



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MAINE**  
Cooperative Extension



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2017 - 2018**

Piscataquis County  
Cooperative Extension

# Local Partnership

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The partnership between the University of Maine, County Governments and the county Extension Associations has endured for over a century. As the needs of the people of Maine have changed, so has Cooperative Extension. We are committed to helping Maine succeed across our spectrum of programming. However, success is best achieved by collaboration with the people, businesses, organizations and communities that we work with. Extension is a reflection of the locally identified needs that form the basis for the educational programs that are offered statewide.



The county report is an important way to share the work that has been happening locally and statewide. This report is also an important way that the county Extension Association documents accountability for the investment of funds from County Government. We are very pleased to share this report with you and encourage you to contact your local office with questions or for more information on anything in this report.

— John Rebar, Executive Director

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## Piscataquis County Extension Association

Dr. Beth McEvoy, President  
David Bridges, Vice President  
Carole Boothroyd, Secretary  
Dr. Karen Murphy, Treasurer  
Dotty Hadler  
George McKay  
Richard Neal  
Gretchen Huettner

Retiring Members:  
Natasha Colbry  
Tish Dutson

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## Piscataquis County Staff

Donna Coffin, Extension Professor  
Barbara Baker, Extension Educator  
Sheila Norman, 4-H Community Education Assistant  
Trisha Smith, Home Horticulture Community Education Assistant  
Anette Moulton, On-call Clerk  
Amanda Miles, Administrative Specialist - Resigned  
John Albertini, Administrative Specialist - No longer on staff

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

Our annual report features highlights of recent accomplishments and the difference we make in the lives of Maine citizens and their communities.

## County Highlights –



JOSEPH H. BODWELL

### First County Agent in Piscataquis County

September 1, 1915 Joseph Henry Bodwell started his new job as county agent for

Piscataquis County. Dr. Leon Merrill, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of the Agricultural Extension Service for the State of Maine told him, “You will start out by hiring a horse and wagon and making calls on farmers to get acquainted... Establish an office and I will come up to visit you when you get settled.”

Some farmers in the county did not think this young man from college would have anything helpful to teach them about farming and made Joe’s first weeks on the job very difficult. Frank Merrill was the most vocal about his lack of respect for this new county agent. Frank was the Pomona Grange Master and farmed 50 acres of potatoes, a herd of Holstein cattle and Percheron draft horses.

One day, Joe arrived at Frank’s farm a day that fellow farmers were helping fill his silo. He asked if he could have 10 minutes time to have Frank show him the beautiful field of potatoes and then would spend the rest of the afternoon helping to fill the silo.

Joe was very familiar with tuber diseases and had noticed a few hills having rhizoctonia. He predicted that one of the affected hills would only have 30 worthless little potatoes, and Frank anxious to prove Joe wrong, dug up the hill and found a bunch of small, unsaleable potatoes. Joe pointed out another hill and said

Frank would find six or eight good potatoes and no small ones. As it was Joe was proven right again, and the chiding ceased as Frank led the group of farmers back to work filling the silo.

The Dover-Foxcroft Historical Society was gracious enough to share the letters from Joe Bodwell and are now available online at <https://extension.umaine.edu/piscataquis/home/bodwell/>



### 5-Years of One Tomato™!

The One Tomato™ Project has reached the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary to encourage people to grow at least one tomato in their garden. Yes, you heard us – we’re excited over one tomato! Of course, the plants produce much more than one tomato, but we celebrate the difference that one edible tomato makes.

Once again, the Piscataquis County Extension Association purchased 400 cherry tomato seedlings that were distributed throughout the

county at various events along with information on how to grow them in containers. As in past years, at the end of the season we will ask recipients how their tomatoes did.

Last year we gave out three different varieties of cherry tomatoes: Sungold, Jasper and Esterina. 2017 was a very good tomato year and with the disease resistant varieties folks had great success averaging over \$10 worth of cherry tomatoes from their plants. The most productive was Esterina, a sweet, yellow tomato. In 2018 Ellis Greenhouse in Hudson grew four varieties for the project. We added Sunrise Sauce a small, paste type tomato.

