Internal Compliance Review Best Practices for Program Year 2012

University of Maryland Extension (UME) Internal Compliance Review (ICR) was conducted in the month of April and May 2013. Internal Compliance Reviews are structured procedural methods used to monitor UME organizations performances based on its Affirmative Action (AA) plan. The following counties best practices should be utilized as benchmarks to improve parity, minority participation and disability access in all UME counties and regional offices. Please note that in all of the reviews conducted in April and May of 2013 for program year 2012. The counties reviewed for program year 2012 are:

Baltimore County

Charles County

Harford County

Howard County

Prince George’s County and

St. Mary’s County

Best Practices –Overall Themes

1. Broadening Agricultural and Natural Resources program content generally results in greater program participation by minorities and women.

2. Extension Advisory Committees (EAC), that include minorities and both genders result in better program participation by a representative cross-section of the community than when there is no committee or when that body is homogenous.

3. Having a diverse volunteer groups tend to result in greater participation by minorities.

4. Faculty and staff that collaborate with other agencies or entities are likely to expand their audience reach and increase participation in all UME programs.
Best Practices by County

Baltimore County

- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all.
- The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas such as African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, and Hispanics. The efforts to reach the African American/Black, Hispanic and Asian American or Pacific Islander populations are noted. Continue this outreach.
- Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives.
- Excellent use of ICR forms.
- Camp application and scholarships forms well documented.
- Commendable partnership with public library to conduct train the trainer program and conduct STEM Programs.
- Good efforts to reach special needs youth through camping program, at after-school sites, and through formation of clubs such as Sweet Potato Kids 4-H Club.
- Creation of new awards is an excellent way to recognize newly formed partnerships and to be inclusive of all 4-H participants.
- Documents in all files contained appropriate AA and Disability statements.
- Press releases and newspaper articles were properly filed.
- Small Farms program increases this Extension Educators diversity in both ethnicity and gender.
- The office has several utility vehicles for use to transport disabled or individuals with walking problems to the Demonstration Garden and field plots.
- Teachers of Elementary students: Integrating Nutrition Education into the Curriculum.
- By Language: Spanish visual aids are available. Grad Students translate materials into Spanish.
- By Literacy level and intellectual abilities: Programs have been adapted for individual educators to support participants with intellectual impairments e.g. Nutrition Nuggets.
- By Race/Ethnicity: All programs are available to and appropriate for all race and ethnic groups and genders.
- By Physical Ability: The height of the salad tables for Growing Healthy Habits was shortened to accommodate wheel chair participants.
- The PACT program at Kennedy Kreiger Institute is training for children and parents (with developmental delays).

Charles County

- Educator accommodated clientele by offering a class that had a Chinese interpreter.
- Educator teaches programs at local detention center to accommodate diverse clienteles.
- Health Smart program offers classes at local libraries to improve its reach into the community.
- Health Smart goes into Title 1 schools and works with participants as part of the schools’ health fairs.
Money Smart program introduced financial and health-related programs in classes at the Children's Aid Society.
EFNEP offers handouts written in Spanish for youth.
4-H carries out successful collaborations with other youth organizations including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the Wild Turkey Youth Federation.
4-H uses an innovative recruitment strategy during the Charles County Fair. Families who are interested signed up for more information. 4-H employees then contact them and invite them to an introduction to 4-H Night where they receive help selecting clubs that meet their interests. Excellent contact, follow-up, and enrollment records are maintained through all stages.
Camp opportunities are open to current 4-H members, EFNEP participants and members of the general public. Promotional materials explicitly state that scholarship funds are available for youth with financial need.
4-H sends EFNEP program promotional letters home to the families of eligible students in four elementary schools. In addition, a detailed new 4-H member welcome packet helps orient youth to 4-H policies and educational opportunities.
The 4-H Teen Program routinely completes community service projects. These projects help show the public that 4-H has much to offer all children interested in contemporary projects and more traditional projects.
The 4-H staff members modify livestock showmanship standards to accommodate and include youth with physical disabilities and limited mobility.
Other accommodations include offering make-up sessions for missed trainings, providing reading and writing assistance, making alternate food choices available based on dietary restrictions, and provision of materials that have been translated into native languages of participants.

