

# 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.



*David Thatcher surveys the garden at St. James Place. Hay bales and containers allowed the residents to make use of a difficult location.*

#### **Empowering Veterans**

Fayette County Horticulture partnered with the SNAP-Ed program to install gardens at a veteran's rehabilitation center and produce from the gardens was utilized in the cooking and nutrition classes conducted with the residents. Although initially timid and unsure about gardening, the residents came to embrace their garden and as a result had success in growing herbs and vegetables. Cooking lessons were taught weekly and garden lessons occurred monthly. Residents harvested produce at the morning garden session and prepared meals with the vegetables in the nutrition lessons in the evenings. They participated from seed to finished meal. The program was very well received and residents eagerly awaited the sessions. One participant shared "... nutrition class was a pleasant experience for me. I was never able to grow things. I was excited to watch the potatoes grow and then actually cooking them was a learning experience for me . . . the cooking was a way for me to interact with others. It helped me realize that I CAN do things. I always tell myself that I can't and this experience has helped me stop saying I can't."

## Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 8,869 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 3,135 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- 1,150 Extension participants reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- 6,817 youth and adults indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- A total of 5,505 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- 5,525 individuals experienced an increase in knowledge, opinions, skills or aspirations regarding lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, etc.) that improve personal health
- A total of 8,000 children and youth reached through Extension programming related to eating healthy food.
- 3,515 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.
- A total of 11,650 individuals were reached related to health and safety.
- 9,012 youth and adults demonstrated increased practical living skills.

### **Gardener's Toolbox Teaches Life Skills**

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. One participant commented, "I wanted to write to thank you for the programs you put on at the Fayette County Extension Office. These programs have been consistently outstanding and just what I needed to develop as a gardener and home fruit producer. I started taking your courses and doing my own gardening about 5 years ago. What I want to tell you is that I've used every one of these courses at home and continue to reap their benefits. Of course, information on these practices is available in books and on the Internet, but, that isn't the same as the kind of live, personal introduction and tips you have given me and many, many others. I especially like the hands-on aspect of the classes. They give me and others the 'can-do' feeling that we need."



### **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 2015 showing the largest increase since it started eight years ago. Agriculture is now recognized as a significant part of the Lions Club Bluegrass Fair.

### **Job Club**

The unemployment rates in Fayette County and surrounding counties ranged from 6.5% - 5.7% in 2014-15. The Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service worked with community partners to present a bimonthly Job Seekers Club. The series, in its third year, served 805 job seekers from 8 counties and over 100 businesses seeking employees. Pre and post survey data from July 2014 – June 2015 provides the following impact information. Participants attended an average of 4 sessions. 110 became employed and 93% of survey responders improved their employability and participated in phone and/or face to face interviews with 40% attaining a finalist designation. Participants learned how to search for jobs on-line and through networks, established a budget to help through tough times, developed or revised resumes/cover letters and developed 30 minute commercials. Forty-five attendees participated in a 30 minute mock interview and over sixty had their resumes reviewed. Employers met with job club participants at the end of each educational session to announce available job opportunities. Eighty-six of the employers hired one or more participants through this job club network. Total value of secured jobs estimated at over 3M dollars.

Survey data 67% of attendees were unemployed; 18% were under-employed (looking to improve their job status or working more than one job); 74% had been unemployed 1 to 12 months; and 18% more than 18 months.



*Job Club*

*"Wonderful place to get valuable information from friendly knowledgeable people."*

*- Kathie F.*

### 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 Schools and private schools to continue the long-standing tradition of providing overnight environmental camps to youth in grades one 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 Camps are held at the North Central 4-H Camp in Carlisle, KY impacted 1,155 youth and 334 adults; with a total of 17 schools attending Overnight Environmental Camps. 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 of the families indicated that because of their exposure to the campgrounds through this program that they will be sending their child to overnight residential camp in the summer.



