

Internal Compliance Review Best Practices for Program Year 2011

University of Maryland Extension (UME) Internal Compliance Review (ICR) was conducted in the months of April and May 2012. ICRs 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. The counties reviewed for program year 2011 are:

- **Frederick County**
- **Montgomery County**
- **Washington County**
- **Wicomico County**
- **Worcester County and**
- **Somerset 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 group tends 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

Frederick County Best Practices

- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all including individuals with disabilities.
- The office works to ensure that parity is met with all ethnicities. Several program areas show excellent outreach to Asian American or Pacific Islanders, African Americans.
- Staff meetings are used as trainings.
- County office provides retirement seminars annually with Spanish translation.
- Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives.
- Nutrition programs in after-school reached a large number of minority youth.
- Videos are submitted to the UME office, reviewed and are shown during the county fair.
- Resident and day camps – moving from predominantly female to including more males – changing activities to attract more male participants.
- Upcoming opportunities for youth are published in newspaper, Facebook, advertised at Ft Detrick military base.

**Frederick County
Best Practices
Con't...**

- Documents in files contained appropriate AA statements.
- Press releases and newspaper articles were properly filed.
- Horticulture educator has gardens in the community to increase outreach.
- Increasing outreach to focus on male fathers.
- All programs are held in handicap accessible facilities.
- Translation services are provided during programs as needed to accommodate individuals with disabilities and non-English speaking clientele.
- Programs are modified to reach mentally challenged audiences.
- Programs reach all facets of the county population through collaborating with a multitude of community agencies: Goodwill, Rescue Mission, Department of Health, School Health Council, and Public School.

**Montgomery County
Best Practices**

- Programs are relocated to accommodate target population and to improve minority participation.
- Programs for disabled adults are held in meeting rooms that are accessible to all individuals with disabilities.
- In the central files, each program area had their mailing lists included with dates that indicated the latest update.
- The Healthy Lifestyles advisory committee is structured to match the population demographics.
- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all clientele including persons with disabilities.
- Publications are sent to clients by request because all publications are published online.
- The office has computer space for the public to review publications.
- In the EFNEP office area, walls were built to allow for clientele privacy.
- A Facebook page was recently established to attract a younger audience and computer savvy clientele.
- The main joint-programming is Close Encounters of Agriculture. It includes public, private and home schools, reaching up to 2,400 4th graders. All areas of Extension involved focusing on production, environment, nutrition and health. The Extension Office collaborates with the Montgomery County Fair.
- Language translator and sign language interpreters are provided during programs as needed.
- Materials are printed in Braille for Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP).
- The AGNR Educator is conducting horticulture training programs reaching large numbers of minorities.

Montgomery County
Best Practices
Con't...

- Educators have provided materials in large print for individuals with vision impairments.
- Educators have been careful to select better contrast color choices in PowerPoint programs to reduce color-blind impaired issues.
- Use of Facebook has expanded non-traditional audience.
- Use of interagency newsletter has expanded clientele base.
- Posting of UME materials to Soil Conservation District web site has expanded clientele base.
- Horse Action team has been restarted which will assist in reaching more female clientele.
- All programs are held in handicap accessible locations.
- Translation services are provided during school programs.

- FCS meet parity with males through staff training, child care providers and food preservations programs for youth.
- Program materials are published in Spanish and English to meet all clientele needs.
- Babysitting services are provided as needed during program meetings.
- A new hire from Sierra Leone (West Africa) speaks French and Spanish allowing for additional outreach in the county's diverse audience.
- 4-H clubs meet at the UME office to avoid the barrier of cost and the office is accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Close Encounters with Agriculture is a collaborative program in which several youths come to county office and participate in hands-on activities. Sign language interpreter is available for Adventures in Science Program to accommodate individuals with disabilities.
- 4-H educator promotes 4-H in-school enrichment programs and offers various special interest and short-term projects to diversify the county's 4-H program.

