Welcome to our 2013 Program Highlights. One trip through these pages will give you a glimpse of the work our faculty, staff and volunteers have done over the past year.

As Interim Dean this past year, I had the opportunity to visit people and places in every corner of the state. I am eternally grateful for that wonderful experience. A few things in particular stood out:

■ Though vast in land, Nevada is a tightly knit state, with people working together to use their limited resources to provide the most benefit to Nevadans. Bottom line: We couldn’t do what we do in each community without the help and collaboration of so many. To all of you: Thank you.

■ People appreciate Cooperative Extension and the work we are doing in both rural and urban communities across the state. Clearly, we are fulfilling our century-old mission to provide research-based educational programs based on the people’s needs. Extension is truly an integral part of each community. It was heartwarming to hear county residents talk about the importance of Extension in their lives. Many talked about their county Extension staff as though they were family.

■ Challenges present an opportunity to re-examine what we are doing and how we are doing it, and then consider how we might do it even better. Our faculty and staff look forward to working with our USDA, Nevada Counties and University of Nevada, Reno partners in the coming year to build on our current successful programs, as well as find new ways to excel in addressing needs of Nevadans across this beautifully unique and diverse State.

As of July 2013, I leave the leadership of the college in the competent hands of my colleague Mark Walker, who has 23 years of experience as an Extension specialist. Mark is eager to work with our faculty and staff, and with stakeholders throughout Nevada, to continue to fulfill the University’s critical mission of outreach and engagement.

It has truly been a pleasure serving as this organization’s Dean and serving the citizens of this State.

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2013 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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Ameya McKenzie shows off some onions. Photo by Jonathan Chodacki
Winter hoop house field tour in Lincoln County. Photo by Lincoln County Cooperative Extension

I am pleased to assume a leadership role in University of Nevada’s College of Cooperative Extension. I look forward to the opportunity to build on this fine work and Extension's accomplishments. This report represents the great capabilities and dedication of Extension faculty and staff.

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2012 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Faculty made 521,186 face-to-face contacts with children, youth and adults throughout Nevada.
- Faculty and staff received grants totaling $3,759,845.
- Faculty published more than 50 educational fact sheets, curricula and special publications.
- Volunteers contributed more than 83,000 hours helping to deliver Cooperative Extension programs in the State.

FISCAL YEAR 2012 FUNDING

- Grants: $4,810,872, 21%
- Sales: $663,923, 3%
- Gifts: $156,769, 1%
- Temporary bridge funds: $2,586,874, 11%
- County: $8,360,055, 36%
- State: $4,142,536, 18%
- Grants: $4,810,872, 21%
- Total Federal: $2,402,643, 10%

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Blue highlights in this report emphasize just a few of the many University of Nevada Cooperative Extension collaborators.

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action in recruitment of its students and employees and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or gender expression. The University of Nevada employs only United States citizens and aliens lawfully authorized to work in the United States. Women and under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.
Cooperative Extension partners with schools to increase language development in children age 5 and under

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program is a federally funded initiative to improve literacy of children from birth through high school. Nevada was one of six states to receive five years of funding under this program, starting in 2011. Clark, Douglas, Lyon and Washoe County school districts were selected to implement the program in Nevada. They partnered with Cooperative Extension to provide literacy programs targeting families with children from birth to age 5, a time when children’s literacy abilities develop rapidly.

“Providing literacy-rich experiences to young children is essential to their language development,” explained Teresa Byington, Cooperative Extension early childhood education specialist.

One of the programs Cooperative Extension is offering through Striving Readers is Family Storyteller, a family literacy program using children’s literature and activities that promotes parents and children engaging in interactive book reading.

“The key to effective programming is involvement of both parents and children,” stated YaeBin Kim, Cooperative Extension early childhood/family literacy specialist.

Nevada Cooperative Extension’s Dan Weigel, human development specialist, and Sally Martin, family life specialist, pioneered the program in 1997. It has now been implemented by 29 states, and under the Striving Readers grant, it has expanded to more sites in Nevada. Under the direction of Weigel, Kim and Byington, it is now being offered in 13 elementary schools and 10 child-care centers in Clark County, in five elementary schools in Washoe County, and in several elementary schools in Lyon County. In fall 2013, it will also be offered at two Douglas County elementary schools.

