

Report to the People Fayette County 2022



Agriculture

What a productive year it has been for the Fayette County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources program. Educational programming, publications, and trainings were given to over 2300 producers across the county on topics relating to beef cattle, grain crops, agriculture finance, pasture management, equine management, tobacco production, pesticide and chemical management, solar on-farm options, GAP trainings, and so much more including countless one-on-one trainings!

Client demand for our consultation and farm-visit services has increased greatly in the past year. We've conducted numerous farm visits, getting hands-on with producers to resolve any issues they may have. Over 300 soil samples have been analyzed for approximately 70 producers across the county, helping them to better manage their crop production in a profitable and sustainable manner. Hay sampling has become more popular with producers, and we have served approximately 30 folks with that service this year to give them an accurate quality value of their hay, allowing them to supplement feed as-needed to their animals.

We have worked in coordination with other county extension agents to assist in natural disaster efforts, both in Muhlenberg County for the tornadoes, and Breathitt County for the flooding. We have worked in close collaboration with the Farm Service Agency and Fayette County Conservation District to better serve the agricultural producers of Fayette County, ultimately making them more profitable and sustainable.



Horticulture

The past year has been busy for the Fayette County Horticulture program. Home Horticulture is the most utilized program we offer. We engage with thousands of individual residents each year about lawn and garden issues. We routinely consult about food production, nuisance wildlife, pollinator preservation, and home pest problems. This year summer drought, boxwood blight, winter cold, and storm damage have greatly increased our traffic.

We distributed over 3000 vegetable transplants, along with seeds to community and classroom garden projects and home gardeners. Our demonstration vegetable garden teaches best practices, but also donates an average of 1,000 lbs. of produce to local food banks annually. We performed over 1,200 soil tests, many at no charge, in partnership with the Fayette County Conservation District.

Horticulture staff trained a new class of Extension Master Gardener volunteers who will lend additional support to gardening and educational programming in our community. We currently have 82 volunteers in active service. Projects include The Arboretum, Seedleaf, Foodchain, Reforest the Bluegrass, Our Growing Community event, Bluegrass Fair Flower and Vegetable show, and local farmers' markets.

20 Gardener's Toolbox classes accounted for over 1600 contacts. Our social media reach grew to over 4000 followers with our Facebook posts reaching over 450,000 people. Our Youtube channel videos received another 70,000 views. We proudly serve all Fayette county residents with current, accurate, unbiased gardening information.

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Family and Consumer Sciences

Savor the Flavor

Research shows that people who prepare and cook meals at home are more likely to eat the recommended fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and whole grains needed in a balanced diet. Evidence also suggests that those who prepare home-cooked meals have improved health outcomes and reduced chronic disease risk.

To encourage more home-prepared meals, the Fayette County Extension Office hosted the workshop Savor the Flavor: Seasoning with Spices. The Savor the Flavor program focused on cooking with various spices to season and enhance the flavor of food. The goal of this program is to increase knowledge about various types of spices that you can use and learn how to incorporate them into food preparation and cooking. Of those surveyed, 47% indicated they better understood different types of spices used for cooking and/or increased their level of understanding regarding ways to incorporate spices into food preparation and cooking. Further, 94% expressed the intention to try a new type of spice as a way to prepare or add flavor to foods, while 94% expressed the intention to incorporate more spices into cooking to increase home- prepared meals.

Fall Back into Fitness

Low levels of physical activity, unhealthy nutrition, and poor mental health are all determinants of several chronic diseases. These behaviors are now considered major public health concerns and require effective behavior change interventions. The Fall Back into Fitness program was developed with these issues in mind.

Through this program, participants increased their physical activity through the cardiovascular exercise of Zumba and during the strength training portion. The goal was to equip participants with the knowledge of how to safely and effectively include physical activity in their life once the program ends. The initial outcome indicates that participants reaped the intended benefits of this program. 41 adults participated throughout 8 classes. Of the participants surveyed, 100% became aware of the benefits of regular physical activity, 100% reported having gained the knowledge and skills to be physically active, and 97% reported an increase in physical activity levels as a result of participation in this program.

Family Care Center

The Family Care Center (FCC) is a local school and child development center for single mothers located right next to Extension Office. Together FCS and NEP programs have reconnected with FCC to provide nutrition education, physical fitness, along with career and workforce development courses. With 4 quarters of 9-week sessions in a school year, FCS and NEP have impacted this year over 20 youth with over 85% indicating improvement in diet quality and physical activity after completing the course.

