Mission

Washington State University Extension Grays Harbor County helps people put research-based knowledge to work, improving their lives, communities, and the environment.

To realize this mission, faculty and staff plan, conduct and evaluate research and experience-based educational programs to improve the lives of Grays Harbor County residents.

WSU Extension Grays Harbor County also employs the assistance of hundreds of volunteers and community partners and provides access to the resources available at Washington State University and the National Land Grant University Extension System.

Partnership

Grays Harbor County and Washington State University have a long-standing partnership in providing educational programs and research-based information to residents throughout the county. This partnership ensures that resources are committed from Federal allocations and University funds to keep important educational programs available in Grays Harbor County.
Program Updates

4-H Youth Development Program

Staff: Dan Teuteberg, County Director, Regional Specialist-Associate Professor
Tracie Hanson, Program Coordinator

Grays Harbor County 4-H Summer Camp was home to approximately 100 youth campers from July 8-13th at Panhandle Lake 4-H Camp this year. Camp was staffed by 28 adult volunteers and 23 trained teen camp counselors who provided leadership, educational activities, nutritious meals and mentorship to the young campers. The six-day educational camp experience is a valuable learning opportunity that helps build independence and self confidence in our campers. The unplugged environment of camp allows children to try new things, open new doors, meet new challenges, and make new friends. Adult and youth staff provide a challenging yet nurturing setting, where children “learn by doing” in a hands-on learning environment based on the philosophy of 4-H.

One month later, 4-H youth members proudly shared their 4-H Project accomplishments at the Grays Harbor County Fair from August 8 – 12th in Elma. Project entries included photography, gardening, fine arts, woodworking, educational displays, and public speaking.

In addition to the exceptional still life exhibits, many members attended with their project animals and participated in Fitting and Showmanship and other educational classes. Animal projects included horses, goats, dogs, poultry, rabbits, and more.

Many 4-H members qualified to exhibit their projects at the Washington State 4-H Fair which runs August 31 – September 23 in Puyallup. Participation in the State 4-H Fair is the culmination of a year of learning, dedication, and responsibility for 4-H members. Dedicated adult 4-H volunteers from Grays Harbor County played a significant role in the success of this partnership by contributing their time and talents to support hands-on learning opportunities throughout the week for 4-H youth and community members alike.

Within the overarching fair theme of “Ticket to Fun,” 4-H volunteers asked current 4-H members and 4-H alumni attending the county fair to write in their own words why 4-H is their Ticket to Fun. Youth and adults shared the following:
- I love 4-H. 4-H teaches you skills. ~ Levi R.
- As a 4-H leader I was able to learn right along with the kids! ~ Jen J.
- 4-H taught me valuable communication and public speaking skills. It also taught me about the importance of personal responsibility. ~ Brynna H.
- I used the communication skills I learned in 4-H presentations in my job as a social worker. ~ Dixie

# Health and Nutrition Programs

**Staff:** Chris Koehler, Associate Professor  
Stephanie Rangel, Lifestyle Coach

The WSU Extension Grays Harbor County Diabetes Prevention Program was granted Full Recognition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This designation has been achieved by only four face-to-face Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) in Washington State and is based on participation, weight loss and physical activity reports. The DPP was developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in conjunction with the National Institute of Health. In their original research, lifestyle intervention decreased the incidence of type 2 diabetes by 58%. The American Diabetes Association noted in March of 2018 that people with diagnosed diabetes incur average medical expenditures of $16,752 per year, of which about $9,601 is attributed to diabetes. People with diagnosed diabetes, on average, have medical expenditures approximately 2.3 times higher than what expenditures would be in the absence of diabetes.

Three Diabetes Prevention Programs continued with weekly or monthly sessions during the summer months. Participants track physical activity minutes, while making healthy food choices. We are again offering two sessions of the year-long program starting in September. Class series will be located in Aberdeen and Elma with additional information on the WSU Extension Grays Harbor web site.

We were able to generate program revenue by providing Facilitator Training for the Strengthening Families Program for Parents and Youth 10-14 for volunteers and agency personnel funded through Kitsap County Substance Abuse Prevention and Youth Services. This program has been identified as a best practice and its implementation and facilitator trainings are supported by prevention funding across the state.
Nutrition Education

Staff: Julie Guyton, WSU Extension SNAP-Ed
       Kym Foster, Educator

School’s Out For Summer...at least for some! Though youth in Grays Harbor may be taking a break, WSU SNAP-Ed staff are busy teaching, learning and preparing for the coming year.

