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**

District Project Achievement (DPA) continues to be our most active program in Catoosa County 4-H. For Cloverleaf DPA, held in January 2018 at Georgia Highlands College in Rome, Georgia, we had 84 competitors and seven teen leaders representing Catoosa County. We received an award for a high number of participants. In March, we took 9 4-H’ers to Junior/Senior DPA. Catoosa County 4-H visited all fifth grade classes at the eight elementary schools focusing on College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) lessons. We also enjoyed going to all the middle schools and focusing on teen leadership and citizenship activities.

Judging teams in Catoosa County 4-H this year included poultry, forestry, cotton boll and consumer judging. The Catoosa County BB Team was a new development this year, and participants included eight students in fourth through eighth grades. Our team qualified for the state tournament at Rock Eagle and had a blast.

Catoosa County welcomed many new staff and employees this year. Caleb Millican became the new 4-H agent in December, Roberta Pepper joined as the new part-time program assistant in November and David Buckler became the new AmeriCorps member in September. We also gained six new Certified Teen Leaders.

We continued to do community service with our 4-H’ers. We participated in the Rivers Alive stream cleanup and Adopt-A-Stream workshop, collected craft supplies for the Chambliss Center for Children, taught a craft lesson to students at Chambliss Center, made reusable diapers out of old t-shirts to be delivered overseas, and volunteered at Hope for the Inner City.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

At the beginning of 2018, we announced the retirement of long-time Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) Agent Charles Lancaster. Catoosa will miss Lancaster and is very happy that he still visits and volunteers around the office. The new ANR agent started August 1, but she was not new to the office. Julia Willingham has been the 4-H agent in Catoosa County for the past two years but has now assumed the ANR agent role. We are excited about what is to come in our office as she finishes training. Other ANR-related services included the submission of 71 soil tests, six feed and forage tests, two litter samples, three water tests, and three plant-tissue tests. We had three local producers enter the 2018 Southeastern Hay Contest.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

Even without the presence of a Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agent, we still strive to offer some FACS programs that are relevant and useful to our community. These programs include Walk Georgia, a statewide program that encourages participants to exercise more either as individuals or as part of a group. FACS also deals with food safety and preservation as well as questions regarding home and family. When we receive calls regarding these topics, we contact FACS agents in other counties in order to help our clientele.
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 302,400 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 F.R.I.D.E, 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.