Keeping Livestock and Horses on Small Acreages: Protecting Our Drinking Water, Families and Animals

A 4-H Extension Education Program

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healthy landscapes

clean water starts at home

Program Impacts

- 87% of trained volunteers (100% adults) gained knowledge about hydrology, the water cycle, and the interaction between watersheds and aquifers.
- 100% of trained volunteers and 89% of program participants (100% adults) gained knowledge about pollution & health risks associated with livestock.
- 93% of trained volunteers (100% adults) and 89% of program participants (100% adults) are capable of identifying pollution & health risks on their property.
- 93% of trained volunteers (100% adults) and 89% of program participants (100% adults) are capable of identifying BMPs to reduce pollution & health risks.
- 100% of trained volunteers and program participants are considering the adoption of at least one BMP to reduce pollution & health risks.
- A study of website usage indicates a high percentage of visits to the home page (54%) and fact sheet page (34%) from RI. About 25% of RI visits occurred through direct connection (typing in website address). Spikes in visits occurred during key periods of public outreach.

Fact Sheet and Self-Assessment Series Evaluation Summary

67% of adult trained volunteers completed an independent site assessment and evaluation. 100% agree that:

- The series is easy to read, understand and complete.
- The series is effective in identifying some pollution risks associated with livestock and horses, in general, and on their farms.
- The series provides appropriate solutions (BMPs) for small acreage livestock owners, in general, and for their farms.
- They would recommend the series to other livestock and horse owners in Rhode Island.
- Livestock and horse owners in Rhode Island would adopt BMPs if they used the series.

Visit our website

www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes

Adoption-Outreach Education Program

The University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Home*A*Syst and 4-H Programs, URI Department of Fisheries, Animal and Veterinary Science and Department of Communication Studies have developed and conducted a train-the-trainer education program for small acreage livestock owners. We have worked primarily with URI 4-H Program volunteers.

Training Program

- 15 4-H volunteers participated in the training program and have conducted over 46 hours of education and outreach.
- Over 200 URI Animal and Veterinary Science students and partner organization staff have received similar training.

URI 4-H Program volunteers participate in a training program at URI Peckham Farm, November 2008. Training includes indoor slideshow and a site assessment of URI Peckham Farm using Program fact sheet series.

URI Animal and Veterinary Science students use Program fact sheets to conduct a site assessment of URI Peckham Farm. Class room training also includes slideshow.

Outreach and Education

- Direct education conducted with 50 4-H members and attended 15 statewide events with poster display.
- Direct outreach conducted with 270 4-H families and 400 livestock owners through a statewide livestock inventory program conducted by partner agencies and organizations.
- Newsletter articles with two Rhode Island livestock associations have reached over 150 members.

Poster display at Rhode Raised Livestock Association Annual Meeting.

Trained URI 4-H volunteers conduct outreach and education through 4-H clinics, fairs, and livestock association events.

Situation

Throughout Rhode Island and New England, small acreage livestock owners often "slip through the cracks" when it comes to education and assistance that encourage the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs). This target audience is often ineligible for traditional agricultural assistance programs, and their goals and resources are often significantly different from large scale livestock operations. Properties usually consist of small residential lots that are close to neighbors and rely on private drinking water wells. These factors pose challenges with manure management and the adoption of appropriate scale BMPs.

URI 4-H Program teen volunteer leads club members through an activity, *Build A Farm With Water Quality In Mind*. Participants learn about pollution risks and BMPs associated with livestock and horses.

Program Resources

- Program Needs Assessment
- Post Card
- Poster Display
- URI Small Acreage Livestock Fact Sheet & Self-assessment Series
- Program Website **www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes**
- PowerPoint Slideshow
- Program Video – in progress

URI 4-H club member trains her horse, Cooper, after filming an interview for the Program video.

Program Video

An educational video is being developed to reach a larger segment of the Rhode Island population and increase awareness about livestock and horse ownership, Program resources and the need for appropriate BMPs. Three URI 4-H Program families are being featured along with partner agencies and organizations.

URI 4-H Program volunteer demonstrates the water cycle to club members. Participants learn about pollution risks and BMPs associated with livestock and horses.

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