EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives

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

Soybean Festival 2012

As misrepresentation about animal ag production continues to fill the minds of consumers, commodity groups have united to tell the true story with women in agriculture leading the charge. A local alliance between Caldwell County Extension Council, Kentucky Soybean Board and representatives from Common Ground joined forces to tell the story in Caldwell County. The 4th biannual Kentucky Soybean Festival was made possible through a $2000 grant provided by the Kentucky Soybean Board along with donations from local agribusinesses. This event covered multiple facets including a fair for youth and adult exhibits, Extension Service Open House, Farm Tours and Farmer Appreciation Dinner. The festival activities attracted approximately 200 Caldwell County citizens including the Mayor, Judge Executive, magistrates and state representatives. The tours covered relevant topics which consisted of Grain Storage, Water Quality and Value Added Beef, which was the focal point of the farm tour. According to beefretail.org 43% of consumers are willing to try new beef cuts and recipes. Dr. Greg Rentfrow enlightened participants with 13 new beef cuts most people did not know were available.

The tour concluded with a Farmers Appreciation Dinner and a 4-H fundraiser. Following the tours and dinner, Carrie Devine, spokesperson for Common Ground, referenced the groups mission which is “to emphasize our farmers commitment to providing safe, affordable food, whether it is produced with modern technologies or more traditional methods”. She also discussed what farm women are doing to help dispel the myths of animal ag production across America. Our program goal of attracting new clientele to Extension was reached. Participants testimonials were 100% positive including multiple statements concerning a new found respect for women in agriculture roles and new ways beef gets from the farm to the plate.

Priority Program Efforts

A total of 109 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
13 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
41 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
41 Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
17 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
25 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
A total of 115 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
A total of 15 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
41 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.
The Trust for Americans Health reports that Kentucky’s high school obesity levels were at 17.6% and children ages 2-5 were 21%. The most recent HEEL report concluded that 29.63% of Caldwell County residents are obese. It is evident that lifestyle changes such as eating healthier diets and increased level of physical activity are essential. The Caldwell County Family & Consumer Sciences Agent and EFNEP Assistant hosted FITNESS (Feel Inspired to Train and Experience Success Stories) for eighteen participants ages 9-14. During each session, a new physical activity was introduced followed by a healthy snack and nutrition lesson. As a result of the program, 94% of participants are more conscious of their eating habits. All participants learned a new physical activity, and 94% plan to continue participating in that new activity. 94% of participants plan to continue making physical activity a part of their daily routine.

Memory Banking

Kentucky’s current population of seniors is 13.3% and is expected to double in the next forty years. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the changes that accompany aging. The Caldwell County Family & Consumer Sciences Agent presented Memory Banking as a three-week program to nine participants. The Memory Banking program encourages the documentation of life story and health history as a way to promote an active brain, quality relationships, mental healthiness, and legacy building, which contributes to healthy and quality aging. As a result of the program, 100% of the participants surveyed demonstrated an increase in knowledge regarding basic concepts of life story and expressed aspirations to document their life story. 100% of participants anticipate using life story as a way to communicate and strengthen relationships and all but two plan to use life story in a caregiving relationship. Finally, all participants reported that they will use life story to think about future planning and decision making.

"I have been wanting to journal for a while, but find that I get overwhelmed, because I am not sure the best way to do it. This class has helped me!"
- Memory Banking Participant

Green Cleaning

Each decision individuals make has an impact on health and safety in the family, community, and environment. Understanding how daily choices can impact our environment is vital to ensuring a healthy environment for present and future generations. The Caldwell County Family & Consumer Sciences Agent presented Save the Green by Cleaning Green to eighteen participants. Immediately following the program, all participants stated that they planned to make and use at least one of the homemade products discussed during the session. A follow up survey revealed that 100% of participants agreed that the laundry detergent produced satisfactory results. 83% of participants have begun reading cleaning product labels as a result of the program and have tried another of the homemade products including the disinfectant, bathroom cleaner, and glass cleaner. 100% of surveyed participants plan to continue to use the homemade products tried.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A Dose of Reality for Middle School Students