Teaching:

In partnership with CCAP LifeSkills program and The Arc of Grays Harbor, WSU SNAP-Ed taught the third series of Plan, Shop, Save, Cook nutrition curriculum to several TANF clients. These nutrition lessons address clients’ need for developing food resource management and cooking skills, and accessing low-cost, healthy recipes. Participants learn to plan meals, shop healthfully and wisely, stretch food dollars, and cook during class. LifeSkills program manager Angela shared that the skills and knowledge her clients learn on cooking, creating a menu, shopping, and portion control are beneficial, especially for parents who are teaching the next generation.

Learning:

SNAP-Ed staff attended two trainings to enhance nutrition programming in Grays Harbor:

- The State SNAP-Ed Curriculum team brought California authors of EatFit to train Washington nutrition educators. This nutrition series will be offered to 6th grade students in the 2018-2019 school year at Aberdeen’s AJ West, Robert Gray and Stevens elementary schools and Elma Middle School. EatFit teaches students to set goals to establish personal health habits. Students explore and practice the skills necessary for a physically active lifestyle and healthy food choices. Beyond nutrition basics, EatFit covers subjects ranging from web-based diet analysis to fast food, to breakfast to media influence. Lessons are designed to spark interest and encourage students to find their own solutions.

- Systems Approaches for Healthy Communities is a five-module training designed to increase educators’ knowledge and skill in implementing PSE (policy, systems, and environmental change) approaches. PSE approaches are multi-level interventions to promote healthy eating and physical activity, in addition to traditional direct education.

Preparing:

From now through September 30th, SNAP-Ed staff will be preparing materials for youth and adult nutrition series, meeting with food bank, school, and cafeteria staff to plan and prioritize PSE strategies to implement in FFY19, and participating in Back-To-School events at partnering schools.
Small Farms Program
Staff: Kiley Smith, Small Farms Coordinator

This summer several small farms throughout Grays Harbor are working hard to succeed and survive their first full season. The Small Farms program has been able to help promote the new farms through a series of “Eating Seasonally and Locally” presentations, as well as highlight our staple farms that have been around for decades. The presentations were well received from the public. The Timberland Regional Library hosted four presentations. The WSU Master Gardeners, the Wellness Committee (County Forestry Bldg.) and the Elma Chamber of Commerce also hosted the “Eating Seasonally and Locally” presentation. Over all about 100 people attended the presentations and only positive feedback was received.

There has been a commitment from the Small Farms Program along with SNAP-Ed to help organize efforts for an Aberdeen Farmers Market in 2019. Our goal in participating is to ensure that the Aberdeen Farmers Market is made up of primarily farm related products, highlighting our agricultural industries and providing access to healthy local food. My active role in working with local farmers has been a crucial component of securing food industry vendors such as Sky Island produce, Sassy Seafood, and Wynoochee Winery. We are confident that a Farmers Market in Aberdeen will be well received from the local community as well as thousands of tourists.

Advertising and promotion is underway for “Ties to the Land”, a succession planning workshop scheduled on September 15th in McCleary. This training is hosted by WSU Extension Forester Andy Perleberg and co-hosted by WSU Extension Grays Harbor Small Farms and WSU Regional Forester Patrick Shultz. Help with succession planning is desperately needed in our region due to aging farmers and the amount of small acreage land owners who are looking to pass their land on to their children. The “Ties to the Land” workshops are held throughout the state and are always well attended. More information can be found at http://forestry.wsu.edu.
The Noxious Weed Program has been building up a strong network of organizations and people who are involved with noxious weeds within Grays Harbor, such as Department of Natural Resources, Conservation District, Stream Team, Quinault Indian Nation, State Parks, and many more. The goal is to work together as a team to combat invasive species in Grays Harbor and the Chehalis Basin.

The summer has been filled with continued training and meetings for me. At the height of the field season, several phone calls are being received regarding advice on specific weed infestations. I strive to provide a sustainable approach using Integrated Vegetation Management and utilize several tactics including manual, cultural, biological, and chemical application.

In Ocean Shores, I have been updating educational material in the Interpretive Center, providing weed identification for poison hemlock scares, and working with the city for a dune restoration project by surveying for noxious weeds. In Quinault, I have been working with Jill Silver from the 10,000 Year Institute on Reed Canary Grass (RCG). I spent one day out in the field with the crew learning how to control the grass and then met with landowners to educate the community on the importance of controlling RCG. The South Shore Road in Quinault is steadily being taken over by this grass among the fields and streams. The RCG degrades spawning habitat for salmon and destroys livestock pastures. I plan on helping Jill Silver with landowner permission contracts to control RCG on private land.

