

# EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

## IN MARION COUNTY

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



### *276, 4th Grade students from five Marion County Elementary Schools attended the first Annual Agriculture Safety Day*

Marion County Extension Agents worked with Family Resource Directors to coordinate the first annual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day for 4th Grade Students in September. Students visited stations about water safety, electrical safety, grain bin safety, tractor safety, animal safety, ATV Safety, firearm safety, and drug awareness. Each student also had a child ID badge created by the Sheriff's Office and received a t-shirt and goody bag.

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## Priority Program Efforts

A total of 240 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues

418 youth made an impact in their community through service projects

75 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture

75 Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations

737 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs

1623 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming

A total of 128 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health

A total of 543 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills

23 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.



# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



## 4-H Communication Program Youth for the Future

According to the National Institute of Mental Health Research 75% of children and adults suffer from gloss phobia or a fear of public speaking. Unfortunately, if it is not addressed this anxiety can lead to poor performance in college or careers later in life. As a way to address this anxiety and better prepare our youth for the future, the Marion County 4-H program partners with the Marion County School District and the Marion County community to hold annual 4-H speech competitions. Each child in grades 4 through 8 write, practice and present a speech before volunteer judges and an audience of their peers. Youth compete in a school level contest where winners advance to the county contest. Winners from the county contest advance to the area contest and winners from the area contest advance to the State 4-H Speech competition which is held on campus at the University of Kentucky each year. In 2014, 727 students wrote, practiced and presented a 4-H speech. Over 100 community volunteers supported the program by volunteering as judges for a day. Three 4-Hers advanced all the way to the state contest where one received champion in his age category. Parents and 4-Hers noted that the program helped them to feel more confident with public speaking.



## Substance Abuse Prevention Program: Truth and Consequences, The Choice is yours

There is a strong need for continued substance abuse prevention and intervention in Marion County. The number of diverted prescription and illegal drugs, overdoses, thefts, arrests, court cases, and medical/ financial consequences of drug abuse continue to negatively impact a large number of families in the community. To address the variety of substance abuse issues impacting our community, the Marion County Extension Office partnered with other local agencies to organize Truth and Consequences. Truth and Consequences is an activity designed to show students the impact of getting involved with illicit and legal substances. Based upon the format of the 4-H Reality Store, students roleplayed scenarios including possession of prescription drugs, driving under the influence, sniffing, possession of alcohol, drug paraphernalia, or illegal drugs, trafficking, stealing drugs, etc. Depending on the scenario, students visited appropriate officials and/or agencies to experience the consequences of their behavior. Volunteers from the community served as "parents" to the youth and accompanied them as they visited the various agencies such as law enforcement, judges, school officials, and hospital.

257 students participated in Truth and Consequences: The Choice is Yours to learn more about the physical, legal, financial, and emotional consequences of substance abuse. Over 50 community partners and volunteers participated in the event as well. Evaluation results revealed that over 60% of students shared their experience at the event with their families. When asked how the program impacted them, students shared, "If I ever encounter drugs and alcohol I will think twice about them", "It made me realize drugs can kill people and make you leave everything behind even your family", and "Even if you don't do drugs you can get in trouble if you are with people that do." This program will continue as an annual event in Marion County.

# FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES



With multiple request for the program from the community; the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, EFNEP assistant, and Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent partnered together to do a six session series from May to October on container gardening and cooking. The Ag Agent focused his portion of the class on how to get the most out of a container garden, what to plant when, and tips for growing their produce. During my portion of the program, along with the EFNEP assistant, we discussed the nutrients in the produce, different ways to cook and preserve your produce, and we also did a Plate It Up Kentucky Proud food demo. We wanted to educate consumers on how to get the most use out of their container garden but also wanted to educate them on different ways to use the produce. 100% of participants stated that they learned a new way to cook and/or use their produce. Almost everyone surveyed had prepared multiple Plate It Up recipes during the duration of the series



## BABYSITTING CLINIC

As an opportunity to provide youth in Marion County with entrepreneurial skills and the ability to make money, I partnered with our county 4-H agent to host a Babysitting Clinic at one of our middle schools. During the three part series the students learned how to hold a baby, age appropriate toys, developmental stages of infants and children, safety and first aid, and marketing, among other things. We also got out county health educator to teach the participants CPR and the Heimlich maneuver for infants and children. At the end of the three part series 73% of the participants had improved their knowledge on babysitting skills. Each qualifying participant was awarded a certificate showing their completion of the series.

# AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

## Introduction to Accounting Systems For Farmers

A six hour course was held to introduce farmers to home computer systems that can be used for farm accounting. Many farmers use manual systems or PC based systems like Quicken to manage cash and check-books but very few use a true accounting system that allows them to use the computer to do enterprise based cost accounting.

The course focused on the use of QuickBooks since it is one of the most popular PC based programs available. A representative of the Elizabethtown Community College taught the course. The course was free to participants because of donations from local Agricultural Lenders. Participants were taught how to set up the program, create accounts, enter transactions and create reports like balance sheets, income statements and enterprise profit and loss statements with examples tailored to farm situations

## Lebanon Farmers Market

The Lebanon Farmers Market has grown over the past few years but more progress is needed to allow local farmers to make a living as full time produce farmers. In order to allow Farmers Market members qualify for USDA grants to make improvements at the Market on Martin Luther King Blvd., the Extension Office along with the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD) helped them incorporate as the "Heart of Kentucky Market, Inc. " a Kentucky non-profit Corporation. The goal is to close in part of the market pavilion to allow more frequent sales as well as to extend the selling season for members growing produce in greenhouses and high tunnels. KCARD and Extension are assisting with the grant writing process as well as with developing a business plan.



## Marion County Beekeepers

Marion County Beekeepers began meeting in 2014 and has grown to be a monthly activity at the Extension Office. Beekeeping has been becoming more popular as the public recognizes the need they fulfill for pollinating many of the crops, fruits and vegetables we rely on for food. Disease and habitat pressures have put pressure on bee and other pollinator populations. As mandated by the 2014 Farm Bill the United States Department of Agriculture has developed programs to enhance pollinator habitats and promote the repopulation of these very important insects. The Marion County Beekeepers meet the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Extension Office. Anyone is invited to attend regardless of experience level or if they don't have bees but are interested in learning more.

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