

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



COWLITZ COUNTY EXTENSION

Cowlitz County Program Impacts 2006



**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 2006.**

WSU / Cowlitz County Extension Program Impacts 2006

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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 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.
- An committee meets quarterly to see that all **food waste produced from Kelso school district lunches is composted** reducing the amount of garbage sent to the landfill and generating money for the school district.
- Focus groups that were held in **Castle Rock to look at reducing poverty** develop a action plan and obtain financing to launch the plan.
- A workshop on understanding and helping people in poverty was attended by service organizations staff, county government personnel, and school district employees..

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

Food drive collected 559 pounds of **food that was donated to the local food banks.**

149 people learned how to:

- **Protect their home from robbery**
- **Start a new business**
- **Make a living will**
- **Helping elderly remain at home**
- **Tips for better gardens**



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.

- Farms were opened to the public for tours. People learned that there exists a diverse farming culture in as well as the basics of what and how farmers produce the food and animal products.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

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

112 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.



4-H Animal Projects-County Programs

Youth who lack access to activities that develop positive life skills are more likely to participate in activities with negative social outcomes. Programs need to be conducted which stimulate the interest level in youth while continuing to develop their confidence, responsibility, technical knowledge, leadership, communication and problem solving skills.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

After 220 youth attended classes at the 4-H in Action Day (which provided them with skills in animals management, family living and protecting the environment), surveys showed:

- 91% said they **could make better decisions**
- 82% were **better at expressing themselves**
- 91% understood the **importance of following through with commitments.**



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:

154 food handlers in 39 facilities attended courses in Cowlitz county. All participants **increased their knowledge about how food-borne illness** can be prevented.

75% 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



FoodSense

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.
- In 2006, 128 such phone **calls on food preservation and food safety** were answered. Many of these calls are from elderly, home bound citizens.
- The FoodSense 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.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

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

437 elementary age children and 72 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.

- Participants learned how tests relate to their health, and how to **better manage diabetes** through their diet.
 - 88% increased their confidence in managing their diabetes through diet
 - 43% improved blood glucose levels, cholesterol, and blood pressure
- Participants reported significant changes in use of the food guide pyramid for diabetes and paying attention to how much carbohydrate they were eating.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

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

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



Success Stories

Diabetes class participant – I have added regular physical activity to my day and my A1C has dropped! This class has helped me make sense of how to live with diabetes. Thank you

4th Grade Teacher – During conferences I had more feed back on what you taught the kids than everything I taught. The parents really liked what you did. The kids learned so much. PLEASE come again nest year!

3rd grade boy – (walking past Nutrition Assistant, waiting outside another classroom, with his lunch tray) “Hi! I got 4 vitamin C’s today. Look! (holding up orange peels) walks down the stairs and says “And fiber too!

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 19 potential leaders attending and 12 leaders completing the application and screening process and 12 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 polices, enrollment, publications, and financial record keeping. This has resulted in improved 4-H club management and support for the volunteer club leader.
- **235 4-H club members** participated in the 2006 Cowlitz County Fair. This is an increase for Cowlitz County.
- Over **200 4-H members, leaders, and parents** attended trainings such as the regional “4-H In Action” program and Quality Assurance
- The 4-H program contributed 70% of the total points for still life and animal exhibits through county fair participation
- Increased efforts in teen programming resulted in three teens attending the “Know Your Government” Conference in Olympia and 8 teens participating in the 4-H Teen Works program

- Applied for and received a full time equivalent Washington Service Corps member with ½ time to Cowlitz County to promote youth activities
- Grant funded 4-H clubs after school were implemented during the school year at Olympic Elementary School in Longview (12-15 regular participants)
- 92% of participants from the summer camps and summer “4-H clubs” entered exhibits in the 4-H department at the county fair
- **4-H After School at Huntington had 14 youth** learned skills in robotics and knitting program with 65% gaining skills in problem solving and critical thinking. Each program was offered one day/ week for 15 weeks
- **65 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. 42% of the participants exhibited in the 2006 Cowlitz County Fair
- 100 % of the clubs re-enrolled in Cowlitz. There were 3 new 4-H clubs for 2005-06 4-H year
- 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.
- “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:

353 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**

4-H clubs showed a **10% increase in member enrollment.**

Received a **\$1,500 grant** for Operation Military Kids for Cowlitz County that reached over 60 youth via summer programs and fair participation



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. The program is considered a “best practice” in substance abuse as a result of rigorous longitudinal research demonstrating effectiveness in preventing substance abuse.

The lead agency in implementing the Strengthening Families program in this county is the Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition and the Cowlitz County Drug Free Communities grant with WSU Extension 4-H Youth Faculty as the evaluation lead. The 4-H Youth Extension faculty is the WSU liaison for Cowlitz County Strengthening Families.

