NEWS & EVENTS

It is a New Year…
Make Your Health a Priority in 2020!

Upcoming Diabetes Prevention/Management Classes

**Class option 1:** For Diabetics, Family Members of Diabetics, Friends of Diabetics or anyone wanting to learn more about diabetes. Classes will be held on Monday’s from 5:15-6:15pm at the Elbert County Extension Office (1088 Ruckersville Road Elberton, GA). Our first information session about the class will be January 6 starting at 5:15pm.

**Class option 2:** For Pre-Diabetics and individuals who are at-risk for developing Type 2 diabetes. Classes will be held on Monday’s from 6:15-7:15pm at the Elbert County Extension Office (1088 Ruckersville Road Elberton, GA). Our first information session about the class will be January 6 starting at 6:15pm.

There is no cost to attend these classes….just a commitment to learn! If you want to learn proven ways to lose weight and improve your health and you haven’t signed up for the series of classes…then join us on January 6th as we begin life’s next learning adventure!

**HOBBY FLOCK SEMINAR SERIES**

Brought to you by Lincoln County Cooperative Extension

Do you currently have or are you interested in having your own backyard hobby flock? Benefits of keeping birds include fresh eggs, fertilizer, insect control, and entertainment. If you are interested in learning more about keeping your own flock, join the Lincoln County Extension Office for a four week seminar series!

Registration is required by 1/20/2020. Call 706-359-3233 or email uge3181@uga.edu to register.

**Details:**
- **Day:** Mondays
- **Time:** 6:30 PM
- **Starts:** Jan 27th
- **Ends:** Feb 17th
- **Location:**
  288 N. Peachtree St, Lincolnton GA 30817

**Topics:** Basics & Economics, Housing & Biosecurity, Nutrition, Health, Egg Production and Meat Production
The new year is a great time to pick up a few habits that will help build a greener future for the planet, but new habits can be hard to maintain.

Whether they pertain to exercise, finances or green living, resolutions are easier to keep when they begin with small changes, said Pamela Turner, an associate professor and Cooperative Extension housing specialist with the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences.

“Making a large change — like going completely plastic-free — can be hard to take on because they’re such extreme changes,” Turner said. “Like anything else, the best way to build a more sustainable household is to start with small steps that you can maintain.”

There are lots of small changes that a family can make to lessen their footprint on the environment. Here are 10 steps that Turner recommends:

1. Stop buying bottled water.
2. Make a habit of keeping your reusable bags in the car so you never end up at the store without them.
3. Buy your family members reusable straws with cleaning brushes.
4. Start using cloth napkins and cloth kitchen towels; save the paper towels and paper napkins.
5. Take your own containers with you to restaurants to carry out leftovers.
6. Bring cloth produce bags with you to the grocery store.
7. Become a clean recycler; clean all containers before putting them in the recycling bin.
8. Eat at home or brown bag whenever you can. Eating out generates more waste from unnecessary packaging.
9. Borrow or rent large items and tools that you may not use very often.
10. Swap clothes with friends or buy used clothing when you need to refresh your look.

“The best thing to do is just pick two or three changes and try to stick with them,” Turner said. “The most important thing is that you move forward with what you can do and not compare yourself to others. It isn’t a competition.”

For more tips of living a greener life, visit UGA Extension’s UGA Greenway at UGAgreenway.org. Other tips are available at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's blog.
January is Radon Action Month: Why It’s Time to Test your Home if You Live in Elbert County
By Christa Campbell

According to data gathered from previous radon testing done by the University of Georgia Radon Education Program, homes in Elbert County have a 17.8% chance of having an elevated level of radon. This can happen in any kind of home with any type of construction, including slab on grade, crawlspace, and homes with basements.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can be harmful after an extended exposure to high levels. Because people spend about 90 percent of their time indoors, typically at home or work, they can be exposed to elevated levels. Radon is a colorless and odorless gas so you do not know when, or if, you are exposed until you test. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rocks and water. Uranium is often found in areas with high levels in granite, which is readily present throughout Georgia, especially in the northern half of the state. As the gas migrates up through the soil, it can enter a building and concentrate indoors.

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer for nonsmokers, and the second leading cause overall, behind tobacco smoke. Radon is responsible for an estimated 21,000 deaths per year with over 800 of those deaths in Georgia. Luckily, testing for radon is easy and exposure to radon is preventable.

Test kits are available from several sources, including local retailers, some county Extension offices and by ordering online at www.UGAradon.org. Kits purchased online cost $15 and include the kit, shipping, lab analysis, and results. Through January, Georgians can get $5 off the cost of a test kit using the promo code NRAM2020.

Winter is the best time to test for radon, because the heat is on and your home acts like a vacuum, sucking up gases from the ground under your home. If your home has an elevated level of radon, the test will be more likely to indicate that than when testing other times of the year.

If the radon level in your home is elevated, you can install a radon reduction system. A radon reduction (or radon mitigation) system reduces high levels of indoor radon to acceptable levels. The most commonly used system is a vent pipe system and fan that pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside.

Another source of radon exposure is from drinking water that comes from private wells. In Georgia, wells drilled into granitic crystalline rock aquifers, usually in the northern part of the state, are at risk of naturally occurring radon contamination. If you don’t know whether there is radon in your well water, have the water tested. The UGA Agricultural and Environmental Services Laboratories in Athens tests water samples for the presence of radon. To get a water testing kit, contact your local UGA Extension office at 706-283-2037 or call 1-800-ASK-UGA1.

To learn more about radon and what you can do to keep yourself and your family safe go to www.UGAradon.org.
Young Riders Horse Club
If you like horses, make plans to join the Young Riders Horse Club! This afterschool club will meet once a month at the 4-H Center to study all things horses! The 4-H Van will pick up interested students. You do NOT have to own or ride a horse to participate! Meeting dates: January 13th

Horse Quiz Bowl Practice
Are you a horse lover? Do you want to learn as much as you possibly can about this amazing animal? You need to join our Horse Quiz Bowl team! You will study all sorts of information related to the horse industry. 4-H’ers who participate will not only learn about our equine friends, they will get to compete with other 4-H’ers from across the state while answering questions in a jeopardy styled competition. Practices will be held on January 8th, 10th, 15th, & 17th, from 3:30-5:00pm at the 4-H Center. The 4-H Van will pick up students at ECMS.

Choose to Reuse
We all know how important the 3 R’s are... reduce, reuse & recycle! In this fun after school project club, we are choosing to reuse! Come spend an afternoon taking an item and repurposing it into something new! Let’s get creative. Wednesday, January 29th after school until 5:00pm

Clover Crafts
Join us if you have ever want to build something from the dirt! Clover Crafts will be working with clay this month, please join us to create. Clover Crafts will meet Tuesday, January 21st, after school until 5:00pm. The van will pick up interested students.

Please see The Elbert County 4-H Flash Newsletter on our website for more 4-H Activities and News