

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

IN HARRISON COUNTY

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



Pictured above is the progress being made on the new office expansion.

Office Expansion

For nearly a year we have discussed the possible expansion of our office facilities to add additional meeting space. With four different programs operating out of our office and numerous meetings being held by each agent, additional meeting space is needed.

After many meeting and discussions we began the expansion in early October. The addition will include a large meeting room which can be split into 2 smaller meeting rooms and 2 additional offices for the staff.

The planned completion date will be in late February or early March 2016. This should allow our office to be more flexible and allow for more group meetings at one time. Over the past few years our facility has been one of the most used buildings in the county and this addition should allow for more of that. Our meeting facilities here at the office are free of charge for any educational related group. They just need to call plenty ahead of time as we do stay booked up most of the year.

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 375 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 60 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- 315 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- 220 Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- 550 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 4,500 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of 720 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of 500 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- 220 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

Ag Development Report

The Harrison County Ag Development committee has conducted the 2015 cost share program. Over 245 producers applied for the program this year and 129 were approved for the \$3000 cost share. The group also allocated \$7500 for the Deceased Animal Program which is also matched by the Harrison County Conservation District and the remainder is picked up by the Harrison County Fiscal Court.

The intent of this program is to assist as many producers as possible. Besides the cost share program, the funds are used for the deceased animal program and the shared use equipment. All programs are available to producers in Harrison County.



Clover Bud Programs strives in 2015

2015 saw the start of our 4-H Clover Bud Club in Harrison County. This program is for youth 6-8 years old. Our initial meeting of over 60 kids showed a true interest in the program! Two clubs were created due to the positive involvement, meeting once per month throughout the year. The after school club focuses on hands-on activities related to science, nature, agriculture, arts, crafts, and nutrition. Students from the 4-H Teen Council helped to lead each meeting, as well as provide games and activities for the kids. At the conclusion of the year, over 25 cloverbud youth and teens attended the District 4 Cloverbud Camp. The 2016 program year shows continued success, having an average of 24 kids per club!



Campers having fun participating in Cloverbud Camp activities.

Soil Testing

Over my last 32 years in Harrison County we have continued to hammer away at producers to test their soils. Last year we completed over 900 soil tests. This year has been no exception.

During that period of time I have noticed a change in many of the soil tests. pH levels are more consistent and fertility levels only vary when specific crops are involved. Soil testing remains one of the most important parts of the cropping system and with the cost of fertilizer it is a way you



4-H Environmental Camp Program Reaches over 200 Youth!

Over the past 4 years, 4-H in Harrison County has worked to implement the Overnight camping program into the school for 4th and 5th grade students. The Overnight Camping program is designed as a hands-on educational field trip that centers around topics and activities the students are tested on in school. In 2011, the first group from Southside Elementary participated in the event. 4th grade students took part in sessions relating to mammals, soil conservation, Kentucky history, nature, bees, birds, and reptiles. 2015 saw the first year that all schools were represented with the program. Northside and Southside 4th grade, as well as Eastside, Westside, and St. Edwards 5th grade groups spent the night at North Central 4-H Camp for the two day event. Over 200 youth, teens, and adults participated in the trip. Youth will continue the Environmental Overnight Camping program for 2016 through all schools.

Heirlooms: What's so special about them?

In March of 2015 an Heirloom Seed Class was held at the Harrison County Extension Office to inform producers, consumers, and hobbyists about the importance of heirloom seeds. With the local foods movement that is occurring throughout our county, state, and nation there is a need for our clients to be aware of the importance of heirloom varieties. On the day of the class we had 32 clients come with a passion for locally grown food and producing healthy vegetables for their families. During the class we discussed the difference between an heirloom and hybrid, why heirlooms are a healthier choice, as well as the need to save seeds and pass those on to the next generation. Juanita Herrington, a local heirloom gardener and seed saver presented her techniques on how to save seeds and passed out goody bags containing several heirloom seeds for everyone to try for themselves. A survey was given out at the meeting and 95% of the clients reported an increase in knowledge of heirlooms and how they are different from hybrid varieties and 97% of the clients reported that they would be using their heirloom seeds and planting a garden this year. As a result of the class several participants wanted to attend a seed swap to learn about more heirloom varieties and how to grow them, so on October 3rd myself and five of the participants visited the Seed Swap in Berea, KY at Bill Best's Farm. Overall the meeting was a great success and the clients would like to see more classes offered on this topic.



Participants gathering their own heirloom seeds to try and learning the stories behind some of the seed names.



Participants learning about the basics of beekeeping in Kentucky

Beekeeping: A growing interest among Harrison Countians

Soon after becoming the Horticulture Agent for Harrison County, several clients made me aware of the need for beginner beekeeping classes that walked through the steps of raising honeybees. After several months of planning and talking with other agents around the state, I held a class with Tammy Horn, our state apiarist, as the speaker. There were 28 clients that came to the meeting to learn more about beekeeping, its importance to agriculture, and how to get started with their own hives. Tammy talked about her own personal experience with raising bees, some concerns about the bee populations throughout the state, as well as a time frame on when to complete certain tasks in the hive. After the meeting a survey was taken by all participants that showed an 86% increase in knowledge about the importance of honeybees to agriculture and a 97% increase in knowledge about the issues that bee populations are facing. 95% of the class would like to continue these classes with demonstrations and hands on activities intermingled throughout.



Nutrition Education Program in Harrison County

A Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) program has been added to the Family and Consumer Sciences program area of the Harrison County Cooperative Extension Service. The program is designed to provide nutrition education through instruction and cooking demonstrations on topics such as planning nutritious meals on a limited budget, acquiring safe food handling practices, improving food preparation skills and changing behavior necessary to have a healthy lifestyle. The program is a free service administered by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service and is targeted primarily to limited resource families with young children and SNAP eligible individuals.



Food Preservation

In an effort to assist newer Family and Consumer Sciences agents through practice and to gain more experience in the area of food preservation, the University of Kentucky FCS Extension program offered Food Preservation Workshops in the counties. Harrison County was fortunate to host a workshop which was presented by former Harrison County FCS agent Cheryl Case and former Carroll County FCS agent Grace Angotti. During the three day workshop, participants were taught to can, dry and freeze food in a hands-on setting. Participants canned tomatoes, green beans and jelly. They also dried apples and tomato skins and froze corn.



Homemakers Support 4-H Youth

A goal of the Harrison County Extension Homemakers is to encourage the youth in the community. As part of the 2015 Homemakers' Annual Meeting, one former and three current 4H'ers, were asked to present on how Cooperative Extension had influenced their life choices and their future aspirations. The youth expounded on their experiences and their decisions to pursue their interests in areas such as the Beef Industry, Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles, Leadership and Auctioning. All have received special recognition in their respective areas of skill. By presenting this opportunity to the youth, they, along with their parents, stated that they were encouraged by the support of the community and intended to remain active within the Extension Service. Homemakers also awarded the Donnell Scholarship to two recipients.



- ◇ Pictured to the left middle is Crystal Beitler, SNAP-Ed Assistant doing a demonstration during one of her programs.
- ◇ Pictured above Harrison County 4-H members who participated at the Homemaker Annual Meeting.
- ◇ Pictured on the bottom left participants learning the basics of food preservation.

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**The Harrison County
Cooperative
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*Extending Knowledge,
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