Priority Program Efforts

• A total of 549 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
• 822 individuals adopted practices that ensure protection and conservation of water and soil resources
• 1,929 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge, or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
• A total of 504 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
• 300 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
• A total of 1,062 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
• 1,086 people reported eating more healthy foods in their diets
• 87 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.
• 45 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture

4-H Camp provides learning opportunities for over 150 young people each summer. Here Georgia Ray demonstrates correct archery techniques. The camping program will expand in 2014.

Oldham County: Making a Difference in the Lives of all Residents

The Oldham County Cooperative Extension Service is an educational outreach office of Kentucky’s land grant institutions – the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University. Our mission is to bring research-based information, advice, and programs to local individuals and families. Our programs focus on three main areas: 4-H Youth Development, Family & Consumer Sciences, and Agriculture & Natural Resources, all supporting Community & Economic Development.

As we reflect on the past year, it is clear that Cooperative Extension continues to make strides in serving a diverse group of clients here in Oldham County. We hope you will take time to review the programs highlighted in our annual report, and we look forward to continue meeting your needs. No matter what you’re growing – kids, families, businesses, farms or landscapes – give us a call and learn how we can help.
Master Gardeners and 4-H’ers Protect Watershed

Curry’s Fork Stream is part of a large watershed in Oldham County that has been identified as an impaired waterway. Erosion is an ongoing problem that contributes to sedimentation and impaired function of the stream. Through a partnership between Oldham County Extension and the Curry’s Fork Watershed Coordinator, Oldham County Master Gardeners and 4-H members participated in two educational sessions and learned about watersheds, their function, and how to protect them.

Using this knowledge, thirteen Master Gardeners, thirty 4-H youth, and eight adult volunteers planted native trees, shrubs, grasses, and flowers at two impaired sites along Curry’s Fork. These native plants require less maintenance, perform better in native environments, and will help prevent future erosion at these sites. 4-H’ers and Master Gardeners also starred in several public service announcements broadcast on Oldham County Cable Channel 25 to promote watershed protection.

Cooking Promotes Family Time

Only 28% of American families with children ages 6 to 17 eat together in the home each evening. Extension Advisory Councils identified promoting family time as an important initiative in programming. In an effort to assist families in preparing nutritious foods at home, the Oldham County 4-H and FCS Agents collaborated with the Oldham County Health Department to establish a summer Kids Cooking Camp.

Campers indicated they were preparing the recipes and cooking for their families each evening. Parents have come forward and volunteered to become 4-H volunteers and start a 4-H Cooking Club.

4-H Members Gain Confidence in Public Speaking

Strong communications skills are essential for success in life. Client surveys indicated the need for additional communication skills building programs.

Extension Staff conducted Public Speaking Workshops involving 355 4-H youth who presented a speech or demonstration, with 8 qualifying to present at the State 4-H Communication Day. Surveys indicated youth organized their thoughts and ideas into successful presentations, which increased their confidence in public speaking events.

Canning Classes Emphasize Food Safety

Canning has seen a tremendous increase in popularity over the past ten years. Consumers are becoming more concerned with food additives and the environmental impact of commercially-produced food, leading to an interest in growing and preserving their own produce.

To meet the demand for canning information, the Oldham County FCS agent offered a series of basic home-canning classes for canning locally grown food. These classes focused on food safety, time-saving techniques, and the importance of following recipes.

More than 75 participants attended classes held in Oldham and surrounding counties. In surveys, participants indicated that they had increased their knowledge of canning principles and felt confident they were prepared to safely preserve their own produce.

Dare to Care Clients Improve Food Budgets and Diets

More than 1,200 families in the LaGrange area receive food assistance from Dare to Care Food Distribution. Each month, those families receive recipes and cooking tips to encourage healthy eating and economical information to help them stretch their food budget. Participants have reported utilizing the recipes and following the dietary guidelines that are presented.
Oldham County Producers Plan Beef Initiatives

There are a variety of cattle breeds raised in Oldham County, including Angus, Belted Galloway, Hereford, and Shorthorn. Cattle pictured here are Angus-Tarentaise cross cattle raised by Danny Jacobs and Caldwell Willig.

Kentucky is the largest cattle producing state east of the Mississippi River. Oldham County alone is home to around 100 cattle producers, raising an estimated 7,800 head of cattle. Because of cattle’s importance to Kentucky’s economy, University of Kentucky Extension hosted a Beef Leadership Conference to address producer and industry needs. Two Oldham County producers, Kevin Perkins and Caldwell Willig, participated along with other producers, industry leaders, and Extension Specialists and Agents from across Kentucky. Participants identified top issues and then developed new state-wide programs and initiatives to address them.

