

Cowlitz County Program Impacts 2012



**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 2012.**

WSU / Cowlitz County Extension Program Impacts 2012

Small Farm Management – Gary Fredricks	4
Community Development	
Small Farm Management	
Master Gardener Program	
Food Safety and Preservation	
– Sandy Brown, Debbie Fredricks & Tina Thompson	7
Food Preservation Workshops	
Pressure Gauge Testing	
Person in Charge- Food Service Food Safety	
Diabetes Series	
Food \$ense, Nutrition Education	
4-H/Youth Development – Jennifer Leach	10
4-H Club Program	
Cowlitz County “Strengthening Families” Program	
Forestry – Jim Freed & Mike Nystrom	12
Small Business Development Center – Jerry Petrick.....	13



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.



Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

- **115 people gained new knowledge** on gardening tips, protecting your home from invasion, using herbs for health, saving money while shopping, and how to write a will.
- WSU Food drive collected **1517 pounds of food that was donated** to local food banks from an employee food drive (**valued at \$1,138**).
- WSU **Small Business Development Center** moved to WSU Extension office encouraging greater access to clientele.
- Working with Cowlitz County Dept. of Solid Wastes, a grant was secured from Department of Ecology offering **composting bins for \$10.00** (\$75.00 without grant) to those that attended composting training provided by WSU Extension **saving taxpayers \$17,875**. There were **262 people** that attended one of 5 trainings offered.
- **Silver Lake is being tested** for water quality concerns through funding from Cowlitz County (\$110,000). Volunteers are assisting with sample testing. Four tests taken in 2012 have highlighted lake concerns.
- **162 people** learned how to properly and safely preserve a variety of different foods that were grown locally.

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.



Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

- **384 people gained new knowledge on:**
 - Low impact vegetable gardening practices
 - Control of moles
 - Using native plants in their landscape
 - Composting practices to enrich the garden
 - Care of roses
 - How to raise Mason Bees.
- **43 people purchased rain barrels** and are practicing water conservation methods.
- **32 people are now using raised beds** to grow food for themselves and understand how to maximize food production.
- **21 people received their Washington apprentice Beekeeper's Certification** and are actively raising bees.
- **69 people learned how to properly prune their fruit trees** to maintain tree health, reduce disease and improve fruit production.
- **76 people learned management practices** to promote sustainability on their small acreage farms.

Master Gardener 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.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

- **10 volunteers graduated from Master Gardener Training providing 890 hours of community service.** 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 **14 youth participating in the juvenile detention** gardening program, all indicated they had gained greater knowledge of gardening and were able to demonstrate those skills.
- A 5 day **Gardening camp was attended by 22 youth** ages 6-9 years old. Youth learned how to compost, how soil is created, how to maintain water quality, grow vegetables and other facts of science. Parents of participants indicated that all youth gained knowledge and skills in science and natural resources.
- Master Gardeners raised and donated over **3000 pounds of fresh produce was donated** to local food banks (**valued at \$2,325**).
- **361 people attended 8 workshops learned** how to prepare vegetable starts, lawn care and raising tomatoes.

Master Gardeners offered Home VEG (Vegetable Educational Garden) where they **build 10 raised beds at homes (cost at \$2,500)** supplied all the materials, soil and seeds. Families raised an average of **47 pounds of food** per bed.

74 Master Gardeners provided 30 classes attended by 7639 people and volunteered 4,276 hours of community service.

The Master Gardener volunteers answered the **questions of 319 people** on how to control insect pests, cure plant diseases and solve garden problems.



Food Safety and Preservation

Growing and preserving one's own food is of increasing interest to people these days. People want to know where their food comes from and what is in it when preserved.

Food Preservation Workshops

- Partnered with Bob's Merchandise to offer a six week series of food preservation classes
- Over 250 people attended the workshops learning the basics of preserving foods.
- 90% of the participants indicated they learned something new about preserving foods
- 75% of the participants actually preserved food after each class using the skills learned in class
- 45% of the participants were able to successfully preserve one or more foods for the first time.
- The number of calls and questions regarding home food preservation and food safety as a result of this class has increased 5%.



Pressure Gauge Testing:

Pressure canner dial gauges **MUST** be checked yearly to be sure they work accurately. If they don't, people could be over or under processing their foods. This could potentially cause a foodborne illness or death resulting from improper preservation.

- 50 canner gauges were tested
- 35% of them were inaccurate and needed to be replaced
- As a result of replacing the inaccurate one, this reduces the risk of over 50 families from getting ill or dying from foodborne illness or related health issues due to incorrect processing of home preserved foods.

