EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives
IN MUHLENBERG COUNTY

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

Priority Program Efforts

- a total of 494 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 880 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- 35 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- 57 producers adopted resource management technologies (IRM, IPM, soil testing, soil fertility management) as a result of Extension programs
- 1,610 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 680 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- a total of 1,024 individuals gained knowledge about eating healthy foods
- a total of 1,000 children and youth were reached through Extension programming related to eating healthy foods
- a total of 300 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- 35 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices

Improving the Lives of Muhlenberg County Citizens

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service is instrumental in improving the lives of local citizens. Research-based information from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment combined with a collaborative effort from Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service agents, leaders and volunteers makes this possible. Whether it is agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, or 4-H youth development, the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service impacts the lives of all citizens of Muhlenberg County. We hope that you will take time to review the programs highlighted in this report and we look forward to seeing you at one of our programs soon!

Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension staff from left to right: Dan Wood, Maintenance Staff, Judy McGehee, 4-H Youth Development Program Assistant, Kristan Melton, Staff Assistant, Janie Culton, Staff Assistant, Mackenzie Pogue, 4-H Youth Development Agent, Vi Wood, SNAP-Ed Assistant, Mary Beth Riley, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, and Darrell Simpson, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent.

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Utilizing Soil Testing to Reduce Crop Inputs

Reducing input costs will be necessary for crop farmers to make a profit or break even in the next few years. The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service utilized Extension Specialists to host an educational meeting in December 2015 to address the issue of reduced or no profit. Twelve producers attended this three-hour program to learn about weed control, soil testing and budgeting.

Johnny and Stephen Boggess harvesting corn.

The soil test comparison calculator was utilized to show the difference between the recommendations and costs associated with utilizing results from the University of Kentucky soil test laboratory and a commercial laboratory. Two producers who had not been using the University of Kentucky soil lab submitted 22 samples to the UK lab representing over 300 acres of crop land. Another producer submitted four samples representing 64 acres, that producer split the samples to compare results from the UK lab and a commercial lab. The producer learned that he could save $1,956 over the 64 acres ($30.56 per acre) and not affect production negatively by utilizing the UK laboratory and recommendations. A fourth producer provided information about results and recommendations from a commercial lab. The producer learned that he could use recommendations which were based on the University of Kentucky Lime and Nutrient Recommendations publication to reduce fertilizer rates and costs. The producer commented, "I put on what you said to get me to the needed Phosphorous and Potash levels."

Enhancing Knowledge About Cuts of Meat and How to Cook Them

There is a growing trend throughout the country to learn more about where food comes from and how to prepare it. The Muhlenberg County Extension Agents for agriculture and natural resources and family and consumer sciences collaborated again this year with Dr. Gregg Rentfrow, Meats Specialist from the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture Foods and Environment on a two session educational program entitled All about Meats. Thirteen (13) people participated in the program. They learned about the meat harvest process, food safety, where the different cuts of meat come from on the carcass, selecting the best cuts of meat, quality grades, muscles of locomotion versus muscles of stability, and umami. Surveys after the first session revealed that none of the participants considered themselves very knowledgeable about where the different cuts of meat originate before the program, whereas three considered themselves very knowledgeable after the program. Only three considered themselves knowledgeable before the program as compared to seven who said that they were knowledgeable after the program. Only four program participants considered themselves knowledgeable about the meat harvest process and food safety before the program as compared to nine participants who said that they were knowledgeable after the program.

Comments from the participants included, "Great learning experience," "Loved it! This was a very informative class," and "I really enjoyed seeing the different cuts of meat." Extension is about providing unbiased research based information. This program was another good example of meeting that need.
4-H Youth Development

Digging up Experience

Understanding science helps kids appreciate and relate to the world around them. Middle school is the perfect time to get kids interested in science when they are naturally curious. Science education fuels that curiosity and provides our youth in Muhlenberg County with valuable ideas, skills, and potential future career choices. Geology education teaches children about earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and tsunamis, arming them with knowledge about Earth processes that can protect their health and safety throughout their lives.

A Muhlenberg County 4-Her learns about geology by discovering a rock with a fossil.

With the support from a local science teacher, geologist, farmer and 4-H, 58 students participated in a geological dig in Muhlenberg County. Students were armed with buckets, digging tools, and a sense of curiosity; then guided down the creek to excavate their own rock and mineral specimens. The geologist assisted in identifying the rocks and minerals the students unearthed. Students and volunteers alike discovered new geological finds and benefited from an adventurous day outdoors learning about our environment. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the participating students surveyed stated they connected to the environment in a new way by discovering rocks and fossils with their own hands.