The Noxious Weed program was able to secure $3,000 from the Department of Agriculture for training on Knotweed control. I plan to utilize these funds by spending time in Clallam County with expert Noxious Weed Coordinator Cathy Lucero. My goals are to learn techniques for tackling large swaths of knotweed in riparian areas as well as education on grant funding. I also plan to use a portion of the funds to spend a few days surveying knotweed on the Wynoochee River as a step towards securing larger grants to control this riparian infestation.

The Grays Harbor County Fair went really well, interacting with attendees regarding noxious weeds.
Food Safety & Food Preservation Program

Staff: Sue Sparkman, Office Manager, Food Safety and Preservation Advisor

It is time to test your pressure canner gauges if you are canning meats, seafoods, and those garden vegetables! I am generally available to do this Monday-Friday and recently offered some evening hours to accommodate patrons who work daytime hours. A woman from Cosmopolis was very grateful to be able to come in after work. I have been answering a wide variety of food safety and preservation questions such as: what qualities to look for when purchasing a food dehydrator, how to can water for emergencies, processing time for home-smoked oysters, how to preserve Swiss chard, problems with jam not setting up, processing time for bottom fish, freezing beet greens, accidentally canned chicken with five pound weight rather than the correct ten pound weight, pressure canner gauge swung from five to fifteen while canning salmon, help with making fresh pack dill pickles, processing time for stewed tomatoes, help with how to order fresh tuna and six calls about preserving green beans.

An article about proper grilling and food safety written by WSU Consumer Food Safety Specialist, Dr. Stephanie Smith, was printed in the local newspaper along with our press release reminding consumers to have their pressure canner gauges tested before using them this season. Information is shared from Dr. Smith’s WSU Food Safety and Preservation Facebook page to our WSU Extension Facebook page (WSU Extension - Grays Harbor County).

This July, I led a food preservation workshop for students in the Cultivating Roots Summer Program. The participants (pictured on the right) took part in experiential learning by preparing refrigerator pickles that they can enjoy later at home. This is the third year that I was involved in this partnership with the Grays Harbor County Health Department, Aberdeen School District and the Cultivating Roots Summer Youth Program at Aberdeen High School.
Master Gardener Program
Staff: Elizabeth Sims, Volunteer Master Gardener Coordinator

Summer is passing rapidly and as fall approaches, it is fun to look back at what the Master Gardener Volunteers have been doing over the past busy months.

We graduated 17 new Master Gardeners in late June. They are already working to complete the 60 volunteer hours that will allow them to become Certified Master Gardeners. Graduation was the culmination of six months of intense study through Washington State University and 10 sessions taught by local Master Gardeners.

Our Home and Garden Show was a success with two days of plant clinics, lectures, good food and lots of vendors! We invited two outside speakers in addition to our local Master Gardener speakers and provided gardening education to more than 200 people. The Children’s Booth had close to 150 youth enjoying activities about bees and gardening. Every booth at the show was sold out resulting in lots of vendors with a variety of items for sale.

Other outreach events included an activity booth at Scout-a-Rama, several workshops in Taholah, and another summer of coordinating with the Health Department to provide five gardening field days at the Cultivating Roots Garden in Aberdeen. There have been several plant clinics from the North Beach area to Elma. These included events at both Lily Lane and the Lavender Festival on the same weekend. July brought the annual Garden Tour, this year in the Markham/Grayland area with five beautiful gardens. More than 420 visitors learned about sustainable gardening and plant identification.

The Grays Harbor Fair has just ended with more than 2000 visitors to the Master Gardener Demonstration Garden. Our own Cindy Burton was honored at the Fair this year for her years of dedication to the improvement and maintenance of the Demonstration Garden. Cindy coordinates the many volunteer Master Gardeners who work in the garden all year round. This year the new Native Plant Garden opened offering a cool walk in the woods in the back section of the Demonstration Garden. The garden has produced 65 pounds of produce and over 300 live veggie plants for distribution at local food programs. Harvest and distribution of the produce from the garden will continue through the fall with all foodstuff going to local food banks, senior centers, etc.

We are looking forward to ongoing outreach to adults and youth as we move into the late summer and fall.