Night of Black Excellence

FCS envisioned, developed, and implemented this new program during Black History Month on February 9th, 2023. The event highlighted the work of Black Agricultural, Food, and Family Resources in Extension from the past, present, and future. Five community partners helped successfully provide a night full of Black History decorations, opening remarks from Black extension past and present staff, Black owned local catered meal, food demo and desserts, and entertainment from UK Black Gospel Group. 37 attendees present, all attendees vocalized the desire to have a program “first of its kind here in the Extension Office” to be implemented as an annual event and over 80% voiced the appreciation and impact of learning about Black History within extension.



4-H Youth Development

4-H Summer Camp

Kentucky 4-H promotes the full development of young people, while instilling strong values and morals. It fosters life skills, positive self-esteem, citizenship, and leadership skills in a “learn by doing” approach that helps participants become contributing, productive, and self-directed members of society. The Fayette County 4-H Program feels that one of the best ways to achieve this mission is with a strong residential camping program.



This past July we had 253 (206 campers, 27 teens, 17 adult leaders, and 3 4-H agents) attend camp. This is the highest number of attendees since 2017. Campers were able to return to 4 camp classes of their choice since Covid restriction in 2021. The classes covered a wide range of interest including canoeing, fishing, archery, high ropes, foods, and crafts. Campers, some for the first time, were required to have the responsibility of cleaning up after themselves and their cabins, keep track of their clothing, and personal belongings, including money.

Some campers were away from home for the first time. Fayette county sent home 0 children with homesickness during their week. Campers were encouraged to make friends and learn independence while away from home.

4-H Environmental Camp

During the past School year Fayette County 4-H has continued to provide programming to Fayette County Youth. We achieve this by partnering with the public school system and other community organizations to offer programs in and outside of the classroom. With our “learn by doing” mindset we brought Fayette County Youth outside of the classroom to learn more about our natural environment.



During our Environmental Education Camp Program, we brought youth from multiple schools, both public and private, to one of our 4-H Camp facilities where they got the opportunity to participate in hands-on learning through a wide variety of classes. Each of our classes offered, from Kentucky Mammals to Low Ropes Challenge Course, is geared towards meeting core standards for the school system.

Schools participated in both our Overnight and Extended Day Environmental Education Camp option garnering participation from 10 Schools from the county. In total over 800 youth and 100 teacher and parent volunteers have gone through our Environment Education Camp Program this year. Youth who participate in this program will gain an increased understanding and appreciation in our natural environment. This is made possible thanks to school partnerships and willing parent volunteers who help act as chaperones during the trip.

4-H Youth Development

4-H has been highly involved in school programs including:

- SET programs at Ashland, Booker T Washington, Carter Woodson Preparatory Academy, Clays Mill, Harrison, Maxwell, Millcreek, Picadome, Wellington, William Wells Brown CC, Lexington Montessori, and Crawford Middle School.
- Leadership programs at Jessie Clark Middle School.
- Natural Resource programs at Ashland, Booker T Washington, Clays Mill, Harrison, Maxwell, Millcreek, RISE, Wellington, WWBCC, and Lexington Montessori.
- FCS programs at Beaumont, Booker T Washington, Garden Springs, Maxwell, Meadowthorpe, Sandersville, Leestown, Lexington Montessori
- Agriculture programs at Booker T Washington, and Harrison Elementary.



Additional 4-H activities:

- We had 2 delegates attend the 4-H Southern Region Teen Leadership Conference in Crossville, TN in September.
- We had 2 delegates attend 4-H Issues Conference to learn about active citizenship and addressing local issues in communities in November.
- We had 5 delegates attend a local C1-C4 Area Teen Retreat in Jabez, KY in February.
- We have had 10 active Teen Leadership/ JR. MANRRS council members from August to May.
- We piloted a middle school environmental camp in partnership with Georgia 4-H at Camp Jekyll and accepted 2 delegates to attend in April.
- We have piloted rabbit, poultry, and beekeeping clubs successfully and secured dedicated volunteers to lead these clubs.
- We have successfully begun collecting scholarship funds for 4-H Camp 2023 and partnered with our District Board, and look forward to making camp more accessible and accepting youth from underserved communities to join us for 4-H Camp in the many years to come.



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