

UMass Extension

UMass Extension is part of a nationwide public university research and outreach network linked through its federal partner, the United States Department of Agriculture. UMass Extension's four programs are closely affiliated with research faculty in one or more academic departments of the University of Massachusetts Amherst within the College of Food and Natural Resources and the School of Public Health and Health Sciences. Faculty and staff are located in a network of extension centers and project offices around the state as well as on the Amherst campus.

The mission of UMass Extension is to serve the public good through the creation, communication and application of knowledge. Extension is founded upon a partnership of researchers and educators who facilitate the development and communication of knowledge working with citizens who apply the knowledge, and help identify critical issues.

The goals of UMass Extension are to enhance economic development and environmental quality, and to assist people and communities in the Commonwealth in reaching their full potential. Through the efforts of approximately 110 professional educators, 80 faculty members, and 5,700 adult volunteers working throughout the state, UMass Extension directly impacts over 30,000 Massachusetts

adults and more than 60,000 young people each year. In addition, thousands of citizens attend regional conferences, subscribe to newsletters, obtain written publications and access the UMass Extension web page for educational information critical to their lives and livelihoods.

The four UMass Extension programs are discussed below.

- **The Agroecology Program's** mission is to enhance the economy and environment of Massachusetts by providing knowledge to agricultural and nonagricultural communities through research, education, and outreach, enabling development of ecologically and economically sustainable and socially responsible agriculture and land-management systems.
- **The 4-H Youth and Family Development Program** focuses on preparing youth to contribute to the economic vitality of the commonwealth. It provides diverse, research-based educational resources, in both formal and informal learning environments, to young people aged six to eighteen in need of support and learning opportunities. The program addresses youth development issues related to leadership, environmental stewardship, job readiness, life skills and diversity.

- **The Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Program** provides educational programs and materials that enable people to make informed decisions and take actions to preserve or enhance the quality, productivity and sustainability of natural resources and natural systems. The program works with local officials and community leaders, environmental and conservation organizations, state, regional, and federal agencies, and K12 educators providing technical information, capacity building, training and education.
- **The Nutrition Education Program** provides nutrition and food safety education for low-income families (especially those with young children), high-risk youths, and elders, and the agency staff who work with them. The program's mission is to provide individuals, families, and communities with the knowledge and skills that empower them to make informed choices about healthy diets, reduce risks of food-borne illness and chronic disease, and efficiently manage food resources that support their physiological health, and their economic and social well-being.

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