Priority Program Efforts

- A total of _15_ people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- _30_ youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- _5__ local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- _5_ Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- _50_ youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- _200_ citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- More than _900_ individuals received information on making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of _50_ youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- _5_ individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.
Get Moving North Todd

According to data, 71% of the adult population of Todd County is considered overweight, with 37% of those being obese. Studies have shown that children who are exposed to physical activity tend to be more physically active as adult.

At North Todd Elementary School, the art and music teachers combined art, music, drama and physical activity class for K-5 students. To ensure all students had physical activity, they offered Walk Across KY (in partnership with the Todd County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences), to the students twice a week for 5 minutes as part of the physical education program for physical activity and to help meet health standards. Students used a pedometer to measure steps they took, recorded the steps, and set goals to increase their steps.

Approximately 469 students participated in the walking program. Kindergarten students walked 2,220,624 steps, or 1,110.3 miles; 1st graders walked 2,397,040 steps or 1,198.5 miles. Approximately 316 students in the 2nd through 5th grades walked 9,899,399 or 4,949.7 miles. The total for the school was 7,258.5 miles.

The PE/Art teacher said: The kids enjoyed the challenge of trying to get more steps. It carried over into kids doing it at home with their parents or grandparents because it was something the whole family could do together. Parents commented they could tell a difference in the energy level of their kids, and also said how much their kids enjoyed the walking program. The PE/Art teacher also said the program was modified to meet the needs of physically challenged students.

Preserving Food

Five people with no experience in food preservation wanted to learn how to can and freeze to save money. They participated in a hands-on all day workshop, which included canning vegetables, jams and jellies, and freezing. After learning how to use a pressure canner, boiling water canner, and blanch food for freezing, all of the participants planned to can and freeze fresh fruits and vegetables during the summer, as well as make some jam and jelly.

First Steps to Getting a Job

As of July, 2013, the US Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the unemployment rate in Todd County at 8%. Unemployment hurts families as well as communities because it means less money people have to spend on basic needs as well as supporting community businesses. Twelve people participated in “The First Steps to Getting a Job,” a collaborative effort between the Todd County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences, Pennyville Allied Community Services Coordinator, and Breathitt Career Center Coordinator. The class covered How to Dress for an Interview, How to Fill out Applications, and Resumes. An evaluation conducted at the end of the meeting measured the pre- and post-test knowledge. Seventy-five percent of the participants increased their knowledge about filling out applications; 92% planned to use appropriate grooming and body language during the interview; 83% felt more confident in getting a job. When asked the most valuable thing they learned from the class, four participants said they learned more about applications; four said they learned more about resumes; and one said “Don’t sell yourself short;” and another said “Be positive.” Three of the participants have follow-up appointments with the Career Center for one-on-one assistance with getting a job.

“Don’t sell yourself short!”
- Class Participant
Pesticide Certification Training

Ninety-seven farmers received Certified Private Applicator Pesticide training this program year at eleven Todd County Extension pesticide educational programs. As always, safety when handling chemicals was a major emphasis of these sessions, along with proper pest identification so that appropriate control methods may be utilized. In these trainings, farmers were reminded about the importance of the pesticide label and how to read it to get the information they need to safely and effectively use a given chemical. Other topics emphasized included the environmental concerns related to farm chemical use, and the importance of proper spray calibration.

Even though it has been more than 10 years, many Kentucky farmers are still adjusting to some farmer-related provisions of state pesticide law changes that were passed in 2002. One of the most important of those 2002 provisions dictates that any person who applies any pesticide in a Kentucky farming operation has to have a Private Applicator Pesticide license. Under the old regulations, it was permissible for unlicensed people to apply pesticides as long as they were closely supervised by a licensed Certified Private Applicator. Pesticide training attendees in Todd County are continually reminded that everyone applying agriculture pesticides must now be licensed.

