

Report to the People Fayette County 2023



Family and Consumer Sciences

Dining with Diabetes: Fit and Flavor Edition

Evidence 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 presented the Savor the Flavor series to their community participants. The Savor the Flavor program focused on various types of cooking methods and flavoring techniques. Maranda Brooks was able to provide creativity merging Diabetes concepts and collaborating with Lexington Health Department for Diabetes Education and physical activity. This allowed agent to focus on the delivery of Savor the Flavor and the benefits this curriculum has to individuals that do have diabetes, while getting a holistic approach to diabetes management, physical activities and savoring the flavor. FCS agent was also able to collaborate with horticultural in having a Master Gardener deliver a walk through/hands on tour of the community garden and discuss the herbs section of the garden to provide a visual experience prior to the delivery of the herbs savor the flavor presentation. Thirty-three people participated in the workshop.

Of those surveyed, 100% expressed appreciation for diabetes management information and 94% indicated they better understood different types of cooking methods and flavoring techniques, respectively, and 94% stated they increased their level of understanding regarding ways to incorporate different cooking methods and flavoring techniques into food preparation and cooking. Further, 94% expressed the intention to try a new cooking method and/or flavoring technique to prepare or add flavor to foods, while 94% expressed the intention to incorporate more variety in cooking methods and flavoring techniques into cooking to increase home-prepared meals.

Daddy/ Daughter Hairstyling Class

FCS agent and Stylist Montequa Jackson discussed the need to provide more programming for fathers. Montequa and FCS agent Maranda Brooks discussed a strong interest from the community and feedback of a daddy and daughter hairstyling class.

6 father/ daughter duos attended the class. 100% of the fathers expressed gaining hairstyling techniques that they plan to implement in their daily routine. 100% of fathers attended had never been to the Fayette County Extension Office before and were thankful to hear about all of the program areas from the FCS agent. 100% of the fathers expressed increased confidence to attempt a basic hairstyle for their daughter. 25% of attendance captured a diverse audience. 100% of the daughters expressed enjoyment of their dad wanting to learn how to take care of their hair and spending time 1 on 1 time with their dad.



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Family and Consumer Sciences

Adaptive Sewing Program

In partnership with the Eastern Kentucky University Occupational Therapy Program, Caroline McMahan identified a need for adaptive sewing classes at the Fayette County Extension Office. Sewing and quilting classes are offered frequently in my county and are central to many of our community members' lives and cultures. To address the need for adaptive programming, I worked with the EKU Occupational therapy department to develop our Adaptive Sewing Class series. The EKU team focused on conducting qualitative research on changes in fine motor skills and cognition in participants throughout the program. My focus was to provide a series of classes that would meet participants' specific adaptive needs so that they could learn how to sew and develop the skills and confidence necessary to sew on their own after the series.

There were 5 participants in this series, ranging from age 23-70. Their diagnoses varied and included autism, other intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injury, and stroke recovery. Classes were held at the Extension Office once a week for 8 weeks. The participants worked on several sewing projects throughout the series, including a tote bag, a potato bag, and other projects they chose individually. 100% of participants completed all 8 sessions of the series. 100% met the goal of improving fine motor skills and cognition while sewing. One participant stated, "It's nice to make something and have something functional. It was good to have a sense of accomplishment and let it be useful."

Another unexpected initial outcome from this program was the impact of a safe social environment for the participants. 100% reported that they enjoyed meeting new people and having a consistent social event to attend for 2 months. 80% expressed a desire to participate in a similar program in the future. We have continued this partnership to program another series for 2024.



Gardening and Nutrition Education Program

AVOL Kentucky is an essential component of the Fayette County community with the goals of helping medically vulnerable people navigate to permanent and stable housing, access medical care (health screenings and preventative medications for HIV) and receive social support. We had not previously provided Extension services to this group and identified a need to implement both gardening and nutrition education classes to AVOL's clients. As such, the Fayette County Horticulture agent, FCS agent, and SNAP-Ed Senior Assistant collaborated to address the needs of gardening education, nutrition education, and food safety education. These classes reinforced the idea of using fresh produce to make healthy and nutritious meals.

100% of participants reported that their physical, mental, and emotional health had improved after the program. Other important behavior changes that participants reported include increased levels of physical activity (80%), increased intake of fruits and vegetables (100%), made healthier food choices when they were able (100%), saved money on groceries (100%), are aware of how to safely store, handle, and prepare food (100%), grown their own food (80%), and plan to share what they have learned with friends or family (60%). One of the participants shared that, "to learn about [gardening] and healthy living and cooking has changed my life," and that they are "thankful for the change at better health, wellbeing, and nutrition." All participants stated that they would participate in a similar program in the future.