Somerset County
Best Practices

- Uses the University of Maryland – Eastern Shore (UMES) targeted mailing list for traditionally underserved (minority and women) farmers when sending out press releases for upcoming classes and events.
- The local pastor was used as a translator for Korean and Vietnamese poultry growers during classes and workshops.
- Accommodations were made for an elderly farmer in a wheelchair during a class by placing him at the front of the class so farmer could see and hear the speaker.

**Somerset County
Best Practices
Con't...**

In order to expand the reach of EFNEP programming, the EFNEP educators have formed partnership with the Somerset Department of Health which aids in the recruitment of participants. This partnership also allows for:

- EFNEP to provide home visitation to new moms, providing information on breast feeding and healthy nutrition decisions.
- Teaching adult group nutrition lessons at the health department.
- Teaching sessions are also held in Spanish e.g. MyPlate. Many nutrition materials are translated in Spanish.
- Educators teach nutrition to migratory populations in Spanish at community locations accessible to the worker's schedules.
- In order to reach the underserved male population, the educators disseminate nutrition materials at health fairs and talk to males at the health department and community halls.
- The 4-H Program is well represented on the Somerset EAC and 3 volunteers regularly attended EAC meetings to give guidance to the 4-H Program.
- The 4-H faculty extension assistant and program assistant maintain a good working relationship with club and after school program volunteers in an effort to plan joint programs that appeal to a diverse youth audience.
- All 4-H flyers contain Affirmative Action statements, and documentation of all reasonable efforts is extensive in county 4-H files. Flyers are made available to diverse youth audiences in a variety of school and community settings.
- The 4-H Program offers youth education programs related to 4 of 7 AGNR impact team areas, and a variety of program offerings is likely to appeal to youth from diverse backgrounds.
- A new club has recently formed that contains 30% minority youth and reaches youth from an economically disadvantaged area of the county.
- In an effort to include youth from all areas of the county, 4-H Programs are taken to youth in schools, after school programs, and community locations around the county. This practice helps the program reach youth who have limited access to transportation, is serving youth from low-income areas, and is reaching youth with limited literacy skills.
- Free and low-cost programs make up the majority of 4-H offerings within the county. Scholarships are made available to all youth with financial need.
- The 4-H program has recently recruited 1 Hispanic volunteer and 2 Asian volunteers in an effort to increase diversity within the volunteer pool. A retired teacher has also been recruited to run a photography club, thereby adding an elderly citizen to the volunteer roster.
- 4-H materials are available in Spanish when programs are offered to Hispanic youth.

Washington County Best Practices

- Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all including individuals with disabilities.
- The office works to ensure that parity is met with all ethnicities. Several program areas show excellent outreach to Asian American, Pacific Islanders and African Americans.
- Staff meetings are used as trainings.
- County office has an annual retirement seminar with Spanish translation.
- During summer camp, 4-H team made accommodations and county office hired an aide to assist a youth that was physically disabled. As a result, youth was able to attend and fully participate in camp activities.
- Held county events at the mall to attract youth, diverse clientele and potential volunteers.
- The AGNR Educator is conducting Annie's Project, Small and Part-time Farmer classes, and Poultry classes which attract more female and minority participants.
- The AGNR Educator participates in the UM China Initiative.
- Horticulture educator is conducting Master Gardener trainings in the evenings and has more library-based programs in an effort to attract a younger aged client group for this historically retiree-aged group.
- Horticulture educator has partnered with 4-H to conduct program in high minority population areas of the county.
- FCS working to create more programming to incorporate male role models.
- No fee classes are offered to accommodate limited income individuals.
- All classes taught in facilities that are ADA compliant.
- Reviewed class materials and flyers with non-discrimination statement.
- Utilizes Social Media websites such as Facebook to reach diverse clientele.
- Programs are in Spanish and English to meet clientele needs.
- Materials are printed in Spanish for WIC and school programs.
- Babysitting services are provided as needed during Washington County Health Department programs.
- Accommodations are made for those with disabilities.

