

2023 Annual Report

Knox & Lincoln Counties Extension



LIZ STANLEY PHOTO

*Putting university research to work in homes, businesses, farms
and communities for over 100 years.*

Knox-Lincoln Counties Extension Association

Executive Committee

Aaron Englander, President
Jack Green, Treasurer
Loiusa Crane
Diane Schivera
Nancy Wood

Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension

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Knox-Lincoln Counties Staff

Extension Educator

Brett Johnson

Professionals

Ellen Baker	Ruth Griffin
Jennifer Doherty	Ryan LeShane
Heather Elowe	Hannah Pennington
Parker Gasset	Brooke Sanborn
Gretchen Gee	Claudia Williamson
Cathy Bartlett Gray	Celena Zacchai

Community Education Assistants

Cindy Rogers
Liz Stanley

Administrative Specialist

Pamela Doherty

front cover: KLCEA member and SNAP Ed Nutrition Educator, Nancy Wood makes pesto with youth at the Kids Can Grow program at Erickson Fields Preserve.



CINDY ROGERS PHOTO

University of Maine Cooperative Extension seeks volunteers to serve on the Knox-Lincoln Counties Executive Committee

UMaine Extension can only be successful with the help of county residents serving on the Executive Committee. Board members provide oversight and support to staff, as well as help promote programs.

Knox-Lincoln Extension is vibrant and active! We provide a broad range of programs: 4-H youth development, assistance to commercial farmers and home gardeners, and in-home education for new parents.

Executive Committee members are asked to attend four two-hour meetings a year focusing on county programming, building maintenance, and finances. Members can follow their interests and become more involved in any of the county or statewide programs offered by Extension.

If you're interested in UMaine Extension Programs and giving back to your community, serving on the Executive Committee is a great place to be! Please contact Ryan LeShane 207.832.0343, in Maine 800.244.2104 or email: ryanleshane@maine.edu.

above: UMaine Cooperative Extension office in Waldoboro, Maine

left: Yellow garden spider



LIZ STANLEY PHOTO

President's Message

Dear Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension Community,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits! This is my sixth year as a member of the Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension Association Executive Committee (KCLEA-EC). It has been an honor and a pleasure to work with all the staff, board members and volunteers involved with KCLEA. 2023 was a successful, impactful year for KLCEA and we are looking forward to 2024!

We are grateful to Dean Hannah Carter and the University of Maine Extension leadership for creating an Assistant Professor Educator position in the areas of Sustainable Agriculture and Farm Business Management to support the local farm sector in Midcoast Maine and statewide. In the fall of 2023, Brett Johnson was hired to fill this position—Welcome Brett! In this new role, Brett is providing agricultural technical services for Knox, Lincoln, and Waldo counties, as well as statewide farm business planning support. Brett comes to us from Somerset County Extension, and has a breadth of research and hands-on experience, including seed variety trials, Christmas tree production, and integrated pest management (IPM). We are excited to have Brett as part of the KLCEA community and look forward to working together to support farmers, gardeners, and agricultural producers in the Midcoast area and beyond.

We are also excited to welcome two new board members, Diane Schivera and Louisa Crane, to our KLCEA Executive Committee. Diane and Louisa joined at the end of 2023. We are looking forward to building the KLCEA-EC to further support the work of dedicated staff and volunteers. Diane Schivera has a homestead farm in Appleton and was a long-time writer and livestock specialist for the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA). Louisa Crane works for the Knox-Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District as a Program Coordinator, and is an Erickson Fields Teen Agriculture Crew alum! If you or anyone you know might be the right match for joining our board, please reach out to us. We are seeking new Executive Committee members!

Heartfelt thanks to our amazing staff at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Knox and Lincoln office for all their hard work, dedication to their job, and serving the Midcoast community. From infant and early childhood support to climate change initiatives; technical support for home gardeners and commercial farmers; Master Gardener Volunteer programs and countless programs for local youth through 4-H Clubs, Blueberry Cove 4-H Camp and Learning Center, and other collaborating sites, KCLEA is a true asset to the community. Thank you again to all the KCLEA Staff, Executive Committee members, volunteers, and program participants who make Extension what it is: a community-based program that serves the greater good. Please enjoy this report and you may be as amazed as I am at all the great work going on at Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension.

