

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

IN MUHLENBERG COUNTY

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



Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension staff from left to right: Janie Culton, staff assistant, Kristan Melton, staff assistant, Judy McGehee, 4-H youth development program assistant, Mackenzie Pogue, 4-H youth development agent, Amanda Dame, family and consumer sciences agent, Darrell Simpson, agriculture and natural resources agent, and Vi Wood, SNAP-Ed assistant.

Improving the Lives of Muhlenberg County Citizens

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service is instrumental in improving the lives of local citizens. Research-based information from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment combined with a collaborative effort from Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service agents, leaders and volunteers makes this possible. Whether it is agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, or 4-H youth development, the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service impacts the lives of all citizens of Muhlenberg County. We hope that you will take time to review the programs highlighted in this report and we look forward to seeing you at one of our programs soon!

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **528 people** are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **850 youth** made an impact in their community through service projects
- **133 local residents** implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- **15 producers** reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **1,509 youth** indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- **1916 citizens** (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **228 individuals** reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of **1,071 youth and adults** demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- **135 individuals** incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Extension Helps Producers with Farm Bill 2014

The University of Kentucky Cooperative Service was charged with helping grain producers and landowners make decisions relative to the Farm Bill in the fall of 2014. The Muhlenberg County Agriculture and Natural Resources agent along with four other agents from districts five and seven planned and conducted a training for Agriculture and Natural Resources agents in districts five, six, and seven. Twenty-two agents attended the day long training and learned how to use the online decision aid tools so they would be better able to serve their clientele. The Muhlenberg County agent utilized his knowledge and the information gained at the training to conduct two educational programs regarding the Farm Bill decisions for 31 producers. Nineteen producers and landowners representing 78 farms scheduled appointments after those programs to get help utilizing the decision aid tools. Clientele gained knowledge on whether or not to update yields, reallocate bases, and what potential payment program to select. Based on survey information collected at the end of 11 of the one-to-one sessions representing 54 farms, these producers could receive a combined \$450,374 over a three year period based on pricing and yield decisions that they selected. One producer commented, "It is all just a gamble but I sure do appreciate your help on this." The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service was key in helping make sense of the Farm Bill decisions.



County corn yields directly affect the Farm Bill decision.

Backyard Poultry Production

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service works to meet the programming needs of

clientele throughout the community. One such program was a two night backyard poultry production series. Dr. Jackie Jacobi, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service Poultry Specialist was utilized to provide information which enhanced the program participants' knowledge. Nine clientele participated in the program, seven of the class participants completed a survey after the program series. The survey revealed that three of the program participants had a backyard flock before the program and four did not have flocks. When asked if they would have a flock after attending the program, seven participants responded that they would have a flock. Only one participant responded that they knew correct poultry terminology before the program, seven participants knew the correct terminology after the program. When asked to list what they gained knowledge on, four participants responded that they gained knowledge on breeds, six on poultry medications, five on digestive tract disorders, seven on parasites, four on reproductive tract physiology, five on reproductive tract disorders, and four on respiratory diseases. One producer commented, "That was an excellent program, I learned a lot."

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

"Rocking the Crock" to Improve Food Safety

As indicated in the 2013-2014 Plan of Work for Muhlenberg County, there is a strong need to increase knowledge and understanding for healthy eating and food safety. According to county health profiles 62% of Muhlenberg County's population is overweight and 28% are obese. Preparing nutritious meals at home, food safety procedures, and avoiding fast food meals is a great way to address these issues. The Family and Consumer Sciences agent and SNAP-Ed assistant provided a slow cooker safety and make ahead meals program to the community to address these issues. Before the program 50% of the participants used frozen food in their slow cookers and 40% of participants indicated they believed vegetables can get soft and mushy from being cooked in a slow cooker. After completing the program 100% of participants indicated they would use the proper steps to thaw meat and vegetables before placing them into the slow cooker. Furthermore, 60% of the participants indicated they would plan meals ahead and use slow cookers to make more meals at home. One

gentlemen said he learned how to properly use a slow cooker and would use provided recipes to make meals at home. After attending this session all participants felt they had gained knowledge that would improve their at home food safety skills.

All about Meats Class



Dr. Gregg Rentfrow, Meats Specialists from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment discusses the different pork cuts.

