



Alabama Cooperative Extension System
2015 Annual Report

We Grow Alabama

www.aces.edu/impact

PLANTING THE SEED

One out of four Alabama residents received information and programming in 2015 from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). 1.2 million Alabamians attended an Extension educational program, received personal guidance, or participated in 4-H activities. Alabama Extension evolves to meet the changing needs of our state while focusing on its mission of improving Alabama's economy and quality of life through the delivery of impactful educational programs to all 67 counties. These programs are relevant to contemporary and local issues, research based, and provided through sustained personal and institutional relationships. Digital advances coupled with the personal touch of Extension educational professionals make ACES an asset to Alabama. ACES is the combined Extension effort of Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities.



**Natural Resources
& Global Food
Security and Hunger**
91,564 people



**Community &
Family Programs**
\$8.5 million
annually to
fight obesity crisis
in Alabama

Building community
partnerships to improve
healthy food choices
and encourage
physical activities



**Safe & Secure
Food Supply**
35,982 people

Entrepreneurs pass
FDA inspections with
ACES training

ROI = Return on Investment

Volunteers Contribute To Communities and ACES

15,990 4-H volunteers (1,629 direct and 14,361 program volunteers) donated 99,563 hours to 4-H young people in their communities at a value of \$2.2 million. **ROI 1:19**

1,699 ACES-trained Master Gardener volunteers assisted ACES agents answering 9,208 calls while helping their community neighbors with home, yard, and garden questions; 119,769 households at a value of \$2.1 million. **ROI 1:19**

102,896 residents visited Master Gardener demonstration gardens in their communities.

320 Water Watch volunteers collected 3,315 water samples to manage the water quality of local lakes, streams, and rivers.

96 oyster gardeners donated 960 hours raising baby oysters to increase oyster populations at public reefs in Mobile Bay.

1,506 Alabama A&M students volunteered 40,000 hours to local agencies and NGOs at a savings of \$942,000 to those organizations. **ROI 1:388**

Alabama Youth

138,675 Alabama young people are involved in 4-H club or enrichment programs. Approximately 30% of the state's young people ages 9 to 13 are involved in Alabama 4-H.

Alabama 4-H has a presence in school systems in every county.

25,246 young people developed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math skills through 4-H STEM projects.

4-H teams built 1,071 engineering design prototypes as they developed innovation and creativity skills.

48,356 young people gained leadership and personal development through 4-H.

3,677 urban young people disapproved of the use of tobacco with a potential out-of-pocket and health savings of \$7,394,447 per year.

ROI 1:74

629 young people enrolled in the ACES PROSPER program demonstrated a reduction in aggressive behavior.

1,266 young people increased financial management skills.

3,963 young people participated in bullying prevention and learned the cause and effects of bullying, strategies to help others being victimized, and pro-social skills that help foster healthy relationships with their peers.

Alabama Families

1,747 families learned effective communication skills, techniques to resolve conflict, and improved spending habits through family advocacy programs.

The divorce rate in Alabama has dropped faster than in any other state, falling from 10th in 2003 to 21st in 2013. A contributing factor is Extension's divorce prevention programs. In Alabama, each divorce costs \$14,000 in family costs and \$18,000 in governmental costs. 6,354 fewer divorces mean \$202,328,000 not removed from the state economy. Extension invested \$720,000 in staff and programming. **ROI 1:271**

166 senior citizens improved their retirement financial planning skills through the Seniors Can program.

127 senior citizens completed estate planning documents saving their families extensive probate court costs. **ROI 1:127**

464 farm families explored multigeneration transfer plans to sustain family farms.

145 Alabamians reduced debt with ACES financial planning programs resulting in a total savings of \$83,375. **ROI 1:11**

513 grandparents who received ACES education kept grandchildren from entering the Alabama Foster Care System saving the state \$31,806,000 in foster care costs. **ROI 1:3447**

Alabama's Food Supply

\$150,000 worth of fresh vegetables (25 tons) from Master Gardener-managed gardens donated to food banks and local food assistance programs to help reduce food insecurity.

23 commercial food entrepreneurs with \$2.1 million of sales passed FDA inspection as a result of ACES training. **ROI 1:350**

766 home food entrepreneurs completed the Cottage Food Law certification exam allowing each person to produce and sell up to \$20,000/year for a potential total of \$15.3 million of new economic activity. **ROI 1:61**

85 food entrepreneurs received product testing and labeling advice through the ACES Food Entrepreneur Laboratory.

Alabama's Health and Wellness

Fresh fruit, vegetable, and water

purchases in 3 family-owned grocery stores in a declining rural African American (96%) community with 29% poverty and an extremely high obesity rate (53.9% female and 39.9% male) adopted product placement, signage, and product option strategies provided by ACES to stimulate healthier food and beverage purchases while increasing profitability. One store now sells 10 cases of fresh fruit cups per week after adding them as an impulse item near the checkout register.

Better health is associated with reduced health care costs, less work absenteeism, and less dependence on emergency food assistance. EFNEP offers programs to improve the health and well-being of limited-resource families. National studies confirm that \$1 spent on adult EFNEP programs produces a benefit of \$10.96.

ROI 1:11

Alabama urban households discard \$640 worth of food per year. 949 SNAP-Ed urban participants reduced food waste by a total of \$607,360 per year. **ROI 1:19**

436 urban residents involved in the ACES CHAMPION program reduced annual health costs by \$550 a year with improved food choices and increased activity.

ROI 1:114

Alabama Agriculture and Forestry

Extension and the National Poultry Technology Center created a rainwater harvesting system for poultry houses. A demonstration system collects 100,000 gallons of rainwater from four 40' x 500' houses. A one-inch rain event collects \$500 in water with annual savings per house of \$4,000. The project demonstrates payback of investment in 5.2 years while reducing the pressure on public water systems for infrastructure expansion and livestock production.

ACES and Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station scientists created LED-lighting systems for the rigorous conditions of a poultry facility. The new lighting system offers savings of \$1,250 per poultry house or \$15 million for Alabama poultry producers.

ROI 1:175

Grazing Management Clinics helped northern Alabama beef producers more intensively manage 19,635 acres. At \$51.42 per acre, attendees earned an additional \$946,017. **ROI 1:135**

A volunteer trained by ACES assisted 7 farms in developing an artificial insemination breeding program resulting in increased profits of \$14,049 (\$669/head).

ROI 1:6

Alabama Beef Improvement Association members with ACES guidance marketed 5,149 feeder calves, 503 bulls, 333 bred heifers, and 63 open heifers realizing \$9,126,950 in income. **ROI 1:61**

\$426 per acre increased profits resulted from improved pest scouting and management practices on demonstration cotton fields resulting in a statewide potential of \$127.8 million across Alabama's 300,000 cotton acres. **ROI 1:319**

72% of conventional vegetable producers report using IPM tactics resulting in the prevention of 40% direct crop losses.

Improved on-farm and processing plant poultry footpad management resulted in a \$687,500 payback for one poultry operation. **ROI 1:286**



Alabama 4-H
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

37,591 kids
in 1,863 4-H Clubs

101,084 kids in 4-H events and activities

138,675 reached through 4-H

\$2.2 million value added by volunteers



Financial Literacy
381,385 people



Workforce Development
330,742 people

\$584,650 savings to state in unemployment benefits

How We Are Funded Based on FY16 Budget Data

54.93% (\$36,766,573) <i>State</i>	3.36% (\$2,246,204) <i>Local Appropriations</i>
17.11% (\$11,454,842) <i>Federal</i>	4.12% (\$2,758,100) <i>Other</i>
20.48% (\$13,709,951) <i>Contracts & Grants</i>	TOTAL: \$66,935,670

How We Use Funds

By Category

75.43% (\$50,492,097) <i>Personnel Costs</i>	24.57% (\$16,443,573) <i>Operating Costs</i>
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By Planned Program Areas

4.93% <i>Economic & Community Development</i>	28.76% <i>Family & Consumer Sciences</i>
20.30% <i>4-H & Youth Development</i>	30.63% <i>Agriculture, Forestry & Natural Resources</i>
15.38% <i>Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs</i>	

WATCHING ALABAMA GROW



Sustainable Ag & Forestry

\$10,300,000
for horticulture
industry

\$2,594,301 increase
in farm community
income by plant
diagnostic analysis



Environmental Stewardship

17,950 pounds

e-waste saved
nonrenewable
natural resources

43,500 stoker
oysters planted

\$10,300,000 saved by the Alabama horticulture industry with AU Plant Diagnostic Lab and Extension recommendations to address biotic disease, insect, and abiotic disorders. **ROI 1:50**

964 small-scale and limited-resource sheep and goat producers increased profitability 5% to 20% with improved parasite management saving \$988,100. **ROI 1:35**

Alabama Environmental Stewardship

80 pounds of nitrogen, 30 pounds of phosphorous, and 42 tons of sediment were reduced in the Mill Creek watershed in Lee and Russell Counties based on recommendations developed by ACES and Water Watch volunteers.

43,500 stoker oysters planted in the spring of 2016 added millions of additional larvae to the Mobile Bay estuarine system. **ROI 1:33**

4,000 feet of urban streams were enhanced or restored through collaborative efforts between city officials and the ACES storm water management program.

5 million outdoor enthusiasts received natural resource management information through the ACES/Buckmasters educational partnership.

3,912 pounds of printer cartridges were recycled as a result of ACES-community collaborative efforts.

3,734 pounds of prescription drugs and personal health care products diverted from community water and solid waste streams through collaborative training and collection efforts with Alabama communities.

160 rain barrels were installed by home gardeners saving approximately 10,000 gallons of city water. **ROI 1:2**

17,950 pounds of e-waste saved nonrenewable natural resources and offset CO₂ emissions equivalent to 4,342 gallons of gasoline and 991 trees. 37,269 plastic bottles

and 171,437 aluminum cans recycled; and 1,347 pounds of nylon, plastic, steel, copper, and aluminum reclaimed. **ROI 1:2**

Alabama Workforce Development

When the International Paper mill closed in Courtland, economic shock waves washed across six counties with a loss of 4,954 jobs and \$313 million in labor income. 70% of participants in Extension-sponsored employability training obtained jobs in the region. 85 were hired at one job fair, saving the state \$585,650 in unemployment benefits. **ROI 1:27**

73 Alabamians completed entrepreneurship certificate program designed to improve business startup success with a value of \$58,400. **ROI 1:5**

New Ways To Deliver Information

762 people downloaded *Emergency Handbook, Preparation, and Recovery; Planning for Storm Water; High Tunnel Greenhouse Production; Beef Basics*; and four volumes of the *Gardening in the South* series eBooks.

9,669 people downloaded the mobile apps SOW, Smart Yards, and Alabama Crops to help them manage their crops, yards, and gardens, respectively.

1.5 million people reached by Alabama Extension social media. 8,000 people have liked the ACES Facebook page and follow daily postings leading to more than 80,000 topic-driven conversations. With a 69% increase in likes the past 12 months, ACES is the most engaged Extension site in the South.

913 Extension news stories were placed in media across Alabama as well as in regional and national media. If Extension were to buy comparable advertising space, it would cost more than \$57 million.