Sincerely,



Aaron Englander, KLCEA Executive Committee President
Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Associate Director of Stewardship, Aldermere Farm/Erickson Fields
Rockport, Maine

Eastern hay-scented fern

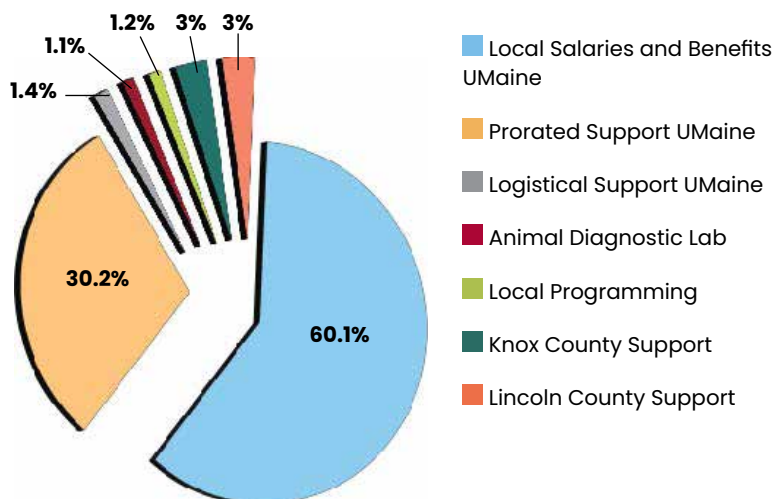


LEZ STANLEY PHOTO

Knox-Lincoln Extension Financial Resources

This graph illustrates the financial resources for programs offered, supported and managed from the Knox and Lincoln Counties office. Each year, Knox and Lincoln Counties tax dollars support UMaine Extension with physical office space, support staff salaries, office supplies, equipment and programming expenses.

As a unique partnership among federal, state and county governments, UMaine Extension uses funding from Maine counties and the University of Maine to match and access support from the United States Department of Agriculture, other federal grantors, state agencies and private foundations. Each UMaine Extension county office is also part of a statewide organization and the national Extension system.



4-H Youth Development

information: ryan.leshane@maine.edu

Knox-Lincoln 4-H Club Program

- 34 youth members, 22 adult volunteers enrolled in 2023.
- 4-H staff led a successful Chef Series at the Knox-Lincoln Extension office. Over three sessions, youth gained cooking skills while they prepared full meals that were served to parents and guests.
- Tractor Supply Company Store's ongoing 4-H Paper Clover Campaign continues to raise funds for 4-H youth to attend 4-H camps and leadership programs. In 2023 these funds enabled three youth to participate in four programs, including Citizenship Washington Focus and National 4-H Conference (both in Washington D.C.), National 4-H Congress (Atlanta, GA), and Bryant Pond 4-H Camp and Learning Center (Bryant Pond, ME).

- 2023 saw the return of Maine 4-H Days, a state-wide event held in Windsor, ME. Youth and their families can camp, and 4-H staff and volunteers from across Maine offer livestock and enrichment workshops throughout the weekend.



CINDY ROGERS PHOTO



RYAN LESHANE PHOTO

Blueberry Cove 4-H Camp and Learning Center

- In 2023 Blueberry Cove completed and opened its new year-round educational building named after the late Extension Educator, Leslie Hyde for all his contributions to 4-H and environmental education during his career.
- In the summer registration in our programs returned to pre-pandemic levels, serving 557 campers. We are looking forward to growing more year-round programs, including a new school year-based early childhood program.

above: Campers and staff enjoying the Leslie Hyde Center for Environmental Education at UMaine 4-H Camp and Learning Center at Blueberry Cove

left: Ryan LeShane teaching 4-H'ers how to make pasta

Parent Education

information: jennifer.d.doherty@maine.edu

Maine Families Home Visiting Program

- As part of a statewide network of Maine Families Home Visiting Programs, our team of 6 parent educators provided 1,506 home visits to 158 families living in Knox, Lincoln, and Sagadahoc Counties, and the Cumberland Towns of Brunswick, Harpswell, Freeport, Yarmouth, Cumberland, and Falmouth.
- We served 160 children using the evidence-based model "Parents as Teachers." This supports families with knowledge and resources to prepare their children for

a strong start in life and greater success in school.