Each weekly session uses a new book to show parents interactive ways to read with their children and provides time during classes to practice skills and get feedback. Parents receive books and related activities to take home.

Research has shown that when parents create supportive home literacy environments and share literacy activities, such as joint book reading, they improve the emerging literacy skills of their young children. Results from previous Family Storyteller sessions have demonstrated that after participating in the program, parents and children read together more often, parents use skills taught in the program, and children increase their understanding of book basics and their enjoyment of reading.
4-H aims to increase skills in science, math

4-H STEM was developed for youth to increase their skills in science, technology, engineering and math. The nation will face a shortage in the workforce in these fields unless youth are encouraged to excel in these areas.

Nevada 4-H STEM has implemented multiple programs, such as the Department of Energy, Community Readiness Network and Rockets Away to teach youth the importance of STEM. In Clark County, six STEM-related clubs were formed, with about 120 youth participating. Since 2010, six STEM day camps have been offered, each with more than 40 youth participating.

In Washoe County, STEM-based education has been incorporated into all aspects of the 4-H Youth Development Program for the past seven years, to include 4-H club-based programs, 4-H afterschool programs, National 4-H Science Experiment Day and the Western Area 4-H Camp. The camp has 128 campers each year, and each camper engages in three to four STEM activities each day they are at the weeklong camp. “Campers have done bottle rockets, edible aquifers, astronomy, energy sciences, geology and shooting sports, to name a few,” said Sarah Chvilicek, Cooperative Extension 4-H youth development coordinator in Washoe County. “Science and STEM are among their favorite things to do.”

Through other Cooperative Extension programs, youth also engage in STEM activities. These include health and nutrition lessons and activities, school-based gardens, and activities highlighting physical activity and increasing knowledge in the science involved in exercise.

Youth involved in 4-H are:

- 2 times More likely to go to college
- 2.3 times More likely to exercise and be physically active
- 3.3 times More likely to actively contribute to their communities

Information from a Tufts University Study of 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 44 states.

4-H at a glance

Over a century ago, the 4-H Youth Development Education Program was created by Cooperative Extension nationwide to teach leadership, citizenship and life skills to youth 5 to 19 years of age. In Nevada’s diverse communities, 4-H youth engage in a variety of activities to foster these skills, from raising animals to practicing robotics. They learn communications, leadership, career development, citizenship, healthy living, STEM and more.

- 4-H is the nation’s largest out-of-school youth organization, with 7 million members.
- More than 46,000 youth are engaged in urban and rural 4-H programs across Nevada.
- 4-H is offered through community and project clubs, military and 4-H afterschool programs, special interest groups, school enrichment, camping and more.
- 4-H clubs are supervised by staff, led by volunteers, researched based, family oriented and responsive to change.
Collaboration tests new breed of bioplastic, compostable plant containers

Heidi Kratsch, Cooperative Extension horticulture specialist, was recruited last year by researchers at Iowa State University to be part of a five-year, four-state research project to find a new bioplastic, compostable plant pot, made of materials such as corn- and soy-based products.

Plastic containers seen most commonly at nurseries are petroleum based and are not biodegradable. They are recyclable, but only 4 percent of the pots nationwide are recycled. The peat moss pots and other compostable pots have not been reliable. The Bioplastic Container Cropping Systems Project seeks to find pots that will decompose in various types of soils at a rate beneficial to plants.

“Many pots don’t biodegrade quickly enough, especially in our dry Nevada soils that lack organic matter, blocking root development or causing other problems,” Kratsch said. “Other pots decompose too quickly, adding too much nitrogen to the soil too rapidly, giving plants an overdose of fertilizer.”

The project was funded by the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and is a collaborative project with researchers in Iowa, Ohio and Illinois in order to test the pots in various types of soils to find one that will perform in all types.

One of the requirements of the Institute is that the project, “involve industry from day one,” Kratsch said. “The intent is to complete the research and then immediately get the products into production and use.”

As such, Kratsch partnered with some local nurseries, which will work with her later in the project to conduct consumer and market research.

Last June, Kratsch began planting pot fragments made from corn or soy protein, rice hulls and even protein extracted from chicken feathers, in the ground at the University’s Main Station Farm, part of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources. Each month, some of the pots were weighed to determine how much decomposition took place. The ones that showed the most promise in Nevada, as well as in the other states, were soy- or corn-based.

