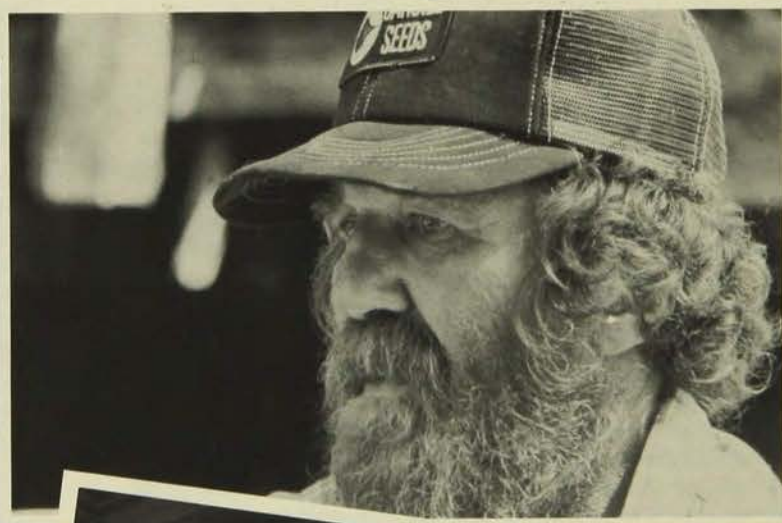




University of Minnesota  
Agricultural Extension Service

# Focuses on PEOPLE

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# University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service

## Focuses on PEOPLE

The University of Minnesota's Agricultural Extension Service provides educational programs and information to people of all ages, in cooperation with the 87 counties in Minnesota. The goal of these efforts is to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for individuals and families in Minnesota.

This has been Extension's mission since 1909, and the challenges of meeting that goal keep growing. Programs are developed by extension staff in cooperation with citizen advisory groups and volunteers. Research conducted by scientists at the Agricultural Experiment Station provides the basic information for much of extension's educational program.

Information and education are provided to the people of Minnesota in many different ways—through classes, meetings, seminars, workshops, over the phone, on radio and television, in newspapers, publications and through computer programs. More than 150,000 of Minnesota's young people are members of 4-H club programs, which bring extension's resources to urban centers as well as to rural communities.

### Extension Includes One-to-One Education

Whenever possible, Extension faces problem solving and teaching in the most direct way possible, often in one-to-one education. This has proved to be effective for adults to learn new skills, to apply them to their own problems, and to assess how much they have learned. One-to-one education differs from counseling. Extension's purpose is to give people the understanding and skills to allow them to solve their own problems and reach their own solutions.

The people who take part in extension programs include farmers, homemakers, business people, children, government officials, families, community leaders, retirees, teenagers—in other words, people of all ages, interests and walks of life.

During this past year the Agricultural Extension Service has successfully launched many new educational efforts, and reached new audiences, while helping traditional audiences in new ways. Here are some examples:

### Project Support Helps Rural Minnesotans

The biggest and an especially effective program in Extension this year has been Project Support, begun in December 1984 to assist rural Minnesotans undergoing severe economic crisis. Educational programs were developed in farm and family financial management, family stress management, and community networking to help distressed families throughout the state. A telephone hotline was established to provide answers to questions in these areas while allowing the callers anonymity, and several written and computer-based programs were developed to assist Minnesota citizens. Extension agents:

- Spent more than 12,000 hours consulting with people on a one-to-one basis.
- Provided over 8,000 people with educational information via the telephone.
- Gave farm management information to more than 16,500 people participating in group meetings.
- Provided family stress management information to almost 21,000 people participating in group meetings.

- Provided over 9,000 people with family resource management information as they attended group meetings.
- Trained 15,000 agency and business representatives in farm and family economic and stress management.
- Provided more than 6,000 youths with 4-H summer camp programs specifically designed to enhance self esteem and renew confidence in the vitality of rural Minnesota.
- Worked with more than 12,000 agency and business representatives to develop community support networks for farm families.

### Center for Farm Financial Management Expanded

Integral to the Project Support effort is this center, which responded to farmers' needs to analyze their financial situation and develop a base for financial planning. Over 10,000 farmers have been helped in one-to-one or small group sessions. The center has also trained 570 financial institutions in the use of a computerized financial management package (FINPACK) as well as 180 Minnesota adult-vo-ag instructors and 90 Minnesota county agents. The FINPACK program has been adopted by 35 other states.

### Extension Works to Increase Profitability in Agriculture

- Integrated reproductive management (IRM) seminars in dairy and beef cattle management helped Minnesota producers achieve the lowest calving interval in the Midwest (12.9 months between calves). Another IRM success was the adoption by egg producers of research demonstrating that an increase of laying house temperatures from 70 to 80 degrees F reduced feed consumption about one pound of feed per 100 hens per day with no loss of egg production. The savings to Minnesota egg producers is 4200 tons of feed valued at \$420,000.
- A soil fertility program dealing with reducing fertilizer costs for farmers includes increased use of soil testing, revisions of fertilizer recommendations for Minnesota, and encouraging fertilization according to soil tests. There was a 28 percent increase in soil samples tested over the previous year and a potential average savings of \$30 per acre in fertilizer costs.

