

# 100 Years of UVM Extension in Pictures

1913–2013



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Cover photos: Tony Vongsy, food service director at Brattleboro Union High/Middle School and Hans Estrin, UVM Extension local food network coordinator; campers at 4-H Camp Downer, Sharon, Vermont; Sid Bosworth, UVM Extension agronomy specialist, and Mark Krawczyk, owner of Keyline Vermont; 4-H girls making apple pies; Jenn Colby, outreach coordinator for the Vermont Pasture Network.

Photo credits: Ken Leach, page 10; Catherine Stevens, page 15.

UVM Extension helps individuals and communities put research-based knowledge to work—100 years and counting. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. University of Vermont Extension, Burlington, Vermont. University of Vermont Extension, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.



# 100 Years of UVM Extension in Pictures

THE HISTORY of the first one hundred years of University of Vermont (UVM) Extension begins with a fledgling organization started in 1913 to serve people outside the University community. It provided those Vermonters with education in agriculture and homemaking through one-on-one visits, group meetings, and mass media channels.

Many of the early programs were geared to the farmer and his questions on crop and livestock production. Experimental groups were also springing up in response to the needs of rural homemakers and youth.

The education that UVM Extension provides has changed over the last century, as has the structure of the organization, the way it delivers information, and the demographics of its clientele—the people of Vermont. Extension has had the flexibility and foresight to change with the times to meet the needs of the population. Yet its mission has not changed, nor has the philosophy of achieving its goals.

In 1912, the Vermont Legislature made its first appropriation for UVM Extension, for county agricultural agent work. This legislation, known as Act 83, was enacted on February 15, 1913. It appropriated \$8,000 annually for two years of Extension work.

A second piece of 1912 legislation, Act 84, provided for an agricultural Extension Service at UVM, conditional upon federal legislation. And so, with the passage of the federal Smith-Lever Act on May 8, 1914, Extension began receiving federal funds as well as appropriations from state and county sources.

These are the dry facts, the historical bones of UVM Extension. But to find the whole



Farming has rarely been easy in Vermont, where thin, rocky soils and a cold, humid climate make most types of agriculture a tough go. Many of UVM Extension's early programs were geared towards the farmer and his need for information about crop and livestock production unique to the state. It's still so today.

story, you have to look to its people and their stories.

Right from the start, Extension's strength has been its people and the relationship they have with Vermonters. It's a connection that works both ways. While Extension staff have given much in expertise, knowledge, muscle, and time to the people of the state, Vermonters have returned in kind their support and confidence, and have often taught as much as they have learned. Certainly, without this special

relationship, Vermont would not look or feel the way it does today.

Almost all of the photographs in *One Hundred Years of UVM Extension in Pictures* depict that relationship. Behind these few photographs, found in UVM archives and Extension collections (unless otherwise noted), lie the wealth of memories and history that are UVM Extension's history and its future.





YOUTH OUTREACH through 4-H—perhaps its most important responsibility—has been part of UVM Extension’s mission from the beginning, especially education in practical skills for rural children. Sewing and cooking were main themes for girls’ clubs early on, left.

4-H GIRLS learn how to make an apple pie in a 1925 photo, below left.

AFTER World War II, efforts were made to develop a better 4-H dairy program. Dairy breeders associations and feed dealers worked together to provide purebred dairy heifer calves to club members, below.







FIRST BEGUN in the 1920s, camps were an important part of the 4-H experience for many years. Above, boys and girls at this camp in Charlotte in 1925 are discovering that camp life includes a healthy dose of exercise.

CAMP DOWNER in Sharon, right, was one of the first of several 4-H camps located around the state. In 1967, it hosted the first special-interest camp, in fine arts, which included painting, ballet, theater and music. Children who were not in 4-H could attend, along with 4-H'ers.







4-H BROADENED its scope over the years from farm production and homemaking skills to current topics such as orienteering, conservation, and good consumer practices, above. The first urban 4-H centers were started in the 1960s in Burlington, Rutland, and St. Johnsbury.

