

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



COWLITZ COUNTY EXTENSION

Cowlitz County Program Impacts 2013



**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
FAMILY LIVING, FOOD SAFETY, 4-H,
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, URBAN
HORTICULTURE, LEADERSHIP AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.**

**THIS REPORT COVERS SELECTED
PROGRAMS AND
ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013.**

WSU / Cowlitz County Extension Program Impacts 2013

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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 to solved problems facing local communities.



Cowlitz County citizens benefited by:

- 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 the 231 people the attended composting training provided by WSU Extension **saving taxpayers \$17,875**. The average household that composts **diverts 646 pounds of organic material away from solid waste at a savings to the government of \$43 per ton**.
- **Silver Lake is tested monthly** by volunteers for water quality concerns through funding from Cowlitz County (\$5,000) and the Silver Lake Flood Control District (\$5,000). Water quality information will be used to determine specific causes of pollution and focus on specific solutions.
- **115 people gained new knowledge** on gardening tips, understanding property taxes, saving money while shopping, winterizing their home and how to write a will to improve their quality of life.
- **74 people had their canning lid tested with 40 %** having a defective pressure gauge. Those with defective gauges had them replaced were retested to confirm the gauge was accurate. Defective pressure gauges results in food not properly preserved causing food to be dumped and food poisoning.

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:

- **723 people gained skills in** composting, water conservation, increasing produce raised in the garden, raising mason bees, controlling moles, and how to maintain plants for maximizing fruit production reducing household costs and increasing their quality of life.
- For the **13 youth participating in the juvenile detention** gardening program, all indicated they had gained greater knowledge of gardening and were able to demonstrate stronger gardening skills.
- A 5 day **Gardening camp was attended by 29 youth** ages 6-11 years old. Youth gained skills in composting, protecting water quality, growing vegetables and protecting plants from disease. Parents of participants indicated that all youth gained knowledge and skills in science and natural resources.
- Master Gardeners raised and donated over **3,400 pounds of fresh produce was donated** to local food banks (**valued at \$2,600**).

Master Gardeners offered Home VEG (Vegetable Educational Garden) where they **build 10 raised beds at homes (cost at \$2,550)** supplied all the materials, soil and seeds. Families raised an average of **48 pounds of food** per bed.

68 Master Gardeners provided 33 classes attended by 7,859 people and volunteered 4,548 hours of community service.

The Master Gardener volunteers answered the **questions of 319 people** saving people money on reduced pesticide use, increased garden produce raised and fewer plants replaced in their landscape.



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 350 people attended the workshops learning the basics of preserving foods.
- 100% 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
- 40% 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.

- 80 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 80 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 6 classes in 2013, 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. Twelve Food facilities or agencies that serve food sent employees to the classes. 40 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.

- 18 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 8 elementary schools in grades K-5, 6 Headstart classrooms, the CSO office, 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.

2,469 families were impacted by the Food \$ense program in 2013. Changes in behavior that occurred as a result of our programs in the schools include:

- **525 now use food labels** to compare the nutrition content of food.
- 1,267 now consume fruits and vegetables every day.
- 246 now eat breakfast daily before going to school.
- 290 have at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- **2,237 wash their hands** before eating.
- 379 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.

- **975 eat more meals together as a family.**
- 890 use MyPlate for selecting healthy snacks and meals.
- 470 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

Needs/Background

Cowlitz County is a county faced with successes and challenges. As per the Cowlitz County Community Report Card (*Pathways 2020, 2013 Report Card*, May 2013), there have been successes in the overall health of the community including the number of young adults enrolling in college after high school; reduction in teen pregnancy; fewer smokers, and reduction in high school dropout rate. However, there are still challenges. This county based community assessment, coupled with the research of Dr. Richard Lerner (Tufts University) on positive youth development provides the direction for programming efforts in the Cowlitz County 4H Youth program. The 4H programming efforts are three fold -

- Volunteer 4H led club program-- recruitment; orientation/training; support and counsel to the 4H volunteers mentoring county youth in the year long club program
- Outreach 4H programs to Title I schools/neighborhoods/youth at risk populations
- Day Camps and special programs to youth not involved in the traditional club program

Outcomes

- Outreach 4H programs to Title I schools/neighborhoods/youth at risk populations with Key Essential Elements Met: Generosity; Belonging/Bonding, and Leadership through friendships and sense of belonging; improvement in parent/child relationships; safe environment to try new projects; improvement in “learn by doing” without adult help; youth did public presentations/demonstrations; math and science via rockets, plant science, building rabbit hutch, nutrition, etc ‘
- Loowit Program: High school students wanted to do sewing projects to help homeless; several students had never completed a project from start to finish; most of students now understand the importance of using math skills as related to sewing’
- Monticello Middle School Quilting program: All students increased their understanding of the importance of math skills as related to quilting. Principal wants the program at her school because to



- this relationship of using math in a productive manner and it aligns Monticello Middle focus on increasing math skills/achievement/MSP
- Day Camps and special programs to youth not involved in the traditional club program with over 50% of the youth involved exhibited items at community fairs and/or county fair and participants learned project skills and were successful in the *Essential Element of **Mastery***
 - Continual recruitment; orientation/training; support and counsel to the 4H volunteers donating their time to teach, mentor and support county youth in the year long 4H club program
 - Of the 89 4H Club volunteers who are leaders, **45%** have been leaders for **10 years or more**
 - **70 %** [11 out of 16] of the 1st year volunteers (2012 program year) returned to be 2nd year volunteers for 2013 program year
 - 4H at Juvenile/Youth Services—3rd year of program; result of their AmeriCorps volunteer signing up her kids for 4H Summer club and 4H rocketry day camp in 2011 and then wanting to start 4H at the juvenile center; now a continuing partnership between juvenile and 4H; ***this partnership was an invited presentation at the 2013 state conference in youth services by Cowlitz County juvenile center staff***
 - 4H Elementary Robotics Club—*Blazing Bots*—beginning 3rd year.
 - Came about as a result of 4H rocketry day camp and 4H robotics day camp offered in 2011 and 4H high school robotics program, 2009-2012 partnership with Longview School District (2nd in Seattle and Portland regionals, 2012 and 2011)
 - ***January 2014—competed in Oregon's FIRST Lego League Championship Tournament and received 1st place for Google's Innovation Solutions Project Award***
 - ***Cowlitz County had qualified 4H horse member as part of State 4H horse judging team attending the Eastern 4H Equine Roundup***



Small Business Development Center



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
- 14 Subject Matter Expert Articles
- 6 Community Presentations/Workshops
- 1 Press Release
- Served **107 Clients**

SBDC Client Economic Impacts:

- **\$2.2 million** in Capital Investment
- **71 Direct Jobs** Created/Saved
- **9 New businesses** formed

Volunteer Service

4-H Program Volunteers:

In 2013, 4-H volunteers work with 471 youth in Cowlitz County.
 144 adult volunteers give 89 hours per year
= 12,816 hours

Master Gardener Volunteers

In 2013, 68 adult volunteers give 67 hours per year
= 4,556 hours

Master Composter Volunteers

In 2013, 11 adult volunteers have given 31 hours per. These hours are for Community Educational Activities which includes conducting workshops for the general public.
= 341 hours

Volunteer Totals

Total number of volunteers = 223
 Total number of hours to the community = 17,713
 Total hours per volunteer = 79

Total value of their service to the community = \$392,166

Value of volunteer time for WA (2012) = \$22.14 per hour
www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