ACES LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Agriculture and Natural Resources

Kudzu bug was noted at commercially damaging levels in soybean in Arkansas during June and July, 2016. So far, only a few fields have been observed, and Division entomologists have stayed in front of this new pest since the initial discovery on kudzu in the Arkansas Delta last year. In response, entomologists have educated county agents, growers and consultants in winter crop production meetings and most recently at a “hands-on” field event in Phillips County. The latest science-based management recommendations have been shared. Based on IPM principles, our scientists emphasize the need for a balanced management approach so that we do not “over-treat”, damaging beneficial insect populations.

Herbicide resistant palmer amaranth continues to develop in the Arkansas Delta and is the most difficult weed science management challenge in the state. Field trials in selected fields of east central and northeast Arkansas show palmer amaranth with resistance to glyphosate and PPO herbicides. In these trials, glufosinate (Liberty) continues to be the most effective herbicide with the new Extend technology (dicamba-resistant crops plus low volatility dicamba formulations) somewhat effective if used very early. The new technology has not been as effective in these trials as initially thought and apparently illegal and inappropriate use of dicamba on or around new dicamba-resistant soybean and cotton varieties planted in the Delta has resulted in many complaints from soybean producers. The scope of the injury has called into question the manageability of the Extend system in Arkansas.

The Division has two new horticulture specialists, one focused on production of fruit and vegetable crops and the other on IPM. Working together, they have engaged both commercial-scale and small local food producers using the latest science-based information and best management practices. With traditional row crop prices in a lull, producers are exploring alternative cropping systems including cucurbits, tomatoes, peppers, sweet corn and other high value horticulture crops in the Delta. Our new specialists are working with these growers “from the ground up” since production and IPM knowledge for these systems are brand new to these producers. These specialists have also initiated local food trials with correctional and other institutions to demonstrate the economic value of local production for direct consumption, with a continuing emphasis on food safety from field to plate.

Community & Economic Development/Public Policy Center

The Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center (APAC) is operated by the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service under a Cooperative Agreement from the Department of Defense (DOD) through a program administered by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). APAC provides statewide business consulting, counseling, contract assistance, and training services on how to participate with government contracting opportunities to both small and large businesses operating in all 75 Arkansas counties.

In fiscal year 2016, APAC assisted Arkansas companies in securing 1,038 contract awards (as reported by clientele). The value of these awards is more than \$126 million, a significant economic contribution to Arkansas communities and the state. Using Department of Defense conversion rates, this has resulted in more than 2,525 jobs that have been created or retained as a result of the program.

County Programs

The County Funding Plan that was launched on July 1, 2015 has been a success. New revenue from counties was received this year. Counties are expected by January 1, 2017 to contribute more than \$1.5 million in additional revenue.

An improved County Performance Evaluation Instrument is complete. County agents were trained on its use in June. Staff Chairs will receive additional training in August on “How to Conduct an Effective Performance Appraisal Conference.”

4-H Youth Development

Arkansas 4-H is piloting an in-school 4-H club approach in 12 counties starting in September. Selected counties vary by population size, county staffing level, and past school enrichment involvement. The three-year pilot will track how county staff build school partnerships, use 4-H educational curricula, develop and sustain 4-H Clubs, and engage youth beyond the school club to participate in county, district, and state activities.

Program goals are to: 1) Increase reach of the 4-H program by partnering with schools; 2) Increase diversity of 4-H membership through school partnerships; 3) Enhance and expand use of experiential learning techniques to prepare students for college and/or careers, including increasing confidence of school staff to use hands-on teaching techniques for core subjects, and providing support for use of experiential learning method and 4-H curricula to build “soft skills” such as communication and cooperation; 4) Increase funding for county-based youth development work by engaging school district support.

Family and Consumer Sciences

The Arkansas Healthy LIFE Project is a CDC-funded community-based effort to make Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) changes in four counties by combining outreach and education with building and engaging community coalitions. Community-wide needs assessment is complete, and coalitions have been engaged to identify strategies to make their communities healthier. With training and technical assistance provided by the project team to both county agents and coalition groups, some early successes have been realized such as fitness policies with local libraries, promotion of financial incentive and educational programs at local farmer’s markets, and local policies supporting improved sidewalks and bike lanes. The project will expand from four to six counties October 1.

The Extension Wellness Ambassador Program continues to train and graduate master health volunteers. More than 100 graduates from the program, which was first introduced three years ago, conducted 620 educational sessions reaching 5,885 Arkansans. Implementation of the volunteer-led Extension Get Fit Program is on-going; thousands of Arkansans are reached each year with ongoing group fitness classes. An agent trainer model increases training access and reduces geographic barriers for volunteers.

The RNECE-funded Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More project, implemented in five counties, utilized faith community-appointed lay leaders and EFNEP program assistants or trained Wellness Ambassador volunteers to educate church members on ways to improve the nutrition and physical activity environment in their faith communities. Pre- and post-surveys and biometrics have been collected and are currently being analyzed to determine changes in individual knowledge, behavior, weight and blood pressure. Comments and notes from field staff indicate that policy and environmental approaches have been implemented and include healthy tips in monthly newsletter, water policy at church functions, church garden, parking lot/walking track mapped with signage. Two Faithful Families EFNEP pages were created and have received over 30 likes which allows us to collect analytics for further analyses.

The Grandparents as our Superheroes program is a collaborative effort between FCS and 4H and offers youth the opportunity to convey the positive contributions senior adults have made in their lives through paintings and writings. Youth read books and participate in facilitated discussions about older adults, then write about and create illustrations about their appreciation for older adults in their lives. Senior adults benefit from the program by seeing how young people in their lives appreciate them.

University of Florida

- UF President Dr. Kent Fuchs will be joining us at the Extension Professional Associations Annual Conference in Daytona Beach on September 29 – 30, 2016 as our keynote speaker. He will be focusing on the 21st Century Land Grant University and Extension: Never Changing, Always Evolving.
- Dr. Heidi Radunovich of our Family, Youth, and Community Sciences Dept. is devoting 15% of her time to our “UF Engagement” initiative. Dr. Radunovich is currently exploring broad UF outreach activities that occur outside of IFAS. She will be focusing on assessing the big picture as well as developing relationships and partnerships between Extension and other UF Colleges and Institutes to broaden Extension’s direct reach throughout the state.
- UF Human Resources in consultation with our General Counsel’s Office determined that county extension faculty are exempt from the minimum salary threshold described in the Fair Labor Standards Act. We relayed this information to our county government partners and we have received no pushback to date.
- Faculty hiring continues at a fast pace. Seventy-five new state-level faculty were hired last year, and there have been 75 active and completed searches this year. (These numbers do not include county faculty hires.) Thirteen new faculty have been hired under UF’s “Pre-eminence” effort.

UF/IFAS

- UF/IFAS is preparing 2017 Legislative Budget Requests (LBRs). These LBRs will focus on: a statewide BMP research and extension initiative (\$2.5 Mill); Zika research and extension (\$4.2 Mill); Invasive Wildlife Response initiative (\$705 K); Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center in Live Oak upgrades (\$2.1 Mill); Southwest Florida Research and Education Center in Immokalee upgrades (\$2.0 Mill); Tropical Research and Education Center in Homestead upgrades (\$3.9 Mill); Florida Palms Under Siege (\$1.6 Mill).
- UF/IFAS has instituted a 12% IDC policy for all commodity groups and foundations as of July 1 '16. There has been a significant communication effort with major commodity groups to answer questions and to help them understand how these funds are utilized to address costs of research and investments into facilities, infrastructure, etc.
- Two major issues facing our state at this time are mosquito-borne Zika and Blue-Green Algae which are in some areas of Southeast FL. There are major efforts being invested in research and extension to proactively address these issues along with a number of state agencies.
- Our main UF/IFAS Administration Building (McCarty Hall) is undergoing renovations that will take several years to complete. Currently, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Office is in temporary quarters as their floor is renovated. When that job is completed at the end of 2016, the Senior Vice President’s Office, IFAS Development, and the Offices of Research and Extension will move to an alternate location while their floors are renovated.

IFAS Extension

- Following a competitive process, IFAS Extension was awarded a 3-year contract worth at least \$31 million (of \$51 Mill available) to conduct SNAP-Ed programs throughout Florida.

However, there are a number of details that are still being worked out with FL DCF (Department of Children and Families).

- We now have five Water Resource Regional Specialized Agents on board. Four of them have PhDs. They are about to embark on a year-long orientation process. We expect this group of RSAs to work closely together as a team. They will conduct extension programs in their area of expertise and they will serve as a liaison between our state extension specialists and county faculty with water resource programs.
- We continue to implement our Extension Strategic Staffing Plan. We have developed a list of 15 new, high-priority extension positions to fill critical gaps in extension programming. Most of these positions are Regional and State Specialized Agents (RSAs and SSAs). We are now pursuing funding to fill as many as possible.
- Our plan to partner with the FFA Leadership Training Center in Haines City to create a new 4-H Camp has come to a halt as FFA has chosen to go it alone. We are continuing to use our three existing 4-H Camps to cover state needs, but the idea to create a fourth camp remains active.
- Our Revenue Enhancement Initiative implementation continues. Establishing UF cash and gift bank accounts in every county extension office has been slow but steady. The UF fiscal office has been very supportive of us in establishing E-Commerce sites that will be used at the local level for collecting revenue. A lot of training is required and it takes some time for county staff to “get it.” This is also requiring a higher level of leadership and management of our CEDs (County Extension Directors) which we are emphasizing through professional development and targeted strategic plans for each county related to programming, staffing, engagement and revenue enhancement.
- We are training our county extension faculty to use an “Event Budget Planning Tool” to determine if they should be charging a fee, and if so, how much. The most challenging concept to teach is the private-to-public value ratio of an extension event. Overall, the training has gone well and the receptivity to the idea has been good. Obstacles and reasons why not to charge have been presented but they do not dominate the discussion.
- USDA-NIFA Deputy Secretary Ann Bartuska visited the UF/IFAS Broward County Extension Service on Aug 10 with a focus on urban agriculture.
- Our unique public-private partnership with Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales (<https://boktowergardens.org/>) will be showcased during an open house on Sept 10. Extension has two RSAs (one with School Gardens and another with Community Gardens focus) as well as a state specialist focusing on food systems evaluation working at Bok.
- Beginning on September 1, we will be implementing a new \$20 4-H participation fee which will be specific to club members. Funds received will be split 50:50 between the state and county. State funds will cover general liability insurance policy as well as investment into regional and statewide events and activities.



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UGA Extension ~ August 1, 2016

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Administrative Overview:

Our new Dean has been in place four months and we are settling into a new administration. We also added Dr. Harald Scherm, new Plant Pathology Department Head, and the third new Department Head in <6 months. In addition, Dr. Sue Chapman became the Associate State 4-H Leader as of July 1. Currently, additional administrative positions being advertised are the Assistant Dean for Research and Director of County Operations, Cooperative Extension. Positions are listed here <http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/abo/hr/>

Budget/Funding:

We are in the process of making our 'B budget' request to the legislature for FY18. In the past several years, the legislature has been generous with specialist and agent positions as well as one time bond money for buildings, repairs and equipment. However; we remain extremely underfunded for continuing maintenance and operation funds in both Extension and Experiment Station. We have a shortage of over \$8M split fairly evenly between Extension and Experiment Station. The College's budget request for FY18 will be to have these funds, or at least part of them, added to our base budget. Previously, the legislature had indicated that we have too much square footage in our College and this has been decreased over the past five years by selling farms and tearing down older facilities. We hope these actions will find favor with the powers that be. Georgia's economy continues to have a slow steady recovery and tax revenues remain positive. The state's rainy day fund' has been replenished to pre-recession levels.

