Improving Lives, Communities, and the Economy

The University of Arizona
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Cooperative Extension

Maricopa County Annual Report 2013
The past year has been one of change and success here at Maricopa County Cooperative Extension (MCCE). In January 2013, we opened an office in Chandler that houses our East Valley SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education) operation. Our SNAP-Ed faculty and staff are now positioned closer to serve our East Valley clientele. Likewise, another office was opened in Glendale for our West Valley SNAP-Ed staff.

On September 24, 2013, we had an Open House to show off the recent renovations to our main office on Broadway Road. The improvements, funded by Maricopa County, include a redesigned front lobby with new restroom facilities, new cabinets, and reception area. We added much-needed office space by converting a storage warehouse at the southern portion of the building into a new open-design office with 10 fully furnished work stations. The building was rewired for high speed internet, complete with a new computer server room that greatly enhances our ability to access the internet and respond to emails. We have also added a covered, paved patio/courtyard for outdoor events. At the open house, we honored Nate Holsome, our one-man maintenance crew and Cathy Munger, our Systems Administrator (all things IT) for their efforts during the renovations. A special recognition was also made by Maricopa County Board of Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox to Monica Pastor for her past service as County Director of this office.

On September 30, 2013, I was officially named County Director. Having worked in an interim capacity for the previous year, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with the fine faculty and staff at MCCE. The proceeding pages touch on the highlights of 2013 and I am sure that you will agree with me that MCCE is making a positive difference in people’s lives and communities in Maricopa County.

Most of the success we have enjoyed at MCCE comes from the hard work, long hours and the tireless dedication of the faculty and staff. However, I also acknowledge the outstanding support of our volunteers who help extend our programming throughout the County. Equally, I acknowledge the support of the University of Arizona, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, whose support is critical to our success.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act, the congressional Act that established the Cooperative Extension Service. MCCE will be partnering with Pinal County Cooperative Extension to host a celebration on October 4, 2014 at the Phoenix Zoo.

I’m looking forward to another successful year in 2014, serving the people of Maricopa County and helping “Improve lives, communities and the economy in Arizona.”

Regards,

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Because of Maricopa County Cooperative Extension . . .

- Less pesticide and chemicals are being sprayed by growers and turf managers due to new research in Integrated Pest Management.
- The risk of obesity is being decreased because adults and children are learning about nutrition and physical activity.
- Young children begin school ready to learn.
- Teens are taught how to avoid risky behaviors and make good decisions about their lives and their bodies through our teen pregnancy prevention programs.
- 4-H youth have greater motivation and aspiration for future education.
- School aged children have the ability to understand and communicate the source and value of agriculture as it affects our quality of life.
- Residents and professional landscapers are using less water by learning proper plant selection, placement, and optimizing irrigation systems.
- Local food systems are being created that keep money in the local economy.

2013 - By the Numbers:

- 135,808 youth participated in Extension activities
- 66,563 adults participated in Extension activities
- Maricopa County Cooperative Extension employs 90 people, 70% of them supported through grant and/or contract funding
- 4,579 volunteers gave 62,709 hours of their own time to support Extension programs
- Volunteer support is estimated at $1.3 million
- Faculty obtained $4.91 million in grants and contacts
Early Childhood Development

CCE programs for Early Childhood Development actually begin with prenatal care for pregnant mothers. The program teaches about nutrition and the importance of a pregnant mother to take care of herself to help keep her baby healthy.

Our programs then focus on youth 0-5 years old. These programs help parents learn skills about childhood development and provide opportunities for families to learn and grow together with literacy and educational skills that help prepare kids for kindergarten. Through our innovative experiential learning techniques, the entire family has fun while they participate in brain building activities that stimulate young minds and help parents create a more positive social and emotional setting for their children. Programs such as these, have shown that participants have:

- **Improvements in educational process and outcomes for the child.**
- **Increased economic self-sufficiency, initially for the parent and later for the child.**
- **Reduced levels of criminal activity.**
- **Improvements in health-related indicators, such as child abuse, maternal reproductive health, and maternal substance abuse.**

2013 - By the Numbers:

More than $835,000 in grant funds were obtained to support these programs

Over 2500 families were strengthened through our Early Childhood Development programs such as the Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center, Parents as Teachers and Brain Builder programs

