EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives
IN FAYETTE COUNTY

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

Master Gardener Volunteers
In urban areas, the large number of residents challenges Cooperative Extension to be visible and available to everyone. In Fayette County this is particularly true for horticulture, as almost anyone who owns a home has some interest in what we do. The Fayette County horticulture program trains, oversees, and relies heavily on a large pool of Master Gardener volunteers. There are presently over 100 active Master Gardener volunteers who conduct numerous educational projects in our community. These include several demonstration gardens, including a therapy garden, educational classes, horticultural exhibits, and a call-in horticulture helpline. In addition to these, our volunteers provide daily educational assistance to clients in our office setting. In the past year our Master Gardener volunteers provided 5,269 hours of educational service to our community for a total value of over $118,541.00 to our community.

Homemaker Veteran Program
This past year, Fayette Extension Homemakers chose a new project in partnership with Community Action to help local homeless veterans, the ‘Backpack a Vet’ program. This program raises awareness about homeless veterans in Lexington and provides them with a backpack of essential items that can be used while on the streets. Fayette Extension Homemakers donated one hundred backpacks containing a large variety of essential items. In 2014, the Fayette Extension Homemakers contributed 33,762 volunteer hours. With the current national average of $22.55/hour, Fayette Extension Homemakers’ community service is valued at $761,333.10.

Priority Program Efforts
A total of 1,854 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
11 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
3,000 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
130 producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
3,401 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
99,287 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
A total of 3,801 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
A total of 1,544 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
800 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.
**Greener Alternatives**

Our society is in the midst of a revolution of environmental consciousness. People are concerned about chemical use, yet still want to maintain beautiful landscapes and gardens. Fayette County Cooperative Extension's horticulture agents and Extension Master Gardener volunteers routinely advise homeowners of the least hazardous approach in dealing with garden pests and problems. In many cases, our recommendation is to not use chemicals at all. Soil testing services help avoid the indiscriminate application of nutrients that are not necessary, avoiding expense and water pollution. In the past year Fayette County Horticulture processed over 550 soil samples and assisted over 2,500 clients with diagnostic samples, phone calls, emails and individual consultations. Clients often comment that these services are ‘invaluable’ and have made them much more successful in their gardening endeavors.

**Agriculture at Bluegrass Fair**

Increasing the visibility and presence of Agriculture at the Lion’s Club Bluegrass Fair has been a priority of the Agriculture Advisory Council, Fayette County 4-H Council, Fayette County Extension Council, and the Lexington Lions Club since 2007. Extension Leaders, Volunteers, Agents, Locust Trace Agriculture Teachers, Fayette County Farm Bureau, and members of the Lexington Lions Club have worked together to make this a successful venture. This collaboration has increased the number of exhibits, including Youth Livestock Shows, Horticulture and Flower Show, 4-H Projects, Antique Tractors, Equine Parade of Breeds, and Hay Contest. Demonstrations included Chick Incubation, Food Preservation, Cooking Demonstrations, and performances by the Fayette County 4-H Dog Club. Each year, participation has increased, with 2014 showing the largest increase since it was included again seven years ago. Agriculture is now recognized as a significant part of the Lions Club Bluegrass Fair.

**4-H Farm Field Day**

The Fayette County 4-H Program conducted a farm field day for approximately 150 fourth from an inner city school. During monthly 4-H club meetings, we learned that most of the students had never visited a farm, seen live farm animals, or spent significant time outdoors studying nature. As a result, Fayette County 4-H agents worked with Kentucky State University, Kentucky Reptile Zoo, and Madison and Garrard County 4-H programs to present a forestry program. The highlight of the day was a 4-H livestock leader from a local high school who brought her sheep and lambs for the students to see. She shared how to care for the animals and how it helped her develop self-confidence. She also allowed the students to pet the animals. It was the first time most of the students had interacted with farm animals.

"I can truly credit the Fayette County Extension Service for the health and ‘happiness’ of my lawn, shrubs, garden, and trees. You have always been only a phone call away and I am very much obliged."

