participants learn about My Pyramid, food safety, how to read food labels, and preparing low cost meals.

- The Food\$ense program partners with Longview School District, Kelso School District, Longview Parks and Recreation, Cowlitz River Club, Head Start, Parents Place, Cowlitz County, Cowlitz County Health Dept., LCC, Cowlitz Tribe, St. Paul Lutheran Church and Lower Columbia CAP to provide information on food safety, food preparation and saving money on food.
- In 2008, 178 such phone **calls on food preservation and food safety** were answered. Many of these calls are from elderly, home bound citizens.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

975 low income families **learned how to save money buying food while preparing a nutritious meal for their family.**

443 elementary age children and 69 adults **learned how to safely prepare food, the value of eating fruits and vegetables, and the correct way to wash hands to eliminate disease.**



Diabetes Education and Food Safety

Approximately, 400,000 Washingtonians (6%) have diabetes, one of the leading causes of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and lower limb amputations. Living Well With Diabetes is a joint research project with Harvard University, Joslin Labs of Boston that offers 5 week program targeting people with diabetes and pre-diabetes. During the program people are taught about the 5 important tests everyone with diabetes should have, how to make healthy food choices at home and away, how to read labels, how to incorporate physical exercise into their daily lives and how to deal with stress.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

89 pressure gauges from canning lids were tested for accuracy **reducing the danger of serious food borne illness.**

96 people **manage their diabetes** through exercise and diet with 43% improved blood glucose levels, cholesterol, and blood pressure



Jennifer Leach

4-H Extension Agent



The Cowlitz County 4-H program is an integral part of providing developmentally appropriate activities for Cowlitz County youth. 4-H outreach efforts continue to be an important aspect of providing youth with positive pro-social activities that increase subject matter knowledge, skill development, and opportunities for participation in community and county activities. The 4-H outreach efforts are delivered in a variety of ways ranging from 4-H volunteers to 4-H Challenge leaders to Clothing and Textile volunteers sewing camps/Saturday Sewing to day camps to Youth Leadership Academy.

4-H Club Program

The foundation of the program is the volunteer led 4-H clubs who have trained adults who lead youth in a variety of projects ranging from horses to dogs to cooking to small engines.

- Eight “New Leader Orientation” sessions were held with 13 potential leaders attending and 8 leaders completing 9 hours of new leader training.
- To build relationships with 4-H leaders, the 4-H agent met with every main club leader prior to re-enrollment to review basic program policies, enrollment, publications, and financial record keeping. This has resulted in improved 4-H club management and support for the volunteer club leader.
- **225 4-H club members** participated in the 2008 Cowlitz County Fair.
- 90% of the new 4-H volunteers have gained knowledge and skills in child development, experiential learning, understanding life skills, and managing a club and/or teaching others.
- Over 25 4-H members, leaders, and parents attended trainings such as Quality Assurance.
- Increased efforts in teen programming resulted in 8 teens attending the state Conference.
- Applied for and received a full time equivalent Washington Service Corps member with ½ time to Cowlitz County to promote youth activities

- **125 youth participated** in summer day camps and educational workshops in sewing day camps, gardening, foods/nutrition, and creative arts day camps led by Extension staff/faculty; Clothing and Textile Advisors, and/or 4-H volunteers.
- “4-H Clubs” After School—participants stated that
 - 74% felt a sense of belonging to the program
 - 69% felt they could better resolve conflict
 - 77% said they had improved their skills

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

412 4-H members participating in 4-H clubs **determined career choices; achieve high school recognition for community service hours; improved their ability to speak in public; improved their organizational skills; and improved their opportunities for higher education or vocational school**

Received a **\$1,500 grant** for after school programs that reached over 65 youth.



Cowlitz County “Strengthening Families” Program

For Cowlitz County risk factor indicators include poor family management, family conflict, and family history of substance abuse. The program is designed as a strengths based family program for parents/caregivers and their 10-14 year old youth. It is a seven-week program that targets teen substance use and abuse both directly and indirectly.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

Parents rated significantly higher in **their ability to control their anger when disciplining or discussing problems** at the end of the program.

There was a significant **increase in the number of parents reporting communicating about drug and alcohol use.**



Gary Fredricks

Urban Horticulture Program



The WSU Master Gardener Program is a public service program that provides university training to volunteers for the purpose of enabling them to serve their communities through horticulture, gardening and pest management.