So this summer, the researchers are focusing their research on these products. In addition to planting pot fragments, they are starting seeds in pots and planting the seedlings, with the pots, in the ground.
Green industry looks to Cooperative Extension for education and training

Cooperative Extension provides several educational programs for workers in the green industry, including Nevada’s nurseries, landscape companies and commercial horticulture programs. These programs promote economic development and career advancement; ensure high-quality services for consumers; promote worker and consumer safety; and encourage sustainability of energy, water and natural resources. Examples include:

- **Green Industry Training Program**: A series of eight three-hour trainings held in February in Reno for entry- and mid-level professionals.
- **Green Industry Continuing Education Series**: One-hour monthly seminars offered in Reno for those seeking advanced knowledge for specific trades, such as pesticide applicators or arborists.
- **Horticulture Education for Environmental Sustainability**: A collaborative program with Nevada Workforce Connections that offers intense training in best practices in Las Vegas to promote environmental sustainability.

Master Gardeners at a glance

As trained volunteer teachers, Nevada’s more than 615 active Master Gardeners fulfill the need for research-based horticulture information. They learn advanced plant-science skills and information specific to Nevada’s challenging climate from 50 to 80 hours of classroom and hands-on instruction. After training, they volunteer at least 50 hours per year, providing presentations at workshops; educating at farmers markets, community events and schools; maintaining demonstration gardens; and working with community gardens.

Last year, Nevada’s Master Gardeners helped establish and run more than 30 community gardens, in schools, senior and daycare centers, neighborhoods and parks. Master Gardener Louise Watson volunteers at the Portals REM Nevada gardens north of Las Vegas. Portals is a daycare center for adults with developmental disabilities.

“I find this a very rewarding opportunity,” she said. “The clients are so excited to see me. The pride they display as they water the gardens is indescribable.”

Master Gardeners also provide one-on-one assistance to Nevadans at Cooperative Extension offices throughout the state, helping them to solve their garden and yard-care problems. Last year, they helped more than 75,000 Nevadans face-to-face, and almost another 12,000 Nevadans via email or telephone.

Center for Sustainable Urban Food Production helps grow crops, and business, in southern Nevada

At Cooperative Extension’s 5-acre Clark County Center for Sustainable Urban Food Production, researchers and volunteers test, demonstrate and disseminate research-based information on fruit- and vegetable-growing in southern Nevada’s desert environment. Located in North Las Vegas at UNLV’s Urban Center for Horticulture and Water Conservation, it includes a large orchard, vineyard and vegetable test area. Testing of new varieties of hops has begun, working with microbreweries in southern Nevada. A technician and volunteers run the Center.
The Healthy Steps to Freedom Program augments existing substance abuse programs by providing health education for women at risk for use of methamphetamine, speed and other illegal stimulants. Developed by Anne Lindsay, Cooperative Extension specialist and exercise physiologist, the program increases the success of substance abuse treatment by addressing not only weight loss, but also other critical areas, such as body image and eating disorders.

While only 25 percent of treatment admissions for marijuana and hallucinogens were female in 2010, 50 percent of treatment admissions for methamphetamine were female. Methamphetamine has become the growing illicit drug of choice among young women.

“Women increasingly report using stimulant drugs, such as methamphetamines and amphetamines, to lose weight; they’re available and affordable,” Lindsay explained.

Lindsay collaborated with UNLV’s Larry Golding and Auburn University’s Michele Olson to work with and study women in substance abuse treatment and correctional facilities in southern Nevada for several years, which laid the foundation for her development of the Healthy Steps to Freedom curriculum, consisting of 12 weekly, 90-minute lessons taught to groups of six to 15 women. Topics include substance abuse and women’s health, body image and self-esteem, physical activity, nutrition, calories and metabolism, eating behaviors, eating disorders and cognitive distortion.

Results from 124 women participating in the program in southern Nevada showed an increase in the women’s health knowledge and positive healthy behaviors, and a decrease in their body dissatisfaction, eating disorder symptoms and thin-ideal internalization.

Lindsay now collaborates with the University’s Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies to make available a Train-the-Trainer Program. Through participation in a two-day workshop, professionals in the field gain knowledge and resources so they can implement the Healthy Steps to Freedom Program in their own treatment programs.

