

WSU Extension Cowlitz County Annual Report - 2014



Cowlitz County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

**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 2014.**

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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 from Dept. of Ecology provided composting bins for \$10.00 (\$75.00 without grant) to the 63 people attended composting training provided by WSU Extension **saving taxpayers \$4,875.**
- **Promoted monthly testing of Silver Lake** secured by funding from the **SLFCD and Cowlitz Co. BOCC** (\$10,000) matched by volunteers help. Water quality information is used to determine specific causes of pollution and focus on specific solutions.
- **281 people gained new knowledge** on controlling diabetes, setting up power of attorney, successfully growing vegetables, using shopping tips to save money.
- **81 people had their canning lid tested with 39%** 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.
- **13 people completed community projects** that introduced high school seniors to local jobs, used media to denounce drug usage and taught people how to build a 72 hour safety kit by using leadership principals learned through **WSU Leadership Academy.**
- Master Composter training graduated 26 volunteers by securing a \$3,500 Dept. of Ecology grant. Volunteers provided recycling information to 4806 adults, vermi-composting bins to 22 people.



Urban Horticulture 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, 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.
- Master Gardeners raised and donated over **3,400 pounds of fresh produce was donated** to local food banks (**valued at \$2,600**).
- For the **12 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 27 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 offered Home VEG (Vegetable Educational Garden) where they **build 10 raised beds at homes (cost at \$2,600)** supplied all the materials, soil and seeds. Families raised an average of **48 pounds of food** per bed.

90 Master Gardeners provided 40 classes attended by 7,236 people and volunteered 5,325 hours of community service.

The Master Gardener volunteers answered the **questions of 331 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 400 people attended the workshops learning the basics of preserving foods.
- 100% of the participants indicated they learned something new about preserving foods
- 85% 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 7%.



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.

- 50 canner gauges were tested
- 25% of them were inaccurate and needed to be replaced
- As a result of replacing the inaccurate one, this reduces the risk of over 50 families from getting ill or dying from foodborne illness or related health issues due to incorrect processing of home preserved foods. The cost of one case of Foodborne illness related to unsafe canning procedures could range from \$10,000 to \$250,000.



Person in Charge- Food Service Food Safety

WSU Extension offered 6 classes in 2014, 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. 35 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.

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. In 2014 the SNAP-Ed federal grant was put on hold due to the lack of a Farm Bill. In the spring after the Farm Bill was signed, the program started up again. Therefore our outreach was limited due to the lack of funding for over ½ the year.

Two Food \$ense nutrition educators work in 6 elementary schools in grades K-5, 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.

888 families were impacted by the Food \$ense program in 2014. Changes in behavior that occurred as a result of our programs in the schools include:

- **310 now use food labels** to compare the nutrition content of food.
- 888 youth now consume fruits and vegetables every day.
- 546 youth now eat breakfast daily before going to school.
- 290 have at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- **888 wash their hands** before eating.
- 295 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.

- **520 eat more meals together as a family.**
- 479 use MyPlate for selecting healthy snacks and meals.
- 470 tried new recipes using new foods.
- 603 eat more fruits and vegetables every day.
- 657 read nutrition labels more often when choosing foods.

Cowlitz County 4-H Youth Program

Background

Eight years of national longitudinal research on 4H youth development indicates that 4H helps young people **excel beyond their peers** in the area of healthy behaviors; excelling in school including the sciences; and improving their communities [Dr. Richard Lerner, Tufts University]. To achieve these impressive outcomes, our Cowlitz County 4H volunteers work with youth in the framework of the "four Essential Elements" of positive youth development which are *Belonging/Bonding, Mastery, Leadership/Independence, Generosity*.

Activities/Outputs

- **A total of 664 youth in 4-H** reaching **3%** of the K-12th grade youth in Cowlitz County
- **105 4-H volunteers** with 95 in 4H Volunteer Club Program and 10 Sewing and Textile volunteers providing 5,750 volunteer hours
- **236 youth** are in the year-long 4H volunteer led club program
- "Outreach 4H Programs" ranging from after school 4H clubs to day camps to school enrichment had **428 4H youth a minimum of 2,568 contact hours**.

