



COMMUNITY



4-H & YOUTH



ENVIRONMENT



AGRICULTURE



FOOD

MANAGING VERMONT'S TREES AND FORESTS

Vermont is 73% forested and has a \$1.4 billion forest products industry, so it is no surprise that the state is well known for its trees. Forests are a valuable environmental and economic resource. They require ongoing management to preserve them for future generations. From town parks to dense forests, UVM Extension provides education and the technical training Vermonters need to maintain this valuable asset.



Photo Credit: Amber Primdahl

IMPROVING FOREST BUSINESS AND STEWARDSHIP

Sustaining forests requires careful harvest of all grades of trees to allow room for future growth. To make this practice economically viable, there have to be markets for all types of wood, and with the recent downturn in low-grade wood markets, loggers struggle to maintain their businesses.



A partnership between **UVM Extension Agricultural Business programs** and the Vermont Farm and Forest Viability Program* provides training and coaching to help forest-related businesses survive and thrive in the fluctuating economy. Over the last two years, 70 logging business owners learned about market trends, financial record keeping, job pricing and business plan development in three industry-specific workshops. Ten additional forest product businesses receive regular one-on-one business coaching from UVM Extension staff each year.

UVM Extension Business Specialist **Mark Cannella** and Educator **Christopher Lindgren** will expand this work with a \$50,000 award from the Working Lands Enterprise Board. Collaborating with foresters and industry leaders, the team will use a portion of the funding to develop business plan best practices and sample budgets for timber harvest systems in Vermont. With training from UVM Extension, logging professionals improve the economic vitality of their businesses, and simultaneously enhance sustainable management of Vermont's woodlands.

*A Vermont Housing and Conservation Board Program

CARING FOR URBAN FORESTS

One urban tree annually provides its community about \$100 in benefits. There are an estimated 11.9 million trees in Vermont's downtowns and village centers. Though their maintenance sustains those paybacks, only three municipalities have a paid arborist on staff. Vermont cities and towns need increased local capacity to keep urban forests healthy, safe and vibrant.

UVM Extension's Urban & Community Forestry Program completed the **Care of the Urban Forest Project**. The project was funded by the USDA Forest Service and coordinated by **Elise Schadler**. Each community now knows the composition of their trees and has a plan for their management.

PROJECT RESULTS



20 TOWNS



20 PLANS



15,000 TREES
INVENTORIED



139 TRAINED

65% Staff, 35% Volunteers



WE KNOW NOW WHERE OUR URBAN FOREST STANDS, WHERE IT'S SLOUCHING, AND WHAT STEPS HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO HELP IT GROW UP."

-community member



LEARNING HEALTHY HABITS FROM STORYBOOKS

UVM Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) arms our youngest Vermonters with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices about nutritious foods. Better choices can lead to a healthy weight and ultimately a healthier Vermont.

26% of Vermont's high school students are either overweight or obese (2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey). This significantly increases the risk of serious chronic health conditions, which can result in shorter life expectancy and higher health care costs. Reducing the rate of obesity, especially among youth, is crucial to the health of our state.

EFNEP is a National Institute of Food and Agriculture initiative led in Vermont by **Amy Davidson**. It provides hands-on, practical nutrition education to limited resource parents and youth. The long-running **Book-in-Bag Program** is inspired by a Kansas State University Extension program. It uses food-related storybooks, hands-on activities and food tasting to teach young children about nutrition, and encourages them to eat more fruits and vegetables. The Gould Family Foundation has been supporting Book-in-Bag for the past three years. Since October 2015, EFNEP delivered 50 Book-in-Bag series, reaching 702 kindergarten, first- and second-graders across eight counties in Vermont. Of those children, 86% demonstrated improvement in one or more health-related knowledge area or skill. Book-in-Bag students are making healthier choices at school and paving the way for an overall healthier life.



PRECISION MANURE MANAGEMENT HELPS FARMERS AND ENVIRONMENT

Manure is a highly valuable resource for farmers. It provides nutrients for crops and can help to build soil health. But if it is not managed properly, it can make its way into surface waters and negatively impact water quality. Following the "4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship" (right source, right time, right place and right rate) helps farmers achieve production goals while providing environmental protection.

In December 2016, the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) – part of Vermont's Clean Water Act – were signed into law. RAPs specify regulations for water quality practices to which farmers and custom manure applicators must adhere. This includes the mandate that custom manure applicators receive training and certification before operating in the state. Certification ensures that custom manure applicators understand the new standards. This leads to better management of manure application, reduced risk of nutrient runoff to surface waters, and improved water quality in Lake Champlain.

UVM Extension, in collaboration with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Foods and Markets (VAAFMM), provides the education necessary to gain that certification. This year, UVM Extension Agronomists **Heather Darby** and **Jeff Carter** and their teams, delivered nine workshops, attended by more than 100 custom manure applicator owners and employees from 56 businesses in New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. As a result, all custom applicator owners operating in Vermont, and their full-time employees, started the certification process and comply with the RAPs for 2017.