The federally funded Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program provides education to limited-resource families in food resource management, nutrition and food safety practices. In 2012, Cooperative Extension taught the series of eight, 90-minute classes at 30 schools and 15 community locations in southern Nevada, with almost 4,000 family members participating. After taking the classes:

93.5% Of individuals reported more closely following U.S. Department of Agriculture recommendations in their consumption of grains, fruit, vegetables, milk, and meat and beans.
Beyond the Hub Program aims to bring more nutritious choices to Nevada’s American Indian communities in remote locations

Obesity and diabetes are growing problems across the country, especially among American Indians. Of all ethnic groups, American Indians are at the greatest risk for obesity and related chronic diseases that often accompany obesity. American Indians’ rate of diabetes is three times higher than that of non-Hispanic Caucasians.

Cooperative Extension is piloting a project to help address this problem. The Beyond the Hub Program aims to develop action plans to address nutrition and health issues on nine American Indian reservations in rural Nevada.

“Many of the Newe (Shoshone) and Numa (Paiute) communities in Nevada lie beyond, or at the fringe of, regional food hubs and at the extreme limits of existing food sheds,” explained Frank Flavin, Washoe County Extension educator and director of the program. “This makes nutritious, well-rounded diets difficult to come by.”

The effort is aligned with the USDA’s cross-agency “Strike Force” initiative to address critical needs, such as health and nutrition, in persistent poverty areas. Nevada has been designated as a Strike Force state, and rural American Indian communities have been established as primary recipients of cross-agency action. University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, through a competitive grant process, was awarded a National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant of more than $160,000 to conduct the Beyond the Hub Program.

Cooperative Extension is currently working with reservation communities and other partners to survey food availability in each community. Representatives from each community who can assist in building the communities’ availability of nutritious offerings are being recruited to work with Cooperative Extension in this effort.

In September 2013, a conference will be held to share the data that has been collected with tribal representatives. Work with tribal representatives will continue, and in spring of 2014, there will be another conference where specific action plans for each tribal community will be developed. The reservations will implement the plans with assistance from Cooperative Extension and its partners.

Program partners include USDA Rural Development, Natural Resources Conservation Service and University of Nevada School of Medicine. Mary Emery, sociology and rural studies professor at South Dakota State University, and the First Nations Development Institute are consulting on the project.

83% Of individuals reported handling food more safely

74% Of individuals reported increasing their physical activity rates

73% Of individuals reported stretching their food dollars further

72% Of individuals reported improving their nutrition practices
Jay Davison, Cooperative Extension alternative crops and forage specialist, has been helping Nevada farmers experiment with alternative crops for 15 years now.

**Nevada teff production booming**

Eleven years ago, Davison gathered 36 farmers to listen to a teff producer who wanted Nevada farmers to grow about 500 acres of teff for grain.

“We didn’t have a single taker,” Davison said. “So, I asked a local farmer, Craig McKnight, if he could plant a couple of trial acres on his land. Craig said, ‘Sure, let’s do it.’”

Davison got one producer to put in 7 acres the next year, and by the following year, about 100 acres were planted. Now, there are about 1,200 acres and 10 teff growers. Davison estimates about half of teff sold as grain or flour in the United States is now grown in Nevada, with Nevada and Idaho being the top producers. The gross value of teff grain being produced in Nevada is about $1.5 million.

“The main problem now is, we just can’t keep up with the demand,” Davison said.

“Jumping” into hops

Davison and Fallon’s Neal Workman are also testing hops varieties. They planted more than 600 hop plants of multiple varieties on 1 acre of Workman’s farm in July 2012.

“My dad and I talked about it, doing something different, diversification,” Workman said. “We have our necks out a bit, but it is sort of fun. It should be interesting.”

Davison said that some hop varieties show potential because they are adapted to our challenging climate and soils.

“And, you have this up-and-coming microbrew industry here,” he said. “There is a lot of interest in it, but there’s no local hops production save for a few individuals growing it for use in their home brews. The brewers have to buy it from producers in the Northwest – Oregon, Washington or Idaho.”

Davison has also partnered on a Specialty Crops grant with the local nonprofit Urban Roots to do hops research on the University’s Main Station Farm in Reno. He is planting 1 acre with several varieties to look at production potential and acceptance by local brewers for quality. In addition, hops testing is underway at the Clark County Center for Sustainable Urban Food Production, under the direction of M.L. Robinson, Cooperative Extension horticulture specialist.

