



# EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

## *Changing Lives*

### IN GRANT COUNTY

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



Above: Master Clothing Volunteers teach 4-H'ers about piecing fabric together to quilt. Right: Dishes prepared by students in a cooking class.

### Passing Down Life Skills

Many heritage skills, such as food preservation, quilting, sewing, needlework, gardening, and even cooking are no longer being passed down through the generations due to busy schedules. The Grant County Family and Consumer Sciences Program, in partnership with 4-H, Grant County Homemakers, and Master Clothing Volunteers, have begun to focus on teaching these important skills to a younger generation of 4-H'ers.

Hands-on classes have been offered 1-2 times a month that teach basic sewing skills, quilting, cooking, and canning. In many cases, participants are simply guided so that they can learn these important life skills first hand. After participating in the canning workshop, one 4-h'ers Mom said, "It was nice to see him learn, because it is something that I never learned to do."

### Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **345** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **195** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **189** Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **3,114** citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **240** individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- **241** individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

## Build A Better You!

In September of 2015, Lamar Fowler, 4-H Youth Development Agent, was contacted by the principal at Crittenden-Mt. Zion Elementary. The principal had seven fifth grade boys who needed to learn how to work with others. Just months earlier Fitness for Life Around Grant County (FFLAG) had put in an all weather walking path at the school, so it was decided to have the boys complete a beautification/outdoor classroom project around the walking path.

Meeting a few times a month, the students brain stormed ideas and developed the plan.



*CMZ students work together to complete a bird feeder.*

2' x 2' quilt boards were designed, painted and added for the heritage aspect to the path, as well as color. Bird houses and bird feeders were built, painted and placed. A bird friendly flower garden was planted, and wooden seats that resemble

toadstools were added. The reaction from the community has been overwhelmingly positive to the improvements.

After the dedication ceremony, when the students were asked what they learned during this project, words like cooperation, teamwork, accomplishment and communication were the first from their mouths. It has been very rewarding to have been a part of community beautification while educating youth about the importance of teamwork and how great things can come be accomplished



*Providing seating for tired walkers or to just watch nature was important to the group.*

## Investing in the Farm of Tomorrow

The scope of agriculture in Grant County has evolved over the past 20 years. Cows and tobacco are no longer the staples as farmers look to more and additional sources for farm revenue. The Grant County Agriculture Development Council has been proactive in utilizing funds from the Master Settlement Agreement to assist farmers by creating our County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP). This allows farmers to merge their businesses with the latest technologies and concepts.

In an effort to maximize farmers' funds, the Grant County Extension Office was contacted to provide educational programs to all applicants for cost sharing programs. Curriculum and publications were developed by specialists from the University of Kentucky College Of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Two hundred and twenty-nine (229) farmers attended the educational sessions. Farmers were polled using the program application to determine if they would improve a practice from knowledge gained at the training. One hundred percent (100%) of the applicants indicated that they would change or improve a practice covered during the educational sessions.

The Grant County Cattlemen's Association administered the Program, 75 Grant County farmers completed projects to improve or change a current practice on their farm. These farmers received a total of \$241,000 in total reinvestment dollars. Total expenditures for the projects exceeded \$671,281.40. Farm practice change projects ranged from commodity storage, genetics, farmland improvement, agriculture diversification to fencing.

***"It's a fantastic program that financially and educationally helps farmers make necessary improvements that increase farm gate receipts."***

***Chris Ammerman, ANR Agent***

## On My Own

The Grant County Extension Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education Assistant offered a hands-on cooking class for new high school graduates, low income college students, teen parents, and newly graduated foster children. The class was advertised by the Family Resource Centers at Grant County and Williamstown Schools, as well as our local library. Five adults attended the classes which lasted for three hours, one time a week for four weeks. They prepared several recipes and used vegetables and herbs from our small community SNAP garden behind the Grant County Extension Office.

End of class results include:

- 100% of adult participants showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices (i.e. plan meals, compare prices, uses grocery lists or doesn't run out of food by the end of the month).
- 80% improved in two areas (shopping with grocery lists and comparing nutrition facts on food labels to make food choices).
- 100% of participants showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices (plans meals, makes healthy food choices, prepares food without adding salt, reads nutrition labels, or ensuring their children eat breakfast).
- 60% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices (thawing and storing foods correctly).
- 100% of participants stated they prepared at least one recipe from class in their homes.