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service strives to develop, plan, and conduct educational programs that meet the needs of county clientele. Extension agents for Agriculture and Natural Resources and Family and Consumer Sciences worked with Dr. Gregg Rentfrow, Extension Meats Specialist to develop and conduct a program that covered nearly every aspect of meat. Fifteen clientele participated in this program series. Topics of the first program included food safety, where the different cuts of meat originate on the carcass, newly developed cuts of meat, the harvest process, and choosing cuts of meat. The second program included topics on quality grades of meat, selecting the best cuts of meat, cooking muscles of locomotion versus muscles of support, knife selection and care, and the concept of Umami cooking. A survey was utilized after each program to determine the participants' knowledge level. When asked about choosing cuts of meat after participating in the program, 69% said that they were comfortable and 31% said they were very comfortable. One participant said, "I will be better informed when I select various cuts of meat in the store." The survey after the second program yielded similar results regarding knowledge level gain. One participant commented, "Because I was not knowledgeable about meat, I would let my husband

purchase our meat selection. After this program, I can now select, purchase, and cook meat."

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Creating Awareness in Muhlenberg County



Community volunteers work with students at the "Truth and Consequences" program.

According to the National Substance Abuse Index, 7.3% of Kentucky adolescents between the ages of 12-17 have been admitted into either a drug rehabilitation or substance abuse treatment facility. The human brain does not stop fully developing until a person's mid-20s or even early 30s. In Muhlenberg County, 25.5% of admissions to the Pennyroyal Mental Health Services, a local substance abuse facility, are adolescents between the ages of 15-17. As a part of promoting substance abuse awareness, the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development and Family Consumer Sciences agents facilitated the "Truth and Consequences: The Choice is Yours" program along with the assistance of the program manager for the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation and the community relations specialist. Three hundred fifty-five freshman from Muhlenberg County High School were reached through this role-playing event where students are given scenarios and then visit community agencies/officials to learn the consequence of their actions. Community agencies/officials acted in their role to show the students the true outcome of their scenarios. Numerous community partners were involved with the program, including the Muhlenberg County Sheriff's Department and local law enforcement, hospital, health department, school counselors, and STAND (Students Teaching Against Negative Decisions). Pre and post-tests were distributed to the students to determine what they had gained from the program. As a result of the

program, 80% of the students surveyed indicated they are more aware of the consequences associated with negative decisions.

Muhlenberg 4-Hers at West KY 4-H Camp

West Kentucky 4-H Camp is a favorite of Muhlenberg County 4-H members and 4-H volunteers. One hundred eighty-one Muhlenberg Countians spent an action packed week at 4-H Camp, that's 142 campers and 39 adults, teens and counselors in training (CITs). For several years Muhlenberg County has camped the most campers at West Kentucky 4-H Camp. Survey results from camp indicated 95% made new friends at camp, 97% felt cabin leaders cared about them, 94% took responsibility for themselves, 94% tried something new at camp, 83% felt safe at camp, and 100% felt good about their accomplishments while at camp. The camp experience paired kids with caring adults, grandparents who have been going to camp since their grandkids were young and who now are in college, young parents who grew up in 4-H, and new volunteers who were eager to jump right in and make for a fun week at camp for our kids. Camp offers teens the opportunity to give back, to serve others, gives the CITs the opportunity to get a glimpse of themselves in leadership roles, and gives all involved the opportunity to develop new skills.



Muhlenberg County is always well represented at the West KY 4-H Camp.

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The goal of the Kentucky Nutrition Education Program is to educate limited resource Kentuckians to acquire knowledge, improve skills, and change behaviors necessary to achieve health and well-being. The SNAP-Ed program through the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service has had a total of 60 limited resource families enrolled in the basic Nutrition Education Program. The program includes 8-12 lessons that teach

clienteles how to achieve and maintain good health, avoid running out of food, prepare and store food safely, and make healthy food choices on a limited budget. Upon their exit from the program, 93.8% of families enrolled showed positive changes. The program enlisted the help of 22 community volunteers and 22 community partnerships at 20 different community locations. Twelve clientele participated in a three day Food Preservation Workshop for adults. Six youth participated in a one day Food Preservation Workshop. LEAP (Literacy, Eating and Activity for Preschoolers) reached a total of 50 youth and 10 adults. Professor Popcorn Exploring My Plate reached 48 youth and three adults. The youth curriculum WIN (Wellness in Kentucky) was taught to 35 youth and three adults. The Food Explorers program, which introduces an unfamiliar food to youth once a month for six months at Muhlenberg South Elementary School reached 550 students and faculty members monthly. The SNAP-Ed Nutrition Assistant made 1,794 additional contacts at community events, school events, grocery stores, food banks, and the Farmers Market. These one-time contacts offered information for participants to make low-cost, quick, and healthy meals, improve use of their food dollars, create healthier diets that reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and improve food storage and food safety resulting in fewer food-borne illnesses.

COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
SERVICE



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County
Cooperative
Extension Service**

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