



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN McLean COUNTY

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



Performance Perfection

One of the main goals of the 4-H Council has been to continue the quest for agriculture literacy but also increase participation in all areas of the 4-H Curriculum, more specifically Communications and Expressive Arts. Three years ago the 4-H Agent promoted the Performing Arts Troupe to youth in the County. One individual in particular took advantage of the opportunity to try out for the group at Teen Conference held in Lexington, KY each year. At the time this active 4-Her was timid and had not ever played an instrument or showcased her outstanding vocal skills in front of hardly anyone, especially not a crowd. After making the Performing Arts Troupe, this individual quickly gained the confidence to not only teach herself to play guitar, mandolin and banjo, but she also began performing in and around the community. Upon returning from Teen Conference this year, 2016, her achievements include: member of the Performing Arts Troupe - 3 years, formation of her own bluegrass band, songwriter and much more. She was also able to record a song a member of the famous Kentucky band "Sundy Best" during Teen Conference this year. This 4-Her says, "I owe my success and self-confidence thus far to 4-H and the outstanding leadership it has provided me."

"I owe my success and self-confidence thus far to 4-H and the outstanding leadership it has provided me." Emma Dame

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **129** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **22** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **98** youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- **274** citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **27** individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of **224** youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills

Building Healthier Families



McLean County ranks 55th in overall health rankings across Kentucky in 2016 with 36% of 18 year olds and older are obese (County Health Rankings). Adding to this obesity problem is lack of leisure-time exercise. In McLean County, approximately 32% of adults reported no leisure-time exercise in the past month (County Diabetes Atlas, 2015). With high levels of obesity and the low levels of leisure-time exercise a high percentage of McLean County residents have reported being diagnosed with chronic disease in McLean County. According to BRFSS Health Indicators Warehouse, approximately 41% of McLean County adults reported having been diagnosed with high blood pressure.

In order to address the obesity level in McLean County, the County Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences is an active member of the local Health Coalition. She is currently serving as facilitator of this coalition. The Partnership for Health McLean County along with the Green River Health Department has received a grant from the Foundation for Healthy Kentucky to provide more physical activity programs in the community. The grant has provided a walking trail at the local middle school for the school walking club. The Healthy Council has installed new playground equipment at the local park in hopes of providing opportunities for McLean County residents to get out and become active, as well as sponsor other health related events in the community.

One program implemented by the FCS agent addressing the health issues within the community was the “Get Moving KY” program. The goal of the program is educating participants on the importance of becoming physically active. Additionally, for participants to learn the benefits of becoming physically active as an individual, with family or as a community. One week after the program ended the FCS agent encouraged participants to participant in

the Women’s club 5K in McLean County. After this eight week program on hundred percent (100%) of participants reported an increase in their level of physical activity and 96% planned on getting 30 minutes of physically activity most days of the week after the program ends. Furthermore, 62% of participants reported weight loss and reported an improvement in cholesterol, blood pressure, or blood glucose.



“We have all become more active together as a family and have supported each other thought this program.” Hailey Guenthner

One participant of the program testified due to participating in this program her entire family has become more physically active. She began the program with her father to help him increase his physically activity level to assist with improving current health issues. As a result of this program she, her husband, and relatives became members at a local gym to become more active. Her son also began working out at the gym with the family and since then lost weight. After completing the program she and her husband ran in the local 5K, which was their first time competing in a 5K . She was quoted saying “we have all become more active together as a family and have supported each other thought this program.”



Field Day Increases Knowledge of Cover Crop Usage



Producers are always looking for ways to reduce inputs yet still maximize yields and profitability. One possible strategy is the implementation of cover crops. They may or may not boost your profits the first year you plant, however they can improve your bottom line over the years as their soil-improving effects accumulate.

To illustrate this effect to farmers, the McLean County Cooperative Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources teamed up with a local producer to plan a five year cover crop project. During the duration of this project, cover crops will be planted in the same field for five consecutive years behind the farmer's regular crop rotation. Data will be collected throughout the five years and published.

A field day was held this spring for other producers to have the opportunity to tour the plot and hear about the project. Field day participants also had the opportunity to hear information on cover crops from UK Soil Specialist and NRCS State Soil Scientist. Producers that have already implemented cover crop in their rotation also had the opportunity to share their experiences with field day participants.

Of the 32 that attended, 21 completed evaluations. One hundred percent (100%) of those that completed evaluations reported an increase in understanding of the benefits of using cover crops, proper management of crop residue, basics of soil health and of the county cover crop project. As a result of the field day 100% said they would implement the usage of cover crops and 100% also indicated that they would utilize Extension research and publications on cover crops. Another producer noted that he "enjoyed looking at the differences in the treatments on the plot the most".

Future work with the cover crop plot will continue and data from this year's cover crop plot will be shared with producers at a winter meeting.



"I enjoyed looking at the differences in the treatments on the plot the most."
Field day participant.

The Chef's!



Nearly 36% of youth in Kentucky are considered to be overweight or obese, threatening their overall well-being. In an effort to help youth become more aware of what they eat and how their food should be prepared, a cooking club was formed by the 4-H agent and a dedicated volunteer in McLean County. Starting with only three members, the club leaders began teaching youth not only how to eat healthy, but also how to measure, use and properly store ingredients and utensils. By further promotion, the club grew to ten members in two short months. Youth became so involved, that they renamed the club to "The Chef's," elected officers and appointed committees. In May the Club held a summer bash inviting their friends to try some of the healthy recipes they have made and promote healthy lifestyles by including fitness relays into the event. The youth in this club have been dedicated to growing their leadership and well-being skills. After only seven months of meeting, all members have reported an increase in physical activity and smart choices when eating, several have even lost weight. We can't wait to see where "The Chef's" will go!

Learning new life-skills while building Family Relationships

Building and preserving family relationships is an important aspect of life, especially in small rural towns. One way to build strong family relationships is by teaching others something new or by learning something new together as a family. One important component of Family and Consumer Sciences Extension is to assist families with developing a strong value system and developing a supportive and encouraging environment. In order to begin developing these important aspects within families

in McLean County, the Family and Consumer Science Extension agent hosted two beginning quilting classes for McLean County residents. Those who attended testified



they gained basic quilting and sewing skills from each of the programs. After the basic quilting classes, several participants of the class taught other individuals how to sew and create a quilt top. One participant has taught her grandchildren to create a quilt with the skills she gained from these classes. Three youth completed their first quilts as a result of this program. All three entered their quilts at McLean County Ag Festival in hopes of advancing to the State Fair. Furthermore, one participant hosted a quilting day at her home for family and friends to teach them the pattern she had learned from attending one of the basic quilting classes. As a result of the quilting day two family members completed their first quilt top. This life skill has brought both family and community together by passing on the skill of sewing while building stronger relationships and sense of community.

“Learning to quilt has always been one of my goals. Now my daughter and I have memories of learning together and she has a new skill no one can take away.” ***Mischelle Pinkston***



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

McLean County

*Extending Knowledge,
Changing Lives*

For more information,
Please contact us at:
335 West 7th Street
Calhoun, KY 42327
(270) 273-3690
Fax: (270) 273-9986
www.ca.uky.edu

