

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN OWSLEY COUNTY

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



Mrs. Heather Hall's 3rd Grade Class – Owsley County Elementary School with the books donated by Save the Children for Butterfly Project

4-H BUTTERFLY PROJECT

The life cycle is an important component of the science curriculum standards for third grade students at Owsley County Elementary School. The Owsley County Cooperative Extension Service, in cooperation with the Owsley County Schools, conducted a 4-H Butterfly Project with 50 third grade students. The project provided each classroom with caterpillars, which the students were able to observe and record information as the caterpillars changed into chrysalides and butterflies. By the end of the project students were able to define and describe meconium (68%), metamorphosis (72%), as well as the four stages of the life cycle (68%). Once the butterflies emerged and their wings strengthened, the students released them. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the students encountered their first ever 4-H experience. One teacher stated, “The hands-on learning from the Butterfly Project helped the students have a better understanding of the material.”

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **2,048** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **210** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **300** local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- **230** Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **1,082** youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- **556** citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **920** individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of **2,961** youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- **627** individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

OWSLEY COUNTY FARMERS MARKET

The agriculture industry, more specifically production agriculture, has been devastated by the loss of income from tobacco in Owsley County over the last ten years. Tobacco was the primary income for farmers in this area for many years, however, since the buyout from the tobacco companies in 2001, it has been a struggle for farmers to replace. They quickly realized in order to sustain their operations, they had to start producing something else and for many the answer was vegetable production. It was obvious that the farmers had a good grasp on production, however, they struggled with marketing as that was not a requirement in tobacco production.

The Owsley County Cooperative Extension Service, along with a small group of farmers with the Owsley County Farm Bureau joined together to start a local Farmers Market that would be the center for helping farmers market their products. The Extension Office took the lead role in providing classes to the farmers on everything from production to dealing with the consumer. Nearly \$60,000 in grants and donations allowed us to build a 40x80 shelter on the Owsley County High School property for the Owsley County Farmers Market. Owsley County High School was also successful in securing another \$35,000 to install walk in coolers for the farmers to use. We received an additional \$5800 in farmers market vouchers from the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These vouchers were for senior citizens over the age of 60 years or age, who met the poverty income guidelines. The vouch

ers were used to purchase fruits and vegetables which resulted in a 95% redemption rate. Surveys from 12 farmers indicate that:

- 80% grew Tobacco prior to joining the Farmers Market.
- 100% give Owsley County Extension credit for their success with the Farmers Market.
- 100 % give Owsley County Extension credit for improving management, quality, yields and personal marketing skills through Extension programs.

50% stated that they had increased personal income by 100% by selling at Farmers Market.

OWSLEY COUNTY FARMACY PROGRAM

It has been said that Owsley County is one of the poorest counties in the nation, and according to many reports it is one of the unhealthiest populations nationwide. A report from Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) in 2014 stated that Owsley County has 12.5% diabetes and 32.7% obesity based on County Population and a poverty level of around 50%. Eating healthy can be very expensive compared to eating junk foods, therefore making it even more difficult for our citizens to afford access to healthier foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables. The Owsley County Cooperative Extension Service and the Owsley County Farmers Market are now partnering with Mountain Comprehensive Health Care (MCHC). MCHC is a clinic in the county working to improve the health of individuals and families by means of a more nutritional diet. Eligible recipients receive a prescription from their doctor at the clinic to purchase FREE food at the Farmers Market. The program is called FARMACY, MCHC has pledged \$30,000.00 for the 2016 season and is a popular program. We like to call this a win, win program. The patient gets fresh produce at no charge that they otherwise couldn't afford, the overall health of the patient will improve and the farmers are getting an increase in sales. The farmers are reimbursed through MCHC.