IN A WAY, 4-H has come full circle. One of its emphases today is introducing agriculture to kids who may know little about where their food comes from. But the Youth Agriculture Project is more than just picking beans, right. Boys and girls in the program, which was started in 2001, learn job skills alongside the importance of agriculture and food security.







WORLD WAR II had a huge effect on rural Vermont. Extension began programs on food conservation, clothing, and household equipment; for example, home demonstration agents helped people gather milkweed to stuff pillows. Meanwhile, with so many men serving in the armed forces, farms faced a severe labor shortage, and Extension helped address that problem, too.



THE EXPANDED Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) improved the diets of low-income Vermonters by teaching nutrition.



THE FARMER'S wife as well as the farmer received practical, up-to-date education from UVM Extension. The home demonstration program started in 1917, with schools, exhibits or single demonstrations of cooking or canning, and sewing.



UVM EXTENSION put more emphasis on consumer education after World War II. Vermonters weren't just producing their own food and fiber anymore—they were more and more often purchasing them from others.





JUDGES inspect the Harold Shaw Farm for the Green Pastures contest in 1952, above left. The New England Green Pastures Program began in 1948 when the governor of New Hampshire bet the governors of other New England states that his state had the best pastures.

BETTER varieties and agronomic knowledge helped double the acreage of legumes like trefoil and alfalfa between 1950 and 1960. Extension helped educate farmers about forages, above right.

SHORT on large, level fields and with a cool, moist climate, Vermont's livestock industry relies on pasture and hayland to make up for what it can't grow in cereal grains. Today, Sid Bosworth, agronomy specialist, takes on pasture management as one of his areas of expertise. Bosworth, left, consults with Mark Krawczyk, owner of Keyline Vermont.





THE VERMONT AGENCY of Natural Resources, the Poultney-Mettowee Conservation District, and UVM Extension started the Agronomy and Conservation Assistance Program in 2010 to provide technical assistance to livestock operations in the Lake Champlain watershed and to promote practices that improve water quality. Above left, Rico Balzano, UVM agronomy outreach professional with ACAP, left, and Starksboro dairy farmer David Russell, confer.



JUDGING DAIRY cows has a fine tradition in Vermont, above right. K. Stewart "Stew" Gibson judged cattle throughout New England for decades and was an outstanding cattle judge, teacher and mentor for thousands of 4-H'ers. He was a Chittenden County agricultural agent from 1955 to 1960, a Washington County agricultural agent from 1964 to 1967, then an Extension dairy specialist from 1967 until his retirement in 1997.

LEFT, the UVM Extension dairy exhibit at the 1925 Champlain Valley Fair shows the premier role of dairy in Vermont's farm economy. During Extension's first year, educational exhibits like these were displayed at the state fair and eight county fairs.





“WHEN I CAME in the late 1950s, [dairy farmers] were going from milk cans to bulk tanks. That was a tremendous change, because ... there were 85 pounds of milk in a can and there were some farmers had as little as a couple cans of milk a day, you know.” Fred Webster, UVM Extension economist (1956-1988).

In the decades of rapid change after World War II, U.S. farmers could make more and more milk, while the cost of producing that milk climbed steeply, especially in New England, where costs are traditionally higher than in other parts of the United States.

One technological change was the shift to bulk tanks. It was an expensive change for Vermont dairy producers, and many small farms couldn’t afford to upgrade their barns. UVM Extension helped those farmers make informed financial decisions about whether to stay in dairying.





SHEEP PRODUCTION peaked in the early 1800s, then declined as dairy farming became the state's chief agricultural sector. But during the 1970s and 1980s, as more people farmed on a small scale, raising sheep was one of the skills UVM Extension taught. Chet Parsons, Extension livestock specialist from 1985 to 2011, teaches sheep shearing, above left.

SOME OF the earliest work on integrated pest management began with UVM Extension's apple program. Today it has expanded into working with cold-climate grapes for commercial wine production. Lorraine Berkett, above, right, headed the UVM apple program from 1983 to 2011.