Harford County

- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible to all clienteles including faculty and staff.
- The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas. The efforts to reach the African American/ Black, and Asian American or Pacific Islander populations are noted. Continue this outreach.
- Outreach to the female population meets parity. Continue this best practice.
- Continue and expanded joint programming efforts in the county and the Northern Maryland Cluster.
- Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives.
- The faculty outreach to females is excellent.
- Files are well-organized and up-to-date.
- Continued Efforts to work with military programs and Rte. 40 corridor to reach diverse youth and volunteers.
- Military youth and volunteers are engaged in countywide programs and recognized at the awards banquet.
- 4-H promotional efforts are evident around the building and county.
- Strong camping program with accommodations for youth with special needs.
- Baked Goods entered at the Harford County Fair are donated to a local soup kitchen.
- Documents in files all contained appropriate AA/EEO and Disability statements.
- Press releases and newspaper articles were properly filed.
- The Master Gardener Extension Educator met parity African American/Black, and females.
- The AGNR Extension Educator provides webinars using YouTube.
- The AGNR Extension Educator met parity African American/Black, and females.
- The Master Gardener Extension Educator moved programs to a local special needs school.
- AGNR Extension Educators outreach to the African American/Black, Asian American or Pacific Islander and Hispanic populations is outstanding. Gender parity is also met.

**Howard County**

- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all.
- The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas. The efforts to reach the African American/Black, Hispanic and Asian American or Pacific Islander populations are noted. Continue this outreach.
- Continue and expand joint programming efforts in the county and the Northern Maryland Cluster.
- Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives.
- The faculty outreach to females is excellent.
- Continued Efforts to work with Columbia Teen Center to reach diverse audience.
- Committee members are given specific responsibilities to conduct 4-H events and activities.
  - This would include the achievement committee members composed of youths and adults plan and execute the program successfully.
- 4-H promotional program is well represented by the club members. 4-H day at the Fair a one day activity has increased enrollments in 4-H program.
- Club roster well organized in binder.
- Documents in files all contained appropriate AA and Disability statements.
- Master Gardener program offers an opportunity for many to participate in programs.
- AA statements were at the bottom of all handouts and promotional materials.
- Good start on grassroots audiences that have received mail: low income, Howard Transit (accommodating those with mental and physical disabilities), Columbia Association, Judy Center, Community Action, and Howard County Government.
- Mailing list that show the composition of clientele reached include—domestic violence groups, Asian and Hispanic groups, United Way (low income) Howard transit (physical disabilities).
- Educator’s committee memberships include the UME Money Smart Impact Team, Health Smart Health Insurance Action Team, Asset and Development Committee, Howard County Financial Education Alliance.
- Accommodations have been made in the following areas:
  - Food Allergies and asthma in camp situations
  - Bilingual financial brochure
- Program work with the Howard County Health Department increases community awareness of University of Maryland Extension programs.
- AA statements were at the bottom of all handouts and promotional materials.
- Continue Programs with the Master Gardener program.