- Cowlitz County is one of four counties that has reached over 120 families
- The 3 programs evaluated showed all 3 programs resulting in positive evaluations related to **significant positive change** from pre-test to post-test in enjoyment of time with family and youth; communication skills; temper management; and smoothness of daily routines.
- The number of parents reported daily **fights about homework decreased significantly** and numbers reporting that **homework was done** at a regular time and place increased significantly.
- For the youth evaluation, there was a significant increase in the youth rating of their knowledge about stress management and about parent’s expectations regarding drugs and alcohol.

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.**



Dixie Edwards

Horticulture Program Coordinator



According to a Gallup Poll, U.S. households spent \$46.8 billion on garden and lawn products and landscaping services with this amount is increasing each year. 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.

- The WSU MG Volunteer Plant and Insect Clinics in Cowlitz County offer information to clientele on the proper methods to apply Integrated Pest Management practices to their community and home garden.
- Horticulture Information was published in Master Gardener Newsletter and The Daily News
- **38 new volunteers were trained this year who will be returning 90 hours** of volunteer service to the community in the next two years.
- Cowlitz County hosted plant & insect clinics at the farmers market.
- Demonstrations to people at Community Events-Earth Day, Home & Garden Show and Cowlitz County Fair

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

The Demonstration Garden showed residents how to **reduce the amount of pesticide use** by using plants such as roses and tomatoes that grow well in the Pacific Northwest.

Twenty-nine people **learned how to control insect pests** in a safe and effective method.

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 156 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 120 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** is designed for students who complete a transferable Associate of Arts degree and then pursue a Bachelors of Arts teaching degree. The Longview site continues to run two consecutive classes, one with 20 students and one with 15 students.

Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

Enrolled 620 students **enrolled in classes** other than Distance Degree Program.

The Learning Center patrons provided 9,362 students **with information on classes and degree programs.**

The Learning Center held 122 community service activities with **2,571 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 15 students. The focus of the Full Immersion Spanish Institutes is to increase understanding and communication skills with the Hispanic/Latino population statewide.



Beginning Spanish Immersion class



Intermediate Spanish Immersion class

Extended Community Education

The Learning Center continues to provide educational programs to meet the needs of the community.

- 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.
- WSU Learning Center partners with the WSU Small Business Development to provide net-counseling.
- WSU Learning Center hosted attorney Michael Evans to discuss Civil Liberties and its effects on democratic functions. 95 students and faculty learned how world events affect the liberties that we take for granted.
- The Learning Center facilitated a **Train the Trainers program for Medicaid** to aid elderly to understand the new Medicaid Part D.
- The WSU Learning Center partnered with LCC to a annual teleconference titled " Pain Management at the End of Life: Bridging the Gap Between Knowledge and Practice." The program provided insight to **professionals who regularly deal with aging clients**, their families and friends.
- The WSU Learning Center hosted Al Wiener, a local Holocaust survivor, to share his personal experience in surviving the Holocaust. Over 140 people were in attendance.

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	254
Field Meetings	36
Referrals to others	83

- The number of contacts for participation in the different programs 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 include:
 - Helping local high schools Envirothon contest – forestry section
 - Tree City Award presentation to City of Longview Parks Dept.
 - Participation in Farm Forestry Association

Success Stories

“I thought some kind of disease was attacking my hybrid poplar trees. You identified the problem as porcupine damage and advised me on control “.

“I called in a panic after receiving word from the title insurance company two weeks before closing that I needed a forest management plan upon closing. Your prompt response has saved me in excess of \$20,000”.

“The DNR Stewardship and WSU Forestry Extension programs are to be commended for the cooperative relationship between the agencies. The guidance provided in my management plan is the best value I ever received for my tax dollars”.

WSU Extension Volunteers

4-H Master Gardeners & Clothing and Textile Advisors



4-H Programs

107 4-H volunteers in Cowlitz County average 10 hours per month (9 months) in club meetings working with 306 4-H club members in 4-H club activities/events and fair preparation for a **total of 9,630 hours.**

32 4-H middle managers/superintendents in Cowlitz County average 15 hours per day for at the fair (2,880 hrs.) and approximately 10 hours per week in July preparing for fair (1,280 hrs) for a **total of 4,160 hours.**

Master Gardener Volunteers

The 52 Master Gardener volunteers provided 790 hours to Community Educational Activities, 420 hours in Plant and Insect Clinic and 600 hours to Program Support for a **total of 1,810 hours.**

Clothing and Textile Advisors

The 19 Clothing and Textile advisors provided an average of 96 hours/volunteer for a **total of 1,824 hours**

Totals

Total number of volunteers = 178

Total number of hours to the community = 17,424

Total value of volunteer service to the community =

\$17.55/hour X 17,424 hours = \$305,912