WSU Thurston County Extension

Summary of Activities

2020
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Our efforts would not be possible without our program staff and numerous volunteers
Extension Programs: Organizational Collaboration, Community Buy-In

Eleven Extension educators positively impact Thurston County residents each year providing research-based information and educational programs that give people the knowledge to improve health and livelihood. Leveraging County support, WSU Extension brings in resources from grants, contracts, fees, fund-raising, and the University to develop and deliver locally-relevant programs.

In 2020, Thurston County provided $153,262 in support via the MOA, and $347,618 from non-MOA sources (total $500,880). WSU Thurston County Extension received $426,072 from WSU, raised an additional $262,445 in grants (total $688,517), and facilitated $372,000 in volunteer service contributions.

Volunteer Support!

Trained, enthusiastic volunteers are an important part of WSU Extension programs. In 2020, WSU Thurston County Extension volunteers gave approximately 13,681 hours of service†, which is equivalent to 6.5 full-time employees. At an estimated volunteer value of $27.20 per hour*, that service is worth $372,000.

† Not all volunteer hours have been reported to the WSU Volunteer Database.
* Source: Independent Sector, July 2020

Thurston County-WSU Funding Overview 2020

- WSU grants, $262,445
- WSU Support, $426,072
- Total County, $506,845
- General fund, $277,624
- Non-general fund, $229,221

County investment

- $506,845

Leveraged

- $372,000
- $688,517

$506,845 Thurston County

$688,517 WSU

**Budgeted County funds include space use, IT, phones, waste reduction program staff, front office staff, M&O, reserves, and other.

February 2nd, 2021. Prepared by Stephen Bramwell, Director and Agriculture Extension Faculty (360-867-2161, bramwell@wsu.edu).
Three foundations support the following WSU Extension programs in Thurston County: 4-H Youth Development program, Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter program, and the Native Plant Salvage Project. Support is garnered through fundraising activities, accepting donations, membership fees, and other approaches.

**Thurston County 4-H Council** raises funds to enhance and expand 4-H Youth Development programs in Thurston County. The Council and Program Committees add value to the WSU Thurston County Extension program by providing grants for innovative programs, and subsidizing registrations fees for camps, leadership conferences, volunteer leader training programs, and exchanges.

**The Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County**, founded in 2005, encourages sustainable gardening and environmental stewardship practices through financial support for the WSU Thurston County Extension Master Gardener and Master Recycler Composter programs. Major events sponsored by the Foundation include an annual Plant Sale on the third Saturday in May, a Bingo Night hosted by a local gardening personality (prizes are garden themed), and bi-monthly meetings with educational lectures which are open to the public.

**The Native Plant Salvage Foundation**, founded in 2000, promotes the use, preservation, knowledge, and appreciation of native plants in the landscape through financial support for the WSU Thurston County Native Plant Salvage Project. The primary program areas of the project include: Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)/Low-Impact Development (LID), Shoreline Stewardship Education, Schools Programs, Sustainable Landscaping/Naturescaping, Plant Salvages, and Plant Identification.
The SNAP-Ed program helps youth and families make healthy choices within a limited budget and lead active lifestyles through improved nutrition, food preparation skills, gardening and physical activity.

SNAP-Ed Policy, Systems and Environmental Initiatives (PSE) included:
❖ Partnered with the Regional Food Security Project, developing “Cooking with the Seasons” videos.
❖ Developed Meal Kit program at Garfield Elementary, providing bi-weekly food bags for families.
❖ Developed COVID-19 Emergency Food Resource List and distributed to partners.
❖ Collaborated with WIC and WSFMA to ensure market vouchers were distributed by mail to clients.

The SNAP-Ed direct education program provided multiple class series on basic nutrition, food preparation skills, gardening and physical activity, partnering with Pleasant Glade Elementary, Centralia and Chehalis School Districts.

