EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN GALLATIN COUNTY

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

Healthy Eating, Healthy Lifestyle...Learned and Applied

Because there was no easy access to free, reliable weight loss programs in Gallatin County. Three 8-week “Weight: The Reality Series” weight loss series were conducted with 48 participants. Two of the series were conducted within a factory for employees and the other series was open to the community at large.

Weight: The Reality Series emphasizes self-designed lifestyle changes over a period of time. Each session included an educational lesson, weigh-in, and healthy food preparation demonstration with taste testing. A University of Kentucky Dietetic Intern also assessed weekly food journals of the participants and provided individualized counseling. 36 people completed the series with an average weight loss of 7.4 pounds each.

100% reported that as a direct result of the program, their health had improved and 95% reported that they planned to use these skills indefinitely.

It has been proven that small lifestyle changes can lead to major health improvements. By teaching people how to make health decisions concerning food and exercise, these programs last far beyond their completion.

Priority Program Efforts

• A total of 85 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
• 50 youth made an impact in their community through service project
• 12 producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
• 35 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
• 85 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
• A total of 110 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
TOBACCO COST SHARE EFFORTS IN GALLATIN COUNTY

The rising costs of labor, insurance, machinery, seed, feed, fertilizer, and every other thing needed to run a farm business of any kind has made it increasingly difficult for farms to operate in a sustainable fashion.

As a result of efforts put forth by the Gallatin County Cooperative Extension Service, the Gallatin County Livestock Association, and the Gallatin County Agricultural Council, over $95,000.00 of Phase I Tobacco Settlement money was invested in Gallatin County agriculture in the form of a CAIP (County Agriculture Investment Program). And since reports show that a dollar typically “turns over” 5 times in a given community, this investment had the potential to add $475,000.00 to the economy.

The dollars invested cost-shared improved beef genetics, livestock handling facilities, improved forage systems, diversified agriculture enterprises, structures for hay and grain storage, and equipment and supplies needed for farmers to enter the rapidly growing goat industry.

KEEPING THE “SERVICE” IN THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

An old county agent once said, “To be good at this job, you need to have an attitude of servitude”.

He was emphasizing the importance of the often marginalized customer service aspect of extension work. Farm and garden visits along with other face to face contacts are as important today, as they were when he started his extension career 50 plus years ago. In today’s high-tech world filled with emails, links to websites, online meetings, voice mail and text messages, it’s easy to overlook the importance of face time with clientele.

At the Gallatin County Extension Service office, personal customer service is more important than ever. During this program year, this office conducted over 60 home horticulture visits, 150 farm visits, and 40 plus commercial horticulture visits. The office also provided over 50 plant identifications, 75 weed identifications, 40 disease identifications, and processed over 150 soil samples. These numbers don’t include the numerous office visits made by clientele to discuss other horticultural and production agriculture related issues. Simple tabulation reveals that the numbers related above conservatively reflect a 20 percent increase over previous years.

As a side note, but also reflective of the customer service offered by the extension office, the Gallatin County ANR Agent was named as “Gallatin County Citizen of the Year” for 2013. This distinction reflects not only an individual effort, but the overall philosophy of the Gallatin County Extension Service staff.
Kentucky has the third-highest childhood obesity rate in the country, according to Kentucky Health News. Approximately one in three children who were born in the year 2000 will develop Type II Diabetes, mainly because of the food choices they make.

In March 2013, the Gallatin County Extension Office collaborated with the county’s Health Department to participate in a six week Cornell University online course regarding preventing childhood obesity.

It was during this course, that we became aware of a health curriculum called “5210: Let’s Go”. This is a program of The Kids CO-OP at the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital at Maine Medical Center and that the state of Kentucky adapted as well. It is a simple consistent message that promotes four health behaviors that can be practiced every day. Those behaviors are: 5 or more fruits and vegetables, 2 hours or less recreational screen time, 1 hour or more of physical activity and 0 sugary drinks.

This past school year, this program was used at Gallatin County’s head start classes, a daycare center, four 4-H Cloverbud groups, a 4-H Monday Movement group and the 4-H Cooking Creations Club, six 3rd grade in-school enrichment groups, and five 5th grade clubs for a total of 450 children. This program was also used in the Adult Education Program as tools to not only teach families about better nutrition but as a tool to teach participants the English language.

**WEEKEND BLESSINGS**

Kentucky ranks 14th in the nation for food insecure children under the age of 18, and 5th in the nation for food insecure children under the age of 5. According to the Family Resource Center, the Gallatin County School System has 76% of its students receiving free or reduced lunch. Many of those children have a decent lunch and breakfast but not much at home. A community forum of community leaders and teen leaders identified the issue of “being hungry” as the number one concern in the county.

A community leadership team was recruited and trained that included the Gallatin County Extension Service, 4-H teen leaders, the Family Resource Center, the Youth Service Center, the Health Department and Community Action, local churches...
and businesses to help the youth who are going hungry at night and on the weekends.

Approximately forty adults and seventy youth help throughout the year from fundraising to putting food items in 240 bags every week for grades K-5.

Several fundraising efforts were planned and executed by the leadership team including the 4-H Drama Club productions, profits from the games at the county Pumpkin Festival, a county fair event, and another fundraiser with a tri-state artist that specializes in making aprons and telling stories. The 4-H fundraisers brought in $1500 and 450 cans of food.