

Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) Program at the University of Maine, FY 2008

The Renewable Resources Extension Act program funds allocated to the University of Maine focus on wood measurement, wood utilization, non-timber forest products, and sustainable living education. RREA funds are combined with state, county, and private funds, in collaboration with numerous partners, to deliver Extension programs to Maine citizens, landowners, and professionals. Descriptions of current RREA-supported programs are presented below.

Maine ranks second in the U.S. in maple syrup production. Extension faculty members work closely with producers to improve production techniques, develop value-added products, and improve grading skills. The **Annual Maple School** reaches more than 200 participants with up-to-date information on production, business, and marketing techniques. The **Maple Grading School** addresses the need for accurate grading of maple syrup by inspectors, sellers, and purchasers. In FY08, Maple Grading Schools were conducted in Maine and Ohio. The 36 participants learned correct techniques for grading maple syrup and reported increased confidence in their ability to use those techniques during the upcoming season.



Approved Wood Measurement Training

programs are conducted twice each year, in cooperation with the UMaine School of Forest Resources and the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Resources. Maine requires that anyone who measures wood to establish a basis for payment for goods or services be licensed by the state. Since its inception in 2002, 204 individuals have completed the program, qualifying them for six-month apprenticeships rather than the usual two-years. Wood scalers, working full- or part-time, earn between \$20,000 and \$40,000 per year.



The inaugural class of eight **Sustainable Living Volunteers** completed a four-session, 20-hour training and have been conducting outreach in their communities related to global climate change and adopting more sustainable lifestyles. So far, more than 150 hours have been reported by participants, on projects that include building top-bar beehives, an Ecology Day at an elementary school, and establishing a carpooling program in mid-Coast Maine.

“The course brought the realization that everyone can do something to make a positive impact on the environment. What we do will impact for generations to come.”

Carolyn Birbeck, Sustainable Living Volunteer

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