## Sedomocha School Garden

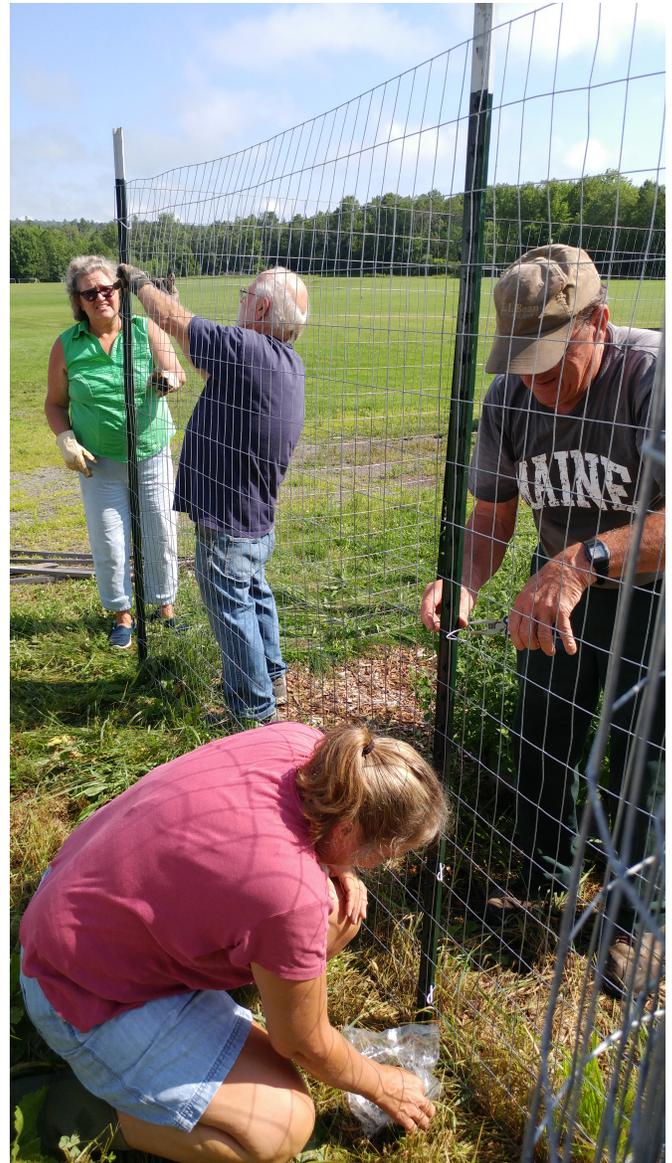
The Sedomocha School Garden began in 2013 as part of a Food Corps initiative to provide outdoor classroom space. Through the years the Piscataquis County Extension Executive Committee has provided financial assistance and physical labor grow the garden from 3 to 7 raised beds, install a rainwater catchment and drip irrigation system, and protect plants from roving wildlife.

Since 2015, Trisha Smith, UMaine Extension Horticulture Aide, has coordinated activities in the Sedomocha School Garden with David Murray and his second-grade class. This spring, *all* Sedomocha second-graders had the opportunity to participate in starting “Three Sisters” (corn, pumpkins, beans) crops, and planting, growing and eating lettuce.

Participants in the Piscataquis Passport Project tend summer crops, sample fresh vegetables straight from the garden, take some of their harvest home, or deliver to the Sedomocha kitchen for use in the summer meals program. Second graders start the school year in August harvesting late summer vegetables to sample and share with the cafeteria. Later in the fall, students harvest pumpkins, clean up the garden for winter and plant garlic. Gardening is

an important way for kids to make connections with soil and food.

*Executive committee members George McKay and Richard Neal install a deer fence with assistance from volunteers Marilyn Savage and Katrina Caffey*



## Piscataquis MGVs Renovate Landscape at Central Hall

Piscataquis Master Gardener Volunteers Pat Jones and Karen Maas planned and planted the landscape at the renovated Central Hall. The plantings include herbaceous and woody perennials as well as annuals.

