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

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
The Augusta-Richmond County 4-H Club serves more than 1,750 students in area schools and in the community as a whole. Fourth-grade students are provided a curriculum that focuses on the environment, the natural world and agriculture. Fifth-grade student lessons focus heavily on developing science skills, covering various topics such as barrier island ecology, cells and DNA traits. Middle-school students are taught stress-reduction and team-building skills. All participating students also learn to appreciate the importance of the environmental components necessary for raising healthy plants through hands-on lessons. Students in all grades are taught effective presentation skills and many go on to compete at the district and state levels.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Augusta-Richmond County Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) teamed with the Exchange Club of Augusta to reach 2,600 youths and 450 adults who visited the livestock barn during the Georgia-Carolina State Fair. Our youth plant identification contest drew 34 youth contestants and eight adult chaperones. Four livestock shows (cattle, swine and goat) drew 114 youth contestants and 161 adult volunteers. Over 10 days, the livestock barn was open to anyone free of charge. Thousands of people were able to see the animals and watch youths preparing their livestock to show. During fair week, the Augusta–Richmond County ANR agent gave guided barn tours to 2,460 first graders and 247 adult chaperones. Many of these youth had never seen some of the animals on display. Our Master Gardener Extension Volunteers also set up an educational display and did a lesson on bats for all of the students and chaperones on the tours.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) in Augusta-Richmond County offers programming to improve the health and wellness of youth and adults in the community. In 2018, 38 community partners and volunteers received 114 training hours on Junior Master Gardeners Learn, Grow, Eat & Go and delivered the curriculum to 129 area youths, who received 1,056 educational hours on healthy living, gardening, physical activity and nutrition. Additionally, 26 participants completed Cooking for a Lifetime of Cancer Prevention schools, receiving 55 educational hours on using nutrition and physical activity to help prevent certain cancers. Improving financial capability is also a focus for FACS. The Poverty Simulation program was conducted three times allowing 132 community leaders to briefly experience some of the realities and struggles that individuals living in poverty face daily and gain insight on how to address issues that may arise from those struggles.

EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM
UGA Extension in Richmond County delivers nutrition education through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Our program provides education in four areas: diet quality, food safety, budgeting and food security. Federal, state and local resources are merged to reach limited-resource families with children. Participants are able to try new recipes, learn how to stretch their food dollars, improve nutrition practices and prevent foodborne illnesses. In 2018, Richmond County program assistants delivered Food Talk and Hablemos de Comida programming, providing 2,449 sessions of the curriculum for adults and youths. Richmond County EFNEP collaborated with 20 agencies and hired an additional program assistant to increase programming. Through outreach events and community partnerships, EFNEP offers an excellent resource to citizens in the community.
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, and its direct and indirect economic impact totals $73.7 billion. More than 392,400 Georgia jobs are directly involved 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 is a virtual, fitness-tracking resource that encourages physical fitness and healthy lifestyles 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.