We continue to depend on county funds for about 1/3 of our budget in Extension. Overall, county contributions continue to increase. However; a recent study showed that 83 of Georgia's 159 counties lost population in the last census. This loss of population could eventually translate into decreased tax revenues in rural counties and that will be a future challenge that we could face. On a bright note, we have substantially increased our number and caliber of personnel in the urban area, particularly around Atlanta, and Extension programming is stronger in this area than it has been in decades. We continue to need to build stronger relationships with our urban stakeholders and urban legislators.

Personnel Changes:

In the last few months, we have added a Fruit Entomologist (shared with Clemson), a Livestock Economist and a Crop Economist and have commitments from a Cotton Economist and a Poultry Processing Specialist. Searches are active for a Regional Agronomist, Grain Agronomist, Vegetable Nematologist, Viticulturist as well as Public Service positions to work with the Livestock and the Dairy industries.

Programing Focus and Challenges:

The College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences increased grant acquisition funds substantially and ended the year at over \$69M. Extension accounted for more than \$22M of this and our goal is to continue to increase this number. Sponsored Programs and Extension are working to streamline the process for receiving contract funds for short-time projects in hopes that this will Encourage Extension Faculty to utilize the SP system so that funds they receive are counted in the official totals.

UGA has a new VP for Marketing and PR and there is a push to standardize University identity and logos. This will mean changes for almost everyone at UGA. Extension (and athletics) is the most visible UGA program across the entire state and these changes and how UGA and UGA Extension are branded will mean a lot to us.

Agent retention and recruitment of highly qualified agent applicants continue to be a challenge. The pool of qualified applicants for production ag and urban positions is not as deep as we would like. In addition, industry continues to recruit from our ranks, often offering large salary increases. To combat this, as well as improve the salaries of our agents with Master's degrees, we are working to raise the starting salary and provide compression raises to some of our current employees. We will not make any salary adjustments for agents with BS degrees and the starting salary with a BS degree will remain at \$34,500 to incentivize hiring agents with Master's degrees and to encourage existing agents to utilize the Tuition Assistance Program and go back to school and get a Master's. Any agent hires at the Bachelor's level will be provisional faculty and will be expected to obtain a Master's degree within 6 years.

All of our 4-H paraprofessionals will become non-exempt employees after December 1 due to the FLSA. Currently, we have an exempt category called 4-H Associate as well as the non-exempt Program Assistant. Tracking time and managing employees to work 40 hours per week will be a big change. We have not worked out all of the details of this to date, but non-exempt employees working in a county without local supervision will be a challenge.

Due to the recession and resulting hiring freezes and retirements, we have many new employees at both the agent and specialist level. While these new employees are incredibly talented and bring many great skills, there is still an enhanced need for organizational training. UGA Extension has a very organized and rigorous system for onboarding and training agents, but we need to enhance our trainings for specialists. This as well as leadership development opportunities at all career stages is an ongoing challenge and a focus of our newly formed Office of Learning and Organizational Policy. Finally, documenting impact, both economic and otherwise, is a priority of the UGA President and Provost. Documenting the impact of Extension and college-wide programs is a focus at all levels.



**University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Update for
ASRED/AEA/AES Joint Meeting**

August 22-26

Nashville, TN

[UK Cooperative Extension Homepage](#)

Significant Activities

Defining Strategic Initiatives for UK Cooperative Extension and the County Plan of Work

Work on redefining the breadth of UK CES programming continues. Campus specialists have been involved to a much greater degree, and agents have been on the strategic initiative teams to produce better programs and service for clientele. The reporting system has been changed to handle these changes, and most teams have developed common evaluation instruments. At the same time, we have been developing a web-based mobile app for on the spot reporting of contacts and demographics, and a prototype is nearly ready for testing.

Work continues on the integrated programming teams. Most have a combined logic model and have made progress towards evaluation instruments.

These initiatives will be used by agents to compile their plans of work that began April 1. Although the initiative framework continues to be refined and augmented, including integrating the Kentucky State University reporting into this framework.

Kentucky Extension Employs First County Manager

County Extension Director roles have been common in most states for many years. Because of increases in population and associated increases in county staff, UK Extension recently hired our first full time “Extension County Manager” in Boone County KY. Located in Northern Kentucky and part of the Cincinnati metro area, Boone County has a current population of approximately 130,000 people. It also has largest Extension budget in the state and over 20 employees.

The County Manager responsibilities include direct agent and support staff supervision, facilities management, Extension Council and Board development and serving as office contact with elected/public officials.

<https://boone.ca.uky.edu/>

Kentucky Nutrition Education Program Growth

Despite flat funding for Extension in many other areas, Kentucky’s NEP has seen continued growth. Because of our ability to consistently manage our staff and document behavioral changes in our clients, additional nutrition education funds have been secured and additional staff have been added. Currently over 140 NEP paraprofessionals are employed in Kentucky.



<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/nutrition-education-programs>

Extension to launch Comprehensive Review

By fall 2016, UK CES will begin a comprehensive review of programming, operations, IT, marketing and communication, and external relations. The review is a product of discussions between the Dean and Provost to explore ways for UK CES to be more transparent, accountable and explore innovative ways to improve its level of service. The process will have significant leadership from Extension and administrative professionals from outside of the University and Kentucky. Completion is hoped for in 6 to 9 months.

UK CES Undergoes Internal Audit

Beginning August 1, UK CES is being reviewed by the UK Department of Internal Audit. The process is beginning with interviews of administrative leadership. Results of these discussions will lead to audits of a number of county extension offices.

Budget/Funding/Legislative

The state budget of the University of Kentucky was reduced 4.5% in the first year of the biennium beginning July 1, 2016 and a 5% performance-based hold back (my words) was instituted in the second year. The Provost and the Vice President for Finance allocated the majority of the \$3.1M reduction in the College of Agriculture to the Field Programs Unit (\$2.6M). The \$2.6M represents a 14% reduction in state support to Field Programs. This reduction came from the benefits budget paid on county agents that are locally funded. Field Programs will make the reduction to this new budget figure over three years, with the Provost and the College providing bridge funding. The outcomes of the Comprehensive Review will assist in any needed reallocation or adjustment to county staffing and/or cost share arrangements. Little is known about the nature of the performance targets or the 5% hold back for the budget beginning July 1, 2017.

Hiring of agents in state supported positions has been slowed greatly to create recurring budget savings. Counties that choose can pay the full cost (called 'Stop Gap' funding) can replace vacancies immediately. Counties unable to replace agent vacancies using the stopgap mechanism can expect to wait 18 to 24 months for their position to be posted and filled.

The UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment was able to secure \$15M in new funding for a Grain Crops Center of Excellence at the UK Research and Education Center in western Kentucky. These one-time funds came from the tobacco master settlement resources administered by the Governor's Office of Ag Policy and require a 1:1 match.

Administrative/Policy/Staffing

College-Retirements and Staffing Changes

UK CES is in the final stages of a national search for an Assistant Director for 4-H Youth Development. Three finalists were interviewed and shared presentations in mid – July. A final announcement is expected by late August.



Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.



Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
LSU AgCenter
2016 Joint Meeting of PLN, AEA and ASRED
August 22-26, 2016

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

- **The Louisiana Advanced Master Gardener (LAMG) program** graduated its first class on May 12, 2016. A total of 71 applicants completed all requirements to graduate the 2 year program. The received training in private pesticide applicator certification (pre-requisite), in soil/nutrient management, first detector, IPM, irrigation, and communications. LAMGs will serve as environmental stewards supporting horticultural environmental education at the parish level.
- **EPA FIFRA Section 18/Crisis Exemption requests** were developed and submitted for products to manage blackbirds in rice (AV-1011), west Indian cane fly (acetamidrid) sugarcane aphid (sufoxaflor), tarnished plant bug (sulfoxaflor).
- Education and outreach programs have been established for the public and small landowners concerning the **invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer in five Louisiana Parishes**.
- The LSU AgCenter cooperated with the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to develop an **education program for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) users in Louisiana Agriculture**.
- Education, outreach, and service programs were implemented to support **distribution of a biocontrol agent, the giant salvinia weevil**, to the Louisiana Dept. of wildlife and fisheries and private landowners to manage the invasive weed species, giant salvinia. A committee with representatives from Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Louisiana Landowners Association, two regional state universities, and Delta Waterfowl was formed to develop a MOA to assist in the delivery of infested material to public and private lands.
- Five factsheets in the new public health entomology series: Zika Virus, Scabies, Choosing the Correct Repellents Mosquito-borne Viruses, and Fireflies and Pesticides: Just the Facts were developed by Extension Entomologist, Dr. Kristen Healy.

- LSU School of Animal Sciences changed its degree major from **Animal, Dairy and Poultry Sciences to Animal Sciences**. Currently the School is in the process of restructuring the curriculum to be geared towards the concentrations of animal production, animal products and science (including pre-veterinary).
- LSU AgCenter is no longer focusing on **dairy cattle production**, therefore, the Southeast Research Station went through a dairy herd reduction process. A herd of this reduced size will allow numerous extension activities and events such as judging contests, clinics, and field days.
- LSU AgCenter scientists just completed a study looking at **feral hog damage** to water bodies. It was found that water samples taken from 40 bodies of water with known feral hog presence, contained at least one pathogenic organism that could be unsafe for humans or wildlife.

Family and Consumer Sciences

- **Healthy Communities-** Community support and creative ideas can go a long way in improving people's health in rural areas. Healthy Communities, a community-driven effort to identify ways to improve residents' access to nutritious foods and recreation opportunities. The initiative began in West Carroll Parish 2013 and expanded this year to St. Helena, Madison and Tensas parishes after the LSU AgCenter received a two-year, \$1.25 million grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The collaborators are SU Ag Center, Pennington Biomedical Research Center and Department of Health and Hospitals.
- LSU AgCenter implemented a social marketing campaign in 2014 to reach **SNAP-eligible residents** in 32 parishes. Using FNS core messages,

the campaign promoted increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, family meal time and physical activity. The campaign used mass media and local channels for dissemination of messages. Approximately 75 billboards were displayed and LSU AgCenter local extension staff provided reinforcement by distributing print materials such as posters, brochures, activity books; partnering with local entities; and providing direct nutrition education.

Conclusions and Implications - Local staff easily identified goals of the campaign and believed social marketing helped reinforce concepts from direct nutrition education. Campaign materials were utilized well by staff. Local-level partners were supportive of the campaign. Half of phone survey respondents were aware of the campaign and reported seeing billboard messages more than twice. This evaluation indicated that a social marketing campaign using mass media and print materials can be successfully launched in a one year time period with sufficient planning.