Person in Charge- Food Service Food Safety

WSU Extension offered 12 classes in 2012, using the detailed Food Safety curriculum developed by WSU Extension in response to the Health Departments request. The class is for anyone working in the Food Service and volunteers preparing food for community events. Four agencies sent employees to the classes and 14 people received certification upon completion of the class.

Citizens benefited by:

- Food Service Workers trained to prevent foodborne illnesses in the community.
- Food Service Workers are eligible for a 5-year Food Handlers Permit.
- Community events and food facilities in Cowlitz County are following procedures that prevent foodborne illnesses that could result in death or expensive hospitalization, restaurant reputation or potential closing of the facility.



Diabetes Series

Cowlitz County is considered a "hot spot" for diabetes. WSU Extension provided series of 6 classes teaching people how to manage their diabetes. The classes also teach people who are considered pre-diabetic new skills that may prevent them from ever developing diabetes.

- 12 people with diabetes were able manage their disease through better dietary choices and increased exercise which leads to fewer serious health complications.

Food \$ense, Nutrition Education

WSU Cowlitz County Extension Food \$ense program teaches youth, families, and adults with limited incomes to develop lifelong skills and behaviors that promotes healthy food selection and eating along with leading physically active lifestyles.

Two Food \$ense nutrition educators work in 9 elementary schools in grades K-5, 6 Headstart classrooms, the CSO office, the Free Clinic and with Cowlitz River Club to provide nutrition education class series that teach food selection, food budgeting, preparation and menu planning to feed themselves and their families healthy foods within their budgets.

2,180 families were impacted by the Food \$ense program in 2012. Changes in behavior that occurred as a result of our programs in the schools include:

- **475 now use food labels** to compare the nutrition content of food.
- 250 now consume fruits and vegetables every day.
- 385 now eat breakfast daily before going to school.
- 284 have at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- **2,180 wash their hands** before eating.
- 480 now wash fruits and vegetables before eating them



Parents report the following changes in behavior occurred after reading the parent newsletter and hearing about what their child learned in class.

- **1500 eat more meals together as a family.**
- 890 use MyPlate for selecting healthy snacks and meals.
- 750 tried new recipes using new foods.
- 800 eat more fruits and vegetables every day.
- 900 read nutrition labels more often when choosing foods.

Cowlitz County 4-H Youth Program

Background

Eight years of national longitudinal research on 4H youth development indicates that 4H helps young people **excel beyond their peers** in the area of healthy behaviors; excelling in school including the sciences; and improving their communities [Dr. Richard Lerner, Tufts University]. To achieve these impressive outcomes, our Cowlitz County 4H volunteers work with youth in the framework of the “four Essential Elements” of positive youth development which are *Belonging/Bonding, Mastery, Leadership/Independence, Generosity*.

Activities/Outputs

- **466 youth in 4-H** reaching **2%** of the K-12th grade youth in Cowlitz County
- **143 4-H volunteers** with 117 in 4H Club Program and 36 in outreach
- 214 4H members in volunteer-led Club Program.
- “Outreach 4H Programs” ranging from after school 4H clubs to day camps to school enrichment had **252 4H youth receiving 912 contact hours**.
- For 4-H Clubs After School, 114 youth met once per week during the school year. Programming provided by AmeriCorps/Washington Service Corp position
 - Monticello Quilting: 8 youth taught by 4H Sewing & Textile Volunteers
 - Cowlitz County “4H Bits and Bots” Robotics Program in partnership with Longview S.D. taught 35 youth by 4H robotics mentors
- Day Camps and School Enrichment had:
 - Robotics Day Camp led by WSC staff using 6 youth participants and 12 adult/parents
 - Summer Sew Day Camp had 24 participants attend
 - School Enrichment at Kelso School District for Loowit High School 4H Sewing for 27 youth
 - Youth Services Center-Transitional Classroom-Science Focus had 6 participants
 - Know Your Government taught 6 youth with Theatre Arts involving 8 participants

4-H Impacts

- **No** 4H middle school or high school age member became a teen parent or were in the juvenile system.
- **90%** of the **20** graduating senior members in Cowlitz County are going to **college and/or working** as indicated in the state wide 4H graduation survey, as compared to 78% of statewide 4H youth.

