Dear Extension Partner,

Thanks to all of you who have supported Cooperative Extension during the past year. Whether through volunteer time, program advocacy, or financial donations these contributions are invaluable to Extension programs here in Connecticut.

The overall economic climate has certainly impacted business and family budgets and our recent fundraising efforts have fallen short of expectations. Council funding becomes more critical as we continue to move forward and support new exciting programs and move away from older programs. In fact, last year we were forced to cut funding to programs by 50%.

We are asking if you could please contribute to support the terrific Extension Programs operating from our own New London County Extension Center. With your assistance, we can continue projects to support our 4-H, Operation Military Kids, Nutrition Education, Sustainable Landscape Education, and the Master Gardener Programs.

Our Extension center supports a diverse array of projects involving staff who delivers support within our community. Funding dollars have declined over the past few years, yet the need for support has not. Enrollment in after school 4-H programs and campership needs have increased. The Master Gardener program has expanded by both the number of people enrolled and by the diversity of programs offered. Critical nutritional education programs for youth and seniors, and military youth programs continue to be in demand.

I appreciate that this time of year brings many requests for donations and we all must make choices about which organizations we can support. Your generosity will help support and continue these valuable programs in New London County.

Sincerely,

Shelly Roy
President, New London County Agricultural Extension Council, Inc.
Master Gardener Program News

Twenty-six students from the New London County 2014 class became certified Master Gardeners on October 14th. Advanced Master Gardener certificates were awarded to ten Master Gardeners and four more advanced further in the program. During the event, there was much discussion of the volunteer outreach work that Master Gardeners do. The New London County program has designated three signature outreach programs: Camp Harkness for the Handicapped; Connecticut College Arboretum Tours; and the Norwich Extension Center plantings. These are programs where Master Gardeners have been volunteering for many years.

Master Gardeners George Smith and Stacey Whitney staffed tables at the Blue Slope annual fall festival in North Franklin, CT on October 4 and 5, where they handed out literature on UConn Extension programs.

On September 7, we held our annual Fall Garden Day at the Extension Center with exhibits on composting, invasives, growing wine grapes in Connecticut, butterflies, and beekeeping. Master Gardeners did soil pH testing for the public and led tours of the rain garden, pollination garden, native plant collection, and willow fence on the Extension Center grounds. A good time was had by all. Applications for the 2015 class are available at www.mastergardener.uconn.edu.

Nutrition and Wellness News

Diane Schuler, Community Nutrition Educator for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program –Education (SNAP-ED) Food Security Project provides workshops, presentations and food demonstrations for low income families and individuals in Southeastern Connecticut. Diane works with housing sites and local agencies, such as the United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, and the Mobile Food Pantry Program.

The Mobile Food Pantry provides 8 to 10 different food items distributed each month. Items may include fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, breads and other perishable foods. Diane provides recipes, food safety and storage information and vegetable tip sheets during the Mobile Food Pantry Distribution. There are 12 Mobile Food Pantries in New London County reaching on average 1,000 families in need each month. There are sites in Colchester, Groton, Jewett City, Norwich, New London, Salem, Sprague, Stonington and Taftville.
Healthy Homes News

Keeping a healthy home is of interest to many individuals and families. Information, presentations and publications focus upon keeping your home clean and clutter free, maintaining good indoor air quality especially if you have asthma or allergies, home safety and usage of household products, and mold and moisture prevention. Programs are available for housing authorities and other groups. For additional information, contact Mary Ellen Welch at (860) 885-2829.

Connecticut Operation: Military Kids News

Connecticut Operation: Military Kids (CT OMK) supports the children of service members before, during, and after deployment with programs, resources, and referrals to a statewide network of service providers. There are just over 10,000 military kids in the state of Connecticut. Approximately half of them live in New London County. CT OMK supports the CT National Guard, the Navy Subase Youth Center, the Navy School Liaison Officer, and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy Child Development Center.

We offer workshops for staff who work with military youth as well as military youth programs. Recently, we provided 100 Hero Packs for a submarine homecoming family event, held a wind turbine activity at the UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Cornucopia Fest, and briefed participants raising funds for OMK in the “Gone Too Early” Poker Run.

In cooperation with the American Legion Auxiliary and the American Legion, we held a weekend camp for military connected youth. Special Forces ‘Tween Weekend Camp was held at the New London County 4-H Camp in Franklin in October. STEMtastic, an eight week science, technology, engineering, and math program for military kids was offered in collaboration with the 4-H Military Club Program. In the past year, CT OMK supported over 100 events for military connected youth.

Sustainable Landscapes News

Vickie Wallace, Extension Educator and Program Director of UConn’s Sustainable Turf and Landscape Program, is part of a team of Extension IPM specialists that was awarded a grant to support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) education. The portion of the grant in which Ms. Wallace participates was a pilot program that provided weather stations to 16 schools districts where the grounds/fields are maintained without the use of pesticides. The intent of the grant is to incorporate weather station data as part of the pest & cultural management protocol in pesticide-free turf care programs. There are 2 weather stations in New London County.

Also, this fall, a weed herbarium was established at the Extension Center. This “on site” herbarium will assist Master Gardener interns with the identification of common turf and landscape weeds. The project was funded by the Master Gardener Foundation and while it will support the NLC Master Gardener Program, it also will be used as a component in future Sustainable Landscape Education Programs.
Donor Response Form

Name ________________________________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________________________________________

Email Address________________________________________________________________________

Amount of Donation $__________

Please use my donation to support:

- [ ] 4-H Programs
- [ ] 4-H Camperships
- [ ] Healthy Homes
- [ ] Master Gardener Program
- [ ] Nutrition Education
- [ ] Operation: Military Kids Programs
- [ ] Sustainable Landscape Education
- [ ] NLC Extension Center Landscape Fund
- [ ] Other (please specify) ____________________________________________

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