- **Consumer Food Safety** - With a new specialist and the current interest in food safety plans are being developed to expand work in this area. The position had been vacant for a couple years. Priority was getting the word out that we were a reliable information source. Based on the number of hits regular podcasts on hot topics have been well received. Requests for media interviews has increased as has programming requests. A seafood safety & technology specialist position is advertised and with it and the current consumer food safety and producer food safety positions we will be able to focus on addressing major food safety issues in the state.
- **School of Nutrition and Food Sciences (SFNS) faculty awards**
Dr. Georgianna Tuuri, appointed as the Ann Armstrong Peltier Professor.
Dr. Subramaniam Sathivel received the LSU Distinguished Faculty Award
Dr. Carol Lammi-Keefe received the American Oil Chemist Society, AOCS Ralph Holman Lifetime Achievement Award.

- **SNFS students received four of four awards from LSU Gamma Sigma Delta**
-Emotion and Purchase Intent of Mayonnaise-Type Spreads as Affected by Nutrient Claims for Sodium Content (Low Sodium, Reduced Sodium and Sodium-Free) - **Ryan Ardoin and Dr. Witoon Prinyawiwatkul**
-Examining the Impact of Participating in a Culinary Skill-Building Program on High School Students -**Brittany Craft and Dr. Georgianna Tuuri**
-Is Maternal Fatty Acid Status Mid-Pregnancy Related to Mothers'-To-Be Usual Diets?- **Carly Thaxton and Dr. Carol Lammi-Keefe**
-Human Norovirus Genotypes I and II in Marine Water: Development of Antibody-Based Rapid Methods. Gamma Sigma Delta Ag Residential College Student's choice award: **Scarlett Swindler and Dr. Marlene James**

4-H

Club Members – 47,945

School Enrichment Special Interest –265,527
 Total without duplications –199,997
 Youth and Adult Volunteers –9,236
 Mission Mandate Enrollment Science, Engineering, and Technology –107,244
 Citizenship/Leadership –92,117
 Healthy Living –25,454

- **4-H University** - This 4-day learning experience reached 1,450 teens from all 64 parishes of the state. Four-H University provides a range of experiences from competitive events, to short-term educational programs, to more in-depth learning in Clover College.
- **4-H Camp** - Camping is one of the most valuable experiences a child can have. A total of 6,865 youth attended 4-H Summer Camp in 2016. The tracks for summer camp included: Wetlands, Science, Engineering, Technology, Survival Skills, Hunter Safety, Food and Fitness, and Outdoor Adventures.
- **Youth Wetlands Program** – This environmental state-wide program is designed to heighten students' awareness of Louisiana's wetland loss. Since its inception this program has

reached more than 200,000 students in grades 3rd-12th and 2,200 educators in 64 parishes.

- **Community Service and Service-Learning** - Over 50,300 4-H members participated in community service and service-learning projects during the 2015-2016 year. Forty service projects were conducted that benefitted more than 20,000 people with an economic impact of \$21,921.
- **Overnight Chaperone Training Program** Approximately 1,000 adult volunteers serve as overnight chaperones each year for Louisiana 4-H programming. As a result of the Louisiana 4-H overnight chaperone training program, 98 percent of participants felt that they have gained information on how to create a positive environment for youth. Ten years after the creation of the program, it continues to provide tools, guidelines, and training for 4-H adult volunteers



MSU Extension received two FY16 year-end state appropriation budget reductions, totaling 2% of the overall state appropriations. Additional FY17 mid-year reductions are expected due to falling revenues in the state budget. Plans have been developed to reduce lower priority programs, if additional reductions occur.

MSU Extension external funding awards for FY17 increased through grants and contracts. MSU Extension currently represents 25% of the university's total external awards.

The second year of MSU Extension's new **Program Development Process** is complete. Faculty submitted 133 planned programs to the Program Planning Team for review. A new Extension Course Catalog is being developed. The programs were developed by faculty assigned to one of ten program planning areas:

- Plant Systems
- Environmental Systems
- Forestry
- Animal Systems
- Wildlife and Fisheries
- Environmental Sustainability/Pest Management
- Community Resource and Economic Development
- Enterprise Economics
- Family and Consumer Education
- 4-H Youth Development

The MSU Faculty Senate voted 32 to 3 to support Research and Extension faculty to have tenure track positions. The Senate will work with administration to modify the current Promotion and Tenure Guidelines to support the scholarship of Research and Extension faculty during the fall of 2016.

MSU Extension is developing a new Extension Agent Evaluation Form to support the work of the field staff and the new Program Planning Process. The new instrument is being pilot tested and will be implemented in 2017.

Dr. Keith Coble has been named **Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at MSU**. Dr. Coble's primary responsibilities will include chairing and co-chairing the administrative and programmatic efforts for Extension Enterprise Economics and Community Development areas.

MSU is currently searching for two *Research and Extension Center Heads* for the Coastal and North Mississippi Research and Extension Centers. These positions lead the administrative efforts of the Center faculty and staff, branch experiment stations and County Extension Office operations with the region. (North Mississippi Research & Extension Center located in Verona, MS and Coastal Research & Extension Center located in Biloxi, MS).

Submitted by Gary Jackson, Director, Mississippi State University Extension, August 5, 2016

NC State University August 2016 State Report
A. Richard Bonanno, Director

NC Budget Issues: We may experience a 2+% internal cut from the University to pay for other activities including cluster hires. The legislature is funding a 1.5% recurring salary adjustment this summer and a 0.5% one-time bonus in October.

Agent Compensation: Like most everyone, we are looking the impact of FLSA changes on our employees. We are working on a career ladder for agents that will provide more than 2 planned (non COL) pay increases over their years with us. How to compensate agents who receive advanced degrees is part of this discussion.

Specialists Engagement: We have re-emphasized Departmental Extension Leaders with defined stipends and a new job description. Extension, Research, and the Dean's office are working together to replace all high mileage trucks over the next 2 years.

Strategic Plan: Our strategic staffing plan was fully implemented as of July 1, 2016. The final pieces were accounting goals regarding county and state sharing and the hiring of 8 FSMA/food safety Area Specialized Agents. There are a total of 26 ASA's.

We are also working on improved branding, especially for our combined efforts with NC A&T University at the county level. We are expecting to roll out both internal NC State and NC State/NC A&T combined branding by the Fall.

A bond package was passed in March providing \$85 million for a new plant sciences research building at NC State which will cost \$170 million. Foundations and industry are providing the additional dollars. There will be a close connection with Extension to both identify research needs and to extend results.

Through a collaboration with Extension, Research, and the Provost's office, NC State is hiring 40 new faculty in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences over the next 3 years. Departments working within 4 "Systems" will formulate and prioritize positions and bring them to a College committee of the Associate Deans who will provide a final prioritization. Input to the Departments can come from any area including commodity groups and Centers within the College. There are an additional 12 positions already in the works bringing the number of new hires to at least 52. Extension is financing about 15 of these new positions, including salary and start up.

I have been involved with a College committee working on updates to our reappointment, promotion, and tenure discussions. Over the past several years, the expectations at the Departmental level and above have favored research at the expense of teaching, extension, administration, international programs, interdisciplinary activities, and entrepreneurship. As of 8/1, we have completed this task and will send to the Dean.

The College is concerned about the difficulty that high school students face getting into NC State. We have created many options including partnering with Ag High Schools, Community Colleges, our 2-year program, and spring delayed program. We are also considering creating a first Year general program so that students will not pick a major until sophomore year but not lose any time toward graduation.

Industrial hemp. Our industrial hemp commission still has raised the \$200,000 required by state law, therefore, an oversight board will be established to set up a permitting program for growers.



Oklahoma State Report

ASRED Meeting August 22-26, 2016

Nashville, Tennessee

Administrative Changes

Dr. Ross Love retired as of April 30, 2015, but continued to work part-time until March 31, 2016. As of March 1, 2016, Dr. Randy Taylor was hired into this position. Dr. Taylor was previously a professor in the Biosystems and Ag Engineering Department at Oklahoma State University.

Jim Ansley was recently hired as the Department Head in Natural Resource Ecology and Management (NREM). Previous to accepting this position, Dr. Ansley worked for Texas A&M University at the Vernon Research/Extension Center located in northern Texas.

Budget

The state budget for Extension was cut by 16.1% as of July 1, 2016. Over the past 6 years we have had budget cuts and unfunded salary programs that have added to about 15%. Hence, this year's cut brings our total state budget losses over the past 7 years to a little over 30%. In my observation two factors have caused this large cut. The first is the impact of lower oil prices on the state's economy. The second is a very conservative Republican dominated legislature and similar Republican governor.

Because of the declines in our budget over the past 7 years, we started a county-staff downsizing program a year ago. As previously described in ASRED reports, we were funding 2 Educators and 1 secretary in each county. We are now phasing in, over a four year period, a plan to fund only 1.5 Educators and 1 secretary in each county. Counties were given the option to increase their contributions to our salary budget (increase their payments by 1/8th of the amount of salary and benefits for an Educator each year for the next four years) or have their staffing reduced. About 2/3rds of the counties entered into this plan. I anticipate some of these counties will drop out of this plan before it is completed.

Those counties who did enter into the plan are sharing Educators across two counties. That is, two counties now have a total of three Educators. The sharing arrangements vary from case to case, but in most cases all three Educators work to some extent in both counties.

It now appears that the above described "4-Year 1.5 Plan" as it is being called, will be inadequate to cover the 16.1% cut we received this year. Various options for increased downsizing are being considered. Most options require many Educators to cover more than two counties. In addition, a number of fee programs and cost-sharing arrangements have been, or are being, developed.

- 1) A 4-H programming fee of \$20 per 4-H club member is being collected.
- 2) A fee is being charged for court mandated "Co-Parenting Divorce Counseling" conducted by FCS Educators.



- 3) We are co-funding two agribusiness development positions with the Small Business Development Council (SBDC) which is funded by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.
- 4) In a number of counties, we are contracting with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to provide secretarial and Educator services for them.
- 5) Our “Pride Program” (which trains individuals on customer service and community promotion) is now predominately funded via fees.
- 6) Fees have, or will be, increased on most of the certification courses we teach.

On campus, what amounts to nearly a hard hiring freeze currently exists for vacant faculty positions. A buyout does not appear to be a part of the solution to this budget cut. Reserves will be used to cover deficits and attrition via retirements and resignations will be used to cut the budget. Over the past 6 years, cuts to the campus budget have absorbed almost all of the total budget cuts. This has resulted in Extension faculty FTE’s declining by about 30% over the past 6 years.

A possible partial reprieve from our budget cut exists with the passage of a “one-cent” sales tax for Education. This tax is on the November ballot and would add about 8% to our budget if passed. A recent poll shows it passing with a 62/38 margin.

Programming Highlights

OCES is expanding its urban Extension efforts in partnership with the George Family Kaiser Foundation. We funded the Extension portion of three Kaiser Endowed Chair faculty positions in Family & Consumer Sciences on the OSU Tulsa Campus. These positions will be housed on the OSU Tulsa Campus but will collaborate with our Tulsa County Extension office. The positions focus on child & family resilience, child development, and family & community policy. These research/extension positions are for the purpose of improving family, child and policy outcomes in Tulsa and Oklahoma.

