



2016 ANNUAL REPORT: ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

University of Georgia Cooperative Extension is working hard for its constituents. The following are examples of our impact in the county over the past year.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

UGA Extension in Athens-Clarke County taught over 125 gardening classes to 1,500 community members, including the popular Monthly Gardening Class series held at the Athens Public Library. More than 160 Athens-Clarke County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers contributed over 14,000 hours of service in the area. Volunteer projects included Plant a Row for the Hungry, UGA demonstration gardens work, work at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, work at Athens-Clarke County school gardens, Junior Master Gardener programs, civic group presentations, "Ask a Master Gardener" farmers market informational booths, home site visits, newsletter articles and plant clinics at special events. Two vegetable garden operations for Plant a Row for the Hungry produced a donation of over 3,700 pounds of fresh produce for local food banks.

Extension employees and trained Master Gardeners answered more than 4,000 gardening-related phone calls, emails and in-person questions from the community. These questions covered a variety of topics including home vegetable gardening, ornamental and landscape plantings, turf information, plant identification, plant disease identification and treatment, pest control and identification, wildlife control and removal, and access to local resources, suppliers and events. "Shades of Green," the Athens-Clarke County Extension monthly gardening e-newsletter, was distributed to more than 1,500 community members. The Georgia Master Composter program completed its fourth year, with more than 75 graduates volunteering over 5,500 hours in compost-related activities since the program began in 2012. School gardens were also a focus, with a dedicated staff member coordinating middle school farms, composting programs and a student-run restaurant each week during the summer.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

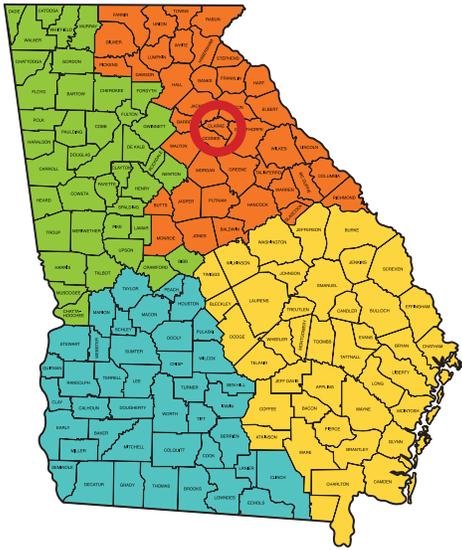
Athens-Clarke County 4-H serves all youth in grades five through eight as a component of the school system curriculum. In 2016, more than 1,000 children and teenagers participated in Athens-Clarke County 4-H. They learned and excelled in leadership, citizenship, public speaking and critical thinking skills as well as teamwork, building character and good sportsmanship. Athens-Clarke County 4-H has received awards for outstanding participation in these areas as well as for having the most junior camp participants. Athens-Clarke County 4-H continued its robotics club in which students use 4-H Robotics Platforms lessons and LEGO MINDSTORMS NXT software to build a robot and learn how it works.

The 4-H program offers a variety of after-school educational activities. Students may join after-school judging teams, including forestry, wildlife, consumer judging and poultry. In these educational teams, students learn subject matter to prepare for competition. They can also participate in LifeSmarts or Challenge Bowl. In these activities, students learn a variety of topics and compete in a quiz-bowl setting, answering questions at the competition.

Special initiatives have continued to target youth at risk. More than \$10,000 in 4-H camp scholarships was granted to students who could not afford camp fees.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Family and Consumer Sciences provided 45 nutrition and wellness programs for local residents, including the Walk-a-Weigh healthy living program. These programs helped over 1,000 participants adopt new habits that promote a healthier body and weight control, including making more nutritious food choices and increasing daily physical activity. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) enrolled over 600 low-income participants.



COUNTY AT A GLANCE

Population: 124,601

2016 Georgia County Guide, UGA

Georgia Health Factors Ranking: 61/159

2016 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Georgia 4-H Enrollment: 945

Georgia 4-H enrollment system, FY16

Agriculture, Food, Fiber, Horticulture and Related Total Economic Contribution:

Jobs: 4,292

Output: \$801,336,463

2017 Georgia Ag Snapshots, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

Farm Gate Value: \$44,253,353.57

Top Commodities: Greenhouse, Broiler, Container Nursery

2015 Georgia Farm Gate Value Report, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

was founded in 1914 by the federal Smith-Lever Act. It's a unique partnership between UGA, county governments and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension System of land-grant universities. Today, UGA Extension serves more than 2.6 million Georgians annually through a network of specialists, agents and staff by providing unbiased, research-based information driven by local needs and clientele input. From publications to in-person workshops and events, Extension is ready to meet the needs of the state and its communities.

Learn more at:
extension.uga.edu

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Agriculture & Natural Resources

Goods and services related to Georgia's agriculture and natural resources affect each of the state's communities every day. Agriculture is Georgia's largest industry, with \$74 billion of direct and indirect economic impact. More than 411,000 Georgia jobs are involved directly in commodity or food- and fiber-related industries.

UGA Extension faculty and staff play a key role in the success of this industry by sharing university-based research for Georgians to use on the farm and at home. Recommendations in areas including soil fertility, pest management, plant and crop varieties, water quality, and herd health and management focus on maximizing production and profits while minimizing environmental impacts.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension agents also provide homeowners and communities with information on lawn care, landscaping, gardening and water conservation through a variety of workshops. Some agents also work with schools on projects like community gardens and farm-to-school programs. Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteers give thousands of hours of service to their communities by answering questions in county offices and creating educational opportunities.

4-H Youth Development

As the youth development program of UGA Extension, 4-H is also part of a national network. Georgia 4-H reaches more than 170,000 fourth- through 12th-grade students across the state and helps students develop the knowledge, life skills and attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. This mission is fulfilled through hands-on learning experiences in agricultural and environmental awareness, leadership, communication skills, citizenship, energy conservation, health, and food and nutrition.

Georgia 4-H'ers are well known for sharing their knowledge and volunteering throughout their communities. At the school and county levels, students participate in club meetings organized by 4-H Youth Development Extension agents. At the state level, students participate in competitions, summer camps and conferences. Some 4-H competitions and events are also offered at the regional and national levels.

Research indicates that, as a result of participating in 4-H, members are more engaged in their academic studies, less likely to be involved in risky behavior, and more likely to graduate from high school and continue their education.



Family & Consumer Sciences

Family and Consumer Sciences Extension specialists, agents and staff assist in addressing real-life issues faced by Georgians of all ages. They provide programs and the latest information on obesity, chronic disease, food and financial insecurity, family stresses, unhealthy housing, food safety and preservation, nutrition and more.

To help promote the positive development and safety of preschool, school-aged and adolescent youth, UGA Extension offers resources for parents, caregivers and others. Extension professionals in this program area lead consumer economics trainings and programs such as ServSafe®, Relationship Smarts, and PRIDE, a parent and teen driving education course.

Extension also promotes healthy lifestyles through statewide programs. Walk Georgia – a virtual, fitness-tracking resource – encourages improving physical fitness and healthy lifestyles in order to better the lives of Georgians. Other health programs managed by UGA include the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). These classes teach families how to stretch their food dollars, eat healthier meals and snacks, and reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses.