

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



COWLITZ COUNTY EXTENSION

Cowlitz County Program Impacts 2005



**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 2005.**

WSU / Cowlitz County Extension Program Impacts 2005

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Debbie Zbaeren,
Nutrition Education Assistant
Food Stamp Family Nutrition Education Program



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. Classes are designed to help people learn to eat a healthful diet and stretch their food dollars.

- **Food, Fun and Facts** is a free monthly newsletter mailed to over 1000 limited resource households and local agencies. The newsletter includes articles related to nutrition and nutritious low cost recipes.
- 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., Lower Columbia College, Cowlitz Tribe, St. Paul Lutheran Church and Lower Columbia Community Action Agency.
- 12 fact sheets were developed and provided to the Food Banks for printing and distribution to over 1000 clients per month.
- **46 senior citizens** participated in a monthly series of classes that covered basic cooking tips, nutritious food selection on a budget, reading food labels for fiber, trans fat, sugar, and storage.
- **305 elementary age children** participated in various classes discussing safe food preparation, eating more fruits and vegetables, helping with meal planning and handwashing.
- **12 high school girls** participated in 15 classes about selecting nutritious foods, preparation techniques, storage and meal planning.

As a result of these contacts children and families made the following changes:

- Drank more milk and 100% juices
- Ate more fruits and vegetables for snacks
- Was sick less often because of increased hand washing
- Eating together as a family more often
- Teachers reported that 100% of the students wash their hands more often.
- 90% of students said vegetables were not so bad and would eat more of them.
- People are using foods they get at the food bank instead of throwing them away.

Diabetes Education

Approximately, 400,000 Washingtonians (6%) have diabetes, one of the leading causes of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and lower limb amputations.

- Participants learned how tests relate to their health, and how to better manage diabetes through their diet.
 - 281 people attended classes in 2005**
 - 41% improved blood glucose levels, cholesterol, and blood pressure
 - 87% increased their confidence in managing their diabetes through diet
- Materials were translated into Spanish and Russian. Food bank volunteers and staff developed additional materials entitled "It's not just about sugar anymore". These flyers address the myths that food bank staff has about preparing food bags for clients.
- Participants reported significant changes in use of the food guide pyramid for diabetes and paying attention to how much carbohydrate they were eating.

Testing of pressure canner gauges is offered through the Cowlitz Extension office. This provides the public with an important service to help insure that the canned foods are being processed at the correct pressure. It is also an opportunity to provide food preservation education. During the last canning season 42 gauges were tested.

Sandy Brown

Family Living Extension Faculty

Eat & Play for Health

Trains middle school students as mentors for elementary school students to teach preparation and selection of healthy snacks and creating non-competitive games to increase physical activity.

-95 middle school mentors & 300 elementary students

-Pre, post, and 3-month follow-up evaluations show:

Youth consuming fruit and/or vegetables increased from 39% to 52%

Student choice of snacks of chips, soda & candy, decreased from 61% to 48%

Children selecting more physically active activities increased from 55% to 68%

Jennifer Leach, *Coordinator & Extension Agent,* **Cowlitz and Wahkiakum 4-H Program**



The Cowlitz County 4-H youth program is an integral part of providing developmentally appropriate activities for Cowlitz County youth. The program has multiple delivery methods to reach diverse populations. 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. The other prominent 4-H program is "4-H After School" which has been in existence since 1988. The 4-H programs after school are grant funded with part time staff that provides on going after school 4-H activities and projects at Title I elementary schools and/or middle schools. The efforts of 4-H after schools in Cowlitz County have received regional, state and national recognition, both via Extension and also public education.

4-H Club Program

353 4-H members belong to volunteer 4-H clubs with a 10% increase in 4-H club member enrollment. Over 75% of the 4-H members participating in the 4-H clubs after school increased their life skills in communication, problem solving, concern for their community, and critical thinking. 95% of those participating know that they belong to 4-H with 100% being able to recite the 4-H pledge.

4-H Summer Programs

107 youth participated in day camps and/or special interest programs ranging from sewing to natural resources to horses to teen leadership and 4-H Challenge to Strengthening Families activities.

80% of the youth participating in day camps/special interest programs learned specific project skills related to sewing, horses, leadership, and/or natural resources/environmental stewardship. 90% of the youth participating knew that they were part of the 4-H program with about 40% participating in the 4-H division at the county fair.

4-H Club Programs-Volunteer Led and Grant Funded

119 adults volunteered in the Cowlitz County 4-H program. 41 adults completed new leader orientation/application and screening process with 33 of those completing new leader training and 28 enrolling as first year leaders.

100% of the trained leaders are returning for the 2005-06 4-H program year. 95% of the new leaders understand the concepts of youth development, experiential learning, and life skills. Over a 3-year period, approximately 90% of the leaders truly practice the above skills.

90% of the past leaders who have attended record book training understand the importance of record keeping and feel that the record books are not difficult (duh!!). 53.7% of the leaders/adults surveyed feel that Cowlitz County should continue to require a record book for county fair participation.

4-H After School Clubs and 4-H After School Programs

103 4-H members belonging to 4-H clubs after school with 163 youth participating in 4-H school age programs. Over 75% of the 4-H members participating in the 4-H clubs after school have increased their life skills in the area of communication, problem solving, concern for their community, and critical thinking. 95% of those participating know that they belong to 4-H with 100% being able to recite the 4-H pledge

Cowlitz County “Strengthening Families” Program

For Cowlitz County risk factor indicators include poor family management, family conflict, and family history of substance abuse. The Strengthening Families for 10-14 year olds has been selected by the Cowlitz County Drug Free Communities project to be provided to rural families in the county. Six out of the seven school districts offered the program. The program was offered one time at Castle Rock, Woodland, Kalama, and Huntington middle schools. It was offered twice at Coweeman and Monticello middle schools.

- **50 new potential adult volunteers** have attended 4-H new leader orientation with 38 leaders completing the application and screening process and 35 new leaders completing 6 hours of leader training.
- **Over 77 families** participate in 12 programs with 130 parents/caregivers and 87 youth participate in the evaluation process.
- In the spring of 2005, one Spanish speaking program was offered to 6 families.
- **10 facilitators have been trained** in the program with 5 of the facilitators being used to actively facilitate the program. Cowlitz County has the most trained facilitators in the state.
- **100% of the school districts** are very satisfied about having the program offered at their schools. Cowlitz County is offering the most programs in the state. 79.1% of the parents reported improvement in reducing the degree of harshness (family risk factor). 69.2% of the parents reported improvement in reducing the amount of daily family hassles with their teens (family risk factor).

- **100% of the adult attendees** gained skills in improved communication with their teens and better understanding of stresses related to their teens lives. Over 75% stated that they are using skills gained in the program related to consequences and using the knowing "where, what, and when" technique with their teens.
- For the youth there have been significant reported changes as follows:
 - a. 61.5% improvement in "knowledge about stress and coping"
 - b. 56.4% improvement in "parents family management"
 - d. 54% improvement related to "feelings of love and respect"
 - e. 77% improvement related to "understanding family values"

Gary Fredricks,
Director, Cowlitz Extension
**Small Farm Management &
 Community Development**



Gary responsibilities in Cowlitz County are community development, small farm management and resource for youth with animal projects. He also has area responsibility for educational programs in Clark, Klickitat, Wahkiakum, Pacific, Thurston, Grays Harbor and Lewis counties for small farm development with emphasis on animal and forage management.

Community Development

The faculty worked together to increase visibility of WSU in the county and solve problems facing local communities.

- Provides a monthly column to the "The Daily News" focusing on current items of interest.
- **A food drive collected 669 lbs. of food** that was donated to the local food banks.
- **139 people attending the brown bag luncheon series** and learned how to address community issues such as identify theft, starting a new business and parenting skills.
- A tour of government and WSU participants in the county learned about the positive contribution Extension makes to local communities.