THE CENTER for Sustainable Agriculture houses the Vermont Pasture Network, among other programs. The network is part of Extension's work in rotational grazing, which began in the 1980s. Jenn Colby, right, is the outreach coordinator for the program today.







**WATER QUALITY**, good agronomic practices and education about manure storage have been UVM Extension initiatives. In 1935, a statewide manure conservation program taught farmers how to make the most of their manure. As the size of Vermont dairies grew, Extension emphasized managing manure to prevent runoff. Often it provided education while state and federal governments gave funding and technical assistance.

**WHEN FARMERS** first began filing income taxes, UVM Extension agents would help them fill in the forms. Later, Extension started the electronic farm accounting system (ELFAC) in the 1960s. Verle Houghaboom, center in the bottom left photo, was in charge of the program. He talks taxes with Essex Junction farmer Edward Whitcomb, left, and William Luck of the Internal Revenue Service.

**THE UVM Extension Farm Viability Program** has a team of advisors who work with individual farmers to improve their economic profitability. The program has grown in the 2000s, as UVM Extension puts more emphasis on farm business planning. (Photo by Ken Leach.)







THE ORGANIZATION of farmers' clubs in villages and towns in the mid 1800's was actually how UVM Extension got its start. Later, meetings like this one, above, led by Phil Grime, Caledonia County agricultural agent from 1951 to 1983, were also a great way for farmers to socialize.

ACROSS THE FENCE, which began in 1956, is the longest-running daily farm-and-home television program in the country. Alice Wright, an Extension nutrition specialist from 1969 to 1991, who helped start the EFNEP program, stars in this show, right.







FARM VISITS, above, like this one by John Page, a Bennington County agricultural agent from 1952 to 1986, right, were essential to UVM Extension's outreach into rural Vermont for many decades.

THE COMMUNICATIONS staff, above right, worked on the UVM campus, publishing pamphlets, brochures, and newsletters and all the other media that supported Extension in the field.

RADIO has been an important medium for UVM Extension to bring its message into all corners of Vermont. Farmers doing their morning milking often tuned in to the Extension radio spots, like this one by Judy Branch, an Extension specialist from 1977 to 2009, right.







SINCE 1968, Extension's Rural and Agricultural VocRehab (RAVR) Program has provided employment services for people with disabilities who live in rural Vermont or work in some form of agriculture. Deborah Finnegan-Ling, above, a Greensboro dairy farmer, was one of those whom RAVR benefited.

IN THE MID-1980'S, Extension began to put more emphasis on water quality and water use. Extension faculty like Margaret Andrews, above right, a regional specialist in home horticulture from 1981 to 2002, taught workshops on water conservation, effective septic systems, changes in wastewater regulations, and water pollution.

WORKSHOPS and field days are still an important strategy in fulfilling UVM's educational mission. The workshop on field soil aggregates, right, is led by Heather Darby, UVM Extension agronomist.







AT UVM'S Entomology Research Laboratory, entomologists like Margaret Skinner, above, are renowned for developing fungal pathogens to use in integrated pest management, a sustainable approach to managing such pests.

AS IN OTHER fields of education, the computer revolutionized how Extension specialists like Louellen Wasson, above right, a home economist with UVM Extension in Lamoille and Chittenden counties, from 1966 to 1992, and others did their work.

THE VERMONT Dairy Farm Energy Project in 1989 was one of many UVM Extension programs that have improved energy efficiency. Stan Scribner, a Middlesex dairy farmer, right, installed an in-line plate cooler in his dairy through the program.



