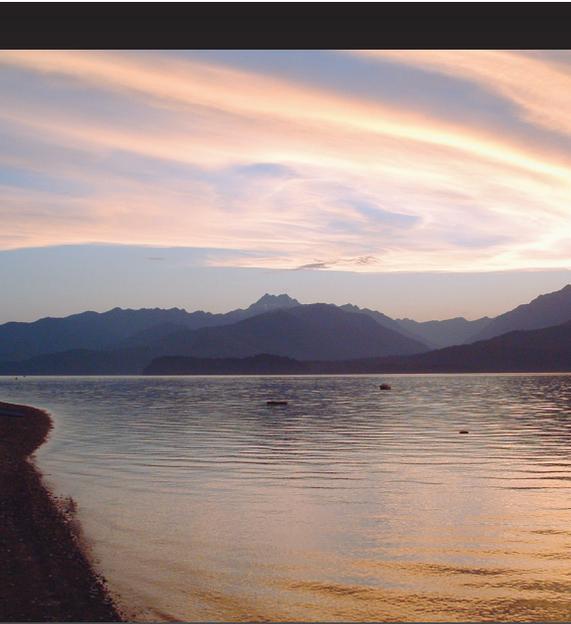


Washington State University Mason County Extension

HEALTH & WELLNESS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

YOUTH & FAMILIES



MASON COUNTY QUICK FACTS

- *Named for the first secretary of Washington Territory, C.H. Mason*
- *County seat: Shelton*
- *Land area, in square miles: 961 (state rank: 29)*
- *Median household income (2007): \$47,200*
- *Population (2007): 54,600 (state rank: 21)*

CONTACT

WSU Mason County Extension Office
11840 N. Highway 101
Shelton WA 98584
(306) 427-9670 ext. 680
<http://mason.wsu.edu/>

Washington State University Mason County Extension is part of the world-class outreach and engagement enterprise of the university. We partner with businesses, the community, and volunteers to drive innovation, invention, and technology transfer. We focus on expanding the problem-solving capacity of communities within the county, enhancing and sustaining the local economy, enhancing natural resources and the environment, enhancing economic opportunities for agriculture, improving health and wellness—especially in the realm of nutrition and obesity prevention—and eliminating barriers to the success of youth and families.

We leverage every dollar we receive from Mason County with federal, state, grant, and private funding to maximize our reach and effectiveness. In fact, for every \$1 invested by Mason County, WSU Extension provides more than \$4.90 in state and federal resources. Additionally, faculty and staff in the county raised more than \$620,000 in extramural funding, in 2008. Therefore, every dollar that Mason County spends in support of WSU Mason County Extension generates \$10 for the county—a 1000 percent annual return on investment.

Impacts

Health and Wellness

Sound Nutrition Choices

From October 2007 through September 2008, the WSU Mason County Extension Food Sense educators provided nutrition lessons to 2,362 students in eight different schools, about 90 classrooms per week.

After taking the class, students shared stories about eating new and healthier foods, trying new recipes, and participating in physical activity. One parent-teacher organization held a walk-a-thon and health fair in



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

In 2008, volunteers donated 13,000 hours to WSU Mason County Extension programs. Their time was worth an estimated \$195,000.

From October 2007 through September 2008, Food \$ense educators provided nutrition lessons to 2,362 students in eight different schools (below).



response to students' enthusiasm for health and nutrition. An autistic student was able to overcome her many food aversions and now eats fruits and vegetables and has the confidence to try new foods.

In some schools, Food \$ense students grow their own vegetables. The program also provided three summer day camps. In addition, 41 members of the Squaxin Island Tribe learned how to prepare low-cost, high-protein meals for their families.

Poor nutrition is of particular concern for low income families. While obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, rates have increased even more among the poor. The WSU Mason County Extension Master Gardener's program established a permanent vegetable garden at the county fairgrounds in 2004. Last year, more than 3,000 pounds of garden vegetables and 100 bags of lettuce were delivered to the Saint's Pantry, a local food bank.

Natural Resources

Oakland Bay Water Quality

Oakland Bay, the nation's largest source of manila clams, provides more than \$12 million to the local economy. Rising bacteria levels in the bay threaten these rich harvests and have led to closures in some areas.

A study by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found that human sewage systems were contributing to the problem. In response, WSU Extension Mason County, with Mason County Public Health, provided 16 workshops to 228 county residents on septic operation and maintenance, from 2006 to 2008. Fecal coliform levels in Oakland Bay have declined since that time. While these levels do vary seasonally and annually, this is positive news and likely results—at least in part—from educational outreach.

Workshop evaluations found that a majority of participants were committed to properly maintaining their sewage systems. In addition participants: were now able to identify a failing septic system (91%); planned to share what they learned with family and friends (65%); and intended to switch to non-toxic cleaning products (33%).