Our “Insect Adventure” traveling “Insect Petting Zoo” has recently been recognized by National Geographic and Lonely Planet (see links below):

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/07/insects-spiders-petting-zoos-animals/>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/news/2016/08/03/meet-woman-behind-travelling-insect-petting-zoo/>

The program has an on-campus facility that displays/houses a variety of insects. It conducts an open house every 1st and 3rd Saturday with a program for youth of all ages (and adults too). During the week, the “Zoo” goes on tour in a dedicated project van that transports the Zoo’s insects and display equipment. During the past year, the Insect Petting Zoo made 600 presentations to an estimated 40,000 individuals. It is a great way to reach non-traditional audiences and a perfect enhancement to school curriculum. Children are curious about bugs and when parents are present with them, we make sure to publicize the broad mission of Extension. This program’s website may be viewed at:

<http://insectadventure.okstate.edu/>



**ASRED State Report
Clemson University Cooperative Extension System
August 2016**

As we close out our fiscal year I would like to say a big THANK YOU to all of our dedicated and hardworking Extension Faculty and Staff throughout this great state. This has been a very productive year on all fronts - Extension programming, hiring, research and advocacy. This year also brought in the final stages of our Strategic Plan, with the hiring of six regional agents, and combining the Water and Forestry teams back into the Natural Resource Team, and splitting the Horticulture Team into Commercial and Urban Horticulture Teams. These changes will allow us to focus more on quality programming. I want to thank Derrick Phinney for accepting the opportunity to lead the Natural Resource Team and Cory Tanner for accepting the opportunity to lead the Urban Horticulture Team. We were able to re-energize our Extension Advocacy Council under the leadership of Ed Pappas and Bob Guinn. They have work extremely hard to revise our by-laws and restructure this outstanding organization to the Extension Advancement Council.

Last year because of the hard work of Extension Agents with quality programming, our advocacy team, under the leadership of Dr. Kathy Coleman and Ms. Alma Harris, led us to another great year with increased funding. We were able to hire 14 new agents, (9) 4-H, (2) Food Safety & Nutrition, (2) Horticulture, and (1) Water Resources. We are currently searching for two Small Fruit and Vegetable Agents, one 4-H Agent, two Water Resources agents (rehires), two Agribusiness Agents and two Agribusiness Specialists. These new hires will allow us to advance our programming activities to an even higher level. I also would like to thank all of you for advocating for our PSA budget this year. PSA was very successful again this year in receiving \$1.2 million in recurring funds and \$500,000 in non-recurring funds for Extension and Research, \$750,000 for Livestock Poultry Health, and \$1 million for improvements to the T. Ed Garrison Arena. This year the majority of the funds will go to support Extension and Research efforts at the Research and Education Centers. This would not have been possible without the help of everyone pulling together and taking time to contact your local legislators. Many folks have noticed your efforts; all I can express is a deep-hearted thank you.

Our new Extension Mentoring Program is off to a fast start under the leadership of Dr. Meghan Wood, Mr. Danny Howard and Ms. Karissa Ulmer. The goal of the Mentoring Team is to develop an individualized mentoring program for all of our new and beginning agents. This is truly a monumental task, but one I know this team will complete. They have already conducted a three-day workshop and started to visit our new and beginning agents. Dr. Matt Burns started a venture with Auburn University Cooperative Extension System. He hosted the Auburn Livestock & Forage Team as well as their newly started Agribusiness Team for a three-day in-service

Office of the Director

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training on the campus of Clemson University. This is a new and cooperative venture between the two Universities, and one which we will expand upon.

This has also been a very relentless year on our Agribusiness, Agronomic, Forestry and Livestock Teams with the low state flooding. Our agents were some of the first responders to help our most treasured commodity, "Our South Carolina Farmers". The impact our agents had on helping our farmers was noticed by everyone including our Governor. Extension did not stop working for our farmers even months after the flood. Our Agribusiness team (under the leadership of Dr. Kathy Coleman, Dr. Nathan Smith, and Mr. Scott Mickey) has worked hand-in-hand with Hugh Weathers our Commissioner of Agriculture and Mr. Harry Ott, South Carolina Farm Bureau President, to get the Farm Aid Bill passed through our legislation session. The South Carolina Department of Agriculture has lead on this project, but our agents will be the frontline for our farmers to assist with the application process. Dr. Coleman, Dr. Smith and Mr. Scott Mickey have been working around the clock to get this process completed and developing training for our agents.

I am very proud and humbled to be the Director of Clemson University Cooperative Extension System, because of the great, passionate, dedicated agents and specialists I get to work with each and every day.

Livestock and Forage Program Team:

Dr. Matthew Burns, Team Leader

The Livestock and Forage Team conducted 277 programs and agents have served as content provider for an additional 186 educational workshops (total programs = 463). The team increased direct contacts by over 10,000 participants compared to last year (total number 29,989).

Continued to develop Livestock and Forage Team core programs. These include Master Beef Producer, Backyards and Barnyards, Master Small Ruminant, Grass Masters, Backyard Poultry, and BBQ Boot Camps.

Provided nine Livestock and Forage Agents and one producer the opportunity to attend Beef Improvement Federation Meetings in Manhattan, KS and stopped at beef cattle operations in KS on the way to meetings.

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Commercial Horticulture Program Team Activities (Jan – Jun 2016)

Powell Smith, Program Team Leader

- Six producer meetings
- 3 field days
- two research/demonstrations
- entered Farm Gate data for in fruits, vegetables, and agri-tainment for 7 counties
- Assisted in Farm Aid work in holding meetings, assisting producers with applications and determination of yields, spacing specifications, etc. for acreage verification
- Made farm visits and answered phone calls to solve problems
- Agents attended several regional and state events for in-service training

Urban Horticulture Team Update

Cory Tanner, Program Team Leader

The Urban Horticulture Team's primary activities to date largely involve various aspects of Master Gardener volunteer training and management through 14 active MG programs across the state. To date this year there have been 3 statewide advanced MG trainings held (School & Community Gardening, Plant Propagation, & Landscape Design) with outstanding attendance. We also have a very active School and Community Gardening program with an exemplary program titled School Gardening for SC Educators that trains teachers and volunteers to engage children in garden-based learning. This project is a partnership with the College of Charleston and currently serves school districts in Charleston, Dorchester, Berkeley, and Greenville Counties. Plans are underway to expand the project into Anderson and other counties this year. Most recently, members of the Urban Hort Team were honored to co-host the American Horticulture Society's 24th Annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in Columbia.

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Food Safety and Nutrition Extension Program Team

Dr. Julie K. Northcutt, Program Team Leader; Dr. Michelle A. Parisi, Assistant Program Team Leader

A summarized report of the major activities for the Extension *Food Safety and Nutrition* (FSN) Program team are outlined below. These activities focus on the major events conducted to-date by the FSN team. The FSN Extension Program Team consists of:

- 12 County Agents;
- 5 Extension Associates;
- 11 EFNEP Program Assistants (Federally-funded *Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program*);
- 5 EFNEP Nutrition Educator Assistants (NEAs);
- 1 EFNEP Data Manager;
- 2.5 Full-Time-Equivalent Faculty Specialists plus 0.8 FTE currently vacant; and
- 2 part-time Program Assistant (team-funded through ServSafe or EFNEP).

During 2016 (Jan-July), FSN Agents conducted 22 ServSafe Manager Workshops certifying approximately 400 individuals, 8 Employee ServSafe Workshops for nearly 100 Food Handlers, 20 Carolina Canning Programs for 202 participants, 124 Nutrition Programs for over 4000 individuals (3990 in-person plus undetermined TV audience), and made several Population Health Management contacts (412) through the mobile health unit and Diabetes-Support Program. The team made 4 appearances on the eTV program *Making it Grow*, covering topics such as food waste, food dehydration, nutrition (eating a rainbow) and healthy yogurt smoothies (audience estimated to exceed 250,000 per appearance). One agent appeared 4 times on the *Peggy Denny Show* for cooking demonstrations. In January 2016, one new Extension agent and 4 new NEAs were hired and trained; two new agents (1 EFNEP and 1 Culinary) and 1 NEA were hired in June/July. Twelve team members were reclassified by the Assistant Program Team Leader's work with Human Resources.

The FSN EFNEP program has 1,308 total families enrolled, including 229 families that are new to the program. These families have been taught 1,471 total lessons. Additionally, the EFNEP Program has 2,118 youth enrolled and each youth receives 8 lessons (total of 16,944 youth lessons).

The FSN Team's Food2Market Program tested 78 new products, prepared 60 Nutrition Facts Panels, and answered 520 food safety/nutrition questions generating nearly \$12,000 to support a M.S. graduate student's stipend. Furthermore, the team conducted 3 *Better Processing Control Schools* (4 days per training), 1 *Seafood HACCP* Workshop (1 day per training) and 1 *Food Safety Modernization Act, Preventative Controls for Human Food* Workshop (2.5 days per training). Other funding included:

- \$36,800 for 2 years for FSN/Greenville Health System/Public Health Science Grant

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- \$10,000 for EFNEP Culinary Partners Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- \$3,500 for FSN MOU with SC Department of Education (SCDE) for ServSafe Training
- \$25,600 for EFNEP SCDE MOU
- \$15,000 Campylobacter Product Testing, \$51,500 Tri-County 4-H
- \$56,000 USDA Regional Extension Training Center Grant (awarded January).
- \$20,000 SC Department of Health and Environmental Controls Food Pantry Grant

The team has also applied for a number of grants that include:

- \$399,000 USDA-NIFA Grant on Health Extension
- \$2 Million from Robert Wood Johnson Center on Health Extension
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention Obesity Grant (in-process); and USDA Health Extension Grant (in-process)

Natural Resources Division

Derrick Phinney, Program Team Leader

- Following the direction of our strategic plan we have completed our team realignment of the Natural Resources Division. Under this division we have combined our forestry, wildlife and water resources units to form the Natural Resources Division. This new realignment will help to foster collaboration, eliminate real and perceived barriers, enhance efficiency, effectively distribute human and financial resources, and broaden employee knowledge base.
- The Carolina Rain Garden Initiative certifies professional rain garden installers and designers who attend the Clemson Extension Rain Garden for Professionals workshop and demonstrate their experience by submitting a rain garden portfolio. This certification is intended for residential-scale “pocket” rain gardens and does not include more highly engineered bioretention cells. Although both rain gardens and bioretention cells work to slow storm water runoff and allow for infiltration, bioretention cells are more highly regulated in design and materials.
- The Master Pond Manager (MPM) achievement course is designed to teach participants a wide range of pond management knowledge and skills. As a "hybrid" course combining online and face-to-face learning, it will incorporate self-paced lectures, discussion, quizzes, and other web-based methods of participant-instructor interaction, along with hands-on participation activities in the field. Intended audience for the course includes pond owners, pond management professionals, community staff, stormwater managers, landscapers, contractors, property managers, parks staff, planners, and developers. Course curriculum is offered through two tracks, the full Master Pond Manager certificate or a letter of completion in management. Depending on which track is

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selected, the course will consist of up to 6 parts, including: Recreational Pond Design, Permitting, and Management Strategies; Stormwater Pond Design, Inspection, and Maintenance; Limnology; Integrated Aquatic Plant Management; Best Management Practices for Stormwater Ponds; Fish Management

- Ongoing installation of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs), often installed as part of extension workshops, provides highly visible demonstrations of rain gardens, bioretention, floating wetlands, shorescaping, and more. Installations are used as training opportunities, and well-maintained practices are intended to provide local residents the chance to learn more about the appearance, function, and design of BMPs.
- In order to maintain and strengthen natural resources education programs the forestry and wildlife unit has taken some initial steps to provide quality educational natural resources programs to local landowners and other clientele who are interested in natural resources. The team has started to rebuild/rebrand the concept of the Master Tree Farmer program as a single county or local area offering per client requests. With the Forestry 101 concept we are looking to provide the basics of forest management in a manner that will be clear to the landowner with no prior experience and help clarify and give better understanding of management concepts to those that have owned land for some time. We will be looking to individual team members to produce appropriate training modules that can be delivered by any available agents, associates, and specialists around the state
- Extension and the *Center of Heirs Property Preservation* have partnered to conduct quarterly workshops that promote sustainable use of forest land to provide increased economic benefit to historically under-served families through sustainable forestry education. Funding has been provided from the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities (USE). Along with the quarterly workshops, we have hosted several focused workshops through the coastal region. Most recently assisted with “SC Rural & Limited Resource Landowner Symposium”.
- Working on inputting pricing and yield date for the forestry section of Farm Gate.

