Good afternoon and thanks for joining us, I am Judy Simpson. Today we mark two significant anniversaries related to the University of Vermont. First we're going to touch on the centennial celebration of UVM Extension and we're also going to discuss the sesquicentennial of the Land Grant College Act. To find out more I'm joined by the Dean of the University of Vermont Extension, Doug Lantagne. It's always great to have you with us.

Doug.: It's always great to be here Judy.

Judy.: What are some of the key things that are keeping you busy this summer?

Doug.: It's been a busy summer never mind my personal life just on the business side of things. We had a food systems summit this summer. We're bringing on a new faculty member actually today an ag. engineer which we haven't had in 20 years or so in Extension. Then of course we've had our centennial celebration going on all year and very shortly we will have a couple more new items out that highlight our centennial year. Then there's the 150th anniversary of the Land Grant College Act.

Judy.: Busy. As you celebrate your 100th year, what are some of the top things you want Vermonters to know about Extension?

Doug.: I think the one thing Extension started local and it's still local. We're in 11 of the 14 counties and our faculty and staff live in those communities and continue to work in those communities. And we serve the entire state. I'd say the other thing I would like them to know is we continue to work with individuals with families with communities with businesses whether you're a dairy farmer or diversified farmer vegetable farmer or lifestyle farmer we have expertise and we are there or nutrition in communities.

Judy.: We're going to take a moment to hear what Vermonters have to say about the work and the programs offered by UVM Extension. The Across the Fence team put together a video that travels the state and explores the variety and depth of work done by Extension.
Since I started farming nine years ago, UVM Extension and the personnel who work there have been instrumental in giving me excellent technical expertise. Everything from helping me identify disease problems in the field, cover cropping rates and timing, coping with soil issues including interpreting soil tests. In general making my farm perform better because of the information they are able to provide for me. They are consummate professionals very responsive extremely knowledgeable of course that goes without saying that and really supportive of the farms in Vermont. I think my industry as a whole has benefited vastly because we have technical folks to help us find the right answers even if they don't already have them so that our industry can thrive. Diversified farming whether it's vegetable farming and berries flowers etc...it is newer to Vermont agriculture and I think UVM Extension has been critical in helping its growth.

How it's helped me out is Extension brought on these new agronomists that have really focused on us trying to do a good job or a better job to see a new approach of how we do our cropping and implement nutrients and how we implement a lot of things on our farms. That has been what's so great about Extension willing to move ahead and bring on these people with new goals and new ideas. I couldn't go to school and learn as much as I've learned working with Heather through Extension.

Vermont 4-H programs include 7000 children. 2000 of those children are in a traditional 4-H club program. Our highest enrolled projects are dairy and horse, natural resources and environmental science. The other 5000 children are in our after school programs and are in school enrichment programs.

A big part of 4-H is learning how to be a better citizen and teach citizenship. When I started 4-H I was nervous to speak in front of the crowd but being in 4-H it has helped me speak better in front of a crowd.

It teaches a lot, not only about stuff we can use now in 4-H but stuff we can use later on. Like when we go into our careers.

Operation: Military Kids along with UVM Extension did a really great job of showing me that the community could reach out in the right way to military kids. It's easy to isolate yourself as a military kid because in Vermont there's not a lot going on militarily so it's hard for both worlds the civilian world and the military world to get connected and I think this UVM Extension program does a great job of connecting the military kids and the civilian kids and integrating them into one community.

The 4-H model is hands-on learning. It's learning by doing. The children really respond to this. Learning is taken in in such a way that it both compliments and enhances the school day program.

I understand like UVM Extension do they have people you know who are very needy. I learned there from there we have to eat a whole grain food. We learned how to cook healthy food and how to eat healthy food. All these things from that class I learned to see the label and price compare. If anybody would say this I will advise them to take this class because this class is very important to learn to eat new things that we have in the U.S. And the new place because if we learn how to do all these things then they will teach us how to do a smart way of shopping
and saving time cooking. How to eat healthy food. UVM Extension did this so I would advise them to take this class.

Here we were starting a new enterprise, not having production knowledge, never having run our own business. We've tapped UVM Extension for just about everything.

It's been pasture walks and workshops and handouts and individual technical assistance, conferences, it runs the gamut and that's really incredible.

What I think about what we chose to build as a farm a highly diversified farm it was responding to the place and UVM Extension is responding to the place.

