

RCAS February 3, 2009

**PROGRAMS:** Programs raise public awareness of your facility and create ties between the research center and the community.

1. Facility Tours &/or Field Days: Raise awareness that your facility exists, and what you do there. Can alleviate fears of scary research.  
Limit number of participants. For example, we do two spring tours and two fall tours for a combined total of 120 participants.
2. Adult seminars, workshops, Brown Bag seminars: Good avenue to find volunteers for your facility. We have monthly seminars or workshops on a variety of agricultural, horticultural or environmental topics. Speakers are extension agents, researchers or members of the community with some expertise. Master Gardeners or garden club members are another good choice. Our seminars last about two hours, and typically are at no cost to the participants. We have found that any seminar or workshop that has to do with native plants, are very popular. This could be a slide presentation indoors, or a hike to see native trees and plants growing at your facility.
3. Working workshops: Participants gain experience and education while installing plants for you. This is another good way to recruit volunteers.  
We had an Herb workshop, where participants planted the herb garden, and now some of them come back to maintain the garden and harvest the herbs.
4. Botanical Sanctuary Program: Does not necessarily take place at your facility. Encourages and recognizes homeowners and possibly businesses to use best management practices.
5. Bus Tours. AARP or other groups. Possibly charge a token fee.
6. In-school programs for K-12: These do not require the use of your facility, and can be done during the winter.

Our programs have included:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade "Our Feathered Friends"

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade "Water, Water Everywhere" program on water quality

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade "Cabbage Patch" program with free cabbage plants from Bonnie Farms

7. On-site programs for K-12:

Our programs have included:

Kindergarten "Johnny Appleseed" in our apple orchard, students on-site for about an hour

Fourth Grade "All About Trees," students on-site all day

Fifth Grade "Environmental Field Day," taught by professionals from NRCS, GA Forestry Commission, National Forest Service, local recycling Center and our Center staff

Local high school history students visit our Ethnobotanic Garden and Woodland Medicine Trail to see plants that the Cherokee and early settlers used for food, fiber and medicine.

Other suggestions:

Scout groups and 4-H can study tree ID

Farm-to-school type programs

Where Does Your Food Come From? programs to introduce students to farming and food production.

Useful websites:

[http://nass.usda.gov/Education\\_and\\_Outreach/](http://nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/)

<http://www.HandsOnTheLand.org>

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/students>

<http://www.education-world.com/standards/>

<http://www.BonniePlants.com/CabbageProgram/tabid/81/Default.aspx>

8. Summer Day Camps: Can be one day or a week. Can restrict the class numbers easier than during the school year, which will require less adult supervision.

## **VOLUNTEERS:**

Raise awareness about your facility to attract volunteers. Consider what work you want the volunteers to do. Volunteers will need to be organized into some sort of structure.

To recruit volunteers:

1. Offer Master Gardener classes. Master Gardeners can teach classes, install plants and maintain gardens.
2. Advertise in RV Parks, apartment complexes or condominiums.
3. Recruit former staff or faculty.
4. Utilize inmates for grounds or crop work.
5. Approach retired community organizations/clubs, such as retired teachers.
6. Invite garden clubs or other horticultural groups to participate
7. Youth, such as 4-H or Scouts. High School and College students can be a great source for “volunteers.” A class studying Environmental Science could remove your invasive species in an area of your property.
8. Existing volunteers can spread the word. If your volunteers enjoy their time at your facility, they are more likely to spread the word.
9. University Interns can work for a semester. Obtain corporate sponsors if students need payment.
10. Advertise through website, brochures and press releases.
11. Write an article for a newspaper or magazine that can raise awareness about your facility and offer knowledge to the community. Include opportunities to volunteer.

## **FUNDRAISING EXAMPLES:**

1. Donations
2. Grants from a project or funding agency
3. Agriculture and Commodity Groups, such as a Cattleman’s Association
4. Charge fees, for example, \$10 per person, per program  
\$50-75, Perception of getting more value, more likely to show up  
Offer CCA credits
5. Estate Planning
6. Resource Management  
Commodities  
Used Equipment or Scrap Iron for funds
7. Federal Surplus
8. Private Companies – Fees for plot research
9. Regulated Field trials through APHIS  
Do in advance of release of a product or service
10. Contractor Research, for example:  
Conduct a feeding trial where the event is regulated  
Grow controls & treatment
11. Legislature  
Support Group to help certain programs
12. Rent auditorium or office
13. Rent equipment or personnel

Two Research Centers have websites that can give some insight on outreach & education programs:

University of California ANR Research & Extension Center: [http://groups.ucanr.org/desertrec/Farm\\_Smart/](http://groups.ucanr.org/desertrec/Farm_Smart/)

University of Georgia Mountain Research & Education Center: <http://gmrec.uga.edu>