Preliminary planning for landscaping at Central

Hall began in 2015. Easy maintenance and color co-ordination were the primary considerations. The MG volunteers decided on perennials in pink shades that die back to the

ground and can simply be cut back. Plants came from MG volunteer gardens, Rockwall Gardens, and Sprague's Nursery.

They carefully selected trees and shrubs to complement the color and scale of the lawn and flowerbeds. They planted a dogwood tree near the entrance and requested the town of Dover-Foxcroft replace an ailing street tree with an ornamental crabapple. The lawn is a work in progress. Many people have complemented the MGVs on their great work.



## Maple Mania 2018

The eighth annual Maple Mania hosted by the Maine Maple Syrup Producers Association with the assistance of UMaine Extension, kicked off in Greenville in June with a trade show at the Barley Family Center in Greenville. Almost 100 producers from across the maple production region had the opportunity to check out the latest in maple technology, renew friendships, and tour the Moosehead Lake area.

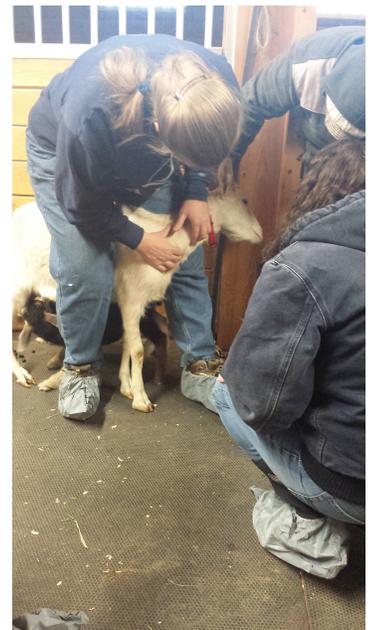


Bus tours of local sugarhouses included locations in Shirley, Beaver Cove and Blanchard as well as three operations on the Golden Road. Participants also had the opportunity to take a cruise of Moosehead Lake aboard the Katahdin.

Visiting with vendors, touring sugaring operations and enjoying the Greenville area was followed by a morning of learning with nine technical sessions options on Saturday morning. As usual, participants enjoyed good friends, a beautiful location and great learning!

## Hands-on Learning for Small Ruminant Farmers

Over twenty Sheep, Goat and Camelid keepers from the area attended the Keeping Small Ruminants Healthy meeting sponsored by the Piscataquis County Extension Executive Committee featuring Caterina Ruksznis DVM, who has experience caring for small ruminants in the practice where she works in Vermont.



Dr. Ruksznis was joined by Dr. Beth McEvoy & Dr. Karen Murphy at the Foxcroft Vet Clinic Barn in Dover-Foxcroft where the participants learned what they can do to prevent disease in their animals through lecture and hands-on live demonstrations. Topics included what is normal for their animal, vaccination schedule, deworming, nutrition, foot care, and basic veterinary care.

## 4-H Clubs, Teams, and Groups



The towns listed below are where 4-H clubs, teams or groups meet, but youth from anywhere are welcome to participate if they are willing to travel.

- (Greenville) Super Science – Monson/Guilford
- Wild Blueberry Cloverbuds Club – Greenville
- Mighty Monarchs – Dover-Foxcroft
- 4-H After School – Milo
- Sew Much Fun SPIN (Special Interest) Dover-Foxcroft
- Farmers' Market SPIN – Dover-Foxcroft



The Super Science 4-H Club from Piscataquis County has placed second in the statewide Envirothon for the past two years. Teams from all over the state participate in field events that tests what the youth know about wildlife, forestry, aquatics and soils. This is part of the STEM (science, technology, engineering and

math) education with a focus on environmental stewardship.



## Piscataquis Passport to Summer Fun

The Piscataquis Passport Project taps in to the spirit of community and cooperation central to UMaine Extension. In its second year, the Piscataquis Passport Project encourages kids and their families to access healthy food and activities in the Dover-Foxcroft area in the summertime. Youth age 5 to 18 got their Passports marked at locations such as Sedomocha School cafeteria for Free Summer

Meals (breakfast and lunch), the Sedomocha School Garden, free community meals, Dover Cove Farmers' Market, Thompson Free Library and Mayo Regional Hospital.