**Summer annual forage trial underway**

With a new large powdered milk plant opening in Churchill County, the number of local dairy cows is expected to increase dramatically. Davison said there will be a need for high-quality feed that uses less water than alfalfa. So, he planted 13 varieties of summer annual forage grasses and two forage soybean varieties to study their production, profit margins and water and soil requirements.

Davison planted at the University’s Main Station Farm, at the Newlands Experiment Station in Fallon and on a private farm in Yerington. The experiments are a partnership between Cooperative Extension; the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources; and private industry, which supplied the seed for testing and financial support for testing the forage quality.
“The dairy industry is going to explode, so we need more information on what farmers can grow to provide high-quality feed for that industry, especially in low-water years,” he said.

And, getting into guar

Finally, Davison is also testing guar. The plant’s seed is used in the food and oil industries. Guar is extremely drought- and heat-tolerant, meeting Nevada’s climatic conditions. Currently India produces about 80 percent of the world’s guar, with the United States being its top buyer. Davison is working with David Shintani, a professor in the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources, who is interested in the production of industrial materials from plants.

UPDATE: Herds and Harvest

Nevada ranchers and farmers share information; gain business and marketing expertise

In August 2011, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension was awarded a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development project grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The Herds and Harvest Project is designed to help farmers and ranchers develop agricultural entrepreneurship, implement sustainable agricultural marketing strategies and improve profitability.

Staci Emm, the program’s director and Mineral County Extension educator, reports that across the state, more than 30 workshops have been offered, in person and via technology, reaching more than 200 farmers and ranchers. In addition, the Great Ideas From Growers mentoring group was created to provide producers from across Nevada the opportunity to learn from each other’s experiences. Finally, more than two dozen producers have worked with mentors and experts to create individualized enterprise budgets.

Staci Emm, the program’s director and Mineral County Extension educator, reports that across the state, more than 30 workshops have been offered, in person and via technology, reaching more than 200 farmers and ranchers. In addition, the Great Ideas From Growers mentoring group was created to provide producers from across Nevada the opportunity to learn from each other’s experiences. Finally, more than two dozen producers have worked with mentors and experts to create individualized enterprise budgets.

Shammy Rodriguez, a cattle producer at the Rhoads Ranch in Elko, participated in a Herds and Harvest workshop in May 2012.

“I always learn a lot from the Extension programs,” she said, “I don’t think I would have been motivated enough to chase down the information if it weren’t for Extension. In the workshop, they provided many extremely hands-on tools that I can apply at the ranch, and I walked away with all of the questions in my mind answered.”

Two-Thirds

Of Herds and Harvest participants reported they would make changes in their businesses based on what they learned from the program

2,670

Producers belong to the Herds and Harvest Great Ideas from Growers information-sharing group
Cooperative Extension helps to tackle difficult sage grouse issue in Nevada

The greater and the bi-state sage grouse are two distinct bird species being considered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for listing as threatened or endangered. Once a species becomes listed as threatened or endangered, many landowners, managers and users can be adversely affected due to limited management options. In recent years, locally led planning efforts to create community-based conservation plans have been created to help avert species listings under the Endangered Species Act.

In August 2000, the State of Nevada initiated a sage-grouse planning effort, and sage-grouse conservation plans were first developed in 2004, with the assistance of several Cooperative Extension faculty members across the state. Encouraging plan implementation to improve habitat conditions and ultimately increase sage-grouse populations has been the focus of the efforts of the state and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

“More oppressive regulatory measures that could hurt Nevada ranchers, landowners and businesses can be avoided if we take steps to improve sagebrush habitats and ultimately increase sage-grouse populations,” said Steve Lewis, Douglas County Extension educator who has been working on the issue.

In 2011, Lewis was awarded a $25,000 grant from the Nevada Department of Wildlife to conduct facilitated meetings with several of the working groups across the state addressing the issue, including the Bi-State, Washoe Modoc Lassen, Lincoln County and White Pine County Working Groups.

In 2012, Lewis conducted 17 meetings with the various groups, as well as helped to coordinate and conduct open house sessions for private landowners in the Bi-State area, which extends along the California-Nevada border, from approximately Carson City, Nev., to Big Pine, Calif. He also helped to conduct a field trip for the Bi-State Working Group, residents and members of the media. In addition, he moderated the two-day Sage-grouse Symposium, coordinated by the Society of Range Management in Minden.