- This year we connected 133 families with community resources and programs, including parenting classes, food pantries, housing assistance, medical services, and childcare.
- To learn more about our Maine Families affiliate and see parent testimonials visit our website at <https://extension.umaine.edu/parenting/maine-families-mid-coast/testimonials/>



MAINE FAMILIES KNOX COUNTY PHOTOS

above: Baby Yoga class at Knox-Lincoln Extension

left: Practicing baby care at a home visit

Master Gardener Volunteer Program

The 2023 – 24 Maine Master Gardener Volunteer training runs from October into May. Trainees in county cohorts receive self-paced material on UMaine's online learning platform and connect virtually to specialists and industry experts on horticultural topics. Master Gardener Volunteers then donate their time within four focus areas:

- **Maine Harvest for Hunger:** Volunteers grow and donate produce from home and community gardens, glean at farms, and work directly with food security organizations. 204,000 pounds of fresh produce was donated statewide in 2023.
- **Ecological and Sustainable Landscapes:** Volunteers learn best sustainable practices—utilizing native plants for pollinator- and wildlife-friendly habitats, controlling invasive pests, and mitigating climate challenges.
- **Youth & School Garden Programs:** Working with teachers and students to explore Maine's food system.
- **Educational Programming:** Presenting talks, webinars and writing articles relating to horticulture.



LIZ STANLEY PHOTOS

right: Knox County Gleaners, in collaboration with volunteers from the community and the Maine Master Gardener Program, harvest surplus lettuce.

left: Rainbow of peppers



Horticulture

- More than 1,000 local and statewide client calls were fielded by the Knox-Lincoln Extension office. Clients received research-based information on plant identification, diseases, pests, invasives, plants for the Maine Landscape, and soil testing.
- UMaine Extension's statewide horticulture team developed multiple webinars and videos featuring sustainable practices for beginning and experienced gardeners.
- Two new programs are now offered: The Maine Gardener Training, which does not require a volunteer component, and the Maine Horticultural Apprentice Training, a microcredential program for professionals in the nursery and landscape industry.

Sustainable Ag/Farm Business



CINDY ROGERS PHOTO

Welcome Brett Johnson

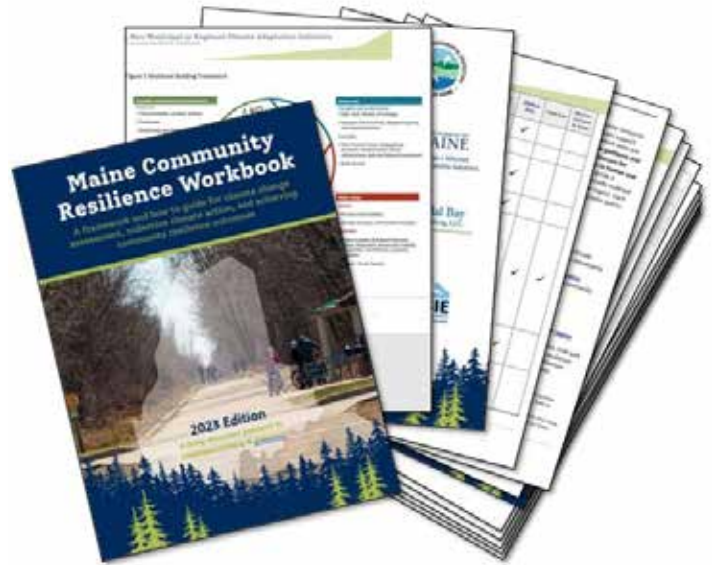
Meet our new **Sustainable Agriculture and Farm Business Management Educator**, Brett Johnson. Brett joined UMaine Extension in July of 2022 and comes to this region after serving the people of Somerset County as their Sustainable Agriculture and Horticulture Professional. In this new role, Brett provides technical assistance to commercial agricultural producers in Waldo, Knox, and Lincoln Counties, and develops educational programs in a wide range of topics including: integrated pest management (IPM), marketing of farm products, and farm business planning.