- **81.8%** of the **53** 4H members stated that as a result of their participation in the 4H public presentation activities, they had improved their communication skills such as clearly stating my thoughts and ideas to others; participate in group discussions; or influence nearly every audience.
- **100%** of the **6** 4H members in the 4H robotics club “Blazing Bots” had gained skills in planning, designing, and programming their robot as part of the FIRST Lego League participation.

Outreach 4H Programs

- Robotics—Day Camp and School Enrichment : Over **80%** of the **41** participants gained knowledge and skills in STEM to help them with future careers in STEM
- Robotics School Enrichment Cowlitz County “4H Bits and Bots”—The adult mentors felt that over **80%** of the participants gained high level skills to help them with science, engineering or math and over **55%** felt that their skills and knowledge gained would prepare them to college or career ready in the area of STEM
 - The Cowlitz County “4H Bits and Bots” team placed 2nd in Oregon Regional’s and 2nd in Washington regional’s—which is quite impressive as it was only a second year team
- **90%** of the **43** participants in the respective sewing programs have applied their math skills to successfully complete quilts and other sewing items at a blue ribbon standard of excellent.

Grants and Extramural Funding for Outreach Programs

- Washington Service Corp/AmeriCorps Grant: One FTE 4H Outreach Educator salary and benefit equivalent: **\$31, 875**
- JC Penney After School Fund: Over **\$6,000** received from JC Penney (over 5 years). One of 65 counties in the nation to receive funds from JC Penney.
- For 2012 received over **\$25,000** in national and local support. Corporate support (JC Penney and Bezos Family Foundation of \$6,000) with the remaining support from local donors. Partnership with the Longview School District for use of the facility.
- Del’s Farm Supply-Longview Store: received over **\$3, 800** in a two year period as part of corporate support. The local store has led the nation in amount of funds generated and the most 4H donors. Funds will be provided to 4H clubs that focus on science through a mini grant application written by the 4-H youth.

Forestry

Impacts

- Conducted an 8 week Forest Stewardship coached planning course. 16 families registered for the class (24 people average attendance). Impacting **4,200 acres in Cowlitz County** and 700 acres in other counties. It was the best one ever conducted based on the number of finished plans within 6 months. In response to written, electronic and face to face surveys, **planning two natural resources management focus classes for 2013** for the families that have taken coached planning in Cowlitz County.
- Conducted a class for professionals who do forestry plans. The Technical Services Provider plan training was attended by 22 professionals.
- **Conducted a "Ties To The Land" program for 18 families.** This program assist forest land owner to develop a method of transferring their assets from the present generation to future generations.
- Present a program on non-timber forest products for the Cowlitz chapter of the Farm Forestry Association.



- **Jim responded to 61 requests** for information via phone and e-mail. Many were people who receive the e-newsletters that I write monthly. 8 were people that the Cowlitz county extension staff referred to me.
- Jim conducted 16 site visits that included:
 - 7 in relations to the coached planning class
 - 4 for forestry management of smaller parcels
 - 2 forest health visits
 - 3 special forest products management, manufacturing and marketing plans (economic development)
- **Mike conducted 11 site visits in the county** and responded to 25 requests for information. 5 plans were received as part of the class so far.
- The Western Washington Forest Landowners Field Day, held in Thurston Co. provided education for small forest landowners. This event was attended by over 18 landowners from Cowlitz County (overall attendance was over 250.)

Small Business Development Center

Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) provide a wide array of technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs supporting business performance and sustainability and enhancing the creation of new businesses entities. These small businesses in turn foster local and regional economic development through job creation and retention as a result of the extensive one-on-one long-term counseling, training and specialized services they receive from the SBDCs. The SBDCs are made up of a unique collaboration of SBA, state and local governments, and private sector funding resources. The Washington SBDC Network has been operated by Washington State University for more than 30 years.

SBDCs provide services such as development of business plans, manufacturing assistance, financial packages, and procurement contracts. Special emphasis areas include international trade and export assistance; e-commerce; technology transfer; assistance for veterans, including reservists, active duty, and disabled personnel returning from deployment; disaster recovery assistance; IRS, EPA, and OSHA regulatory compliance; research and development as well as market research.

This year in Cowlitz County, the SBDC had:

- 2 Published Success Stories
- 12 Subject Matter Expert Articles
- 4 Community Presentations/Workshops
- 2 Press Releases
- **104 clients Served**
- 795 Hours of Direct Client Service [103% of goal] (45% with Growth & Development Clients - clients with high probability of capital investment and/or job creation)

SBDC Impacts:

- **\$1.2 million** in Capital Formation
- 24 Direct Jobs Create/Saved
- **6 New businesses** formed