Piscataquis Passports were used to claim \$5 in Veggie Vouchers at each of up to 6 visits to Dover Cove Farmers' Market. Participants could choose to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables right away, or save for later in the season. Piscataquis County Extension Association, Piscataquis Healthy Food for All, and Farm in the Woods fund Veggie Vouchers.

## Teens, Jobs, and Rural Maine!

UMaine Extension Piscataquis County has been assisting with this project of the School of Forest Resources at the University of Maine, the School of Ecosystem Workforce program at the University of Oregon, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Coos Watershed Association.

Funded by the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture, the Rural Youth Futures project seeks to understand the goals and aspirations of middle and high-school youth in two traditionally forest-dependent communities of **Piscataquis County, Maine** and **Coos County, Oregon**.

The project aims to find out more about the connections between local communities, youth aspirations for the future, and the local economy. This information will help communities better engage the next generation of workers and entrepreneurs as residents and leaders, develop more targeted education and training opportunities, and attract more early-career people to relocate or return to rural places. The project runs from September 2017 through August 2020.



## Smoked Chicken & Pasture Raised Broiler Research Results Extension Annual Meeting

Dr. Colt Knight, UMaine Extension Livestock Specialist demonstrated how to smoke chicken at the 2017 Piscataquis County Extension Annual Meeting. The thirty plus attendees were able to taste the resulting chicken. It was delicious.

Following the meal, a short annual meeting was held and then Dr. Knight talked about the research project at the Witter Center where six different breeds of broilers were kept in chicken tractors. Feed and gain were recorded weekly and rate of gain for the different breeds calculated.

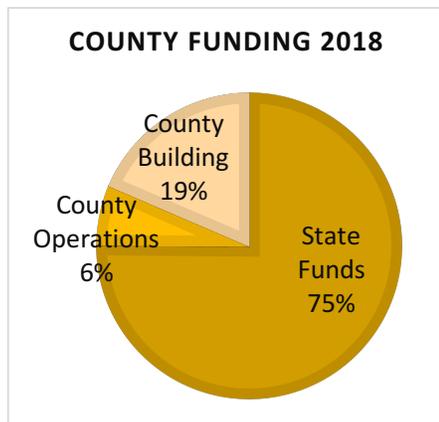


# University of Maine Cooperative Extension Support for Piscataquis County

Without statewide support, UMaine Extension would not be present in your county. Funds for projects are provided through the University of Maine, Federal Formula Funds, grants, contracts, and fees. Dollars from other sources support salaries and benefits for Extension specialists, county educators, Extension administration, computer equipment and networking, publications, postage, telephone, and travel.

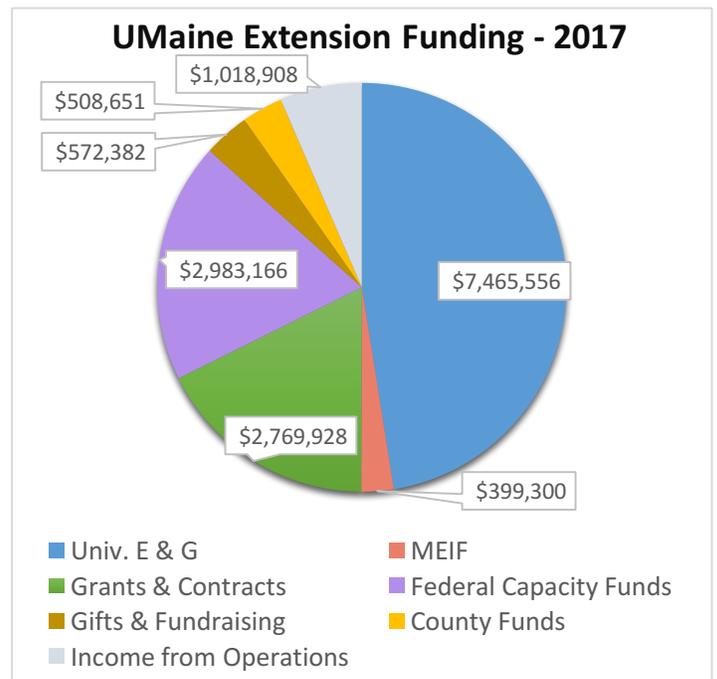
Piscataquis County	State Support CY2017	County Support 2018
Local Salaries and Benefits	\$228,338	\$15,950
Statewide Animal Diagnostic Lab	\$4,350	
Marketing, Publications, Video, Computer Equipment, Networking	\$2,121	
Office Equipment & Copier		\$1,600
Local Programming Supplies & Expenses	\$1,477	\$2,225
Postage & Telephone	\$1,876	\$625
Travel	\$4,829	
Office Space		\$60,015
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$242,991</b>	<b>\$80,415</b>