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1 Rand Corporation
Maricopa County Cooperative Extension 4-H youth development programs provides educational and personal growth and development opportunities for Cloverbuds (children 5-8 years old) and for more traditional 4-H youth, ages 9-18. Our 4-H members develop life skills, increase knowledge and competencies through participation in clubs, projects, educational and social events, service and career exploration. Teens are taught how to avoid risky behaviors and make good decisions about their lives and their bodies through our 4-H Teen Interactive Theater Education (TITE) Program and the Teen Outreach Program (TOP), our teen pregnancy prevention programs. Participants in 4-H programs:

- **Have greater motivation and aspirations for future education.**

- **Are more than 3.3 times more likely to contribute to their communities.**

- **Have significantly lower drug, cigarette, and alcohol use.**

- **Report better grades and higher levels of academic competence.**

### 2013 - By the Numbers:

30,000 adults and 69,000 youth participated in 4-H or extension youth development programs

Over 2,100 volunteers donated over 12,500 hours of support for Maricopa County 4-H youth programs, estimated to be worth $273,000

4-H faculty were successful in obtaining $239,000 in grants and gifts

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The Arizona Agricultural Literacy program assists educators to effectively incorporate information about agriculture into the subjects they already teach. School-aged children have the ability to understand and communicate the source and value of agriculture as it affects our quality of life. The School Garden Safety program concentrates on assuring that schools follow best management guidelines when they use gardens in their teaching curriculum. The program also educates school administration and staff about the process of getting their garden certified by the Arizona Department of Health Services so the crops grown in the garden can be used in their school cafeteria.

- **Kids gain a better understanding of the food that can be grown locally, and what time of the year to grow them.**

- **Teachers and school administrators appreciate the steps for certifications that ensure getting safe food from the field to the fork.**

- **Students and teachers have a better appreciation for the multi-billion dollar agriculture industry in Arizona.**

### 2013 - By the Numbers

- **Educated K-12 students and educators about Arizona’s $12.4 billion agricultural industry**

- **Conducted 16 workshops and the Summer Agricultural Institute for 370 classroom teachers who educate 36,000 students**

- **Coordinated volunteers to go into 114 classrooms for Arizona Agricultural Literacy Days that reached 3,701 students**

- **Created a partnership with state agencies to facilitate adoption of food safety practices in school gardens**

- **Over $185,000 was obtained in grants and gifts to support these programs**

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Horticulture and Agroecology programs at MCCE are some of the most popular programs we offer. These programs use research-based information along with experts from the University of Arizona and other agencies to help people live more sustainable lives in the Sonoran desert. MCCE has a vibrant and active Master Gardener program with an equally enthusiastic volunteer force. This program helps to educate participants on a wide variety of horticultural topics including plant selection, pest identification and general urban horticultural concerns. This traditional program is being integrated into an emerging area, or perhaps, re-emerging area of agroecology. Agroecology is a whole systems approach to the production of food and fiber and how those production systems interact with the environment. Programs include traditional horticulture along with new programs in small and urban farming, which promote the use of local food in restaurants and schools, as well as new grower workshops for those who are just starting a new small farming business.

- Local food systems help keep dollars in the local economy.

- Residents are taught about the proper plant varieties, plant placement and irrigation scheduling for their landscape plants, helping to reduce household water use and learning how to better live in our Sonoran desert.

- Farmers with small acreage learn how to make the most of their land while minimizing their environmental footprint.

2013 - By the Numbers:

- 7,000 people had direct contact with the horticulture and agroecology programs
- 448 active volunteers registered their volunteer hours
- 19,681 hours were recorded by those 448 volunteers, valued at over $428,000

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Agriculture and turfgrass programs key on helping to reduce costly inputs such as water and pesticide sprays, while maximizing yield or optimizing turf quality. In both programs, our faculty work closely with growers, crop consultants, and turf managers to develop and refine methods for pest and weed control. Using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques, pesticide use has been reduced because of correct insect pest identification, knowing times of infestations and economic threshold levels, and understanding biological controls by beneficial predators. The results of fewer sprays translate to higher crop yields, better quality products, and an enhanced and safer environment. In Arizona, there are over 300 golf courses, 11 professional baseball complexes and thousands of acres of turf in schools, city and county parks. The golf courses and sports complexes are a key part of the state’s tourist industry that includes the Cactus League, a major source of income for Maricopa County residents and businesses.