- For the 4-H AmeriCorps Outreach programs such as 4H clubs after school **183** youth met at least once per week during the school year. Programming sites include several high poverty elementary and middle schools in Longview and Kelso school districts, Youth Services/Juvenile Center transitional classroom.
- **205** youth participated in short term special interest programs or day camp programs
- **40 youth** participated in sewing programs provided by the 4H Sewing and Textile volunteers at Monticello Middle School, Loowit High School, Summer Sew, and Saturday Sew



4-H Impacts

- **No** 4H middle school or high school age member is in the juvenile system.
- **100%** of the 12 senior members in Cowlitz County graduated from high school with 100% are going to **college and/or working** as indicated in the state wide 4H graduation survey, as compared to 80% of statewide 4H youth.
- **57** 4H members did public presentations at the 4-H demonstration contest with 95% receiving an “excellent” (blue) rating/score. This indicates high level of mastery in the areas of research, public speaking, and organizing.
- Of the **183** youth served in the 4H AmeriCorps outreach program doing project activities such as foods and nutrition, creative arts, and recycling, to name few, the participants and/or their parents have stated that they have a sense of belonging/bonding to the program and/or to the staff person; increased sense of mastery, problem solving/critical thinking skills; and increased self confidence
- **90%** of the **40** participants in the respective sewing programs have applied their math and/or problem solving skills to successfully complete quilts and other sewing items at a blue ribbon standard of “excellent”.
- In general, Cowlitz County 4H members have increased levels of life skill development in critical thinking, problem solving, working with others, and managing time



Parent Education—Strengthening Families

An RFP was submitted to Cowlitz County Health and Human Services for the Strengthening Families program (SFP) for **\$89,000** for 2014-2016. The grant includes delivery of 8 programs, 8 three month booster sessions, 6 six month booster sessions targeted towards middle schools in Cowlitz County. A ½ time contracted project coordinator is providing coordination through with 7 trained SFP facilitators teaching parents and middle school youth. The 4H AmeriCorps outreach coordinator provides 4H activities to the K-5th graders.

Preliminary evaluation results show from the most recently completed program in late 2014 at Monticello Middle School—with 12 parents attending, 63% stated that their family tension had decreased over the 7 week program. WSU Human Development will be doing a very extensive evaluation of the programs of both the parents and youth, with results available later in 2015.

Small Business Development Center



Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) provide a wide array of technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs supporting business performance and sustainability and enhancing the creation of new businesses entities. These small businesses in turn foster local and regional economic development through job creation and retention as a result of the extensive one-on-one long-term counseling, training and specialized services they receive from the SBDCs. The SBDCs are made up of a unique collaboration of SBA, state and local governments, and private sector funding resources. The Washington SBDC Network has been operated by Washington State University for more than 30 years.

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.

During 2014 across Cowlitz County, the SBDC had:

- 2 Published Success Stories
- 12 Prepared and Submitted Subject Matter Expert Articles
- 6 Community Presentations/Workshops
- Served 216 Clients

SBDC Client Economic Impacts:

- \$5.0 Million in Capital Formation
- 63 Direct Jobs Created/Saved
- 10 New businesses formed

Volunteer Service

4-H Program Volunteers:

In 2014, 105 adult volunteers give 55 hours per year
= 5,755 hours

Master Gardener Volunteers

In 2014, 90 adult volunteers averaged 60 hours per year
= 5,403 hours

Master Composter Volunteers

In 2014, 14 adult volunteers have given 32 hours per year. These hours are for Community Educational Activities which includes conducting workshops for the general public.

= 448 hours

Volunteer Totals

Total number of volunteers = 209

Total number of hours to the community = 11,606

Total hours per volunteer = 55.5 hours per year

Total value of their service to the community = \$256,956.84

Value of volunteer time for WA (2012) = \$22.14 per hour

www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

