

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

IN LETCHER COUNTY

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



4-H Junior Beekeepers at the Letcher County Extension Office

4-H Junior Beekeeping Club

In February of 2015, the first ever Letcher County Jr. Beekeeper's Club was started with the help of a great volunteer that is the president of the Beekeeper's Association in Letcher County. This club would not be possible without the help of parents, volunteers, and all the hard work that they put into the club. The youth started out with six nooks and now have built up to several strong hives that were able to produce enough honey this year to buy equipment for the club. Each youth has a mentor from the Association that works to educate them. This club has been a positive outlook for both the youth and the volunteers!

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 1366 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 200 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- 103 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- 59 Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- 2700 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 550 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of 103,484 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of 2700 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- 192 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

Natural Resource Academy

UKNREsci (Natural Resource Environmental Sciences) gives students that are in the 7-8th grade and continues through the sophomore year of high school an opportunity to learn about careers in Environmental Sciences. This three-year program is only offered to youth in South East Ky. Letcher County has three youth that are involved in this program that opens tons of doors for scholarship opportunities.



These youth meet quarterly with other students from Perry, Leslie, Wolfe, Breathitt, Owsley, and Carter Counties.

Safe Processing for Commercial Sales

Cowan Community Center, the Grow Appalachia Project (GAP), Farmer's Market and the FCS Agent partnered to make U.K.'s Home-based Micro-processing Program (HBM) available in Letcher County. Ten people participated and at least four have had their recipes approved by U.K. specialists and are processing their home grown produce.



Vickie Collins & Pat Yinger share their processed home grown produce.

Growers are now able to sell nutritious home processed food at more affordable prices and perhaps increase their income through sales of their products.

Growing Good Nutrition & Health

The FCS/SNAP-Ed Extension staff presented many programs to help families to have healthier lives through planning and preparing more nutritious meals by using educational information that is shared with Senior Citizen Centers, the Farmer's Market, summer youth day camps, and school groups.



Christy Kincer & Damaris Sexton sharing information at the local Farmer's Market in Whitesburg.

Maple Syrup Programming to Promote Non-Timber Income

Maple syrup is an important enterprise in Eastern Ky. because of mostly forested acreage and a large percentage of maple trees. The Extension Office has installed a maple syrup demonstration, provided facilities for new producers to prepare their syrup and hosted workshops, radio programs, and TV shows on the subject. To increase the likelihood that our clientele will consider it further, the office offered a largely free tour of the New England maple syrup industry.

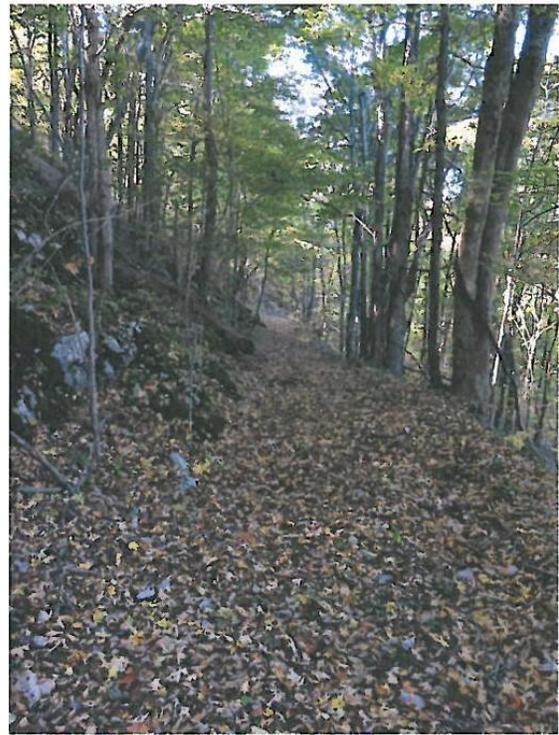


Crystal Smith, 4-H Agent observing the Maple Syrup Evaporator in Maine.

Discussions on the trip have led to a new publication on Maple Syrup Production and plans for an interstate maple syrup target zone for Letcher and Harlan Counties in Ky. and Wise Co. in Virginia. The hope is that the three-county zone will become widely known as the place for maple syrup in the South.

Bike Trail Development

Letcher County Extension Office, through its Community Development programming, has worked to create two biking/walking trails. These trails connect major residential areas to both remote wooded areas for exploration as well as more developed areas for shopping, recreating socially and commuting into and throughout town.



Bike Trail at Jenkins, Ky.

Though still a work in progress, the program has enjoyed some initial buy-in from the county. The office also hosts the monthly planning meetings and lends trail construction expertise.

4-H Raptor Program

Our Raptor program was honored this year to participate in the opening day ceremonies for the UK Arboretum in Lexington. It was a spectacular event and the program met many new friends and future contacts.

We visited several beautiful State Parks. Elk and Native American weeks at Jenny Wiley State Park were among favorites.

At the Mountain Heritage Festival, our program had the opportunity to showcase our birds and volunteers. The Festival allowed us center stage for one hour and we didn't disappoint. Several newspapers and the TV media covered the event and turned us all into "Superstars".

The Extension Office hosted a three-day nature camp this summer and had wildlife professionals from the area help with demonstrations and hikes.



Students participated in a stream project where they collected water species and recorded data for future camps to study the condition of the stream from year to year.

Our program is gearing up for next year. We are excited about our latest project to build an eagle facility to house our future bald eagle at the Extension Office. We are looking forward to all the upcoming events. Contact the Letcher County Extension Office to schedule a program for your school, event, or an office visit.

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4-H Youth Development

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