Another topic that we spend extra time on in the Todd County trainings is using pesticide rotation as a means to slow or avoid the development of resistant pest populations. Kentucky already has significant populations of resistant pests—particularly weeds and we also see occasional resistance issues with insecticides and fungicides. The recent increase in herbicide-resistant weeds is helping many farmers understand how their chemical choices can be a factor in the development of resistant pests. Todd County training programs also outline the employer obligations mandated by the Federal Worker Protection Standards (WPS) and show how those Standards can benefit both the employer and the workers on a farm.

Palmer Pigweed Education

Palmer amaranth (pigweed) was officially identified in Todd County in the summer of 2012. On-farm herbicide results and laboratory testing indicated that most of the Palmer was glyphosate-resistant, and some was also resistant to other classes of herbicides. Palmer amaranth awareness, identification, and control efforts began in 2012 and continued into the 2013-14 program year. Scouting for Palmer amaranth resulted in several additional fields of pigweed being identified in various parts of the county. One farmer also found that he had a soybean field infested with waterhemp. Fortunately he was able to control the weed with herbicides even though much of the population appeared to be glyphosate-resistant. I scouted the field all summer long looking for another flush of the waterhemp, but it came back only in a few bare areas of the field and the farmer was able to destroy the regrowth before it went to seed.

Finding the Palmer pigweeds in July allowed me to create and distribute a "mid-summer" identification factsheet utilizing photographs of young plants so that farmers could find Palmer populations on their farms earlier in the growing season. Earlier discovery allowed producers more time to attempt some type of control efforts, which included chopping out small populations by hand, and/or destroying limited areas of crop where Palmer populations were high. In addition to mailing out a Palmer ID guide out to local farmers, I published an article and photos in the local newspaper, and had UK weeds specialist Dr. Jim Martin conduct a farmer program on Palmer pigweed and waterhemp identification and control methods. More local farmers are learning to identify Palmer pigweed; to understand the potential danger it poses for crops; and to develop herbicide programs appropriate for dealing with this destructive weed.
4-H Talk Meet

Speaking in public is one of the most important skills to learn in school before entering the workforce. The Todd County Cooperative Extension Service 4-H program, teachers, and 4-H volunteers provided youth with opportunities to organize their ideas, prepare a speech, and speak in public. Through the 4-H Talk Meet in Todd County, over 300 4-H members developed and mastered skills in public speaking, research, and presenting an idea. Every 4th and 5th grade student participated in a speech workshop that taught them how to research, prepare, and deliver a speech. Over 55 4-H members presented a speech or demonstration in the County 4-H Talk Meet; six youth advanced to the Area 4-H Communications Event; and two qualified for the State 4-H Contest in Lexington. An end of program survey revealed that 68% gained confidence through the speech process; and over 88% of the 4-H members improved their leadership skills due to involvement in the program.

4-H Circuit Training

Childhood obesity continues to be a problem in Todd County. More than 46% of teens and children do not get enough exercise according to the Kids Count Data. The Todd County Extension Service 4-H Agent and the Youth Service Center collaborated to provide a 4-H Circuit Training after school program to middle and high school youth during the 21st Century Program to increase strength and endurance and help youth become more physically active. Twenty seven middle school students participated in the 12 week circuit training program. A circuit training log was used to measure input and output of training. Participants recorded the number of squats, wall jumps, bench dips, curls, stomach crunches, etc. that were a part of the circuit training in intervals of 30, 45, and 60 seconds. The end of program results showed 88% of the members improving the number of squat jumps in the 30, 45 and 60 second intervals while 78% of the members improved the number of bench dips and crunches over time. In addition to circuit training, the youth participated in the SPARKS curriculum enjoying jump roping, walking, dodgeball, dance, and other fitness games.

Children Youth and Families At Risk (CYFAR)

The Todd County Extension Service welcomes Craig Bristow as CYFAR Assistant. It’s a 5 year grant funded position with the primary focus to strengthen parenting skills of fathers as a means to promote family resiliency. The CYFAR fatherhood initiative plans to help fathers gain an understanding of basic child development; to increase the involvement of positive father/father figures in the lives of their children and to educate youth and families on new technology and communication strategies. Craig is currently working with the Todd County Jail, the 21st Century program, Todd County 4-H and the Todd County Health Department Hands program and other community agencies.