

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN METCALFE COUNTY

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



Tobacco GAP

Metcalfe County is home to a large number of farm families that are economically dependent on tobacco production. Although, total production is down compared to previous years, tobacco still maintains its spot as one of the top agricultural commodities in the area. In 2016, all major tobacco companies required producers to be trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in order to market tobacco. This is due to an increasing concern for consumer health as well as the health and safety of those that work in the crop. The Extension agents in Barren, and Metcalfe counties scheduled, hosted, facilitated, and provided materials and resources for the trainings. Dr. Bob Pearce, as well as representatives from GAP Connections and the U.S. Department of Labor presented research based information that included basic tobacco production information along with issues pertaining to safety, worker training and labor laws. As a part of this process, all growers were educated on the topics listed above and given credit for their completion of the training. Over 200 tobacco producers became certified in Good Agricultural Practices in 2016. As a result, those who participated will be able to market approximately 5000 acres of Burley and realize a gross income of over \$20,000,000.

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **181** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **35** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **158** local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- **172** Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **617** youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- **4,138** citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **56** individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of **791** youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- **135** individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.



Kentucky Blueberry School

Blueberry production in Kentucky centers in Metcalfe County. The Kentucky Blueberry Growers Association is located in Metcalfe County and influences production methods and distribution of blueberries throughout Kentucky. Recent changes within this entity have given rise to an increased grower interest in organic production methods. As a result, the 2015 Commercial Blueberry Production in Kentucky Workshop included information about organic production of blueberries.

For the third year, the Commercial Blueberry Production in Kentucky Workshop was held in Metcalfe County. This event was hosted by the Metcalfe County Extension Service and coordinated by the Metcalfe County Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent and the University of Kentucky Department of Plant Pathology Extension Specialist and Associate. An all-day program was conducted on October 24, 2015. Speakers included a representative from Kentucky Department of Agriculture, University of Kentucky Farm Manager, and University of Kentucky Specialists. Topics included conventional and organic approaches to disease, insect and weed management, soil fertility, and cultivar/site selection, as well as information on organic certification.

Surveys were completed by 25 attendees before and after the event to measure change in knowledge and anticipated changes in practices. Attendees represented more than 30 acres/10,000 plants of state-wide blueberry production. Surveys indicated an increase in understanding of more than 30% in plant disease management, insect management, weed management, fertility and composting, and organic certification. Participants indicated they were on average 13% more likely to transition to organic production after the program. Attendees indicated the most significant item from the program that would be applied to their operations were disease and insect scouting and weed management.

Participants indicated the workshop was a “great program” and that presentations of research based information was well explained and helped to “retain the info and apply it in different situations.” Changes in practices and knowledge gained by attendees will benefit grower operation and profitability long term.

Extending the Growing Season

Metcalfe County has more than 20 producers with high tunnels or greenhouses that extend vegetable production into the early winter season and provide cole crops throughout the winter months. Many of these growers now vend at the local farmer’s market. As part of the USDA FMPP grant work plan, two planning meetings have been conducted for the purpose of connecting these producers to each other, inspiring cooperation and to recruit these producers to sell at the Metcalfe County Farmer’s Market for the extended season winter market sales.

As a result of participating in these organizational meetings facilitated by Metcalfe County ANR and FCS Extension, high tunnel/greenhouse producers are now cooperatively bulk purchasing plastics, fertilizers and seeds to maximize their buying power and budgets. Some of these producers have formed a partnership and are working together to develop a winter/extended season CSA type program, to provide local families with locally grown produce on a regular schedule, in the winter months.



Talented and Gifted (TAG)w

In collaboration with the Metcalfe County School's Gifted & Talented Education program, 4-H has helped in the development of speaking and listening skills of 4th grade TAG students. As part of core content expectations, 4th grade youth must show growth during the academic year in individual abilities to present knowledge and ideas. While this same expectation is valuable in regards to the success of 4-H demonstrations, leadership endeavors, public speaking, and active discussions and participation in club meetings, it seems evident partnering with this group of youth would make for a WIN-WIN situation for all involved – youth, teachers, 4-H Leadership & Public Speaking programs.

A pre-assessment was used during the initial TAG event in October 2015. A rubric was used to determine student performance in reference to reporting on a topic, speaking clearly at understandable paces, enhancing presentations with visual displays, and using formal and informal English as needed. All youth were given a prompt that addressed reporting on the topic of the day and were rated based on the 4th grade Speaking & Listening Rubric. One hundred percent (100%) of the youth showed growth by reaching the "Frequently" or "Almost Always" rating on the 4th grade Speaking and Listening Rubric. Therefore, obvious growth was shown. Developing confident youth at such an early age is vital in promoting the leadership abilities of our youth. The long term possibilities of this partnership is sure to benefit all involved.



Seven Springs Sorghum Festival

The fourth annual Seven Springs Sorghum Festival provided adults and children of all ages with educational activities, entertainment and that down home old fashion farm experience with antique tractors, corn maze, safety, KY Proud produce, and down home grilled meals. The festival continues to grow due to public awareness, added facilities and partnerships with many regional farmers and other entities.