AGRONOMIC ROW CROPS TEAM ACTIVITIES

Dr. John Mueller, Program Team Leader

1,263 Growers Attended “State” Commodity Meetings and Farm Aid Related Meetings

1,275 Growers Attended our Standard “County” Row Crop Team Meetings

Agronomic Row Crop Team activities took place in 27 Counties:

Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield, Colleton, Darlington, Dorchester, Florence, Hampton, Horry, Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Marion, Marlboro, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, Saluda, Sumter, Williamsburg

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23 Major Events for the Row Crops Team Included (1,263 contacts):

State Cotton meeting held on January 26 in Santee with 150 attendees

State Peanut meeting held on January 28 in Santee with 275 attendees

Conducted Tobacco Associates referendum on January 27

Soil fertility meeting in Santee on February 18th with 84 attendees

Row crop agents led 20 Farm Aid training sessions for 998+ growers.

265+ One-on-One Meetings with growers to help fill out Farm Aid Forms

23 Crop Production Meetings were held:

1 Corn Production Meeting

3 Cotton Production Meetings

4 Peanut Production Meetings

3 Soybean Production Meetings

1 Silage Production Meetings

3 Tobacco Production Meetings

8 Multiple Crop Production Meetings

3 Hay activities

7 Young Farmer/local Farm Bureau Meetings (210 attendees)

1 Row Crop Marketing Meeting

1 Farm Safety Meeting

1 Feral Hog Management Workshop (30 in attendance)

1 Coyote Management Workshop (62 attendees)

2 Irrigation Moisture Management Meeting (64 in attendance)

1 Weed ID and Cold Damage Response Workshop (19 attendees)

4 Certifications & License Trainings were held:

11 Pesticide Trainings

3 CAMM Trainings

1 Financial

27 Field Demonstrations Planted:

14 Corn Demos

5 Cotton Demos

2 Peanut Demos

5 Soybean Demos

3 Sorghum

3 Misc. Demos

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The Agronomic Row Crops Team also provided representatives to Winter and Spring meetings of:

South Carolina Peanut Board; South Carolina Soybean Board; South Carolina Cotton Board
SCFB Peanut Committee; SCFB Soybean Feed Grain and Hay Committee

Agribusiness Program Team 2016 Activities

Dr. Nathan Smith, Team Leader

Financing the Farm Workshop - A workshop designed to help farmers assess their financial stability in light of the devastating drought and floods of 2015. Presenters discussed farm financing options, required information that lenders will need, understanding a balance sheet, assessing equity and operating capital, and the crop outlook for 2016. Two workshops held in December 2015 and January 2016 with total attendance of 155. AgSouth & ArborOne Farm Credit sponsored workshops. Presenters were Scott Mickey, Clemson Extension Farm Business Specialist, Dr. Nathan Smith, Clemson Extension Economist and Lynn Huggins, Farm Loan Officer, Farm Service Agency.

Executive Marketing Seminar - A three day workshop in January was held for crop growers on developing a marketing plan for 2016. Topics covered included financial reset for 2016, fundamental and technical market analysis, market outlook, positioning for the future and putting the plan on paper. The seminar is annual workshop offered by the Central SC Farm Management Association led by Scott Mickey.

SC Farm Aid: A catastrophic flood hit much of South Carolina during October of 2015 followed by weeks of rain. Farmers lost much of their 2015 production to the flood or to quality losses as a result of excess moisture. The South Carolina General Assembly responded to the absence of federal assistance request with a \$40 million SC Farm Aid Fund. Clemson Agribusiness specialists Dr. Nathan Smith and Scott Mickey responded to requests during this time for flood disaster assessments and policy analyses of proposed legislation to South Carolina Farm Bureau (SCFB), SC Department of Agriculture (SCDA) and legislators. The Clemson Extension Agribusiness Team worked with SCDA and SCFB on rules and regulations of South Carolina Farm Aid Fund, the application and developing a payment calculator. Dr. Kathy Coleman served as the Dean's representative on the SC Farm Aid Advisory Board. Four train-the-trainer sessions were conducted for Extension agents, crop insurance agents, ag lenders, ag teachers and professionals who work with growers. Beginning on June 27, twenty one education sessions were held, hosted by county Extension agents, on SC Farm Aid in conjunction with SC Department of Agriculture and SC State University Extension. Over 1,000 participants attended the sessions and Clemson Extension Agribusiness, Agronomic Crops, Horticulture and Animal Science and Forages program teams have provided technical assistance in the application process on deciphering documents, running the Farm Aid calculator and answering questions.

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New and Beginning Farmers Program: The South Carolina New and Beginning Farmer Program (SCNBFP) graduated its 2016 class in May. The SCNBFP is focused on enabling new and beginning farmers to be successful, productive, and innovative members of their local agricultural community. Fourteen workshop sessions were designed to provide the tools, knowledge and skills necessary to be successful entrepreneurs; sound business managers; exemplary stewards of SWAPA (soil, water, air, plants, and animals), and successful marketers. A Phase II level was implemented for those who are alumni of Phase I or with 3-9 years' experience. Dr. Dave Lamie is the SCNBFP program director. Participants across Phase I and II totaled 48.

Annie's Project: Clemson Extension held its fifth Annie's Project in 2016 in Georgetown, South Carolina. A total of 18 women from all over the state came together to network and learn to be more successful in farming operations. The group was a diverse mix of experience, farm enterprises, age and geographic location. The program is a four day retreat with program focusing on leadership, networking and risk management basics presented by Clemson and partners with AgSouth Farm Credit, ArborOne Farm Credit, and the Farm Service Agency. Jennifer Boyles coordinates the SC Annie's Project.

Ag + Art Tour: The South Carolina Ag + Art Tour is an agritourism program held each weekend of June in 2016 that combines farm tours and art exhibits and shows. The tour began in York County in 2012 and has grown to nine counties in 2016 with the addition of five counties. The South Carolina Ag + Art Tour is a free, self-guided tour of designated farms in South Carolina featuring local artisans and farmer's markets. During the tour you will have the opportunity to see first-hand where your food comes from, watch artists in action and purchase their works, dance to the melodies of bluegrass and folksongs, and learn more about rural life. The tour is the largest free tour of its kind in the US with over 20,000 visitors since 2012. Agribusiness agent Ben Boyles coordinates the Ag + Art Tour.

Economic Development / SET: Local food systems development has been a recent focus of economic development in South Carolina. The SCNBFP is one example of a program that is focused mostly on local food systems but other programs are being conducted by Agribusiness agents in South Carolina. 2016 programs include:

- **The Feeding Innovation Healthy Foods initiative** is a small business training targeted at food business startups or in the idea stage. Feeding Innovation was created by the South Carolina Community Loan Fund to bring healthy food to underserved communities throughout South Carolina. Feeding Innovation includes eight weeks of entrepreneurship and business-planning courses taught by Clemson Extension agribusiness agent Will Culler. Participants develop business plans with instruction on financial planning, operations management, law and regulation, marketing and more. At the conclusion of the program, participants have a unique opportunity to compete for \$12,500 in seed capital by pitching their ideas to a panel of judges. Two classes were held in of 2016.

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- Freshwater Coast Community Foundation Entrepreneurship Initiative community-based enterprise planning, marketing and branding of enterprises, to promote professional/business relationship among students and businesses through joint ventures, to foment collaboration among local colleges in the areas of agricultural leadership and entrepreneurship, and to catalyze a commitment to agribusiness and nature-based entrepreneurial leadership among internship students through business opportunities that prepares them for a lifetime of entrepreneurial leadership. by leading the FCCF's exploration of a continuing education program at the local community college that integrates innovation and entrepreneurial learning for mid-career entrepreneurs and leaders. A great effort will put forth on agricultural business innovation programs to help agricultural, forestry and environmental, and food businesses to grow in the FCCF region.
- National Stronger Economies Together (SET) program approved for SC in 2016. Partnering with SC State and USDA-RD. Dr. Dave Lamie serves as coordinator of the program. The Central South Carolina SET Collaborative was approved as a SET Phase VI region with a focus on developing local foods systems and agribusiness development. Alta Mae Marvin, Ben Boyles and Will Culler to provide technical assistance.
- Mobile Farmers Market was developed in Colleton County through a NIFA grant with a goal to increase the availability and accessibility of fresh produce to underserved communities. The mobile food market serves 6 locations, offered on Wednesdays for 6 weeks during the summer, funding has been secured to add an additional 6 weeks in the fall of 2016. Each week between 50 and 75 families visit the Mobile Market, children are the fastest growing visitors bringing money for their purchases; the children are a result of programs in schools and programs offered at the locations. The goal for the mobile market to become sustainable. The Mobile Market was expanded to 4 African American churches and 51 families. The 5-week pilot program was designed as a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) style market. Each week we included healthy recipes based on the vegetables in the baskets members received. The mobile market program is coordinated by Agribusiness agent Alta Mae Marvin.

Sandhill REC Farm Incubator: An incubator farm for new and beginning farmers was established at the Sandhill REC in Columbia, SC. Support for the incubator farm comes through a NIFA grant awarded to Clemson. About 5 acres of land was fenced, irrigation and a cooler have been installed for use by participants. Nine applications were accepted for the program and the land is being divided amount the participants to use for learning to farm and business startup. Harry Crissy was coordinator and recently took a new position in Florida. A search for a new permanent coordinator is underway. Curriculum program is being designed to help program participants learn production, marketing, finance and business planning.