Produce available at the Owsley County Farmer's Market

4-H COMMUNICATIONS

Research shows us that the ability to communicate effectively is the most preeminent skill necessary to develop adequate leadership potential. Owsley County 4-H, in cooperation with the Owsley County School, has conducted the 4-H Talk Meet and 4-H demonstrations for many years. The Owsley County 4-H Agent presents the communications curriculum to all fourth grade students in the County. Participants developed their writing and public speaking skills. Over a three year span, 208 youth participated in the Talk Meet and 142 in demonstrations. In 2015-2016 17 students advanced on to the District Competition for the Talk Meet or demonstration contest. Eight of those students advanced to the Kentucky 4-H State Communications Day contests, of which one student won 3rd place. Participants were surveyed on these objectives of the program; researching a topic before writing their speech, write and outline before writing their speech and presenting their speech in front of an audience. Ninety-three percent (93%) of students researched a topic before writing their speech, 88% wrote an outline before writing their speech and 85% gave their speech in front of their parents before the contest. Based on post-survey results the objectives were achieved. Due to the interest in the program, it continues yearly and we are currently looking into having volunteer leaders working one on one with county winners to better prepare them for district and state contests.



District 2 4-H Communications Day Event – Owsley County participants

MONEY HABITUDES

Current economic conditions and the high incidence of low economic levels create challenges for individuals and families both in Owsley County and surrounding counties. Like most Americans, residents lack in financial planning skills which in turn lowers their potential for long term financial security. To address the need for financial education, the Owsley County Cooperative Extension Service offered 14 programs to local and area Extension Homemaker Clubs and other community groups reaching 109 individuals. The Money Habitudes curriculum enabled participants to identify specific behavioral patterns related to money, to learn to communicate more effectively about money, and to build self-esteem and assertiveness in handling money. Ninety percent (90%) made at least one specific savings or wealth-related goal for their family, farming operation or business because of this program. After one year, a post survey of 55 participants indicated that:

- 78% implemented a plan to decrease their expenses or manage wealth because of this program.
- 78% reported the implementation of at least one financial management strategy.
- 30% have improved their economic condition by increasing their savings as part of the 52 Week Money Challenge.

The participants are more prepared for emergencies, income taxes, and holiday shopping. Some testimonials of changes the participants have made include the following: One participant commented “I used more coupons and follow my list”. Another participant commented “I have

money deducted from each payroll check & deposited into a savings account.”



State Trooper Purdy, County Attorney Henley McIntosh & Superintendent Tim Bobrowski speak to students at Truth & Consequences 2016

TRUTH & CONSEQUENCES: THE CHOICE IS YOURS

The Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting System (KASPER), tracks controlled substance prescriptions dispensed within the State. KASPER Trend Report data (2013 fourth quarter) indicates that 341,600 doses of controlled substances were dispensed in Owsley County. With this in mind, the Owsley County Extension Service continued to partner with the Owsley Drug Awareness Council, Owsley County Schools and the Youth Service Center to provide our 9th & 12th grade students with our 6th Annual Truth & Consequences: The Choice is Yours which reached 566 students during this six-year period.

Truth & Consequences is a substance abuse prevention activity designed to show students and other youth the impact of being involved with illicit and legal substances. Students do role play scenarios, and depending on their scenario, students visit appropriate officials and/or agencies to experience the consequences of behaviors. Fifty six (56) freshman and seniors participated in this event along with 33 community partners, volunteers and parents. At the conclusion of our event, community partners conducted a panel to share their experiences in working with those who have abused or misused drugs.

The community partner results included the following:

- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that substance abuse was a significant problem in our community
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that alcohol was easy to get in their community.

Student evaluation results revealed the following:

- 91% of students indicated that they have a better understanding of the health consequences of substance abuse.
- 93% of students indicated that they have a better understanding of the emotional consequences of substance abuse.
- 93% of students indicated that they developed a better understanding of where to access help in the community for a substance abuse issue.
- 93% of students indicated that they have developed a better understanding of the risk and harm of substance abuse.

*“If we can save one child...just one,
our work is not in vain”
- District Judge Leach*

Comments from other students included, “It made me think, I am in control and I make my own decisions,”; “Never do pills,” and “I learned a lot from this.” In addition to the student evaluations, we continue to gain new community partners in this event.



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