

## UNH Cooperative Extension Merrimack County 2016

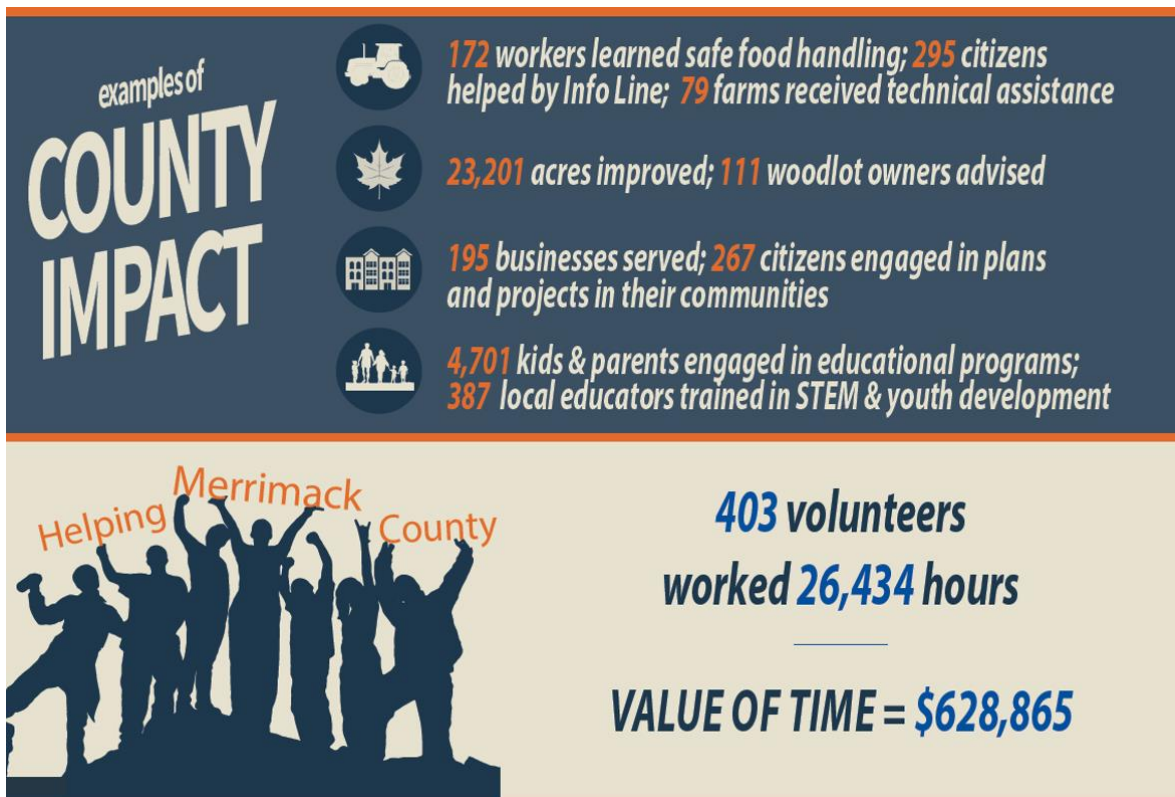
UNH Cooperative Extension serves residents in each of Merrimack County's 27 towns with diverse programming through 4-H, Nutrition Connections, Food & Agriculture, Community & Economic Development, Natural Resources, and Youth & Family. Extension is the public outreach arm of the University of New Hampshire, bringing information and education into NH's towns, helping to make individuals, businesses, and communities more successful and keeping NH's natural resources healthy and productive.

### Our Mission

UNH Cooperative Extension strengthens people and communities in New Hampshire by providing trusted knowledge, practical education and cooperative solutions.

### Our work for Merrimack County

Merrimack County Extension staff brings the research and knowledge of the university to county residents through hands-on workshops, site visits, conferences, phone consultations, printed materials, online resources, a statewide toll-free info line, and through strategic partnerships.



