



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION



NEWS & EVENTS

Up Coming Classes & Events

So Easy to Preserve

Preparing for your garden harvest? *So Easy to Preserve* can help. Elbert County Extension has copies of the latest edition of a popular cookbook, with many chapters in the 388-page book including Preserving Food, Canning, Pickled Products, Sweet Spreads and Syrups, Freezing and Drying. *So Easy to Preserve* cookbooks are \$40 each. Come by and pick up a copy to be prepared for your Summer garden!



Winners Workshop

Five Elbert County 4-H'ers attended the Winner's Workshop at Rock Eagle 4-H Center on Tuesday, May 27. These students qualified to compete at Georgia 4-H State Congress later this summer in their respective projects. Pictured are: Josue Bravo (Festive Foods for Health), Madison Moore (Safety), Makayla McKnight (Sports), Allie Stephens (Art), and Ayden Evans (Horse).



ServSafe Manager Training Course

ServSafe™ Manager Training is scheduled for July 14-15, 2025.

You must pre-register for the class by July 4, 2025. The cost of the class is \$150.

The cost to re-test with the 7th Edition Book with the 2022 Food Code is \$70.

The class will be held at the Elbert County Extension Office which is located at Blackwell Learning Center, 373 Campbell St. For more information, contact Christa Campbell at (706)283-2037.

Celebrating our Volunteers



Elbert County 4-H Volunteers Tracy and Bruce Brown were recognized at the GA Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals Conference in Covington, Georgia, as the Northeast District Outstanding Volunteers. They have been volunteers to the 4-H program since 2010, and serve in capacities beyond the county program for the district and state.

AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

Summer Gardening Tips from the UGA Extension

Brian Bradford, Elbert County ANR Agent

Make your garden thrive through Georgia's hottest season

1. Water Wisely and Efficiently

Summer's heat causes rapid moisture loss, but proper watering can make all the difference. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension recommends watering early in the morning to reduce evaporation and fungal issues. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation to target the root zone. Avoid daily sprinkling—instead, give your garden a deep soak once or twice a week. This encourages deep root growth and helps prevent issues like blossom-end rot.

2. Mulch and Manage Weeds

Mulching is one of your best defenses against summer stress. A 2–3 inch layer of organic mulch (such as pine straw, bark, or shredded leaves) helps keep the soil cool and moist while suppressing weed growth. Hand-pull weeds regularly, especially after rain when roots are easier to remove. Preventing weeds from going to seed now will save you hours of work later in the season.

3. Feed for Continued Growth

Summer crops need nutrients to keep producing. UGA Extension suggests fertilizing fruiting vegetables like tomatoes, squash, and peppers every 3–4 weeks. Use a balanced or vegetable-specific fertilizer. Flowering annuals benefit from water-soluble fertilizer every 2–3 weeks. If you haven't tested your soil recently, now is a great time to do so—it helps prevent over- or under-fertilization.

4. Monitor for Pests and Disease

Warm, humid conditions increase the risk of insects and plant diseases. Inspect your plants weekly—check the underside of leaves for pests like aphids, caterpillars, and mites. Remove affected leaves and use insecticidal soap or neem oil when necessary. UGA Extension promotes integrated pest management (IPM), which emphasizes observation, prevention, and targeted control over broad chemical use.

5. Harvest Early and Often

The more you pick, the more you get. Harvesting crops like cucumbers, okra, beans, and squash frequently keeps them producing longer. Overripe fruits left on the plant signal the plant to stop producing and may attract pests. Morning harvests are best when fruits are cool and plants are well-hydrated. Keep a basket nearby—you may find something ripe every day!

6. Plan Now for Fall

Though it's hot, it's already time to think ahead. Start seeds indoors in July for fall vegetables such as broccoli, kale, and cabbage. Transplant in August when the weather begins to moderate. Rotate crops to protect soil health and reduce pests and diseases. Adding compost or organic matter now prepares your soil for fall and next spring.

Grow Smart, Garden Strong

Summer gardening in Georgia takes effort, but following UGA Extension's research-based tips ensures a garden that thrives in every season. Stay ahead of weeds, water with care, and look forward to a bountiful harvest—now and into the fall.



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Water Helps Children Succeed

Christa Campbell, Elbert County FACS Agent

Drinking water and staying hydrated is an important part of keeping your family healthy.

When children are properly hydrated, they are better equipped to succeed during the day. Dehydration negatively affects mental and physical abilities, making it difficult for children to concentrate and participate in activities.

Children who have not had enough water also experience more headaches, sleepiness, and irritability. Even if your child does not feel thirsty, it is important to drink water all day long. When you feel thirsty, you may already be starting to get dehydrated.

How can you help your child drink more water?

- Encourage your child to drink water at home
- Give your child water to drink instead of soft drinks or other sugary drinks
- Keep water handy so your child can help him or herself when thirsty
- Send a water bottle to school with your child

FAMILY FUN

Use this activity to help your child learn how drinking water works.

Hydration Station

What You Need:

- Water bottle
- Paper
- Markers

What To Do:

- Review with your child why it is important to drink water
 - “Our bodies need water to stay healthy, and without water we become dehydrated”
 - “If our bodies are dehydrated, it is hard for them to do their job”
- Help your child make a chart to keep track of how much water he or she drinks throughout the day
- Make columns for each day of the week
- Separate the columns with several boxes for your child to fill in
- Each time your child refills the water bottle, invite them to mark the chart
- Count the marks on the chart with your child
- This will help your child keep track of how much water he or she is drinking



4-H & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

ELBERT COUNTY 4-H 2025 SUMMER ACTIVITIES

All summer activities are filled on first-come, first-served basis. Students must sign-up and pay the registration fee in advance. The 4-H Staff reserves the right to cancel activities with low participation or due to weather concerns. Sign-ups are held at the 4-H office at Blackwell Learning Center (373 Campbell Street).

U-PICK BLUEBERRIES & WATERFALL HIKE

Join us for a fun day picking blueberries at Chattooga Belle Farm, followed by a hike and lunch in Long Creek, South Carolina. Cost \$25 | Date July 3rd | Time 8am-4pm



KAYAKING THE BROAD RIVER: JUNIOR/SENIOR 4-H'ERS

Cool off with us as we adventure down the beautiful Broad River!
Cost \$40 | July 14th | 8am-5pm



TUBING IN HELEN

Enjoy a fun day floating down the Chattahoochee River and sliding down waterslides at the Waterpark in Helen, GA. Bring additional money for lunch in Helen.

Cost \$45 | July 15th | 8am-5pm



RICHARD B. RUSSELL STATE PARK TAILGATE

Go Swimming and hang out with friends from other 4-H Clubs in our District. We will have a cookout for lunch. Bring towels, sunscreen, and dry change of clothes.

Cost \$30 | July 28th | 9:30am-4:30pm

CONTACT US

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Office Hours:

Monday - Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm

Closed 12:00pm-1:00pm

Visit our website at:
www.ugaextension.org/elbert

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UGA Extension - Elbert County
Elbert County 4-H

If you need reasonable accommodation or language access services, contact the Elbert County Extension office at 706-283-2037 or uge1105@uga.edu, at least three weeks prior to the program date.