



Cooperative Extension Service

Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) program funds allocated to the University of the Virgin Islands ensure that residents, businesses, and public and private agencies receive the most up-to-date research-based information, education, and technical advice in the areas of urban and suburban forest management. The University's Cooperative Extension Service through its Agriculture and Natural Resources program is charged with helping to build capacity within the territory in this specific area. In FY 2008, RREA funds were used to provide instruction in the knowledge areas of Urban Forestry, Forest Stewardship and Health and Public Policy. RREA funding was used in full or in part for the following programs.

Urban Tree Management

Post workshop surveys reveal that 85% of workshop and seminar participants indicated that they learned more about tree management than they had ever learned in the past. Approximately 25% indicated that they had received enough information and had practiced enough in the workshop to be able to prune their own trees. Another 75% said they would continue to seek more information and attend more training sessions as they become available. Public and private landscape crews will require periodic training as that industry's turnover rate is quite high.



Public Policy

Extension Service agriculture and natural resources staff, the Community Urban and Community Forestry Council, and other tree care professionals convened the first of what will be several work sessions to assist in rewriting the territorial urban tree ordinances. These ordinances are very ambiguous, unenforceable, and do not carry much weight in law. Other sessions are scheduled in the upcoming calendar year with commitments from lawmakers to assist in developing and strengthening the ordinances.

The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council met in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to take testimony from arborists, educators, and other forestry professionals in tropical and island regions of the United States. The council was tasked with listening to and collaborating with representatives from these regions to produce recommendations that would be incorporated into national urban and community forestry policy and legislation to meet the needs of the tropics and island communities. Extension agriculture and natural resources staff participated in this event

University of the Virgin Islands RREA contact: Carlos Robles, Acting District Supervisor, UVICES ANR Program #2 John Brewers Bay, St. Thomas V.I. 00802-9990; 340-693-1083; email: crobles@uvi.edu