EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives
IN BRACKEN COUNTY

Extension provides practical education you can trust by helping individuals, families, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

Celebrating 100 Years of Extension

The 100-year anniversary of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 which officially created the national Cooperative Extension System will take place in 2014. This celebration will highlight Extension’s past and focus on the contemporary application of Extension’s transformational educational programming into the future.

Bracken County celebrated by hosting a community appreciation luncheon to say Thank You to our volunteers who serve on District Board, Extension Council, and our respective program councils. A brief program was conducted and volunteers had the opportunity to watch some of the live video feed.

Additionally, at the Germantown Fair in August multiple counties teamed up to continue the 100 Year celebration. Members of the community enjoyed an ice cream social, barn dance, and a contest in the Floral Hall.

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 32 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 38 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- 48 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- 151 Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- 116 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 458 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of 581 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of 202 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- 71 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices
**4-H Babysitting Basics**

The Bracken County 4-H agent as well as the Family and Consumer Science Agent offered a 4 lesson after school series on Babysitting. These classes were a combination of both 4-H and Red Cross curriculum. With the growing trend of both parents working or single parent households there is a need for older siblings to watch younger siblings. Many teens are also looking to babysitting as a source of income.

Babysitting safety has become a high priority for all parties involved. With a class of 14 students each week a new topic was covered. Guest speakers were brought in for certain topics and a field trip was taken to a local daycare for hands on experience. Classes were interactive and engaging. Each student received a manual and a babysitter start up goody bag including safety information, games and age appropriate referral chart.

At the end of class an evaluation was taken. Each student could name something that they had learned from class both about the ages/stages of children as well as important safety information. A brief quiz was given and the average score was 95% from the students.

Youth have since then reported that they have used their skills learned in the course in their babysitting jobs they have received since completing the course.

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**Career Day**

Taylor Elementary hosted a Career Week in the Spring of 2014. Shannon Smith FCS Agent and Rebecca Neltner, 4-H Agent teamed up and participated in Career Day. Students could choose from various Career Booths to visit and learn about the different occupations of people who work in their community. Both agents talked about their job responsibilities, as well as the important role and impact of UK Cooperative Extension in the Bracken County community. Students enjoyed learning about our careers through interactive activities and props. Approximately, 520 students visited the Bracken County Cooperative Extension booth.

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**Youth Cooking Camp**

This summer Bracken County Cooperative Extension participated in a wonderful opportunity through the UK Nutrition Education program. Four teachers came to our county for one week to teach nutrition education, food preparation, and healthy lifestyles. 20 Bracken County youth benefited from this Super Star Chef based curriculum. Youth learned about washing hands, recipes, cutting vegetables, portion control, food safety, and measuring. They made several new recipes and participated in many activities throughout the week. Youth said that they really enjoyed the program and have used the skills that the learned in their own kitchens at home.
Homemakers... the ♥ of Bracken County

Bracken County has 104 Homemaker members in a total of 6 clubs. Each year the homemakers participate in various community events. These programs help members gain valuable knowledge and volunteer hours. These efforts help improve the community for all families in Bracken County. Some of the profound ways homemakers have impacted the community have been:

- Donating to all 3 volunteer fire departments
- 4-H Camp Scholarships
- 3 High School scholarships
- Donated to Baby Gala
- Participated in Gifted and Talented Program at elementary school
- Participated in Ag week at Augusta Independent
- Held a county wide International night for Families
- Held a community day promoting Ag Tourism in the county with approximately 500 people attending
- Participated in a community project for Military members, “Heads at Ease”
- Participated in Backpack Program to help feed the counties hungry children for the weekends

Identification of Invasive Insects, Management & Control

Each year at the annual Bracken County Farmers Breakfast, we highlight as important topic to inform producers as it relates to their farm operation or management. In addition to this part of the program, we promote all of the extension programs and information available to them.

This year, an interactive display was set up to show producers the most recent invasive insects they might deal with in the near future. A microscope was set up to view the very small Spotted Winged Drosophila which allowed the participant to view the identifying marks along with the sharp ovipositor that lays the eggs in ripening fruit. Farmers also had a chance to view the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug and learn its unique markings. Information was also available on control of both of these pests.

After a short instructional session on the insect identification and control, this demonstration was led by members of the Bracken County FFA. It was a great learning experience for them and it also gave them the opportunity of teaching and demonstrating to our county producers.

Bracken County Cooperative Extension Service

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Weed Management in Hay & Pasture Fields

Many local farmers have reported that weeds are invading hay fields and pasture at an accelerated rate in recent years. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this problem which include drought, overgrazing, and close mowing. Each of these factors has played a role in the thinning or loss of grass stands, allowing weeds to become established.

The Bracken County Extension Service conducted a workshop on Weed Management for Hay Fields and Pastures this past summer. Producers were invited to bring in problem weeds for identification which is the most important part of weed management. Not surprising, the majority of the weeds submitted for identification was Hemp Dogbane. This particular weed is very problematic as producers learned that it is a perennial and spreads via the roots and by seed. Many examples brought in showed the lateral roots that put up new shoots and its spreading habit.

Another weed that is causing major problems in our alfalfa fields is Curly Dock. Due to its rapidly maturing seed, it spreads quickly each time the crop is mowed and baled across the fields. Again, learning that it is a perennial, they found out it takes different management to control.

Those attending learned about the differences in annuals, bi-annuals, and perennials and the methods needed to control them. Identification charts and chemical recommendations were shared with each producer. Also, a demonstration on spot treatment for light infestations was demonstrated. Following this workshop, 3 producers signed up to use the county sprayer to apply a fall herbicide on perennial weeds. Two producers are making adjustments to mowers to increase the cutting height. Six producers have submitted soil samples in both hay and pasture fields to check for nutrient shortages.

With recent changes in school lunches requiring fruits and vegetables to be a mandatory part of lunch, students have challenged this. For every 1 to 2 students that try a new fruit or vegetable 5 throw it away. This totals across the United States for all schools who fall under the new federal guidelines a $3.8 million dollar price tag in food that is thrown away. LEAP (Literacy Eating Activity Primary) is a curriculum geared towards children between the ages of 3-8. Its focus is to encourage fruit and vegetable consumption, more whole grains, and low fat dairy products.

In Bracken County LEAP is taught 7 times per month at the 3 schools as well as Head Start. It reaches approximately 120 students. Each class gets a story, a snack, and an activity. While doing the program at Augusta Independent School last year in the Kindergarten class one student would not try anything that was brought for snack. For a total of 8 times, nothing was tried, even with a sticker incentive. With the new school year brought about a new Kindergarten class, but this one student remained in Kindergarten for a repeat year. On the first lesson of the year in September 2014, the student ate the snack, which with this story was apples, even though the apples were offered last year. With the program LEAP, you build a relationship with these students and some just take time. This impact is for this one student, who would not try anything in the past, but has a relationship built and decided they wanted to try a fruit. Hopefully this will encourage a lifestyle that includes fruits and vegetables. It’s exciting to see what the year holds and how much more he will try.