**Prince George’s County**

- Urban Farm/ Garden Program Coordinator used text messaging to communicate with key leaders in the community to share program information.
- Urban Farm/Garden Program Coordinator has shared programing with Lutheran Social Services, Ethiopian Community Development Council, and International Rescue Committee.
- Agriculture Marketing Educator used Twitter to keep community informed about programs and events.
- Master Gardener Coordinator held meetings in two different locations in Prince George’s County as an effort to keep distance traveled by volunteers at a minimum.
- Technology is used to promote and market programs. Examples include an electronic newsletter, a Twitter account, and a Facebook account.
- EFNEP employees partner with community organizations that reach diverse minority audiences. Examples include work with the Ethiopian Community Center, a center that serves refugee populations, the city of Langley Park with a high percentage of Hispanic residents, and the Laurel Boys and Girls Clubs that serve a diverse youth audience.
- Programs are marketed to diverse audiences through media and venues including the Prince George’s Gazette, the annual Hispanic Festival, Hispanic radio stations, the Read for Health Program bilingual newsletter, which is sent home to families of youth in pre-K through grade 4 and to the University of Maryland Service workers with a large Hispanic workforce.
- Although EFNEP and FSNE tend to reach higher percentages of women than men, efforts are being made to reach men through a Health Department partnership for men who were recently incarcerated and a Social Services partnership for men with child support needs. Parents who transport youth to programs in Langley Park are also encouraged to become involved in educational activities.
- Accommodations for clientele include evening and Saturday programs.
- Worked with interpreters for non-English speaking residents and youth/senior citizens with hearing impairments.
- Inclusive practices include identity theft prevention programs at senior citizen centers, finance programs for women who were victims of domestic violence, programs to support infants and toddlers who are at risk, adaptation of literature to include picture and simple wording for people with limited English literacy, and translation of materials to various languages including Spanish.
- Donations of funds and goods from the community make it affordable for all youth wanting to attend. In addition, financial assistance is provided to any youth requesting support.
- One of the camps is established as a cooperative effort of teens working with senior citizens, where youth take on project leadership opportunities to run the week long camp.
- Space and supplies have been made available at a high rise project to bring 4-H program to the youth living in that area.
- Reach military children via both club work and Operation Military Kids activities.
St. Mary’s County

- The Ag educator posted flyers and advertisements in post office, agriculture dealerships, feed stores, navy exchange, and the Loveville Produce Auction (which has a diverse group of buyers and sellers).
- Moved Master Gardener programs to different venues to encourage minority participation.
- Hold agriculture programs in Amish communities to encourage their participation.
- Ag Educator visits minority farmers at least once annually to inform them of upcoming programs and encourage participation.
- Use minority EAC members’ expertise to involve more minorities in programming.
- Works with military base to provide a gardening demo site with free space provided to some individuals and families.
- It is a FSNE policy to read pre- and post-test questions aloud to participants. This benefits illiterate or visually impaired participants.
- FCS program purchased a container gardening stand at seated wheelchair height to accommodate children at Green Holly Elementary School.
- Programs are held in accessible buildings like local libraries and public schools to attract diverse clienteles.
- Reading materials are available in Spanish and Chinese languages.
- FSNE materials are written at a 5th grade reading level.
- Program provided activities and accommodation for children with physical and mental disabilities.
- Educator adapted the Growing Healthy Habits program for SAIL students (“Students Achieving Independent Learning”).
- FSNE Educator includes the statement, “If you need special assistance to participate in the program, please contact . . .” in a large font on flyers.
- To increase 4-H opportunities for youth, staff members post flyers and notices in public places such as libraries and stores, and youth distribute them at community service events.
- Parents are invited to stay with their youth at 4-H club meetings, and they are encouraged to become UME 4-H Volunteers. This recruitment approach has been favorable.
- 4-H youth are encouraged to “bring a non 4-H friend” to workshops and other events to entice new youngsters to join 4-H.
- A wheelchair ramp has been added to the 4-H building at the St. Mary’s County Fairground. In addition, when inquiries are made via telephone for events or 4-H in general, office staff members ask if the participating families need any accommodations.
• Staff responded to requests to do programs for both public and private schools, especially in the STEM, fitness and leadership areas. They also attended PTA functions to recruit youth and volunteers. Responding to the needs of educators enables staff to bring 4-H learning opportunities to youth via a different means.

• In the 11-month School Program in St. Mary’s County, first-fifth graders complete structured 4-H programs as part of their summer offerings. This federally funded No Child Left Behind Program serves educationally disadvantaged youth, across all ethnic and economic groups.