I feel like I've gotten a graduate degree in the last four years as we've done our business. Basically our business plan felt like we're giving birth to a thesis. My diploma from UVM Extension is that I'm woven into this rich community of food producers in the state. It helps so much beyond just that factual knowledge sharing in making us feel like yes we can reach our goals and we can get there there's a net behind us to get there. They're basically invested in sharing intellectual capital that they have and their sharing social capital that they have and it's this combination. It's like our head and our hearts are being fed in a way that's making our business successful.

Let's face it, Lake Champlain is iconic to Vermont it is every bit as crucial as the mountains as the farm community as anything else in drawing people to the state. It is Vermont, the lake. I can also tell you a story from our perspective as resort owners but you and that does that we a number of our guests home and stay where they bring a business here or they decide they're going to open up a new office here because this is their first introduction to Vermont. Think of the economy and the growth. Extension services are always at the table and have always been at the table as long as I can remember. Basin program, meetings, citizen advisory committee meetings, every time I've gone to the legislature, I have frequently gone with the UVM Extension people. I think it's definitely a collaborative work and it's one of Vermont's great strengths. I say the lake is iconic to Vermont but so is UVM and UVM Extension service, it's been here a long time.

Judy.: Back here in the studio I'm with the Dean of Extension, Doug Lantagne. Doug what a great video.

Doug.: It is. Just wonderful the first time I saw it it's just inspiring for us to work in Extension to hear folks interviewed and share them share their bare thoughts as one of them said both their minds and their hearts about what they've learned and being part of community. This is inspiring for all of us of Extension to continue to do what we do and do it better and continue to move forward.

Judy.: It's amazing to me how many different aspects of the state that Extension touches.

Doug.: Yes one of the things or words I hate to hear the most is “you are a hidden gem.” Because we do so much, we are in so many different aspects from nutrition health to the agriculture community and across the agricultural community into communities working with
town officers. It's difficult to get your head and hands around it. Which part of the elephant are you touching when you put the blindfold on that's what people know the best.

Judy.: So this video is part of what you been doing work for the Extension Centennial. What are some other publications that you've been working on.

Doug.: We've actually created a series of publications. One came out in January on Food Systems. There will be one on community and economic development that will be coming out in your local newspaper within the next week of two before the end of July. Then we have another one that will come out next December or January on youth and youth development and work we do there. Then fairs and field days with some information. We created a history book we brought. We had a history book up to 75 years, and we extended that to 100 years so different things like that that we've worked with.

Judy.: Let me ask you about another important landmark. 2012 marks the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Land Grant College Act, tell us a little bit about Justin Morrill.

Doug.: Justin was our senator he was a senator from Vermont. He was one of 10 children if I remember my history correctly. His father couldn't send him to college beyond 12 grade whenever was in those days. 12 of 14 years old so he decided to learn on his own and he became a U.S. senator and sat in the U.S. Senate and became an expert in taxes and tariffs. But it was also the father of what we call the land grant universities. Giving access. He wanted to make sure everyone had excess no matter the color gender or occupation of their parents you should have access to higher education.

Judy.: So the land grant colleges act required states to do that?

Doug.: It didn't require them it offered them land and the west that they can sell and then take that money and create an endowment and they could then build a new college from scratch or add to an existing college to decide that they want to become a land grant university. The University of Vermont became Vermont's land grant university in concert with the legislature.

Judy.: What do you think the land grant colleges act means at UVM today?

Doug.: I think it still means a lot. We still have Extension we still have a university that reaches out. Whether it's in health care through our Fletcher Allen Healthcare and the College of Medicine. Whether it's from the College of Agriculture. Whether it's from the Rubinstein School for the Environment and Natural Resources. The university reaches out. In the theater and arts working with children that do not have everything that they may need and bringing them to campus and helping them or having them experience theater. The University of Vermont is everywhere in the state and I think there's a great potential to continue to grow at serving the citizens of the state.

Judy.: Overall what is the legacy that Morrill left us do you think?

Doug.: Education, education, education. I think the desire to have higher education at all levels of society and the ability to get an education and an infrastructure that allows education to be available in the mindset throughout this country about the need for opportunity in education.
Judy.: In the meantime too also getting the word out about Extension and the work that you do.

Doug.: That's correct, that's one aspect of the land grant university of land grant university is about extending education. Were just one wing but an important wing that just one wing of an institution that serves the state of Vermont.

Judy.: Doug thanks for joining us congratulation on your landmark.

Doug.: Great, thank you.

Judy.: That's our program for today thanks for joining us I'm Judy Simpson will see you again next time on Across the Fence.

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