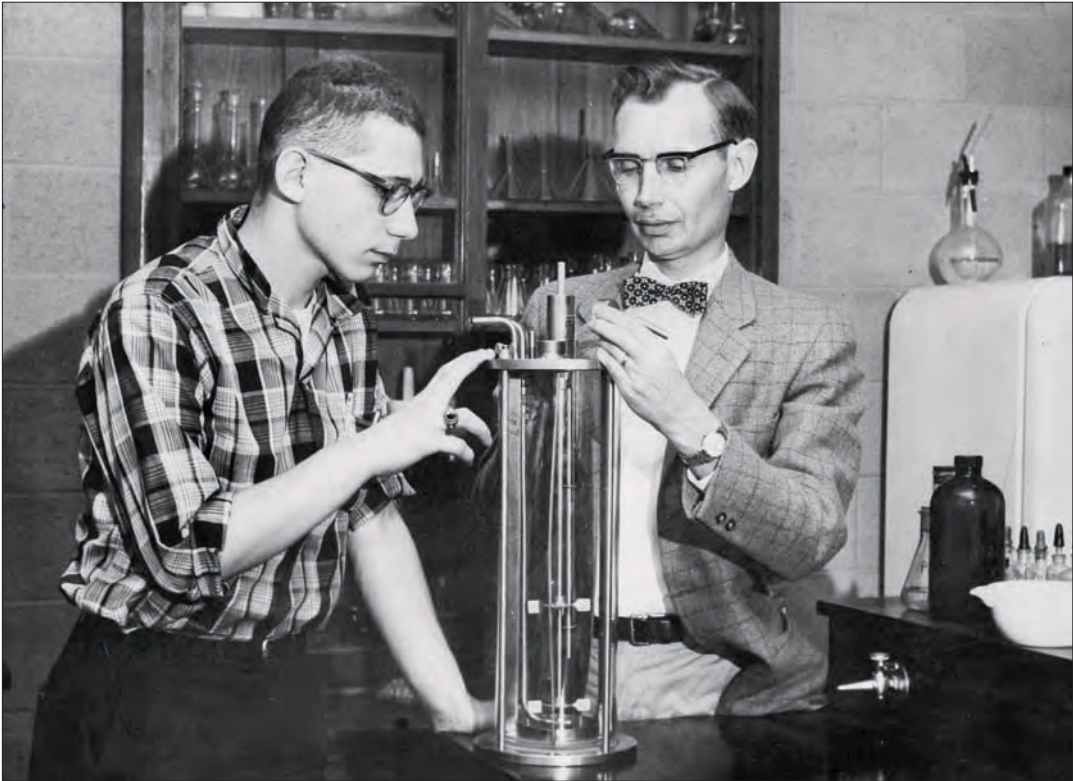




AN IMPORTANT focus of the Local Food Program, begun in 2009 by the Center for Sustainable Agriculture, is connecting schools with farms. Above, Tony Vongsy, left, food service director at Brattleboro Union High/Middle School, and Hans Estrin, local food network coordinator at UVM Extension, are part of that program.

SCIENTISTS at UVM and the Agricultural Experiment Station have contributed research that faculty in the field can draw on. These biochemistry researchers, above right, were just two of the many UVM scientists, past and present.

UVM MAPLE specialist Tim Wilmot, right, works with commercial sugarmakers and does research at UVM Extension's Proctor Maple Research Center. (Photo by Catherine Stevens.)





ON-FARM BIOFUEL production is one of Extension's most important initiatives, as it looks forward to its next one hundred years. Right, John Williamson, owner of State Line Farm in Shaftsbury; Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension vegetable and berry specialist; and Andrew Knafel, owner of Clear Brook Farm in Shaftsbury, confer at a workshop. Expertise from Grubinger and other Extension faculty helped Williamson build a biofuels facility, part of a long-term project to strengthen Vermont's energy security. Knafel, an early partner in the project, grows oil seed crops and processes them at Williamson's facility.



VERMONT'S agricultural future lies in the hands of our children. Today's UVM Extension is shifting its 4-H focus back to the club model, where 4-H'ers learn critical life skills, and it's those 4-H'ers we'll see learning from and working with Extension over the next one hundred years.

THESE GIRLS, below right, representing the UVM 4-H Horse Project, take a break from chores at the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Massachusetts.