Economic Development

Developing Local Agriculture

Ninety-four percent of the farms in Mason County are classified as small farms. The WSU Mason County Extension Small Farms Program builds public support for agriculture and helps small farmers to remain economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable while providing high-quality local food and fiber to their communities.

More than 100 local farmers have gained skills in direct marketing, sustainable crop and livestock production, product development, business planning,

research, and whole farm management through the program. As a result, more than 30 new farm-based businesses have been established.

Working with the Shelton Farmers Market, Mason County Extension helped to find a better location for the market. The effort was so successful that farmers realized an 80% increase in market sales. Program staff also worked with Stewardship Partners to certify five local farms under the Salmon-Safe label. This label allows farmers to distinctively market their products by showcasing sustainable practices and benefit from Salmon-Safe public education and marketing.

In 2007, the program purchased poultry processing equipment. This has enabled many local producers to take advantage of Washington State's poultry processing laws and sell their poultry locally. In 2008 alone, more than \$46,000 in poultry was processed using this equipment, more than half of which was sold locally.

The Mason County Farm Map provides education about local agriculture and encourages residents to buy locally. Participating farmers report increased sales as a result of being listed in the publication. In addition, elementary school children visit local farms each year and learn about where their food comes from as part of the Small Farms Program.

Developing New Revenue Sources

The Special Forest Products Industry doubled from 1979 to 1997 as a result of efforts by area Extension foresters to find and train workers. Harvesters learned about sustainable harvesting, forest safety, fire prevention, post-harvest care, value-added processing, and marketing of specialty forest products. The program also provided a class series for smaller acreage landowners to support them in developing their own forest management plans. More than 1,500 workers have been trained to date.

Specialty Forest Products bring about \$1.5 million annually to Mason County. Based on work by the Washington State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development, it is projected that the industry could eventually generate between \$6.5 and \$8 million locally.

Extension foresters have assisted the Northwest Researchers and Harvesters Association in developing long term cooperative management plans for harvest of floral greens, mushrooms, Christmas greens, firewood, and wild edibles.

Youth and Families

Developing Leadership and Life Skills

WSU Mason County 4-H helps young people develop leadership and life skills. Mason County has one of the largest 4-H After-School Programs in Washington.

The strong history of 4-H in this community provides the basis for its steady growth and popularity. More than 270 young people are served by 4-H



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The 4-H Forestry Education program provided hands-on forestry and natural resource education to more than 1,200 Mason County young people. One aspect of this program is a career exploration and work force preparation.





STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

WSU Mason County Extension's Strengthening Families Program is a skills-building curriculum for families with children ages 10 to 14 that focuses on preventing teen substance abuse and other behavioral problems by strengthening family bonds.

summer day camps and residential summer camps in Mason County. In total, Mason County 4-H programs served more than 2,400 youth in club, camp, after school, and challenge activities in 2008.

The 4-H Forestry Education program provided hands-on forestry and natural resource education to more than 1,200 Mason County young people. One aspect of this program is a career exploration and work force preparation program that provides internships to local youth. The program teaches the importance of healthy forests while preparing young people to make sound natural resource management decisions. Mason County Extension partners in this effort include Green Diamond Resources, Port Blakely Tree Farms, Olympic Panel Products, The U.S. Forest Service, Manke Lumber, and the Kristmas Town Kiwanis Club.

Interventions Prevent Drug Abuse

Substance abuse is a serious problem in Washington State. A recent survey by the Department of Social and Health Services reported that one out of four Washington 10th graders reported having been drunk in the past 30 days and reported driving while drinking.

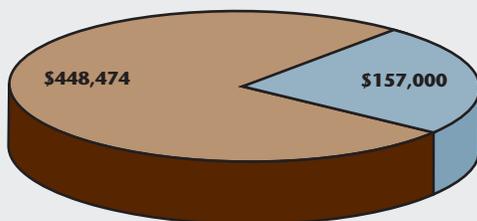
Strong family relationships provide a defense against risky behavior such as this. WSU Mason County Extension's Strengthening Families Program is a skills-building curriculum for families with children ages 10 to 14. The focus is on preventing teen substance abuse and other behavioral problems by strengthening parenting skills and building family strengths.

An analysis by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that for every young person who participates in the program, there is a savings of \$5,805. This is based on a reduction in costs associated with arrests, incarceration, adjudication, and public assistance, among other things. Sixty-six young people and their families have participated in the program since it started in 2002, for a savings to the community of more than \$383,000.

Overview of Funding for WSU Mason County Extension Programs

WSU Support for County Extension Programs

- WSU Support in County
- Other WSU Support



Direct Funding Sources for County Extension Programs

- Total WSU Support
- Grants and Contracts
- County Support



Total Funding Supporting County Extension Programs

- WSU Support in County
- Other WSU Support
- Grants and Contracts
- County Support

