

## Contact Us

Contact Us

County Office Directory

Staff Directory

Locations Map

Office of the Dean

Extension Leadership Team

## UMaine Extension: Connecting with Maine Communities During COVID-19

### Traditional Services Being Offered in New Ways

**Identifying insect pests:** Clay Kirby, Associate Scientist/Insect Diagnostician, will identify pest samples via images. See [instructions for submitting an insect specimen](#).

**Identifying plant diseases:** Dr. Alicyn Smart will identify plant disease samples via images. See [instructions for submitting a sample](#).

**Tick testing:** Ticks are being tested on a limited basis. See [instructions for submitting a tick sample](#).

**Publication orders:** We are still processing orders from our [publication catalog](#), including pesticide application training materials.

**Veterinary diagnostic services:** The Veterinary Diagnostic Lab is still accepting samples. This could change as the COVID-19 situation progresses. For the most current status, please call 207.581.3874 or visit our [website](#) before submitting samples.

**Soil testing:** The [Analytical Lab and Maine Soil Testing Service](#) is hoping that operations will continue through the spring and summer but this is subject to change as the University policies evolve. We are encouraging clients to mail or ship samples to the lab rather than in-person drop off. Lab staff will process samples as fast as possible but clients should anticipate some delays as staffing levels may be reduced. Updates will be posted on the lab web page.

**Greenhouse Plastic Recycling Program:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, University of Maine Cooperative Extension will delay opening all drop-off locations for greenhouse plastic recycling until on or about June 21. Growers and farmers who are ready to recycle their plastic now can still participate in the program by storing their plastic in a clean, dry location until local drop-off sites open. The program also accepts white over-wintering plastic if bundled separately from standard greenhouse plastic. Instructions for removing and storing plastic, online registration to participate, as well as periodic updates, are on the [program website](#).

### New Resources to Meet New Needs

**Maine Farm and Seafood Products Directory:** The directory provides information on available local farm products and alternative pick-up options developed by farmers statewide to accommodate the recommended social distancing in light of COVID-19. To have your farm added to this list, complete the [Maine Farm and Seafood Products Form](#).

#### COVID-19 Information and Support for Maine Farmers:

Includes information about COVID-19; food safety standard operating procedures for farms; federal support programs; farmer networking; agricultural lab services; customer relations; stress, mental health, and well-being; and other tools, including a [COVID-19 Maine Farmer Survey](#).

**COVID-19 Information and Support for Maine Livestock Producers:** Includes information about COVID-19; Centers for Disease Control Covid-19 Resources; National Milk Producers Federation COVID-19 Resources; and other tools.

**COVID-19 & Maine Agriculture FAQ:** Got questions about COVID-19 and Maine agriculture? Ask our experts! Submit your questions using our [online form](#). Answers to selected questions will be posted on the website.

**COVID-19 Information and Support for Maine Food Producers and Produce Growers:** Includes information about COVID-19; resources for food producers, including restaurants; resources for produce growers and farms; and best practice resources for washing your hands.

**COVID-19 Food Safety Information for Maine Consumers:** Includes information about COVID-19; disinfecting; food purchasing and storage; and resources for washing your hands.

**Weekly Maine Farmer ZOOM Meetings:** Starting Monday, March 23, UMaine Extension is conducting weekly ZOOM meeting for farmers to share what is happening on their farm, what is working well, and what isn't working well. It's a chance for farmers to chat with others throughout the state and stay connected in these difficult times. Farmers can tune in either through a computer or by phone. No registration necessary. See the website for times.

#### Learn at Home: Educational Resources to Use During School Closures:

With novel coronavirus closing schools across Maine for several weeks, UMaine Extension has assembled a collection of helpful educational resources for parents and caregivers. From science to financial literacy, whether for toddlers or teenagers, we encourage you to take advantage of these activity books, guides, and other resources to help children remain engaged in educational experiences throughout their school closure.

**Learn at Home with 4-H Friday Fun!** Each Friday, watch for a new hands-on activity that you can try out with simple materials you have at home. Watch a short video clip to see how it's done or download our 4-H Learn from Home activity sheets. Each activity outlines materials needed, easy to follow instructions, reflection questions for discussion and activity extensions.

**QuaranTEEN Virtual Science Cafés:** Maine 4-H is offering "virtual" (online) science cafés! Come hang out for a bit, chat with a UMaine scientist, and learn about their work. It's free!Join us each Tuesday where you will meet scientists, learn about how they ended up at UMaine and how they became involved in their work/research, and participate in informal discussions. Recommended for teens in grades 7-12.

**Mainely Dish Monday:** Each Monday, a Mainely Dish recipe video will be featured on UMaine Extension's social media platforms, the Maine Expanded Food and Nutrition Program Facebook page, and Learn at Home: Educational Resources to Use During School Closures.

#### Garden Chats: Growing Resilience from the Ground Up:

Starting Monday, March 30, UMaine Extension will begin a *Garden Chats* ZOOM series. These 1-hour sessions will be held every Monday at 9:00 AM, Wednesday at 12:00 PM, and Thursday at 6:00 PM. All gardeners are invited to join members of the UMaine Extension Home Horticulture team as they offer short online lessons on featured topics followed by a facilitated discussion with fellow gardeners from around the state and beyond.

#### New Fact Sheets and Articles:

- Bulletin #1064, [Standard Operating Procedures and Their Use on Farms](#), includes [Prioritized Farm Chore Checklist \(fillable PDF\)](#)
- Bulletin #1065, [How Can Livestock Farmers Prepare for the Coronavirus Outbreak?](#)
- Bulletin #1066, [Standard Operating Procedures on Your Dairy Farm: Prepare Now!](#)
- Bulletin #1067, [Guidelines for Maine Dairy Farmers Requiring Temporary Workers Where a Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Positive Case Has Been Suspected or Identified](#)
- Bulletin #2515, [Managing Garden Center and On-Farm Seedling Sales Safely in Maine: Best Practices and Recommendations for Marketing During COVID-19](#)
- Bulletin #2516, [Managing Farmers Market Seedling Sales Safely in Maine: Best Practices and Recommendations for Marketing During COVID-19](#)
- Bulletin #4103, [Social Distancing: What is it? Why Do it? And How to Make the Time at Home with Your Kids Fun!](#)
- [Farmer's Response to Disease Outbreaks Like COVID-19](#)

**Social Media:** Many of our staff are stepping up efforts to communicate to audiences via social media. For example, see [Rogers Farm Demonstration Garden's short educational Facebook videos](#), recorded by Kate Garland, Horticultural Professional.

**Extension Homemakers:** The Caribou Homemakers recently made and donated 110 face masks to area hospitals and nursing homes in Central Aroostook County. Bravo! Photo by Diane Parent, President of the Caribou Homemakers.

**Event Cancellations:** Keep up-to-date with cancellations of UMaine Extension events due to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation in Maine.

### A Reminder from Us to You to Keep Safe

These two UMaine Extension resources aren't new but are now more important than ever:

#### Bulletin #4067, The ABCs of Hand Washing