- Thirty five volunteers attended Master Gardener Training. All trainees showed increased knowledge in horticultural practices.
- 146 people gained skills in horticultural practices pertaining to water conservation, effective methods to compost organic wastes and how to maintain plants for maximizing fruit production.
- For the 191 participants attending workshops, those polled by an informal survey indicated that over 80% learned new information that was useful in raising a successfully garden.
- For the 22 youth participating in the juvenile detention gardening program, all indicated they had gained greater knowledge of gardening and were able to demonstrate those skills.
- Master Gardener volunteers provided over 390 hours of plant and insect clinic to assist 150 people to assist people with their questions.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

The Demonstration Garden showed residents how to **reduce the amount of pesticide use** by using plants in the Pacific Northwest.

Classes provided with Master Gardener assistance increased by 100% with 3637 people attending 33 classes and workshops.

The Master Gardener volunteers taught 620 people how to **control insects pests, cure plant diseases and solve garden problems.**



Terrie Jones, M.P.A.

Director of WSU Learning Center- Cowlitz & Wahkiakum



The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Learning Center has a working relationship with LCC, WSU Vancouver, and WSU Pullman to serve all potential WSU students. The Learning Center coordinates recruiting efforts; assists in advising; proctors student exams; provides workspace and materials for students and is actively involved in the student progress through graduation.

Advising

The Learning Center also advises walk-in students interested in degree programs at WSU, WSU-Vancouver and DDP (Distance Degree Programs).

- Terrie **advised 158 students** seeking to transfer to the 4-year campus of WSU Vancouver on which classes are required for their degree program.
- The WSU Learning Center **hosted an annual event for Running Start** high school students. Over 100 local students under the age of 18 visited the Learning Center and learned about WSU educational opportunities.
- The WSU Learning Center offered a luncheon for all local DDP students and community members interested in distance learning through WSU. DDP offer those with physical disabilities to earn their degrees.
- The **BA in Education Degree Program** designed for students who complete a transferable Associate of Arts degree and then pursue a Bachelors of Arts teaching degree was used by 40 students.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

Students **enrolled in classes** other than Distance Degree Program.

The Learning Center patrons provided students **with information on classes and degree programs.**

The Learning Center held many community service activities with over **2,350 attending the programs.**

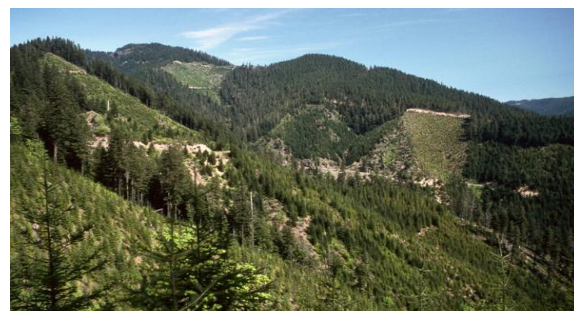


Full Immersion Spanish Institute

The WSU Learning Center hosted the fourth year of its Full Immersion Spanish Institute for two classes with a total of 18 students. The focus of the Full Immersion Spanish Institutes is to increase understanding and communication skills with the Hispanic/Latino population statewide.

Tony Sachet

Forester



Landowners in Cowlitz County were provided technical assistance and educational programs to improve their knowledge to effectively manage the forest resources on their property. The problem of slope stability issues, risk evaluation of damaged trees, cost-share programs and stewardship plans was discussed providing landowners with substantial savings.

- The number of technical contacts are:

Phone & e-mail	112
Field Meetings	24
Referrals to others	62
- The number of contacts for participation in the different programs for SW Washington are:

Technical/Advisory contacts:	195	Field Visits	34
Referrals	100	Forest Stew Plan hours	84
Cost Share Programs contacts	66	Acres w/new Stew Plans	571
Stewardship Plans contacts	70	Landowner Meetings	312
- Volunteer activities in Cowlitz County include:
 - Helping local high schools Envirothon contest – forestry section
 - Tree City Award presentation to City of Longview Parks Dept.
 - Participation in Farm Forestry Association

WSU Extension Volunteers

4-H, Master Gardeners & Clothing and Textile Advisors



4-H Programs

105 4-H volunteers in Cowlitz County average 10 hours per month (9 months) in club meetings working with 503 4-H club members in 4-H club activities/events and fair preparation for a **total of 12,600 hours.**

32 middle managers for 4-H volunteer (superintendents and assistants) give 13 hours/day X 9 days = 117 hours/volunteer for a **total of 4,160 hours.**

Master Gardener Volunteers

57 adult volunteers give 41 hours per year for Community Educational Activities which includes time in the Plant and Insect Clinic for a **total of 2,337 hours.**

Clothing and Textile Advisors

The 21 Clothing and Textile advisors provided an average of 105 hours/volunteer for a **total of 2,205 hours**

Totals

Total number of volunteers = 183

Total number of hours to the community = 20,886

Total value of volunteer service to the community =

\$17.92/hour X 20,886 hours = \$374,277