Extension has played a vital role in making the event a success. Each year agents serve on the planning committee and help insure that the event goes off as planned. Extension is involved from the beginning until the end. In 2016 the Metcalfe County Extension Service took on an additional role with the festival. The 4-H youth and their families provided animals for a petting zoo to teach safety and proper animal health. The youth educated the participants on the different breeds, species and animal safety.

The Metcalfe County Farmer's Market and the Metcalfe County 4-H Council both received funds from the profits coming from the event. The 2016 festival grossed \$9925 in total revenue. The net profit was \$5159. Sixty percent of this was divided between the 2 groups. The Metcalfe County Farmer's Market received \$2023.60 and the Metcalfe County 4-H Council received \$1011.80.

The money received will help the farmers market continue to fund the market manager position for an additional year. The position has been grant funded and those funds expire at the end of the market year. The 4-H council will use the funds to reduce the out of pocket cost of parents for programs that require the participants to pay a fee.

Farmer's Market

The Metcalfe County Farmer's Market has completed their work plan in this second and final year for the USDA Farmer's Market Promotion Program Grant with great success. These achievements are directly attributable to the hard work of the farmer's market volunteer Board Members, the market Manager and our top notch Producers! The chart below shows the progress achieved over the past year.

| Farmer's Market Successes | 2015 | 2016 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Total # of Vendors | 26 | 31 |
| Average Vendors | 8 | 9 |
| Total sales/all Vendors | \$15,946 | \$25,273 |
| Average Sales/Market | \$468 | \$588 |
| Average Sales/Vendor/Market | \$56 | \$68 |
| Top Mkt Sales Amount/Date | \$932 8/28/15 | \$1,189 7/15/16 |
| Average # Customers/Market | 57 | 81 |
| Number of Market open days | 27 | 43 |
| Amount of SNAP \$ Spent @ the Market | \$311 | \$970 |

Exploring My Community and the Arts Day Camp

The second annual FREE Exploring My Community and the Arts Day Camp was conducted June 14 – 17, 2016. The program was implemented by Metcalfe Co. Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences Education, two Extension Program Assistants, a volunteer 5th grade teacher and two paid college bound senior graduates from Metcalfe County High School. Periodic assistance was also provided by the Community Education Director and a local teen artist with planning/implementation assistance from other FCS program advisory council members.



The 40 youth participants had completed 2nd – 4th grades. This FCS Agent partnered with the Migrant Education program through Metcalfe County Schools to publicize the program and recruit participants. The group was a diverse one both socioeconomically and in other ways. Participants were drawn from all over the County, to include underserved areas in the northern/southern communities. Thirty-two participants were from families with limited resources. Five participants were identified as having special/medical needs.

The travelling Super Star Chef teaching team from the University of Kentucky taught hands-on nutrition, food preparation and food safety skills to the group each morning of the first three days of Camp. As a result, most families have reported in post day camp follow-up that their children are assisting more with meal preparation in the home. The youth also learned how to paint and blend with acrylic paint on canvas with each participant creating their own painting on canvas board. 13 Metcalfe County Quilt club and Homemaker volunteers also facilitated a pillow case sewing, service learning project. Youth participants learned about the nearby not-for-profit Center for Courageous Kids (CCK) and made two pillowcases, with the help of Homemaker volunteers. Each youth Day Camp participant donated one of the pillowcases that they made (40 total) to the CCK. Two field trips were conducted to Mammoth Cave National Park for the Domes and Drips cave tour/museum and to the Southern Kentucky Cultural Center in Glasgow. Youth learned about these top notch resources in our area and about our unique cultural history and topography in a hands – on manner. These were first time visits to these two educational resources for all but two of our day camp participants.

SNAP ED

Fifty-seven (57) adults graduated from the Nutrition Education Program for the 2015-2016 year. Of those, 72% increased usage of the "Nutrition Facts" on food labels; 89% improved in one or more of the following food resource management areas: plan meals, compare prices, not run out of food, use grocery lists; 98% improved in one or more, good nutrition practices.



All Preschool, Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade children in the county, received 6 or more nutrition lessons for the school year. All MCHS freshman students were taught 2 nutrition lessons about MyPlate Portions and the MyPlate website. All 6th grade students were taught a MyPlate Healthy Snacks lesson. A Youth Superstar Chef 6 series lesson was taught at the Metcalfe County Public Library over the summer, serving 20 youth aged 9-13. 1 community garden was planted and maintained by LifeSkills Inc. participants; Cook Together Curriculum was piloted and 6 adult participants, with 6 youth completed the program; SNAP Education Programming was offered at 7 different sites in the community on a monthly basis.



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

*Extending Knowledge,
Changing Lives*

For more information,
Please contact us at:
422 East St. PO Box 55
Edmonton, KY 42129
(270) 432-3561
Fax: (270) 432-5087
www.ca.uky.edu