As a result of these efforts, the Bi-State Working Group has developed a new action plan, and extensive conservation work has been implemented and well documented. Bi-State members created a shared database where they have now logged assessments and/or work done concerning the issue on more than 868,000 acres in the Bi-State area.

The ultimate listing decision is slated for September 2013 for the bi-state sage grouse and September 2015 for the greater sage grouse.
Many Nevadans have become familiar with the Living With Fire Program begun by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and other partners in 1997. The program educates homeowners about steps they can take to reduce the threat of wildfire to their homes. Numerous homeowners have cited what they learned from the program and the subsequent action they took for saving their homes after wildfire threatened their neighborhoods.

Now, Ed Smith, the creator of the program and Nevada Cooperative Extension natural resource specialist, has taken the program a step further, creating a new component – Fire-Adapted Communities. Instead of just working with individual homeowners, the Fire-Adapted Communities Program aims to create entire communities that can survive a wildfire with little or no assistance from firefighters. The nation’s wildfire experts called for development of such a program when they met in 2009 to address the growing wildland-urban interface wildfire threat.

In response, Smith went to work, laying the groundwork for such a program in Nevada. By the end of 2010, some program materials were ready for distribution to the public. Since that time, more than 23,900 people had viewed one of the publications or program materials, either online or in print. In addition, communities in other Western states, including California, Colorado and Oregon, are using the materials.

The success of the program travels by word of mouth. Southwest Reno resident Marianne Merriam has participated in Living With Fire workshops and tells others about the program. On June 10, 2013, she wrote to Sonya Sistare, the program’s marketing coordinator:

“I just spoke with the people who live on Chariot Road off of Red Rock Road who had the fire last night. They told me that only because they had cleared brush according to the Fire-Adapted Communities project was their house and livestock saved from the lightning strike fire that occurred last night. Thank you for educating the community. It is a very important service!”

Major sponsors of the Living With Fire Program include the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada Division of Forestry, Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators, USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Regional Fire Chiefs Association and Nevada State Fire Marshal Division.
Cooperative Extension provides programs based on each county’s needs. Elko County Extension Educator Jill Tingey began conducting a communitywide needs assessment in Elko in 2010, and published the results in 2012. Eighty-three questions (and several demographic questions) were mailed to a random sample of County residents to assess the community’s needs in Cooperative Extension’s six program areas: agriculture; community development; children, youth and families; health and nutrition; horticulture; and natural resources.

**Water issues identified**

The survey response rate was above average, with 42 percent of the surveys being returned. Respondents identified the top-priority needs for the county, and three of the top-10 needs related to water issues. “Maintaining adequate water supply” was identified as the highest-ranking priority by respondents.

“Based on these findings, a more extensive needs assessment on water issues will have to be conducted,” Tingey said.

**Tackling domestic violence and child abuse**

Two of the top-five high-priority needs involved abuse and violence in the home, with “preventing child abuse and neglect” being ranked the second-highest priority, and “preventing domestic violence” being ranked the fifth-highest priority.

Since Tingey’s area of expertise is youth development, she has now partnered with Churchill County Extension Educator Pam Powell, who also determined domestic violence was a high-priority issue in Churchill County from a community needs assessment conducted there.

Powell collaborated with law enforcement agencies to develop officer training and teaching manuals to address domestic violence. This program resulted in the publication of a Domestic Violence Investigative Field Guide to help officers know how to better respond to reports of domestic violence. Tingey and Powell are currently working together to expand this program to Elko County. With grant funding, future programs will be developed at the prevention level to teach youth how to break the cycle of violence they have observed in the home, school and community.
Cooperative Extension collaborates to promote economic development

Throughout Nevada, Extension educators are immersed in their communities’ economic development activities. In southern Nevada, Lincoln County Extension Educator Holly Gatzke is helping to develop the local foods and tourism industries, as well as promote workforce development.