Each year 8th grade students at Caldwell County Middle School participate in the Reality Store which is a program that is meant to introduce youth to the "realities" associated with adulthood such as choosing a career, provision of food, shelter and other essentials. This program has been held in Caldwell for the past fifteen years and each year has proven to be a success. In the past students were able to choose their career, whether it were practical or not. However, to make the program more relevant school administrators wanted to correlate the program to each students Individual Learning Plan. The students monthly income was determined by the educational level of their top career interest from their ILP. Educational levels ranged from workforce, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, to professional. The students were to assume that they were age 25 and single and a set salary was figured for each that was equivalent to our geographical location. These changes proved to be very effective. After participating in the Reality Store the students more clearly understood the purpose for the ILP and how it related to their educational process. Teachers and administrators were pleased with the changes that had been made and the outcome. One teacher stated that “using the ILP’s makes the Reality Store more realistic and less like make-believe”. An eighth grade student also commented that “I didn’t know what that ILP was ever used for, now that I know what it is used for I will pay more attention to it.”
Effective communication skills are essential for a successful career, satisfying relationships and a personal sense of accomplishment. However, most adults agree that getting up in front of a group of people and speaking is horrifying and they avoid it at all cost. KY 4-H Youth Development program offers youth ages 9-18 numerous opportunities to gain confidence and develop the communications skills that will help them succeed throughout life. Many counties offer communications contest in which youth ages 9-18 can compete by giving a speech and or demonstration. County champions then have the opportunity to compete at the area contest; champions from the area contest go on to compete at the State 4-H Communications Contest. Caldwell County hosted the Pennyrile Area Communications Contest in April of 2013. There were 69 youth that gave speeches or presented a demonstration in the area contest. Senior participants also had the opportunity to participate in a new category, Mock Job Interviews. Extension Agents, along with other volunteers from across Caldwell County served as judges for the contest. Teen 4-H’ers and FFA members served as room host and runners making the total number of volunteers 36. This event, along with other communications projects available through Kentucky 4H, give youth opportunities to gain lifelong skills that will benefit them for years to come.

**TATU**

Tobacco use among teens in Kentucky is at an all time high. In order to help combat this problem in Caldwell County a 4-H group named Teens Against Tobacco Use was formed. For the past four years Caldwell County Elementary School has had a tobacco education program led by thirteen teens ages 14-18 known as the Caldwell County 4-H TATU Team. Their main objective is to teach elementary aged youth about the dangers and health hazards of tobacco use which will hopefully encourage them to make the choice to be tobacco free. Initially, the group focused on teaching 4th graders and this past year included 5th grade students. All of the lessons and activities are led by the TATU Team and are meant to create awareness of the dangers of tobacco use. The 4th grade lessons are held in the fall and are classroom style while the 5th grade lessons are held in the spring and set up as learning stations. The 5th graders rotate as small groups through each station and participate in hands-on activities that allow them to visualize the harmful effects that tobacco use can cause. There were a total of 320 students that received tobacco education instruction from the TATU Team during the 2012-2013 calendar school year. An evaluation completed at the end of each lesson revealed that 89% of the students plan to remain tobacco free through high school.

**AG & NATURAL RESOURCES**

### Wrangler Equine Day

The issue we often face when developing an equine program is how to communicate the availability of the program with the potential audience. While many horse owners belong to various clubs and associations, a significant number do not. These are horse owners who own horses purely for recreation, such as trail riding.

There is no simple way to reach these horse owners as there are no regular mailing lists. In order to provide educational opportunities for one segment of this group, a non-traditional meeting was developed. In partnership with Trigg and Caldwell counties, plus the U.S. Forest Service, an evening program was developed for the horse owners riding at the Wrangler Campground in Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area. Dr. Bob Coleman Extension Equine Specialist worked with the county agents to develop a program featuring nutritional information and had a local equine veterinarian provide basic first aid for horses in a trail riding situation.