Farm to School activities included:
❖ Built and distributed seed-starting kits to schools and farmers markets, providing students an opportunity to garden at home during distance learning.
❖ Promoted fresh produce boxes distributed to families at school sites, providing recipe ideas.

2020 in Numbers
• SNAP-Ed delivered 17 educational trainings in the community, reaching over 185 youth and adult participants
• PSE (policy, systems and environmental) reach of over 1,108 people

Major outcomes:
• Continued the Food Rescue program at Chehalis Farmers Market, gleaning over 1,200 pounds of produce for emergency food programs.
• Provided over 235 Meal Kits to families at Garfield Elementary, to support those struggling during the pandemic.
• Developed 12 instructional cooking videos, supporting over 100 unemployed families who received weekly produce boxes, in collaboration with Pacific Mountain Workforce Development.
2020 NUMBERS

PARTICIPATION

• 329 youth 4-H club members enrolled
• 383 county youth participated in out-of-school programs with 4-H staff and volunteers
• 145 WSU Certified adult volunteers gave over 3000 hours of their time to 4-H youth
• 60 youth members participated in Thurston County 4-H Virtual Contests (offered as an alternative to the cancelled County Fair)
• 55 high school students participated in 4-H Geology project as part of online school

GRANTS AND AWARDS

• $2200 received from Food Smart Families Grant and Walmart Foundation for healthy living programming
• Zonta Club of Olympia contributed $1000 used to develop STEAM curriculum kits

KUDOS TO...

❖ Thurston County 4-H Horse Project youth members competed in the virtual 2020 Arabian Horse National Youth Judging Contest and Hippology Contest.
❖ Thurston County 4-H Rabbit Project youth members competed in the virtual 2020 National ARBA creative arts, rabbit judging, and rabbit breed identification contests.

The Thurston County 4-H Youth Development Program supports school-age youth in becoming capable, contributing, and caring individuals. 4-H provides opportunities for skill building, recognition, and connecting with others and community which results in healthy behaviors.

Programs:
❖ In 2020, Emily Killeen hired as 4-H Coordinator (start date 9/21/20)
❖ In 2020, 4-H engaged Thurston County young people through...
  ❖ 329 youth in yearlong 4-H Clubs
  ❖ 383 youth in afterschool and in short-term, special interest programs
  ❖ YA4H! Teens As Teachers afterschool healthy living and STEAM programs
  ❖ 4-H teen leader Know Your Government Conference
  ❖ Experience 4-H virtual workshop series and contests such as: public speaking, photography, and educational displays

Club management & outreach:
❖ 30 chartered 4-H community clubs
❖ Volunteer Training Workshops
❖ Weekly Thurston County 4-H Newsletter
❖ Partnerships with Timberland Libraries, South Sound YMCA, Thurston TOGETHER, ROOF, and Tumwater HOPES CPWI coalition.
The WSU Extension Ag program helps support **profitability and sustainability** of agriculture in Thurston County through three programs:

1. Value-added production, processing, marketing
2. Specialty grain production and infrastructure
3. Conservation on working lands focusing on grazing and prairie compatibility

**Research & Education initiatives:**
- Taught **Whole Farm Planning** class to 24 new farmers getting started in Thurston County
- Established the SW WA Food Hub
- Distributed 100 “Food Security” boxes through the Hub to displaced workers due to COVID-19
- **Yr-3 prairie grazing study** trials completed and data provided to Thurston Co. Comm. Planning for use in Environmental Impact Statement
- Awarded **$193,480** for 2021-23 to help implement HCP through farmer outreach
- Supported development of 11 ‘Eating Health with the Seasons’ videos with SNAP-Ed

**Scholarship, Awards:**
- **Extension Publication:** Growing Winter Malting Barley West of the Cascades (WSU Fact Sheet)
- **Publication:** Malting Barley Improvement for Craft Brewers through Consumer Sensory Evaluation of Malt and Beer (J. Food Sci)
- **In progress:** 2 Enterprise Budgets for cow-calf and grass-finished steer operations for SW WA