- The search for alternatives to traditional crops in NE Minnesota has prompted several programs, among them the blueberry project. Partially funded through a grant from the Governor's Council for Rural Development, the program has in its first year resulted in training for agents and growers, the planting of 20 half-acre plots, and distribution of 7,000 plants for 1985, with an anticipated 20,000 plants for 1986. Other alternative crop initiatives include developing cole crops, such as broccoli and cauliflower, in Aitkin and Kanabec Counties, and the Sherburne County sweet corn project.

### Volunteers Make Extension Work

It is difficult to estimate the amount of talent and time and energy extension gets through its volunteers. This past year more than 50,000 volunteers have been involved in many different extension programs such as 4-H, Extension Home Study Group members, and Master Gardeners. A sampling from a few counties:

- In Olmsted County the Community Green Gardens program serving low income families expanded to 100 plots in two locations. Master Gardener volunteers provided training for garden planning and planting techniques, and a Food Preservation Consultant taught home canning. A conservative estimate of the value of produce raised is over \$22,000, but it is impossible to assign a value to the improved nutrition and sense of pride these gardens provided for participants.
- During the past year Minnesota's 4-H volunteers organized their own association, which promises to become the largest adult volunteer organization in the state. 4-H now has 17,000 adults who volunteer their services as club and project leaders.
- In Itasca, St. Louis and Carlton Counties, 124 families received one-to-one household financial management consultation from 17 volunteer budget consultants from October 1984 through April 1985. In Itasca County, six months after meeting with budget consultants, 60 percent of the families are still following their spending plan and all families report feeling more in control.
- In Hennepin County, 45 Master Gardeners provided gardening information to urban consumers. A mobile horti-





culture center conducted over 30 plant clinics reaching more than 3000 people. 234 children raised vegetables in the Minneapolis Children's Garden.

- A youth vegetable gardening program started on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in 1984 continued in 1985 and has led to the development of a new informal network of social service professionals involved in serving youth on the reservation in Beltrami County. This program has grown to include people from drug and alcohol prevention programs, health programs, and Wah Bun Chapel. The 4-H program now includes creative arts, food and nutrition, health and wellness projects and activities.

### **Project SURVIVE**

A ten-part series called Project SURVIVE was aired over Minnesota Public Television this fall, focusing on the impact of the changing economy on Minnesotans. Topics included the crisis in our rural communities, use of debt and credit, hunger and nutrition, job loss and youth and unemployment. SURVIVE was a cooperative effort with KTCA Public Television, the Office of Library Development and Services, the Minnesota Community Education System, and the Minnesota Information and Referral Alliance.

### **Teens in Distress**

County agents working with local experts and extension specialists developed a series of programs called Teens in Distress, focusing on teen depression, suicide, drug problems, eating disorders, and family communication. Research now being conducted in cooperation with Southwest State University faculty and the University of Minnesota's Adolescent Psychiatry Department is one of the most important studies of young people under stress conducted in this country. It is anticipated that results will affect future directions for the Minnesota 4-H program.

### **Helping in Tourism Development**

In response to a growing demand for assistance with community tourism development, extension agents and specialists have conducted 33 workshops in 19 communities

since January 1985, reaching more than 1,500 owners or employees of hospitality firms. The programs were joint ventures with the Sea Grant Extension Program, the Minnesota Office of Tourism, and the Small Business Development Center. Long-term benefits included improved hospitality skills and attitudes, improved community information and interpretive systems, and increased economic activity throughout the state.

### **Telecommunications Helps Give Extension a Bigger Voice**

Greatly aiding Extension's outreach efforts is a grant of \$1.9 million from the Kellogg Foundation to establish a telecommunications development center. The five-year grant is the largest the foundation has ever given the University. The center is being developed to train faculty and staff to plan, design and deliver instructional programs using telecommunications technologies such as television, computers and teleconferencing.

### **Nutrition Programs Aid Youth and Families**

Extension home economics agents in Clay, Becker and Douglas Counties developed workshops with an extension nutrition specialist after several teachers and coaches expressed a need for more information on athletic nutrition and eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. A series of workshops throughout the state informed parents, teachers and coaches about nutrition and athletes. The workshops increased understanding of the special nutrient needs of athletes, identified young athletes with potential nutritional problems, and helped dismiss many myths associated with sports nutrition.