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Joint In-Service Training with Auburn University: The newly formed Agribusiness Program Team joined the Livestock and Forages Program Team for a joint in-service training with Auburn University. The training involved sharing current programs and resources at each university and program plans and ideas for collaborating in the future. Issues with starting a new program were discussed and opportunities for training and development of new Agribusiness agents.

Highlights for 4-H Program

Dr. Pam Ardern, Team Leader

4-H Legislative Day

Over 200 4-Hers participated in 4-H Legislative Day at the State House on March 16th. The day was designed to thank legislators for their support of the 4-H Program in South Carolina. They had supported the program with \$500,000 in recurring funds in our 2015 State Budget. We held a breakfast for the Agriculture and Finance Committees, provided each Legislator with a bottle of Clemson honey, and hosted a luncheon for our major donors. The youth were introduced in both the House and Senate. Most of our youth also had appointments with and met their local legislators.

4-H Presents to the Clemson University Board of Trustees

South Carolina 4-H presented to the Clemson University Board of Trustees for the first time. We shared with them the growth of the 4-H program in South Carolina and the various programs being conducted in South Carolina. 4-Her, Martha Newton, had the Trustees in tears with her 4-H Story.

Pinckney 4-H Leadership Conference

A weeklong 4-H Pinckney Leadership Conference brought 25 high school sophomores and juniors from across South Carolina to Clemson's campus to participate in numerous activities designed to promote teamwork, leadership and citizenship. They spent a morning whitewater rafting and an evening playing "Capture the Flag." They made shoe soles from milk jugs and old blue jeans to donate to children in Africa. The program was conducted in honor of Senator Clementa Pinckney who was killed in the Charleston 9 shooting. A pastor, community leader and mentor, Pinckney also was a strong advocate for 4-H. He's one of the organization's most notable South Carolina alumni and in April received the 4-H Distinguished Alumni Medallion from the National 4-H Council. The widow of Sen. Clementa Pinckney challenged a group of South Carolina 4-H students to return home and strive to improve their communities as her late husband did. "This right here is what he was all about, youth and young people," Jennifer Pinckney said at the conclusion of the inaugural 4-H Clementa Pinckney Leadership Conference at Clemson University. "Learn the speaking skills to bring the leader out of you. Go back home and encourage others. Go back home and be the leader we know you can be. Go back home and be the mentor, be the next Clementa C. Pinckney."

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4-H Healthy Lifestyles Summit and Summer Camps

12 teams of 3 youth and 1 adult attended the 4-H Healthy Lifestyles Summit in January. The group received training on a summer day camp curriculum entitled "Cooking like a Chef". The various teams were challenged to return home with their new skills and conduct summer day camps for younger youth. The training was conducted by Chef Anne Corr from Pennsylvania, Chef Chad Carter product developer from Charleston, Dr. Margaret Condrasky from Clemson University's Food, Nutrition and Packaging Science, and Miriam Roman coordinator of the Youth Voice Youth Choice grant in South Carolina. This summer 12 camps were conducted in local communities reaching approximately 300 youth.

South Carolina 4-H Engineering Event

The South Carolina 4-H Engineering Event was held April 9th at Orangeburg- Calhoun Technical College with approximately 250 youth participating. EnLIGHTen SC is the corporate sponsor. The statewide event utilizes students' skills in science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM, in several fun and engaging competitions that promote teamwork, sportsmanship, perseverance and learning. In Smalls' event, students assembled and programmed robots built with Legos to perform designated tasks.

4-H Wildlife Food Plot

South Carolina 4-H has finished the 3rd year of our Wildlife Food Plot Project, an independent-study project providing hand-on experience in natural resources and environmental education. There were 108 participants from across the state with external sponsorship for the project provided by Wannamaker Wildlife and Quality Deer Management Association. Registration for the 2016-2017 project is underway.

4-H Small Garden Project

South Carolina 4-H Small Garden Project is an independent-study project providing hand-on experience in natural resources with a healthy-living twist. We added the option for a group component this year. Participants increased from an average of 74, over the past three years, to 239 youth. The project is sponsored by the South Carolina Master Gardeners.

Citizenship Washington Focus: Presidential Inauguration Trip

Eight youth and 2 adults were selected to attend the Presidential Inauguration Trip to Washington, D.C. in January 2017. Youth selected to attend this event underwent a vigorous screening process, in which they completed an application, submitted letters of intent and recommendation, as well as a resume. These youth have demonstrated the ability and leadership necessary to excel and serve as outstanding representatives of the young people of South Carolina.

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**The University of Tennessee Extension
State Update for
Association of Southern Region Extension Directors
August 22 – 26, 2016 Nashville, TN**

ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Leadership Changes Effective September 6

Dr. Larry Arrington has announced his resignation as Chancellor of the UT Institute of Agriculture. Dr. Tim Cross has been appointed as Interim Chancellor effective September 6 and will hold that position until a permanent placement has been made pursuant to a national search. An Interim Extension Dean will be appointed, but this had not been finalized as of August 5, 2016.

FY17 Budget

The Tennessee State budget provided a 2.5% increase for UT Extension in FY17. This increase was used to provide a 1.5% across-the-board increase plus a 1.5% merit/equity increase pool for a total average salary increase pool of 3%. These increases were effective July 1, 2016. Minimum starting salaries for Extension titles were increased 1.5% as a result of these changes.

Human Resource Officer Search

Interviews of the three top-tier candidates for the position of Human Resource Officer were held recently. A decision on this appointment is forthcoming, and we hope to have this position filled by October 1.

PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHTS

4-H Youth Development

The Tennessee 4-H program is one of the few programs in the nation with a strong in-school club program. We are in the process of aligning our curriculum to match to the state educational standards so that our program assists teachers to teach required subject matter and communication skills. The 4-H program is also involved in numerous STEM grants to promote science and health initiatives. Lastly we have established a 4-H Family and Consumer Science/4-H Advisory committee to enhance health and nutrition programming for youth.

Lone Oaks Farm 4-H Center

Progress continues to be made toward bringing our newest 4-H Center online and fully operational. We have received significant support from the Bolivar Utility Department, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Hardeman County Schools. Development of a state of the art sporting clay shooting facility is underway. Small group meetings, youth STEM camps, environmental programs, and retreats are being conducted at Lone Oaks Farm. Fund-raising will be a major focus for additional capital facilities development. We continue to also invest in our other three 4-H Centers, emphasizing increased participation in summer camping programs. <http://www.loneoaksfarm.com/>

Agriculture and Natural Resources: Focus on Livestock Production Education

UT Extension Advanced Master Producer educational certification courses continue to be offered to beef, dairy and small ruminant producers across Tennessee. A new Master Horse Producer educational program will begin being offered in fall of 2016. After 19 years of being required to investigate livestock welfare abuse, this responsibility was moved from UT Agricultural Extension Agents to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture as of July 1st, 2016. Over 90% of the welfare investigations conducted by Extension involved equine. The new Master Horse Producer educational program is designed to education horse owners on the proper care, feeding and management of horses with the goal of improving equine management across Tennessee.

Family and Consumer Science Programming: Building Financial Capacity of Tennessee Families

Programs focus on (1) training citizens in sound basic financial practices, (2) encouraging Tennesseans to save to build assets over their working lives, and (3) encouraging individuals and households to reduce dependence on credit and discharge debt. One-hundred twenty-four Extension educators across the state reported conducting financial education programs, up from 95 in the past year. Financial education activities are conducted through bankruptcy education, homebuyer education, High School Financial Planning and teacher training, saving education for adults and youth, and financial education simulations for youth. Counties across Tennessee reported 93,128 total direct educational contacts. Direct contacts by agents included 79,782 contacts via group meetings, programs, and other direct methods. An additional 5,545,996 Tennesseans were reached with the message of the importance of savings and financial responsibility through agent and volunteer media and exhibits.

Impacts: The estimated economic impact of clientele's saving totaled \$12,933,510 in 2015, with debt reduction estimates totaling \$3,524,508. The total estimated impact of Extension Tennessee Saves adult and youth programs as well as youth financial simulations on Tennesseans' saving increase and debt reduction was \$16,458,018.

Strategic Plan Implementation 2016

The UT Extension Strategic Plan implementation has progressed successfully over the past 6 years. Several implementation teams have completed their assignments, and procedures and recommendations from those teams are being institutionalized. A county director training curriculum has been developed, with 30 newly-appointed county directors currently participating in a yearlong program that includes face to face training, online learning, mentoring, and a new website containing helpful resources. After the success of establishing a mentoring program for new agents last year, focus groups have been conducted to identify needs in order to develop a mentoring program for administrative support staff, which should launch this fall. Several trainings have been offered to employees earlier this year to address key needs identified in the strategic plan. A few sessions that have been offered include workshops on obtaining and managing extramural funds; an in-service to improve stress management skills; and trainings on working with volunteers and following new volunteer procedures related to child protection.

Administrative Update

2017 Legislative Update (FY18-19 biennium):

All state agencies recently received a letter from Texas' top elected officials requesting that the 2018-19 budgets be submitted at a 96% level, meaning a 4% reduction in current state general fund support. This is a REAL reduction, and for Extension equates to \$1.8m per year of the next biennium. While this has been termed a "starting point for budget deliberations," we are moving forward with plans that this will be a permanent reduction in our budget.

This request was supplemented by several quotes that included: "Limited government, pro-growth economic policies and sound financial planning are the key budget principles responsible for Texas' economic success," and "It is imperative that every state agency engage in a thorough review of each program and budget strategy and determine the value of each dollar spent." "Due to the slowdown in parts of our economy, some difficult decisions will be required to balance the next state budget, and the process of making those decisions begins now,"

We are extremely proud of the work being done by Extension and the difference we are making across the state. We consistently meet our state identified goals and measurements for contact hours and educational outreach. As we work to address the potential decrease in state funding support our primary goal is to minimize impact on employees and positions. We are hopeful that current state support for healthy South Texas may become part of our base funding for the next biennium. We have also prepared three Exceptional Items for funding consideration: Healthy Texas, Agriculture Surveillance and Safety, and Urban Youth STEM. Our intent is to continue to communicate the value of a network of county Extension offices and research/extension centers across the state in addressing current, critical and emerging needs for the state.

FLSA:

Effective December 1, 2016 there are changes being implemented to the minimum salary for an exempt or salaried employee, moving to \$47,476. While it is our goal to continue to improve our compensation for employees over time, there is not adequate funding to accomplish this level of salary immediately. There is a provision in the FLSA that allows Educators to remain exempt employees, even if the salary is below the minimum level. We believe we have always been exempt, and will continue to be exempt when the changes go into effect. Our belief is supported by legal opinion, and will allow us to continue to compensate our Agents as we do today, while making every effort to move salaries up over time.

Educational Requirements for Agents:

Effective September 1, County Extension Agents will no longer be required to have a master's degree to maintain employment with Extension. Agents will continue to be encouraged to obtain a master's degree, and will continue to be rewarded with a \$4000 salary increase for masters. In addition, the CEA Career Ladder Guidelines will remain constant, so that agents cannot advance beyond Level II without a master's degree. There will be an application process that is required for Agents to complete prior to beginning a master's degree, those guidelines and materials will be shared soon. In addition, there is a policy in place

for completion of a doctoral degree, which states that any agent who desires to complete a doctoral degree and receive a pay increase MUST complete an application and be approved by the Director prior to admission and enrollment in a doctoral program. The Director and Administrative team will consider all applications, and may approve up to a maximum of 5 doctoral students per year to begin work on the degree and be approved for a \$6000 salary increase upon completion.