4-H Youth Development

The Fayette County Extension Office, through 4-H, continues 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.

Communication plays a key role in the development of a child. Through participation in 4-H, youth gain experience and skills in communication. This year, we have partnered with two schools to bring public speaking into the classroom. Outside of the classroom, youth are given the opportunity to participate in our county communications contest along with other 4-H members. From the county level, winners can advance up to the top level, where they compete with other youth from across the state. We plan to continue to grow the program and incorporate more communications programs throughout the county. Last year, we had five participants qualify for the State Communications Contest. Four of the five who qualified participated, and each earned a Blue Ribbon.



With our “learn by doing” mindset, we have brought Fayette County Youth outside the classroom to learn more about our natural environment. Youth from multiple public and private schools participate in hands-on learning through various classes. Each of our classes, from Owl Pellets to the Low Ropes Challenge Course, is geared towards meeting core standards for the school system. Our environmental education and camping program has grown to include overnight and extended day trips to North Central 4-H Camp and field trips to one of our local parks, McConnell Springs. Last Fall, over six hundred youth participated in our Environmental Education Camping Program. This was made possible by the support of over one hundred teachers and parent volunteers. With eight more schools set to participate this spring, over one thousand youth will pass through the Environmental Education Camping Program in the 2023-2024 school year.



4-H has been implementing more STEM related curriculum into our school and club educational programming this year, thanks to agents, volunteers, and community partners. In December, 4-H Agent Genaea Sarantakos implemented a cow eye dissection lab with 4th graders and assisted with organizing a wider dissection lab workshop at the Fayette County Extension Office. 184 total youth participated in 3 school enrichment dissection programs. 21 youth and 10 parents participated in workshop dissection program. We are also excited to be releasing a pilot program in partnership with Apple to implement application design and development with our youth and technology, in the coming months.



Many middle schoolers are being tasked with watching their siblings and possibly other children. 4-H wanted to help educate these middle schoolers at Beaumont Middle School. Being able to equip these 7th grade students will help them feel more successful and knowledgeable when they babysit. There were 54 students in the Babysitting class at Beaumont Middle. 50% of them had babysat a sibling, a neighbor, or someone else for an hourly wage. 45% of the students felt comfortable holding a baby, taking care of an infant and toddler. The students learned about infant care, ages and stages, what to do in an emergency or sickness/illness, made a healthy snack, and made a boo-boo bunny for babysitting. 90% of the students said after the 8-hour session over 5 days that they would feel more comfortable babysitting someone. Many students came in not knowing how to care for a child or what to do in an emergency. After taking this class they felt more confident in starting their babysitting business. 80% of the students did not know what to charge families to babysit. They were able to do a worksheet to help them better understand what they should charge.



Horticulture

The Fayette County Extension Home Horticulture program is well known in our community. We engage with thousands of individual residents each year about lawn and garden issues. We routinely consult with residents about food production, nuisance wildlife, pollinator preservation, and home pest problems. This year summer drought, landscape plant issues, winter cold, and storm damage have greatly increased our traffic. We performed over 1,200 soil tests, many at no charge, through our partnership with the Fayette County Conservation District, and diagnosed thousands of pest problems for residents.

Pollinator concerns have emerged as a popular trend in gardening and Lexington residents are excited to learn more about supporting these valuable insects. The horticulture program coordinated with numerous other agencies to plan and execute Lexington's first organized Pollinator week campaign. Modeled after the popular Tree Week campaign, the group offered educational programs, events, and free pollinator plants to residents. Our kickoff event attracted over 250 people to McConnell Springs for education, plants, and kid's activities. Additional programs and opportunities continued throughout the week-long promotion.

To support the continued interest in backyard food production, we also 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 joined with Family and Consumer science and NEP to develop a vegetable garden at the AVOL community center near Cardinal Valley. Participants learned to raise vegetables and numerous ways to eat healthier.

12 new Extension Master Gardener volunteers completed their certification and will lend additional support to gardening and educational programming in our community. We currently have 70 volunteers in active service. Projects include The Arboretum, Seedleaf, Foodchain, Reforest the Bluegrass, Our Growing Community event, and the Bluegrass Fair Flower and Vegetable show.

20 Gardener's Toolbox classes accounted for over 2000 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. The Fayette County horticulture program proudly serves all Fayette County residents with current, accurate, unbiased gardening information.



Growing Community



Gardeners divide produce from our AVOL garden project.

Fayette County Extension Agents

Maranda Brooks, Family and Consumer Sciences
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Jamie Dockery, Horticulture

Caroline McMahan, Family and Consumer Sciences
Lucas Powell, 4-H Youth Development
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Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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