Local food industry

Gatzke began the Local Food Industry Program seven years ago, and the program has gone through several stages:

- First, Gatzke conducted field trials with specialty crops to identify performing produce and growing systems in the area. She also created tours and surveyed high-end restaurants and farmers market consumers in Nevada to find out the demand for specialty products.
- She then provided education and assistance to local producers wanting to venture into producing specialty crops, such as high-end greens (mustard, arugula, etc.), vine-ripened heirloom tomatoes and eggplant.
- Next, Gatzke connected the producers to the restaurants and consumers. She also did evaluations of the products to show the producers the high-quality standards demanded by the market.
- Now, Gatzke is focusing her efforts on helping producers to run their established businesses more profitably. “They have moved from learning what they should produce, to requiring information on how to run local food businesses,” she said. “That shift, in itself, indicates producers are engaging in the new industry, creating a valuable economic step for the county.”
- Finally, Gatzke is beginning to provide research and education for producers who want to turn their raw products into novelty food products, such as jams, spreads, etc.

Workforce development

Gatzke now manages the Lincoln Youth/Adult Workforce Program, in partnership with the Lincoln County School District and Workforce Connections, a Department of Labor Workforce Investment Board. The program provides career and employment services to Lincoln County’s residents. For adults, Gatzke focuses on helping with training and development of skills to help them become re-employed. For youth, her priorities are making sure they graduate high school, and then helping them form a career plan and get work experience.

Participants rode in the “Park-to-Park Pedal – Extreme Nevada 100” on Oct. 13, 2012, filling Lincoln County motels and businesses and exposing riders to the beauty of the region. The on-road cycling race that goes through four state parks is just one of several events established by the Lincoln Communities Action Team, which Gatzke spearheaded several years ago to help the county capitalize on its assets for tourism development.


What people are saying

We appreciate the feedback offered by many of our Nevada partners and residents throughout the year and share some of them here. As we continue to strive to help meet the educational needs of Nevadans throughout the state, we hope you continue to let us hear from you.

“Extension isn’t important; it’s essential.”

Tom Fransway, Former Chairman, Humboldt County Board of Commissioners; Member, Board of Directors, Nevada Department of Transportation

“When I graduated from Churchill County High School in 1966, they gave me a diploma and apparently thought that I was ready to go out into the real world. In 1970, the University of Nevada gave me a diploma and said, yes, I’m ready to go out into the real world. And for 43 years, I find that I have been continually going back to the University of Nevada, specifically to the College of Cooperative Extension, to seek advice on how to help my business grow.”

Charlie Frey, Owner, Churchill Vineyards, Churchill County

“Cooperative Extension is an invaluable asset for this community and the region.”

Karen Abowd, Supervisor, Carson City Board of Supervisors; Co-owner, Adele’s Restaurant

“Our White Pine Extension services have had an enormous impact on quality of life in our 42 years here in Eastern Nevada. The lives of each of our five family members have benefitted from the life-changing multitude of programs offered. (…) These programs enhance America’s traditions in a most positive way.”

Warren Krch, White Pine County

“Without Cooperative Extension, we don’t have economic development in this County.”

Pat Irwin, Pershing County Board of Commissioners; President Elect, Nevada Association of Counties

“A lot of the people in Clark County have received skills and knowledge through Cooperative Extension and have been able to give it back to the community, which I am very proud of.”

Linda Montoya, 22-year Cooperative Extension volunteer, Clark County

“The Cooperative Extension is the most comprehensive outreach and engagement program at UNR, as well as this community. Cooperative Extension excels in resourcefulness. It would be a challenging task to find any other entity that provides such a full spectrum of community outreach.”

Pamela Van Hoozer, Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteer, Washoe County

“Cooperative Extension is the government service that my family uses the most – through 4-H, through the Cattlemen’s Update, through gardening help, through youth development. If there is something that we need from government, it is probably offered through Cooperative Extension.”

Kristin McQueary, rancher; University of Nevada, Reno alumna; 4-H mother and instructor; former 4-H member; Elko County
“The Nevada 4-H program has made me feel like I can make a difference. I’m learning so much and having the greatest experiences. I’ve taken a leadership role and it’s impacted my life in the best of ways. I now know that I’m unstoppable and anything is possible when you try.”

Christiana Troeger, Reno 4-H’er, Washoe County

“I worked as a probation officer and then as chief of probation for a total of over 30 years. I saw the difference that [Cooperative Extension’s] MAGIC [Program] made in the lives of our rural probationers. Young people who had chosen the wrong path were given a chance to make some changes in their lives through MAGIC and what a difference the program made. I kept an eye on the statistics through the years and was always impressed by the low percentage of MAGIC graduates that had further involvement with the law.”