One 19-year-old female returned to class each week talking about which recipes she prepared at home. She stated that she had been in college for one year and was very tired of fast food. Her college cafeteria was actually a group of fast food restaurants and she wanted to cook simple meals at school. She was very excited that she was able to prepare the meals and began preparing the meals with her mother. She reported that she sat down with her mother after each class, shared the information, and they had started a small garden and were planning to use the vegetables in the recipes she received in

***“I can't wait to complete the A to Z recipe list! I've already made Apple, Banana, Strawberry and Zucchini breads!”***

***-Hannah, SNAP Participant***

class. On the last day of class, her mother came with her and attended the class as well. Her mother stated that she didn't know the program existed but would be telling others about the classes.

## Using an Old Rope to Pull Agriculture Forward

The 2014 Farm Bill allowed for an industrial hemp research project to be conducted in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education and the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. As a result, county Extension offices were overwhelmed with inquiries.

A multi-county, one day conference was held to address the inquiries from media, agricultural producers, and others who were interested in learning more about hemp productions. The presentation was conducted by UK Faculty, Specialists and County Extension Agents. Forty (40) residents of Grant County were among the 107 who attended.

Participants increased their knowledge of the application and legal requirements required to participate in the research, production methods, potential uses for industrial hemp, and how industrial hemp is being marketed.

As a result of the conference, the print media published information gleaned from the conference to 287,000 readers in Northern Kentucky. Conference attendees were surveyed and 22 producers reported conducting additional research, six determined that converting to industrial hemp would not be economically advantageous at this time or were deterred by legal requirements, 24 requested additional educational programs as research information becomes available and four producers have made plans to apply for participation in the program.

The conference dispelled some of the misconceptions of the social and health implications between industrial hemp and hemp that is produced for medical and recreational use.



*A picture of industrial hemp.*

## Changing Your World

It is important to know what to do when our natural resources are at stake. As the Emerald Ash Borer spreads across Kentucky, woodland owners will be faced with making decisions about how to respond. In Northern Kentucky, some woodland owners may have as much as 20 to 30 percent ash in the main canopy of their woods.

In line with statistics, the 4-H Environmental Outdoor Classroom, located behind the Grant County Middle School, has a large ash population. In an effort to engage students with nature, 4-H Agent Lamar Fowler took a science class from GCMS to survey the trees and designate ash trees that are infested. The students then researched the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and produced a working plan to save as many of the ash trees as possible. The plan included removal of trees judged to have too much damage to be saved and treatment for those that might be saved. Both injection and granular treatments were used to see which was most effective.

Research on the American Chestnut Blight was also conducted so that students would have perspective on the reason for concern and why and how infestations of this type can quickly devastate a natural habitat. Of the 68 students involved, 100% had a much better understanding of the threat of the EAB and why it is so important to monitor woodlands. They also felt they had a better understanding of why it is so detrimental to introduce invasive species into local habits. Eighty four percent (84%) of the students felt that they could help others in the community to identify the EAB and direct individuals to resources to help.



A student takes notes about EAB observations in the Outdoor Classroom.

## LEAP

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 13.2 percent of Kentucky youth eat fruits and vegetables five or more times a day. The national average is 21.4%, making Kentucky severely deficient. Based on this information, the Literacy, Eating, and Activity for Preschool (LEAP) program was taught in both Grant County school districts for the 250 Head Start and preschool children by the Family and Consumer Sciences Program Assistant. Once a month for eight months, each classroom was read a story about nutrition and food. The lessons feature a tasting or physical activity related to the story in an effort to introduce foods or activities that may be new to the children.



Judy Jackson, FCS Assistant, teaches children healthy habits including handwashing and eating vegetables.

During one lesson, all participants learned the importance of hand washing, thanks to a special solution and black light that shows what remains if handwashing is poorly done. On average, more than 95% of the children tasted the healthy snacks throughout the program. In order to send information home, to encourage healthy eating and activity, parent newsletters were provided, featuring nutrition information and recipes, as well as the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) newsletter and the NEP calendars.



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### *Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives*

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