- Maricopa County ranks 29th among U.S. counties for agricultural sales.
- For the first time in over 40 years, Arizona cotton growers did not apply a single spray against pink bollworm.
- Eliminating pesticide sprays significantly reduced agriculture’s environmental footprint.
- Arizona golf courses are a $350 billion industry and Cactus League activities add $632 million to the state’s economy.

2013 - By the Numbers:

- Over 900 people participated in turf related programs
- $459,500 was obtained in grants and gifts to support Maricopa County agricultural Extension programs
- Extension IPM programs have reduced agricultural pest sprays in cotton by 85% compared to a decade ago

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Nutrition and physical activity education offered at the MCCE promotes healthy nutrition and physically active lifestyles that lead to healthier individuals and families in our communities. Our SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education) program works in concert with the Arizona Nutrition Network (AzNN), a public and private partnership led by the Arizona Department of Health Services, Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity which partners with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. This program serves families and individuals that meet SNAP eligibility. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is designed to assist limited-resource audiences to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and to change behaviors necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to participant’s development and the improvement of the total family diet and nutritional well-being.

People involved in SNAP-Ed and EFNEP Programs:

- Are at lower risk for obesity, reducing health care costs.
- Are overall less likely to require hospitalization, reducing health care costs.
- Have increased moderate physical activity each day.

2013 - By the Numbers:

Over 26,000 adults and 8,400 youth participated in SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programs

133 volunteers donated 24,183 hours of their time values at an estimated $535,412

$3.1 million in grants were obtained for SNAP-Ed and EFNEP programs for Maricopa County

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Urban water resources programming at MCCE encompasses a wide range of programs to increase urban water use efficiency and educate people about the benefits and needs of our urban riparian areas. The Smartscape program targets landscape professionals and offers courses on irrigation management, proper plant selection, and landscape design. All of these courses have the goal to reduce water consumption in residential and commercial landscapes within our urban environment. The Master Watershed Stewards (MWS) program educates people about the care and value of our urban watersheds and riparian areas. This program delivers a series of courses for participants to gain better understanding of the value of urban water habitats. MWS participants are required to take the classes and then volunteer to help enhance and expand the program’s reach. MCCE also has an active Arizona Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) program that improves water resources stewardship and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) literacy by providing professional development for teachers and direct student outreach through classroom learning and community engagement.

- **Smartscape program** ensures that landscape professionals install proper irrigation systems that help save water for the future.

- **Master Watershed Stewards** appreciate and understand urban riparian areas and volunteer to expand outreach education to the public.

- **Arizona Project WET** teaches future generations about the importance of conserving water in our desert communities.

### 2013 - By the Numbers:

Over $212,000 was obtained for support of our Smartscape and Master Watershed Stewards program

Arizona Project WET reached over 47,000 (K-12) students

491 volunteers donated 4,813 hours to support our urban water programs, an estimated value of $104,875

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Our Mission:  As the outreach arm for the University of Arizona, Cooperative Extension enhances the lives of people and communities in Maricopa County through education, research, engagement and creativity.

Our Vision:  We envision strongly connected communities invested in the betterment of every individual.

As the University of Arizona in Maricopa County:

➢ We empower people to expand their capabilities to improve their lives;
➢ We are a well-known, effective, and accessible educational resource for all communities;
➢ We are a trusted partner in communities for leadership education;
➢ We develop strong, capable leaders in all communities;
➢ We are recognized experts for developing and disseminating research-based information.

Our 2013 Advisory Board

Cheryl Goar, Board Chair - Executive Director, Arizona Nursery Association (District 1)

Al Harris, Jr. - Faith & Community Coordinator, Tanner Community Development Corp (District 1)

Carol Ward-Morris - Program Coordinator, Water Conservation, AZ Municipal Water Users Association (District 2)

Michael Hills - Regional Sales Manager and Technical Agronomist, Seed Research of Oregon (District 3)

Tracy Johnson - Mill Manager, Lakin Cattle Company (District 4)

Tamara Ridge - Office Manager, Paul Rovey Dairy (District 4)

Monica Sandschafer - Executive Director, LUCHA - Living United for Change in Arizona (District 5)