- David C.
4-H Overnight Environmental Camps
The positive impact that environmental education has on youth continues to be a focus for many youth development organizations. In order to promote life skills and increase environmental education, the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development program partnered with Fayette County public and private schools to continue the long-standing tradition of providing overnight environmental camps to youth in grades three through five. Overnight camping programs provide youth opportunities to learn practical skills, gain a greater sense of independence, practice responsibility, and develop positive interpersonal relationships with caring adults and other youth. The Fayette County 4-H Environmental Camp held at the North Central 4-H Camp in Carlisle, KY impacted the lives of 1,034 youth and 323 adults. 100% of the parent volunteers that attended stated they appreciated the opportunity to attend camp with their child and observe the lessons being taught. Many families indicated that because of their exposure to the campgrounds through this program that they would be sending their child to overnight residential camp in the summer as well.

2nd Sunday
Lexington’s sixth annual 2nd Sunday took place on October 12 and attracted over 200 cyclists and supporters. The event provided a preview of how a two-way cycle track would function. Fayette County Extension coordinated the partnership of Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government and local agencies to plan and implement 2nd Sunday to positively affect the health, economy and environment. 2nd Sunday Kentucky is a statewide initiative that encourages all forms of physical activity within the comforts of the local community, and is designed to get Kentuckians on their feet and moving.

4-H Cooking Schools
According to the American Heart Association, teaching youth how to prepare their own food will give them a skill they can use for a lifetime, they will be more likely to eat healthier as adults, and build self-confidence. In an effort to teach youth how to prepare their own food, giving them a life-long skill, the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Program conducted four 4-H Cooking Schools or lessons to 86 youth, ages 9-14. Topics covered included proper measuring, kitchen safety & sanitation, blanching for food preservation, measuring math, and more. New foods never tried by the participants in the past included kale and using applesauce as an oil substitute when baking to make a healthier recipe. A pre and post program evaluation was conducted with participants and 100% agreed that as a result of participation in these programs that they know how to properly measure both liquid and solid ingredients, observe clean kitchen practices including how to properly wash their hands, follow instructions step-by-step to make recipes and follow safe kitchen practices. 85% stated they use the skills learned in 4-H in other activities at home, school or in their community.
**Follow the Food Farm Tour**

Despite a growing local food economy, many Fayette County residents are unaware of the producers in their own backyard. Fayette County Cooperative Extension partnered with Good Foods Co-op, LFUCG, edible Magazine, Fayette Co. Farm Bureau, Marksbury Farm Market to provide an opportunity to meet farmers, vendors, and livestock. The second annual Fayette County Follow the Food Farm Tour was held in September at Clark Family Farms, which produces pastured poultry, eggs, lamb, and beef. In addition to meeting farmers, consumers could sample and purchase their local products. The free tour also offered exhibits, bluegrass music, and Kentucky Proud recipes. The zero-waste event, in which all of the materials were recycled or composted, was coordinated by LFUCG Division of Waste Management. The farm tour attracted over 350 participants.

In a follow-up survey, 85% of respondents indicated they were more likely to purchase local foods as a result of the event.

![Farm Tour participants at Clark Family Farms](image)

**Gardener’s Toolbox**

The Fayette County Cooperative Extension horticulture program offers classes called Gardener’s Toolbox. These classes have generated a large group of followers devoted to producing their own food. Classes cover a broad range of topics and feature recommended varieties and best management practices. In the past year registration for these classes exceeded 1000 seats with 418 people attending their choice of the 34 sessions. One participant commented, "The biggest impact that the Toolbox classes have had is that they’ve given me the confidence to keep trying to grow new types of plants to feed my family and friends. It has changed how and what we eat for the better, which is an impact that is hard to quantify and yet so important.”

**Agriculture Development Program**

Over the past eleven years the Fayette County Extension Service has been the facilitator of the Fayette County Agriculture Development Program since the beginning of the Phase I Tobacco Settlement funds in 2003. With the continued cooperation between the Fayette County Conservation District, Fayette County Cattlemen’s Association, Fayette County Agriculture Development Board, and Fayette County Extension Service, over $4 million dollars of cost share funds have been invested into the Agriculture Economy in Fayette County. Areas these funds have been invested include: Forage & Grain Improvement, Agriculture Diversification, Large Animal (beef, dairy, equine), Small Animal (goat, sheep, rabbit), Farm Infrastructure, Fencing & On-Farm Water, On-Farm Energy, Poultry & Other Fowl, Technology & Leadership Development, and Value-Added Marketing. These programs will continue for 2015.

![Sheep at Clark Family Farms](image)

![Fayette County Extension Agents](image)

**The Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service**

*Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives*

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