Game On! at West KY 4-H Camp

4-H Camp is a favorite of Muhlenberg County 4-H members and volunteers. Two hundred three (203) locals spent an action packed week at 4-H Camp this past summer. That’s 171 campers and 32 adults, teens and counselors in training. For several years Muhlenberg County has camped the most campers at West KY 4-H Camp. Survey results from camp indicate: 98% made new friends at camp, 98% helped others while at camp, 96% felt cabin leaders cared about them, 100% took responsibility for themselves, 97% tried something new at camp, 97% felt safe at camp, and 97% felt good about their accomplishments while at camp. The camp experience paired kids with caring adults, grandparents who have been going to camp since their grandkids were young and are now in college, young parents who grew up in 4-H, attended camp as a youngster and are now camping with their children, and new volunteers who were eager to jump right in and make for a fun week at camp for our kids. 4-H Camp offers teens the opportunity to give back and to serve others. 4-H Camp gives the counselors in training the opportunity to get a glimpse of themselves in leadership roles and gives all involved the opportunity to develop new skills. That is what 4-H is all about!

Muhlenberg County 4-H campers and volunteers gather around for a group photo.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Increasing Knowledge about Healthy Lifestyle Choices for Primary Students

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) more than one-third of children and adolescents are overweight or obese. The Muhlenberg County Extension agents for agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development and the SNAP-Ed assistant partnered together to provide an educational session titled Spring into Healthy Habits. At this educational session 74 kindergarteners participated in the program and were evaluated. The students learned about proper hand washing, making a healthy beverage choice, having good oral health, where their food comes from, how to be physically active, and making healthy food choices. The students were evaluated before the session began and again when the session was complete.
Two out of the four classes had a 100% improvement of identifying when to wash their hands before eating. This improvement was most likely correlated to the hands-on activity of hand washing during the educational session. The final evaluations demonstrated that all four classrooms had a 100% improvement of children being able to identify vegetables. This improvement is due to teaching the students about where their food comes from; Farm to Plate; and making healthy food choices. The CDC states that children need 60 minutes or more of physical activity a day to live a healthy lifestyle. Due to the educational session that provided the children with information about how to be physically active, two out of the four classrooms had a 100% improvement of children identifying being active. When asked to identify dairy foods 56 students had a 100% improvement at the end of the educational sessions. Some of the comments that were from the students and teachers included, “I did not know soda had that much sugar!”, “I love eating vegetables.”, “Great program, I hope Extension can provide this again!” This was the first year for this program and with the results from the evaluations this program will be provided again, hopefully to more schools in the community.

Nutrition Education Program

The goal of the Kentucky Nutrition Education Program is to educate limited resource Kentuckians on how they can improve skills, and change necessary behaviors for health and well-being. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) through the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service had 78 families enrolled in the basic nutrition education program called Healthy Choices for Every Body. Fifty-seven (57) families completed the program, while 18 families are continuing in the program. This Program is an eight to 12 lesson curriculum designed to teach clients to achieve and maintain good health. Families learn to prepare and store food safely and make healthy food choices on a limited budget through this program. One hundred percent (100%) of the families that completed the program showed positive changes in at least one core area upon completion of the Program.

Twelve (12) clients participated in a three-day Food Preservation Workshop offered by the Kentucky Nutrition Education Program. Seven (7) clients from the Greenville Housing Authority attended a one-day program taught by the Extension staff. Clients gained skills in food preservation, as well as food safety, and meal planning. Three hundred nine (309) youth in 18 youth groups were enrolled in at least one nutrition education program. One hundred ninety-six (196) of those youth completed their program and 73% showed improvement in at least one core area. Youth were reached in a variety of programs both in school and after school. Food Explorers, a collaborative program with 4-H and family and consumer sciences introduces an unfamiliar food to youth once a month for the entire school year. It reached 550 students and faculty members at Greenville Elementary. The SNAP-Ed assistant reached 12,309 additional contacts at community events, school events, grocery stores, food banks, summer feeding sites, and the Farmer’s Market. These one-time contacts were offered information to improve use of their food dollars, how to make quick, low cost, and healthy meals, healthier diets that reduce the risk of chronic diseases, and improved food storage safety resulting in fewer food borne illnesses. The nutrition education program has seen great growth in Muhlenberg County in 2016.