Small Farm Management

Small acreage farmers urgently seek management information, yet lack of resources and limited access to knowledgeable personnel restricts them from mastering management skills and marketing their product. Emphasis was placed on sound environmental practices that encouraged sustainability.

- **132 youth** attending classes at the Youth Animal Workshop, 91% said they could make better decisions, 82% were better at expressing themselves and 91% understood the importance of following through with commitments.
- **83 clientele learned** how to purchase high quality hay for their animals. 54 small farm owners learned sustainable practices to effectively grow grass for livestock that encouraged clean water management .
- 53 participants indicated that over 98% learned new information that was useful to their sustainability. Five farmers contacted the Conservation District for farm visits to consult on making changes to their farm.
- Work with government agencies such as the Conservation Districts to provide accurate information, and participate on committees to advise on regulation impacting the dairy industry and to communicate to dairy farmers the changes and new regulations that impact them.

4-H Animal Projects-County Programs

- Programs were conducted that motivated the interest level, knowledge and experience of 4-H members with animal projects while continuing to develop their confidence, responsibility, knowledge, leadership, communication and problem solving skills.
- **145 youth learned** techniques to better manage their animals. As a result of youth attending classes, 93% said they could make better decisions, 85% were better at expressing themselves, 82% learned to set goals and plan, and 88% understood the importance of following through with commitments.

Diane Dick

Horticulture and Master Gardener Program Coordinator



WSU-Cowlitz and Wahkiakum County Master Gardener Volunteers in association with Master Gardener Foundation-

In 2005 the 64 Master Gardener Volunteers provided over 1450 hours of educational outreach to adults and youth through

- Plant and Insect Clinics, 74 provided
- The Master Gardener Demonstration Garden, including garden trials in cooperation with WSU-Vancouver, a raised bed for physically challenged gardeners
- Compost Workshops and Hazardous Waste & Recycling Education in collaboration with Cowlitz County Solid Waste Division, and Longview-Kelso Solid Waste and Recycling
- Horticulture education through radio talk shows; elementary school classroom presentations; demonstrations at retirement and assisted living centers; Plant A Row Project with Cowlitz River Club (for mentally and physically challenged adults)
- Monthly Membership Newsletter
- Pruning Workshops for the public
- Demonstrations at Community Events-Earth Day, Canterbury Open Air Market, Home & Garden Show, Cowlitz County Fair, Castle Rock Fall Festival
- Heritage Rose Preservation Project partnership with Port of Longview
- Horticulture Information published in Master Gardener Newsletter and The Daily News

Terrie Jones, M.P.A.

Director
WSU Learning Center-Cowlitz & Wahkiakum



Description of Program

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Learning Center has a working relationship with LCC, WSU Vancouver, and WSU Pullman to allow them to serve all potential WSU students. Terrie Jones advises for local students to provide a connection to WSU Vancouver. The Learning Center provides community education through diversified programs such as the Full Immersion Spanish Institute, Cowlitz County Health card testing and numerous satellite and K-20 events.

- Advised over 210 potential students since Fall 2004
- Assisted over 3,130 community members in their pursuit of a WSU degree
- Provided over 360 community education opportunities to local citizens
- Completed Spanish Immersion Institutes

Tony Sachet

Forester – Washington State University Extension

Landowners in Cowlitz County were provided technical assistance and educational programs to improve their knowledge to effectively manage the forest resources on their property. Landowners were provided with technical assistance on forest management issues to increase the quality and value of their timber. 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 following numbers show the number of contacts for participation in the different programs and activities. Totals represent five counties of which about 40% are from Cowlitz County. Included in these numbers is the large amount of time spent with a caller, walk-in, or field visit just doing "education" with them to understand their problem and how to successfully handle it.

Technical/Advisory contacts:	488	Field Visits	85
Referrals	248	Cost Share Programs contacts	166
Stewardship Plans contacts	176	Acres w/new Stew Plans	1428
Forest Stew Plan hours	210		
Landowner Meetings	780 people attending		