

University of Vermont
2013 NESARE State Program Annual Progress Report (second year of three-year plan)
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Project Title: Social sustainability on the farm, field-based trainings

Performance Target – Ag Service Providers:

- Of the 20 agricultural service providers who participate in this training, 18 will increase their knowledge of social sustainability issues that farm families are facing, and 10 will implement a change in their current work to include social sustainability topics (i.e., entrepreneurship, farm succession, quality of life, and/or social integration).
- As a result, 50 farmers will report a better understanding of these issues, and 20 will report an improvement in at least one aspect of social sustainability on their farms as a result of educational efforts conducted by trainees.

Performance Target Outcomes Reported

Actions by Educators and Service Providers

- 4 Incorporated new ideas from project into existing programming.
 - 2 increased the focus on social sustainability issues in a business planning course that 20 farmers attended in Fall 2013
 - 1 changed farmer surveys to better measure farm-level social sustainability.
 - 1 is using social sustainability concepts to help frame discussions with farmers to form new farmer-Extension partnerships as part of a youth agriculture program.
- 2 have led development and refinement of social sustainability indicators and accompanying verification tools for Extension-wide programs to better assess how Extension programs affect farm-level social sustainability.

Additional Outcomes Reported

- 1 participant applied for funding for a project to survey livestock farmers to further assess social sustainability topics
- 1 participant presented a poster titled, “Social Sustainability and Vermont Communities: Outcome Measurement and Programming for Extension” at the Rural Sociological Society 76th Annual Meeting, August 8, 2013.

Milestone Activities
1 field-based training and 2 in-service trainings were conducted. Participants learned about sustainable agriculture and social sustainability issues from 4 farm families; the training also successfully addressed the individual learning goals specifically identified by the 11 UVM Extension educators.
Program Participants
11 UVM Extension educators (the primary project audience) plus 82 additional service providers and farmers participated in the trainings
Assessments of Learning
End of training assessments (online surveys) indicated that participants increased their knowledge about farm-level social sustainability; increased their confidence in identifying social issues of importance to farmers; and increased their intention to integrate social sustainability topics into their work with farmers.

Outreach about SARE and Grant Programs

- 20 exhibits/presentations about SARE grants at meetings, conference and a webinar; and 2 workshops reached 437 ag service providers, 283 farmers and 20 students.
- Vermont SARE twitter feed: 84 tweets to 505 followers (an increase of 24% followers from last year).
- 4 NE-SARE blog posts for Women’s Agricultural Network blog