Kentucky Professional Cattleman is one of the programs developed as a result of the leader program. It will begin in November 2013, with two other Oldham County producers participating. Graduates of Kentucky Professional Cattleman will be future spokesmen for Kentucky, helping educate the public about beef production, food, and farming. Other programs developed include Humane Animal Handling and Master Marketer.

“Engineers of Tomorrow” Explore Robotics

Robotics opens up a world of learning for our youth and provides the opportunity to explore communication, mathematical, and problem-solving skills, all while addressing a community service issue.

The East Oldham Middle School 4-H Robotics Club developed a product to aid the aging population. The club solved the research challenge by creating a device to monitor medication administration, blood pressure, and communication with care-givers. Club members developed a prototype of the device, a website, and a promotional brochure.

4-H Robotics Club from East Oldham Middle School (pictured to the right) competed at the Engineers of Tomorrow First Lego League Regional Competition in Bullitt County. The team received the Research Award and advanced to the state tournament at WKU in Bowling Green.

Farmers Recycle Tires

Oldham County Extension partnered with Oldham County Solid Waste to promote a grant-funded used tire recycling program to farmers in Spring 2013. A total of 696 tires were brought to the center for recycling, representing a value to farmers of $2,825.00.

Energy Bus Motivates New Leaders

Oldham County Extension Homemaker Leaders attended the annual Area Leadership Retreat to enhance communication, motivation, and presentation skills. The Leadership planning committee and several agents adapted parts of the book “Energy Bus” as a program aid. Participants in this program accepted leadership positions in Oldham County Homemakers and on the Louisville Area Extension Homemaker Council.

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“Plate it Up” Boosts Vegetable Consumption

According to the 2010 Kentucky Food Survey, the average resident in Kentucky is only purchasing 16 servings of fruits and vegetables a week, which falls short of the recommended 25 servings per week. Kentucky Proud “Plate It Up” programs were held for over 100 residents in Prospect, LaGrange, and Crestwood. The programs were designed to encourage residents to eat more vegetables, utilize their garden produce, or support local Farmers’ Markets. Participants indicated in surveys that they were planning to prepare the recipes and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables in their diets.

Dare to Care Clients Grow Vegetables

Dare to Care Food Bank’s La Grange site provides food to an average of 100 individuals and families in Oldham County each month. Participants include seniors and young families, many of whom do not have gardening experience; some have limited space for growing vegetables, and others have limited mobility that prevents traditional gardening.

Oldham County Extension offered vegetable growing activities for Dare to Care participants starting in Summer 2012. Activities focused on basic growing skills, container gardening, and gaining confidence and self-reliance skills. Gardening activities were conducted in conjunction with nutrition and health activities offered by Family & Consumer Science and 4-H Youth Development staff. Tomato plants, vegetable seeds, and gardening guides were available for those interested in growing vegetables. Fertilizer samples and use instructions were supplied to those who planted seeds or transplants. Participants talked one-on-one with Agriculture & Natural Resources staff to learn and to solve growing problems experienced during the season. Twenty-six people who received vegetable transplants and seeds reported successfully growing vegetables as a result of the program.

Soil Testing Promotes Sustainability

Did you know that many Oldham County lawns and landscapes already have adequate phosphorous and potassium? The Oldham County Conservation District and Oldham County Extension teamed up to promote Don’t Guess – Soil Test! to residents this year. The Conservation District obtained grant funding for free soil testing services for samples processed through the Oldham County Extension office. Awareness of existing nutrients in soil allows farmers and homeowners to apply only the fertilizers that are needed. This helps maintain soil and plant health while ensuring nutrients don’t pollute water.

Ninety-two residents used free soil testing vouchers in Fall 2012 and Spring 2013. Oldham County Extension processed 273 soil samples during this time period, along with nutrient recommendations specific to each site.

Oldham County Extension Leader of the Year

Volunteers are the cornerstone of Extension – their leadership and commitment to Extension programs is invaluable. Each year, the Oldham County Extension Council honors a volunteer with the Extension Leader of the Year Award. Oren Clore was the 2013 award winner. Oren is a farmer, an Oldham County Extension Council member, Vice-President of the Oldham County Extension District Board, and past Secretary of the Oldham County Agricultural Development Council.