Wicomico County Best Practices

- Some documents have been translated into Korean and Vietnamese for poultry growers.
- Translators were provided to translate for Korean and Vietnamese for poultry growers during classes and workshops.
- Accommodations were made for a farmer in a wheelchair during a class by placing him at the front of the class.
- When elderly gardeners, who are not computer literate, called the toll-free gardening hotline, the county's staff will print out publications for them or show them images of pests or gardening techniques on office computers.

**Wicomico County
Best Practices
Con't...**

- Master Gardeners built raised beds and incorporated benches into the design of the beds at the Maintaining Active Citizens (MAC) Center to make planting and gardening more accessible to all participants.
- All 4-H flyers contain Affirmative Action statements; flyers are attractive and visually appealing to youth. Flyers are made available to a diverse youth audience through a variety of school and community venues including schools, stores, and libraries.
- The 4-H program offers youth education programs related to 6 of 7 AGNR impact team areas; therefore, the wide variety of program offerings is likely to appeal to a diverse youth audience.
- 4-H programs are offered in numerous geographic areas around the county, thereby reaching youth who have limited access to transportation.
- Although the 4-H pool of trained volunteers had low racial and ethnic diversity in the past, the 4-H program has made recent progress by increasing the number of male volunteers. The program has also recruited 1 Hispanic volunteer and 2 Asian volunteers.
- Event committees have involved African American volunteers and teens in the planning process and trained minority teen volunteers to assist with the Health Rocks educational program.
- 4-H committees are open to anyone who is interested in participating or volunteering and the committees do not limit the number of participants.
- The 4-H Program has organized clubs and short-term programs for at-risk youth populations such as women and children at a homeless shelter, and the Hispanic Bienvenidos group, thereby reaching several underserved audiences.
- Scholarships for camps and other events that charge fees are available to any youth who requests funds.

**Worcester County
Best Practices**

- Cooperates with University of Maryland Eastern Shore Small Farm Project to reach more minority clients.
- Recently started Equine Program and Annie's Project will reach more female clients.
- County office conducted several programs at accessible locations.
- Most programs are conducted with visual, written, and auditory components. Large print publications are also available for individuals with disabilities.
- Translated materials are available in Korean and Vietnamese for poultry growers.
- Cash Match Program: Anyone can participate; partners have access to the underserved.
- County's Court programs have several minority clientele because the programs have mandatory attendance requirement. This court programs are utilized as a tool for reaching more diverse clientele for the county's Extension office.
- County's office partnered with the Shore-Up Inc. to reach diverse clientele. Shore-Up Inc. is an emergency heating and Head Start program which serves a diverse group of residents.

**Worcester County
Best Practices
Con't...**

- Materials for foster grandparents were printed in larger fonts, and other materials were modified to accommodate individuals with disabilities.
- 4-H personnel present programs where they can link to ongoing events such as Assateague Coastal Bay Day; 4th of July Day in Snow Hill, Berlin Spring Celebration to provide quality 4-H experiences in environmental topics, boating and bicycle safety and other needs that reach large numbers of youth.
- 4-H programs are offered in numerous geographic areas around the county, making 4-H accessible to youth with limited transportation.
- Free and low-cost 4-H programs are offered within the county. Scholarships are available to all youth with financial needs.
- Several planning meetings are held throughout the year with the 4-H volunteers to gain their input with regard to 4-H programs.
- Clubs advertise 4-H at the Snow Hill Library every year in July, and this venue reaches a diverse youth population.
- Youth are encouraged to promote 4-H and include a page specifically in their 4-H Record Books to verify promotional efforts that encourage other youth to join 4-H.
- The county 4-H program has mini grants supported by AARP, Retired Teachers Association, Rotary Club and others to help with school enrichment outreach needs.
- Contacts were made with Salisbury University, Wor-Wic Tech College, and UMES. These colleges have provided volunteers from diverse audiences to assist with school enrichment programs.