The program was advertised to those in the campground and to surrounding counties. This was a first time opportunity with the U.S. Forest Service, and a first attempt to deliver an educational program to this group of horse enthusiasts.

As the meeting started on a Saturday night, the audience continued to grow to over 90 participants. For the majority, this was a first time contact with Cooperative Extension. The organization of the program done by specialists, agents, and the forest service, was the reason for the success.

This program showed how developing new non-traditional partnerships (the U.S. Forest Service), along with a traditional educational partner (the local veterinarian), and with county agents and specialists can result in meeting the needs of a significant population of horse owners. New contacts were made with new clients.

The success was based on county agents developing a new nontraditional partner (the forest service) and providing the educational event in a nontraditional venue (the camp ground). Those horse owners in attendance were provided information to make their trail riding experiences better for themselves and their horses while also learning about what Cooperative Extension had to offer.
Planning for the Next Generation of your Farm Family

Planning for the Next Generation of your Farm Family” attracted 298 farm family members representing 20 counties in Kentucky and Tennessee. Educational topics presented included: Transitioning to The Next Generation, Transition Management, Communication for Farm Families in Transition, and Legal Issues. Participants indicated that as a result of attending this Planning for the Next Generation of your Farm Family educational program that they would:

- Talk to my family about developing a transition plan (54%)
- Talk to my attorney about establishing a trust or estate plan (35%)
- Talk to my children/grandchildren about the future of our farm and/or farm business (29%)
- Talk to my spouse/father/mother/grandparents about developing a transition plan (11%)

Additionally when asked about an increase in knowledge gained relative to transition planning participants indicated:

- 20% indicated a 25% increase in knowledge
- 32% indicated a 50% increase in knowledge
- 37% indicated a 75% increase in knowledge
- 11% indicated a 100% increase in knowledge

The core planning committee included: Extension Agents for Agriculture and Natural resources, Shane Bogle, Jay Stone, Kenny Perry and Lincoln Martin. To fine tune planning efforts and for promotion to a broader multi-generational audience, the committee was later expanded to include Family and Consumer Sciences Agents: Marsha Parker, Vicki Wynn, Laura Holt, and Sara Bogle Martin, and Extension Agents for 4-H and Youth Development: Paula Jerrell, Leann McCuiston, Robert Tashjian, and Kellie Arnold. Support Staff across the district helped with promotion especially Jessica Board, Caldwell County and Stephanie Parker, Christian County.

Buy-in from local, regional, and state-wide partners and registration fees satisfied our budget of $21,000 which was necessary to cover the expense of obtaining nationally renowned experts in the field of Farm Transitions.

Planning for the next generation of your farm family was also offered as an in-service training. Twenty-six Extension Agents took advantage of this professional development opportunity. Promotional efforts included social media, newsletters, news articles, radio ads, extension websites and printed brochures. A follow-up survey will be conducted to measure participant progress toward applying the knowledge gained, from program participation in order to fulfill the needs of their families.

EFNEP

EFNEP Impact

The Caldwell County EFNEP program assistant, Joni K. Phelps, taught 75 limited resource families how to serve more nutritious meals, to keep foods safe, and to utilize local food resources effectively. 100% of families made an improvement in the nutritional quality of their diet. 61.75% of EFNEP graduate families consumed a diet of higher quality because they planned meals using the food guide pyramid, considered healthy choices, and used the “Nutrition Facts” label. 45% of families increased the frequency of moderate physical activity for 30 minutes per day. 87% of families began feeding their children breakfast. 100% of families demonstrated an improvement in safe food handling practices and hand washing behavior. 78% of families learned to plan meals ahead of time and use a grocery list to guide food selections. A 49% improvement was shown in food price comparison behavior. Families showed a 20% decrease in meals eaten away from home. There were 16% fewer families who could not afford to eat properly. 10% of families were able to use community food resources, such as food pantries, less often due to increased skill at food resource management.

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