Programmatic Update

E-Learning Initiative:

To maintain relevance into the future, it is critical that we provide employees with new e-learning strategies which will help us reach more people and improve agency visibility. Currently, we have some great things happening with online courses and other web based education, however, it is time for us to make a strategic investment which will make e-learning more advanced and robust than we have ever had within the agency. We have recently concluded several interviews and workshop sessions to chart the course for the future of web based courses in our agency. The individuals that worked with AgriLife IT to help us determine the needs of our agents and specialists have supplied a report that outlines the specifications of a system to meet the needs of our educators and our clientele. Now we are taking the next step to put out a request for more information so we can begin looking at e-learning platforms that will meet the diverse needs we have identified.

2016 Employee Engagement Survey:

This survey is encouraged by the state and consists of a series of 48 primary items used to assess essential and fundamental aspects of how the agency functions. It was sent to all employees in the agency, and Extension had a response rate of 55.7%, which is considered high for an agency our size. Most important for Extension Administration is the level at which employees feel “engaged” in the agency mission and objectives. Engagement is defined as: focus on building trust, encouraging the expression of ideas, and providing employees with the resources, guidance and training they need to do their best work. While 58% felt highly engaged, there were 10% of our employees who felt disengaged. We hope to continue to reinforce our commitment to our employees, transparency in communication, investments in professional development and recognition of accomplishments as we strive to maintain an environment that is supportive of our employees and our mission.

New Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission:

The Central Leadership Team has participated in a series of meetings during the last year, with the goal of re-writing our agency’s strategic plan. The new plan will be ready for distribution this fall and shared during program planning meetings. Our challenge was to streamline the document and ensure that it accurately reflects priorities of the agency and our clientele. We chose to use the AgriLife Grand Challenges as a tool to organize our priorities (Feeding our World, Protecting our Environment, Improving our Health, Enriching our Youth, Growing our Economy). After reviewing data from the Texas Community Futures Forums that were conducted at the county level, we believe the Grand Challenge areas align with the local needs that have been expressed in communities. We look forward to sharing the new strategic

plan this fall and believe it outlines educational needs that are relevant and will position the agency for the future as we address critical needs across the state.

ASRED
August 2016

Produce Auction Continues to Grow and Leads Local Food Effort in Southside Virginia:

Marketing of produce and fruits in Southside Virginia has traditionally been limited to roadside stands, direct farm sales, farmer's markets, and CSA's. In addition, these types of marketing avenues are limited on the amount or quantity that an individual producer could market at any given time. Many producers had a desire to expand production and to have a ready market for their produce and fruit. Most producers did not want to spend time at stands or farmer's markets to market a relatively small amount of produce and fruits. The Southside Produce Auction, LLC held its first wholesale produce and fruit auction on May 1 2012. Since that time, 52 auctions conducted and sales ran two days a week through the end of October. In 2013, the auction built a new facility, added an additional 6 sales, and increased its volume of produce sold by 300,000lbs. With the help of extension's efforts, the 2015 Southside Produce Auction again experienced growth. Produce and fruit sales increased from 1,000,000 lbs. in 2014 to over 1,750,000 lbs. in 2015. In just four years, produce sold at the auction has gone from 350,000 to over 1,750,000lbs. This has occurred while maintaining average prices above most wholesale prices. Now growers from 27 counties sale regularly with the auction. Sales revenue has increased over 320% since 2012. The Auction has brought over 26,000 visitors to Charlotte County since it began.

Turf and Landscape Urban Nutrient Management Planner Training and Certification

Program: Virginia currently has nutrient management Standards and Criteria and corresponding Turf and Landscape Nutrient Management Planner training and certification programs administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). This program, initiated in 2009, was developed through a collaborative effort between DCR, and VCE. They collaborated in the development of a state/regional training manual to support the certification process. Standards and Criteria were updated, so these changes were incorporated into new presentations. The award-winning Urban Nutrient Management Handbook (recognized by both the American Society of Agronomy and the American Society of Agriculture and Biological Engineers) 13-chapter manual is published through VCE. Personnel from VCE, and DCR collaborated on 2-day training sessions for 52 participants in spring and fall training sessions. The audience included turfgrass and allied green industry professionals, extension agents, and Master Gardener Volunteers desiring to become certified plan writers. Of the 52 participants in the urban nutrient management training program, 26 new urban nutrient management planners were certified in 2015. An additional 4,557 acres of turf under an Urban Nutrient Management Plan was added from these and previously certified trainers that came through this program (137 prior to 2015). Total Urban Nutrient Management Plan acreage is 36,051.

Virginia Impacts of Teen Cuisine on the Dietary Habits and Food Preparation Skills of

Adolescents: This statewide effort seeks to educate today's adolescents on healthy, inexpensive food preparation techniques to use at home. Teen Cuisine is a skill-based

curriculum that focuses on food preparation and safety. It includes six lessons, each lasting 90 minutes. It focuses on key components of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, including MyPlate, the food label, sources of fat, whole grains, and nutritious snacks. This program is supported by the Youth Voice: Youth Choice 4-H Healthy Living grant. Through interdisciplinary programming (4-H, FCS, and FNP) together we reached a diverse group of over 12,000 youth between the ages of 12-19 in 2015. Students completed either a pre-post evaluation, as required for the Family Nutrition Program staff, or the 4-H Common Measures Healthy Living post-test as required by the Youth Voice Youth Choice grant. 370 Common Measure evaluations were completed for the 7th-12th grade participants. As a result, based on these post-tests evaluations, teen participants reported a variety of positive dietary impacts: 90% indicated that as a result of Teen Cuisine they learned about healthy food choices and the importance of nutrition in planning meals and snacks:73% indicated that as a result of Teen Cuisine they are making healthier food choices and cooking with their families: 68 % indicated that as a result of Teen Cuisine they are changing behaviors to eat healthier. This translated into:

- 78% reporting that they ate more fruits and vegetables
- 67% more whole grains
- 61% less junk food
- 64% less saturated fat
- 67% indicated they drank less soda
- 80% more water

In terms of food preparation and cooking skills:

- 91% reported that they washed hands before they cooked
- 86% reported improved knife skills
- 78% reported using recipes when cooking
- 74% indicated that they cooked more

Virginia 4-H CHARACTER COUNTS!: The Virginia 4-H CHARACTER COUNTS! program helps youth sort right from wrong and encourages them to use universally accepted values to strengthen their character. The national program, developed by the Josephson Institute of Ethics and adopted by Virginia 4-H, teaches trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship as the six pillars of character. Age appropriate games, role playing, discussion, reflections, and real world examples make these character values understandable. In 2015, the Virginia 4-H CHARACTER COUNTS! program reached 11,042 youth, ages 5-18. Virginia 4-H also participated in the 2015 Report Card of Ethics of American Youth survey. The survey was distributed at the 2015 State 4-H Congress and a total of 234 responses were received. Respondents were between the ages of 13-19 and the majority, 71%, were female. Results from this survey indicate that the respondents are ethical and place high value on being ethical. When asked, in your personal opinion, how important to you is each of the following? 91% rated having a good moral character as either essential (69%) or very important (22%), 85% stated that being thought of as ethical and honorable was essential (57%) or very important (28%), 92% stated that helping others was essential (59%) or very important (33%), 93% rated having trusting personal relationships as essential (72%) or very important (21%), and 100% strongly agreed or agreed that it was important for them to be a person with good character.

VCE Summer Internships: For more than 10 years, VCE has offered summer internships to students and recent graduates. In 2016, we had 46 positions available in 39 Unit offices. One hundred applicants from 7 states and 23 universities applied for these coveted positions. Applicants must be at least rising juniors, have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and be in a field of study that would qualify them to be hired as an Extension Agent. The experience is for 10 weeks and pays \$12/hour. Unit offices that wish to participate in the program must secure half of the intern wages (\$2400) from local sources. A strong on-campus connection between the Internship program and the Introduction to Cooperative Extension course provides a significant number of motivated Virginia Tech student applicants. A growing number of these student/interns are also now receiving course credit for their experience. While interns usually focus on one particular program area during their time with us, Units are expected to expose them to the work of all program areas. Supervising agents are encouraged to routinely discuss and help the intern reflect on their experience. Interns are required to maintain a blog or some other form of a record of their internship, and a formal evaluation is conducted with the intern at the end of the summer. Interns learn new skills, and gain valuable understanding of what an extension career looks like. At the same time, agents and district directors are able to evaluate interns for their suitability to an Extension career. The internship provides Units with some sorely needed extra hands during the busy summer months, but the greatest benefit of the internship program is filling the pipeline of new agent candidates. In the past year approximately 25% of our agent hires have come from the internship ranks.

International Professional Development Experiences for Agents: It is well documented that international learning and service experiences can re-energize mid-career employees. With that in mind, we set out to create international professional development experiences for agents that have advanced from our basic entry level. Two experiences were created, each independent of the other. The first is with Ireland's Extension equivalent, TEAGASC, the Agriculture and Food Development Authority of Ireland. We established an exchange between our agriculture agents and their agriculture advisors. Two of their Advisors came to Virginia for three weeks followed by two of our Agents following the Advisors back to Ireland for a three week stay. Based on pre-trip communications each organization crafted an experience of farm visits, field days, workshops, experiment station tours, in-service trainings, etc. Ireland was specifically chosen due to the lack of a language barrier and because of the similarity of agriculture systems. Benefits include technology and production practices that were learned that could be adapted in both locations, as well as new educational delivery methods that can be added to the toolbox. Our plans are to exchange one or two agents each year with TEAGASC.

The second international program is in Senegal, Africa. The College of Agriculture has an existing USAID Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) project in Senegal. One of our agronomy Extension specialist involved in the ERA project recognized Senegal's need for the development of a youth development program like 4-H. Her enthusiasm motivated Senegalese university faculty to explore the possibilities, first by coming to Virginia to learn about Extension and 4-H, and second through an invitation to one of our 4-H specialists to travel there in 2015. In 2016, two Virginia 4-H agents were selected to accompany the 4-H specialist to spend three weeks in Senegal to continue to build the foundation of the 4-H program. Plans are to send two new agents there each year to continue training local leaders and university capacity building.

Administration: The state revenue expectations were not met and the planned salary increases planned for November have been canceled. The revised budget comes out in late August and may result in budget reductions. The general assembly did pass a bond package that includes \$22million for new livestock facilities.

Destination Areas: The university is modifying its short term strategic planning to focus on at this point 5 areas to place special emphasis when it comes to faculty individual and cluster hiring. It will also be of importance as new resources and partnerships become available. They will also be significant when the new advancement campaign begins in summer of 2017.

Rebranding: The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, including Virginia Cooperative Extension, as well as Virginia Tech are undergoing a rebranding process. The visibility of the College and Extension is not where it should be and the effort is to know how to place emphasis on advancement, partnerships and recruitment. The University will also have a new tag line.