*4-H Environmental Campers*



*4-H Cooking School*

### Gardening in a Church Community

Fayette County Horticulture obtained a grant to develop a community garden at a local inner city church with a 1,500-member congregation. Multiple members of the congregation collaborated with Horticulture Agents to create a community garden to nourish as well as educate both youth and adults in the church and in the surrounding area. Eight raised beds were built and were planted with a variety of vegetables. Rain barrels were also installed for irrigation. The harvested produce was used for cooking, preserving, nutrition classes, and potluck dinners. Future plans include an on-site farmer's market managed by the church youth.

### 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 through cooking. In effort to teach youth a life-long skill the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Program conducted five 4-H Cooking Schools to 95 youth, ages 9-14. Topics covered included proper measuring, kitchen safety and sanitation, food preservation, measuring math, and more! New foods were always introduced that the participants always sampled. Those included: kale chips, veggie pizzas, new fruits and vegetables, and more. Participants also learned healthier substitutes for items in a recipe, for example using applesauce instead of oil when baking. A pre and post program evaluation was conducted with the participants and 100% agreed that as a result of participating in these programs that they know how to properly measure ingredients, follow step-by-step instructions for a recipes, follow safe kitchen practices, and at least one time during the program they had tried at least one new food. 85% stated they use the skilled learned in 4-H in other activities at home, schools or in their community.

## **Agriculture Development**

Since the passing of the tobacco buyout, tobacco production has declined significantly. Cooperative Extension Service was given the responsibility to create and facilitate the 9 members Ag Development Council. The council met and gathered facts from all areas of agriculture in Fayette County and created a comprehensive plan for agriculture. This council has reviewed and approved applications from various groups or individuals for improvement in area of needs highlighted in the comprehensive plan. With a cooperative effort of Fayette County Conservation District, Fayette County Cattlemen's Association, County Agriculture Development Council and Fayette County Extension Service many programs have been carried out in a smooth and effective manner. Fayette County Extension Service provided resources in planning, organizing, educating, and implementation. As of June 30, 2015 over 4,250,000 of grants to Fayette County farmers who are looking at new enterprises to replace the loss of tobacco income. Each one of these grants has required a matching 50 % cost share amount which means over 8,500,000 has been invested back into the Agriculture economy in Fayette County. Educational sessions for each one of these programs are being conducted by the Cooperative Extension Service and the University Of Kentucky College Of Agriculture. This has led to an increased use of the services of the Fayette County Extension Service. Results from these programs include a 15-20% increase in weaning weights and better overall health of calves from producers participating in the cattle programs. Over 1200 Acres of hay and pasture land have been improved through the Forage Improvement Program which have increased yield by a minimum of 30% with the use of improved varieties and fertility. A building has been constructed at the Master station Park to facilitate livestock events and other agriculture type programs for farmers in Fayette and surrounding Counties. This has led to an increased awareness to the importance of Agriculture in Fayette County through many Agriculture events being held during the Lexington Lions Club Bluegrass Fair. Without this facility this would not be possible. This program continues to be an important asset to the Agriculture Community in Fayette County.

## **4-H Chick Embryology Program**

A new innovative and hands-on learning program has been developed through the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development program who has partnered with Fayette County Public Schools and private schools to enhance a well-rounded learning experience about chicken embryology. This program helps teach complex systems such as nutrition, circulatory system, or more basic skills such as data measurement, collection, and analysis of data collected in the project. This project helps participants learn biological concepts and develop a deeper understanding of the life sciences. Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development program has impacted 1,843 youth from grades preschool to 8<sup>th</sup> grade with a total of 74 classrooms participating in this program. Through this program brought an expansion of interest from teachers, students, and parents about chick embryology.

### **Fayette County Extension Agents:**

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COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION  
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**KENTUCKY**  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment

**The Fayette County  
Cooperative  
Extension Service**

*Extending Knowledge,  
Changing Lives*

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