This pie graph illustrates the financial resources for programs offered, supported and managed out of the Piscataquis county office. Each year, Piscataquis county tax dollars support the UMaine extension with physical office space, support staff salaries, office supplies, equipment and some programming expenses.



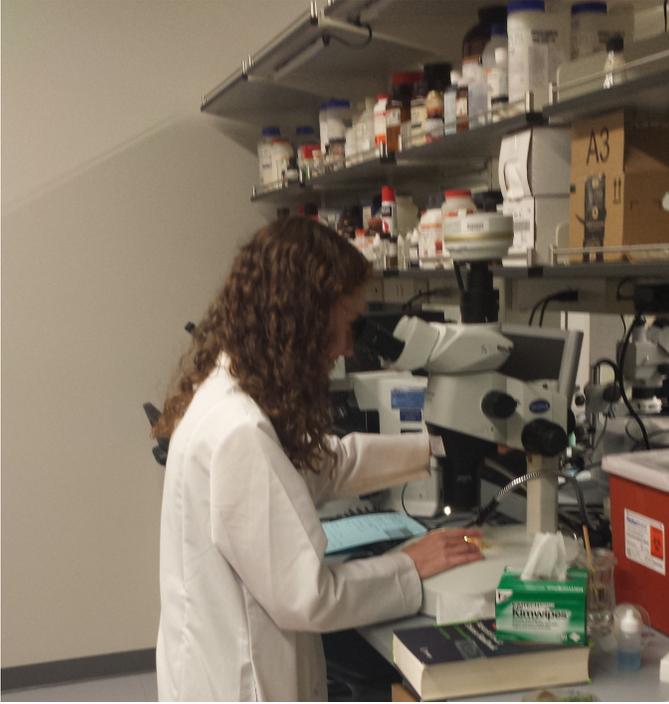
## Statewide Extension Funding

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



## Statewide Highlights

### Cooperative Extension Diagnostic and Research Laboratory



Accurate and early detection of animal diseases is important in limiting or eradicating the impacts of disease. With Maine's continued growth of small farms getting animal health information into the hands of farmers is vitally important, as is having a state conduit for veterinarians to learn about livestock disease.

The Cooperative Extension Diagnostic and Research Laboratory serves the state's veterinarians, livestock producers, and animal owners by performing diagnostic services that include necropsy, microbiology, virology, pathology, and special research support. Through Extension it links with industry to help control animal health related problems. A new Cooperative Extension Diagnostic and Research Laboratory will expand services to serve Maine's over 8,000 farms.

In 2017, the lab tested over 10,000 samples, the majority of which were from farm animals. It tested over 7,000 poultry samples and over

3,000 milk samples, thus allowing farms of all sizes to operate with more assurance of healthy animals and healthy products. Poultry farms were able to meet their FDA-requirements for salmonella testing locally. Sheep and goat owners were able to find out whether their animals have enteric parasites, and what to do about it.

### So You Want to Farm in Maine?

Current farmers thinking about changing farm enterprises and new farmers interested in starting a farm often lack skill, knowledge and confidence in areas such as access to capital, rules and regulations affecting agriculture operations, and marketing.

Since 2011, UMaine Extension has provided diverse educational outreach through its "So You Want to Farm in Maine" series to enhance the skills, business management knowledge, and confidence of new and established farmers.