2020 in Numbers

**Funding**
- USDA funding of **$87,674** for prairie-grazing research related to HCP
- **$20,000** USDA Local Foods for Farmer Food Hub development
- **$11,137** for specialty mushroom research, **$3,457** for wireworm trials, **$5,000** on soils curriculum development, and **$10,000** administering CARES Act funding

**Trainings & projects**
- **42 workshops**, incl. 12-week “New Farmer” Whole Farm Planning course, Cascadia Grains Conference, & several regional workshops & presentations
- **Workshops attended by 622 participants**

**Impact Highlights**
- Yr 1 malting barley sales through regional grain handling facility of **$109,500**
- Est. SW WA Food Hub in 2020, set up operations at Port of Olympia warehouse: Yr 1 sales of **$82,411** to 21 farmer-owners (cooperative)
- Helped administer CARES Act funding to farmers and distributed **$610,000** in grants over 6 weeks
- Supported **38 farmers** receive Food Safety certifications through Produce Safety Alliance
The main aims of the Water Resources Program and Native Plant Salvage Project are to provide hands-on education to bring about on-the-ground changes that protect and conserve water resources and habitat from the prairies to the shores of Puget Sound. The program depends on extramural funding raised through contracts, grants, and fundraising by community volunteers. These are the main focus areas:

❖ **Stormwater abatement and groundwater recharge:** By law, jurisdictions are required to educate their citizenry about stormwater pollution. Through workshops, volunteer trainings, demonstration projects, applied research, and technical assistance for onsite stormwater management techniques, our program supports the County’s efforts under its NPDES permit and realizes on-the-ground changes that protect water resources and recharge aquifers.

❖ **Stewardship of marine shorelines:** By providing training certified through the Dept. of Licensing to real estate professionals and technical assistance to shoreline landowners, we help in the efforts to protect critical economic resources, such as Puget Sound’s fisheries.

❖ **Restoration of native ecosystems:** Through re-vegetation projects and water-wise landscaping with native plants recovered from development sites and provided to local jurisdictions, schools, community organizations and individuals, we show citizens how to make changes to their landscapes that add value and protect water.

### 2020 in numbers

**Funding**
- Program coordinator secured $15,000 in contracts for hands-on education and implementation of ecological restoration projects & rain gardens.
- *Native Plant Salvage Foundation* fundraising efforts supported $16,000 to fund AmeriCorps members; $23,000 in salaries & wages; and $8,000 in volunteer support & program expenses.

**Volunteers & events**
- Engaged 302 volunteers in field events, ecological restoration, green-stormwater infrastructure, and plant stewardship & maintenance projects—a 68% reduction over pre-Covid-19 participation.
- Managed and presented 28 webinars & field workshops focused on ecological restoration, water-quality protection, & stormwater management—a 53% reduction over pre-Covid-19 averages.

**Value**
- Volunteers served 3,606 group-project hours, an in-kind contribution of $98,083. Additional uncounted hours were served fulfilling projects from the safety of their homes.
- AmeriCorps member’s service is more than $46,500—a significant community benefit for minor financial input.
WSU Master Gardener Program & Master Recycler Composter Volunteer Programs.

Volunteers are trained and certified as community educators to provide, professional, unbiased, research-based home gardening, composting, recycling, and waste reduction information to the residents of Thurston County. Despite COVID-19 halting most of our traditional programming/outreach activities, we learned how to adapt and found new ways to serve. The following successes were accomplished through a lot of hard work, problem solving, and Zoom meetings. While challenging at times, the volunteers prevailed and maintained a resilient spirit of service.