Jane Ripley, Winnemucca, Humboldt County

“We can’t express how fortunate we were to have come across a free radon kit that was provided by UNCE. We had never heard of radon and would never have considered testing our home if it had not been for UNCE. (...) Little did we know that our very own house had a problem. Our levels were above government guidelines. (...) After mitigation, our levels are equivalent to outdoor levels. We thank UNCE for reaching out to our community in Incline Village to raise the awareness of the dangers of Radon!”

Chrystie Lowden, Incline Village, Washoe County

“Through the exceptional leadership of Cooperative Extension and its Living With Fire Program, communities, including ours, have benefited from wildland fire education, defensible space programs, fuels management and wildland fire mitigation. (…) Cooperative Extension serves as the ‘hub’ of wildland fire prevention for all fire protection agencies.”

Tod F. Carlini, East Fork District Fire Chief, Douglas County

“I cannot express succinctly, how much UNCE has made a difference in the way I view life. I took an autobiography class that not only let me put my life down in words, but it made me realize how blessed I have been. The Master Gardener class has kept me busy in my retirement. In a rural town like ours, these opportunities are invaluable.”

Judy Greene, Pahrump, Nye County

“The [Cooperative Extension] class, Eating To Stop and Control High Blood Pressure” – What a Blessing! (...) I learned to read food labels and how very important it is to watch and control the salt and sodium intake. The 10 tips on nutrition are very helpful to me, my family and friends. (...) We thank you so much. We are eating and feeling healthier.”

Velma Reed, Las Vegas, Clark County

“Information provided by the Extension Office on alternative crops and water saving methods of irrigation has been very valuable in evaluating how these crops and techniques can be incorporated into a water conservation model for the Walker River Basin. (…) The Extension Office’s ability to do applied research to directly benefit the agricultural community is invaluable and unique.”

Joy Giffin, Manager, Walker Basin Restoration Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Lyon County

“Voices from the State”

“I worked as a prosecution officer and then as chief of probation for a total of over 30 years. I saw the difference that [Cooperative Extension’s] MAGIC [Program] made in the lives of our rural probationers. Young people who had chosen the wrong path were given a chance to make some changes in their lives through MAGIC and what a difference the program made. I kept an eye on the statistics through the years and was always impressed by the low percentage of MAGIC graduates that had further involvement with the law.”

Tod F. Carlini, East Fork District Fire Chief, Douglas County
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension celebrates 100 years of ‘Bringing the University to You’

This coming year, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the University of Nevada, Reno join other land-grant institutions in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Congressional Act that founded Cooperative Extension. When Congress signed the Smith-Lever Act into law on May 8, 1914, the aim was to make education available and affordable to everyone. The Act provided federal support for land-grant institutions to offer educational programs to enhance the application of useful and practical information beyond their campuses through extension efforts.

In Nevada, this led to establishing University of Nevada Cooperative Extension to connect the University of Nevada, Reno with the rest of the state and to give aid to farmers and ranchers. The first Nevada Cooperative Extension employee, Norma Davis, began homemaking and youth programs, and 4-H clubs soon became a part of the State’s culture.

Since that time, Cooperative Extension’s role has greatly expanded, now using University research to serve the diverse needs and populations across our state by designing and delivering educational programs in the areas of agriculture; children, youth and families; community development; health and nutrition; horticulture; and natural resources.

In all 17 counties, from small towns such as Ely to the bright lights of Las Vegas, in a variety of venues – elementary schools, farms, neighborhoods, Indian reservations, senior citizen centers and more – Cooperative Extension faculty, staff and volunteers connect the campus and communities to help solve problems and enhance the quality of life in our State.

Indeed, Cooperative Extension’s role has greatly expanded over the past 100 years. However, just as was the case when Cooperative Extension began in 1914, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension remains dedicated to:

*Bringing the University to You*
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension could not possibly conduct its programs throughout the state without our many, many partners, including federal, state and county entities; higher education and K-12 school districts; nonprofit organizations; and private businesses. In addition to these partners, hundreds of volunteers are at work in Cooperative Extension programs throughout the year. Finally, our exceptional Advisory Committee members provide invaluable, ongoing support and guidance.

To all of these partners and volunteers, from the faculty and staff of University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, we say thank you and look forward to our continued partnership in service.