These Extension programs are live, live-streamed and archived, and reached 754 participants from all Maine counties (including Piscataquis) and out-of-state. Topics included agriculture enterprise selection, business planning, record keeping, market research, regulations, and resource identification.



In the fourth year, when the training qualified as FSA borrower training, farmers with FSA loans were able to complete their loan

requirements and received nearly \$760,000 in farm loans.

The fall of 2018 the “So You Want to Farm in Maine?” course is being offered in five counties. Contact a county office near you for details

## Helping Grain Growers Expand to Serve High Value, Specialty Markets

The growing demand for locally grown and processed small grains, such as barley, oats, rye, and wheat, represents an economic opportunity for Maine and Piscataquis farmers. Current and aspiring small grain farmers face a continuing need to improve their skills and capacities with grains that meet the quality standards of high-value specialty markets such as baking, brewing, and distilling for human consumption, as well as organic feed for dairy and egg production.



Grain farmers, processors, and buyers improved their skills, markets, and business viability as a result of Extension’s *Local Grains Program*, including growing a new crop, changing a fertility, weed, or disease practice, and improving cleaning, drying and storage systems. These changes resulted in improved grain yields and quality, enhanced farm or grain business viability, and improved family quality of life. For organic small grains, production, yields, and value have increased dramatically in Maine over the last 5 years.

### In 2016

- 2/3 of the processors reported having increased purchases and developed new sources and markets
- Maine grew 3.6 times more organic small grains compared with 2011 (1423 vs. 498 tons), on 2.5 times more acres
- 20% increase in yield
- \$800,000 total value of organic small grains and pulses produced by Maine farmer

### 4-H@UMaine

## Gives Youth a Preview of the College Experience



Education after high school is critical to supporting skilled jobs in Maine. Engaging youth in getting college degrees helps to grow and strengthen Maine’s businesses and economy. Unfortunately, the number of Maine high school graduates enrolled in higher education lags at 40th in the nation. Although research recommends beginning to address college and career aspirations in elementary and middle grades, coordinating access to a college campus presents barriers for rural Maine communities.

UMaine Extension created 4-H@UMaine to provide a safe and supportive environment for Maine youth grades 6-12 to experience life on a college campus. Participants come to the UMaine campus and imagine the possibility of college attendance as they stay in campus residence halls, eat in the dining commons, get active in the student recreation center, and participate in hands-on workshops with UMaine students, staff, and faculty. While they are there, Extension also fosters healthy relationships using small-group settings led by trained adult leaders and teenage peer mentors.

In 2017, 4-H@UMaine hosted 55 youth (grades 6-10), 15 Teen Leaders (grades 9-12) including 4 Teen Leaders from Piscataquis County, and 27 adult staff and volunteers. In addition to the traditional youth experience for grades 6-10, college-ready teens took part in an exclusive experience that included pre-event training, planning roles as youth mentors, and workshops to further develop leadership skills and connect with campus staff. Of those attending 4-H@UMaine:

- 92% of all the youth indicated they learned about new career possibilities, helping to raise their career aspirations.
- 91% plan to go to college.



*Photo credit: Edwin Remsberg, Donna Coffin, Trisha Smith, Colt Knight & Kathy Hopkins.*

## 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 of 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.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Excerpted from Title 7, Chapter 7 of the Maine Revised Statutes, §191–§195.

# Piscataquis County Extension Annual Meeting

Wednesday, November 7, 2018  
5 pm to 8 pm

Dover-Foxcroft Congregational Church with DKB Catering.

## What's Killing My Plants?

With Alicyn Smart, UMaine Extension Plant Pathologist

\*Most frequent plant diseases seen this past season

Matt Wallhead, UMaine Extension Ornamental Horticulturist

\*Measures gardeners and farmers can take to prevent plant disease

Pre-registration required through the Piscataquis County Extension Office.  
\$20 per person.



**For more information contact:**

University of Maine Cooperative Extension Piscataquis County

165 E. Main St

Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426

Phone: 207.564.3301 or 800.287.1491 (in Maine)



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