"The Winning Weights," a half-hour video documentary on eating disorders, anorexia and bulimia, was filmed in Clay and Douglas Counties and in Apple Valley. It is one of six in a series of youth nutrition issue videos produced by the Extension Service.

A video tape was also produced on a significant women's health issue—osteoporosis. Called "Brittle with Age," the tape represents a cooperative venture with Melpomene Institute of Women's Health Research, and Riker Labs/3M. The tape, now being distributed through Extension, will also be aired on public television stations.



## Extension Builds Computer Network with EXTEND

Communication technologies like computers and video have helped Extension provide research-based information. The FINPACK farm financial management computer program has helped farmers look at the economic consequences of management alternatives.

In Nicollet County a computer program called FOOD-COST was used by about 250 families to help their family food budgeting.

Computer equipment is now in all county offices. This has resulted in increased cooperation between county and state agencies, including the Association of County Governments, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration and Vocational Technical Education.

## Public Policy and Community Resource Education

- A forum on the rising cost of health care was presented as a public policy educational program in Kandiyohi County. A follow-up year of wellness programs is being sponsored by the Kandiyohi County Extension office, Rice Memorial Hospital, Community Nursing Services, and the Willmar Medical Center.
- A parent education networking program in Isanti County trained nearly 700 parents, resulting in development of a directory of community networking resources for parents, and a monthly newsletter. Cooperating agencies included Community Health and the East Central Regional Library. Cassette tapes on family education are now being pilot tested with commuting families.
- An urban forestry program in Hubbard County resulted in replenishing the trees of Park Rapids. After losing nearly 20 percent of its trees to Dutch Elm disease, the City of Park Rapids, with extension agents and specialists, the Department of Transportation and the Urban Forestry Committee, planted over 4,000 trees valued at over \$40,000. Thirty community organizations learned the so-

cial action process in group decisionmaking, and over 350 people developed and used leadership skills through Extension.

All of these examples demonstrate the capability of the Extension Service to develop networks with other organizations in delivering educational programs to people. Every extension program—agriculture, home economics, 4-H, and community and natural resource development—strives to guarantee that necessary educational programs are delivered without duplication of services.

## Extension Funding: A Federal, State and Local Partnership

- Federal funds are appropriated and distributed to states in two ways. They are either distributed among the states on the basis of a formula for use with any extension program, or earmarked to meet special needs of national concern.
- State funds are appropriated on a biennial basis by the legislature as a special line item in the University of Minnesota budget.
- County funds are appropriated by the County Board of Commissioners, in accordance with Minnesota statutes, based on the recommendation of the County Extension Committee.
- Non-tax funds include fees, gifts by individuals, and grants from business and industry. Individuals, organizations, and businesses may make tax-deductible gifts to the Agricultural Extension Service through the University of Minnesota Foundation or the Minnesota 4-H Foundation.

In 1984-85, the total revenue from all sources was approximately \$29,700,000. More than 85 percent of the total budget is used for professional and support staff. Staff resources of the Agricultural Extension Service are distributed among the four major program areas by the approximate percentages indicated in figure 2.

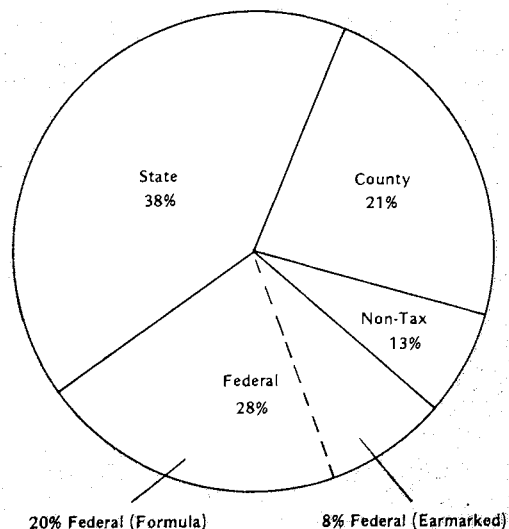


Figure 1. Source of funds, 1984-85.

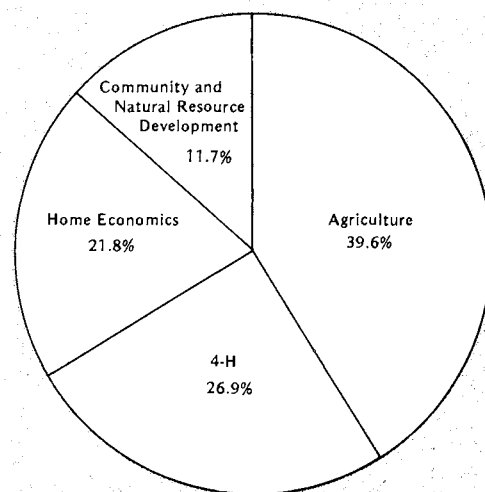


Figure 2. Distribution of staff resources, 1984-85.

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