2020 Success Highlights-

- Writing and implementing numerous COVID-19 safety procedures to keep our volunteers safe.
- In-person Question/Answer Plant Clinics were transitioned to an online platform. This was no small feat and took hundreds of hours to develop, learn and implement this new technology.
- Our food bank garden thrived, and a majority of plant health was maintained at our demonstration gardens despite having minimal volunteer crews.
- Volunteers on behalf of the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County (MGFTC) executed multiple alternative fundraisers to meet our program operating needs.
- After years of planning, a major milestone was achieved when we implemented a new volunteer management system.
- 5-year Lease Agreement was signed for Dirt Works Demonstration Garden between WSU, City of Olympia and MGFTC.
- Learning various technology to remain connected and continue to do our work.

2020 In Numbers:

- 48 new WSU Master Gardeners began their training but was postponed when COVID-19 restrictions went into place. Some trainees have restarted their training in 2021 via virtual and limited in-person sessions. 0 new Master Recycler Composters were trained due to their training being postponed from the Fall to 2021.
- 211 Master Gardeners and Master Recycler Composters gave over 9,782 service hours.
- 96 question/answer clinics were transitioned to virtual means only. From these clinics over 1,900 public inquiries for gardening, recycling, and composting information was recorded.
- 80 work parties were held to maintain demo garden, plant nursery and food bank garden operations.
- 135 in-person (pre-COVID) and virtual trainings were held. 3,181 people attended these trainings.
- To help meet the growing food insecurity need, a small group of very dedicated volunteers grew over 1,800 pounds of food at our Dirt Works Demonstration Garden. All food was donated to the Thurston Co. Food Bank.
- The Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County (MGFTC) raised $43,308 through multiple alternative fundraisers to help cover program outreach, operational and garden expenses. The Foundation also received $7,600 in grants and $4,694 in sponsorships in 2020.
- Thurston County Solid Waste Department provided $2,030 worth of Master Recycler Composter program expenses.
The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 codified into federal law, and provided funding for, outreach endeavors at the Land-Grant Universities founded by the Morrill Act of 1862. The act was introduced by Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of South Carolina to expand the vocational, agricultural, and home demonstration programs in rural America. Specifically, the Act stated as its purpose, “In order to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture, uses of solar energy with respect to agriculture, home economics, and rural energy, and to encourage the application of the same, there may be continued or inaugurated in connection with the college or colleges in each State, Territory, or possession . . .”

The appropriation for Cooperative Extension as established by Smith-Lever was unique in that it set up a shared partnership among the Federal, State, and County levels of government. A formula funding mechanism was designed to ensure that there was support from each of the levels to help the fledgling system achieve stability and leverage resources. The funding would flow from Congress to the United States Department of Agriculture and then out to the Land-Grant Universities to be matched with monies from the states and counties receiving programs.

The original formula called federal funding to be divided in the following manner:

- 20% shared by all States in equal proportions;
- 40% shared in the proportion that the rural population of each bears to the total rural population of the several States as determined by the census;
- 40% shared in the proportion that the farm population of each bears to the total farm population of the several States as determined by the census.

The unique nature of the Smith-Lever Act brought a systemic process for funding the on-going Extension education work that had been started in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by educators such as Seaman A. Knapp, A. B. Graham, Jane McKimmon, and Booker T. Washington. The ideals espoused by these educators were transformative in the manner in which the Land-Grant Universities saw their role in their state. The move toward a model of cooperative extension education allowed for professional educators to be placed in local communities in order to improve lives.

Although the original Smith-Lever Act was far reaching, it was later amended to be more inclusive of schools beyond the original funding for 1862 Land Grant Institutions. In 1971, Rep. Frank E. Evans from Colorado presented a proposal to USDA that amended the funding formula and gave an appropriation in the amount of $12.6 million directly to the 1890 Land-Grant Universities for research and Extension. Additionally, in 1994, there was a second revision to the language which added the Tribal Colleges in order to increase the system’s ability to serve Native American communities.

Current information regarding the Act and its applications in contemporary society can be found on USDA’s website.