- **Food & Agriculture:** We support the county's agricultural industries, including producers of fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants, and livestock, through workshops and trainings, diagnostic services, applied research, and one-on-one consultations. This year, at least 3,146 Merrimack County citizens attended training in livestock management, crop production, safe food handling, pest management, agricultural marketing, pollinator protection, farm business management, landscaping for water quality protection, and more. Our team of specialists and volunteers also provide education and technical assistance to home gardeners and citizens through seminars, publications, and through our Education Center Info Line. This year, Education Center volunteers answered 295 inquiries from Merrimack County residents, and the county's Master Gardeners contributed 668 volunteer hours through garden-focused projects, displays, and presentations.
- **Natural Resources:** Managing and protecting New Hampshire's natural resources is critical to our environment, quality of life, and tourism industry, as well as for current and future economic opportunities. Our natural resources team provides research, education, and stewardship throughout the state with a "boots on the ground" approach, extending state-wide programs in forestry and wildlife, natural resource development, land and water conservation, and marine fisheries. This year, over 606 Merrimack County residents received one-on-one education from woodlot visits, telephone calls, and e-mail correspondence.

Approximately 1,147 County residents participated in many educational events: emerald ash borer educational workshops, geospatial technology training (GIS), N.H. Maple, N.H. Land Trust Coalition work, Saving Special Places Land Conservation conference, Speaking for Wildlife talks, Stewardship Network, woodlot visits, and forest management services. Volunteers from the N.H. Coverts project and the Natural Resource Stewards program contributed nearly 4,511 hours conserving and managing natural resources in Merrimack County.

- **Community & Economic Development:** Our Community and Economic Development team (CED) provides research-based education and assistance to individuals, families, businesses, and communities to help identify opportunities to enhance their competitive advantage, build upon their assets, and create conditions that foster local and regional economic growth. Over the last two years, Extension's facilitated engagement efforts in the Merrimack County town of Franklin helped lead to the creation of four *new* businesses (employing five people) and enabled the city to leverage \$1,336,000 in grants and tax credits to build 45 new units of affordable housing for working families and seniors utilizing a vacant mill building. Other Merrimack County towns have participated in Extension facilitated Community Visioning, Business Retention and Expansion programs, and training for community-based volunteers.
- **4-H/Youth & Family:** Preparing youth to become caring and productive citizens is critical to New Hampshire's future. The research-based education and information we provide enhances the leadership and decision-making skills of New Hampshire's youth and strengthens families. We provide educational resources for parents, families, and community serving volunteers and professionals through innovative programs such as Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, as well as, through creative delivery methods, including web-based outreach, e-newsletters and train-the-trainer programs. Merrimack County youth and volunteers participated in many 4-H youth development programs, including State and County Activities Days, Eastern States Exposition activities and competition, Teen Conference, county and state animal science shows,

Barry Conservation Camp, Hopkinton State Fair, volunteer screening and training, and youth leadership/youth voice workshops. Merrimack County residents also participated in afterschool professional workshops, farm to school days, military family events and camps, and the Nutrition Connections programs for limited resource adults, families, refugees, and youth.

This year, UNH Cooperative Extension trained and supported 403 volunteers in Merrimack County. These volunteers contributed 26,434 hours of their time extending the reach of our programs as 4-H leaders, master gardeners, wildlife coverts, community tree stewards, water quality monitors, marine docents, and others.

**We would like to take this opportunity to thank the 13 community members from all over Merrimack County who served on our Advisory Council during the past year:**

Commissioner Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh, *Boscawen*  
Larry Ballin, *New London*  
Lorrie Carey, *Boscawen*  
Mark Cowdrey, *Andover*  
Bill Doherty, *Franklin*  
Elaine Forst, *Pittsfield*  
Patrick Gilmartin, *Concord*

Ken Koerber, *Dunbarton*  
Lisa Mason, *Franklin*  
Paul Mercier, *Canterbury*  
Judy Palfrey, *Epsom*  
Mike Trojano, *Contoocook*  
State Rep. George Saunderson, *Loudon*

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[extension.unh.edu/About/Merrimack-County](http://extension.unh.edu/About/Merrimack-County)

A wide range of information is also available at [extension.unh.edu](http://extension.unh.edu).

The Education Center and Information Line

Provides practical solutions to everyday questions.  
Staffed by professionals and trained volunteers.

We have **answers** to your **questions**

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UNH, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and New Hampshire counties cooperating.

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