Brett was born and raised in Stillwater, Oklahoma, and is a two-time graduate of Oklahoma State University, holding a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, and a Master of Science in Entomology and Plant Pathology. Brett looks forward to working with producers to address challenges in production, and identify new market opportunities with the goal of improving the sustainability of farm businesses in the Midcoast region. Commercial producers can contact him by phone or email at 207.342.5971 or brett.w.johnson@maine.edu.

Climate Resilience

information: parker.gassett@maine.edu

- Cooperative Extension offers programming to assist municipalities in preparing for climate change. Parker Gassett, who shares an appointment with the Maine Climate Science Information Exchange and Maine Sea Grant, works to strengthen the Climate Adaptation Providers Network, speeding up innovation in climate readiness in Maine. Networking, community collaborations, and development of new communication resources collectively improve access to new science, best practices, and innovative policies and procedures for local resilience. Learn more at <https://extension.umaine.edu/climatesolutions/>
- The *Maine Community Resilience Workbook*, created by the Climate Adaptation Providers Network and agency partners, is a valuable tool for local communities preparing for Maine's changing climate. It provides guidance, resources, and funding opportunities for climate adaptation, helping communities set resilience goals and implement comprehensive plans. The workbook's use in sectors like community planning, economic development, and public health ensures a comprehensive approach to climate challenges. The collaborative effort involved in its creation and its online availability underline Maine's commitment to broad climate action and resilience.



There have been over 1,500 visitors to the online [Maine Community Resilience Workbook](#) site since July 2023.

below: Rushing water at Camden's Megunticook Falls





Appleton Ridge

The County Extension Act

The County Extension Act explains the role of county government in funding local Extension offices.

Cooperative Extension work shall consist of the giving of practical demonstrations in agriculture and natural resources, youth development, and home economics and community life and imparting information on those subjects through field demonstrations, publications and otherwise. For the purpose of carrying out this chapter, there may be created in each county or combination of two counties within the State an organization known as a “county extension association,” and its services available to all residents of a county. The county extension is viewed as a unique and important educational program of county government. The executive committee of each county extension association shall prepare an annual budget as requested, showing in detail its estimate of the amount of money to be expended under this chapter within the county or counties for the fiscal year. The executive committee shall submit to the board of county commissioners on a date requested by the county commissioners, and the county commissioners may, if they deem it justifiable, adopt an appropriate budget for the county extension program and levy a tax therefore. The amount thus raised by direct taxation within any county or combination of counties for the purposes of this chapter shall be used for the salaries of clerks, provision of office space, supplies, equipment, postage, telephone, a contribution toward the salaries of county educators and such other expenses as necessary to maintain an effective county extension program.¹

¹Excerpted from Title 7, Chapter 7 of the Maine Revised Statutes, §191–§195

Additional Resources

Garden & Yard Page for Home Gardeners:

<https://extension.umaine.edu/gardening/>

Horticulture Training Programs:

<https://extension.umaine.edu/learn/>

left: Native trout lily

back cover: Maple syrup





LIZ STANLEY PHOTO

For more information contact:

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University of Maine Cooperative Extension’s successful educational programs result from a federal, state, and county government partnership. Since 1919, when the Maine Legislature passed the County Extension Act, the University of Maine has been in all Maine communities with a county office whose operations are funded by county government. Our educational programs anticipate and respond to local and state needs and issues. We also communicate those issues and opportunities to UMaine faculty to influence their research and development plans.