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**

Bacon County 4-H empowers its members to make a difference in their club, community, country and world by providing many opportunities to engage in the community. The four H's represented in the 4-H clover emblem symbolize the training of “Head, Heart, Hands and Health.” Many of the programs offered through Bacon County 4-H promote an environment for learning and teaching. Poultry judging instills knowledge on grading poultry products to U.S. Department of Agriculture standards. Bacon County 4-H’ers use their hearts and hands to impact the community around them. Whether it is spending time with elderly residents during programming during the fall carnival, Valentine’s Day and Easter or donating, decorating and packaging items to ship to a military unit overseas for Christmas, the 4-H’ers develop an understanding of the importance of giving back.

Consumer judging teaches 4-H’ers the importance of cotton as an agricultural commodity as well as how to become better consumers who compare products and think about purchases. 4-H’ers are taught nutritional value and MyPlate information during consumer judging and cooking competitions. With activities that vary from showing hogs to learning safe shooting techniques, from giving a speech to attending 4-H camp, 4-H’ers from Bacon County grow as individuals and increase their confidence, abilities, knowledge base and leadership skills.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

In 2018, new agricultural technologies were focal points for both the Spring Integrated Pest Management Field Day and the Fall Equipment and Technology Field Day, bringing new tools like aerial imagery and soil moisture sensors directly to Georgia blueberry growers. The Bacon County Blueberry Research and Demonstration Farm provided field space and logistical support from Area Extension Agent for Commercial Blueberry Renee Allen, Grounds Foreman Shawn Thompson and the Bacon County Board of Commissioners for several projects on spotted wing drosophila research. There were even novel projects on soil and foliar probiotics with collaborator Rachel Itle, a UGA fruit–production and genetics scientist. This makes Bacon County a proactive center for applied blueberry research and allows growers to try out new technologies with a hands–on learning approach.

Other research projects conducted focused on the invasive species spotted wing drosophila, Exobasidium leaf and fruit spot disease and Botryosphaeria crown blight. The largest blueberry production meeting in the state is hosted in Bacon County, with more than 200 blueberry growers and industry representatives at the annual blueberry update each January. Research and educational meetings with Bacon County growers are improving our management and production practices to make a better quality blueberry.
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.