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.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The UGA Extension Charlton County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) program offers many services to local clientele. The program offers soil, water and plant analysis through the university’s laboratories, as well as in-office and on-site consultations on a wide array of issues.

The Charlton County ANR agent assists clients with issues such as pond management, lawn health and maintenance, gardening issues and strategies, forestry, horticulture and livestock care and maintenance. UGA Extension agents play a vital role in the success of the agricultural industry through the distribution of university-based research for clientele to use on their farms or in their homes.

Agriculture in Charlton County has an annual farm-gate income of $20 million.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Charlton County 4-H is excited to have the participation of fourth- through sixth-grade students in addition to middle- and high-school students. Including these younger students has increased activity and interest in 4-H competitions and activities. Highlights from the past year include participation in standard 4-H events such as District Project Achievement (DPA), Cloverleaf Camp, State Council, Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging, MilkMake, Mission Make It, and several other activities.

Plans also were made to start and charter the Charlton County 4-H Horse Club. Charlton hosted a first-year DPA retreat for surrounding counties at Newell Lodge, where 4-H’ers learned etiquette and how to build a portfolio, performed community service projects, and heard tips on giving a successful presentation. Charlton County took it a step further and our summer programs rocked! Charlton County 4-H’ers had the opportunity to attend six summer programs. We kicked off summer programs with a “Rollin’ into Summer” skating and pizza party.

Then Charlton 4-H’ers spent the day in beautiful Fernandina, Florida, visiting Fort Clinch and receiving a guided tour by a former Charlton 4-H’er, ending the trip with some friendly competition in miniature golf. Members also took a trip to Okefenokee Swamp Park for a boat ride, train ride and culture classes on life in the Okefenokee. The Livestock Team took a trip to Athens where they improved their judging skills, and Charlton County 4-H Horse Club members had a fun week expanding their riding skills at horse camp. The greatest trip of all was 4-H camp at Rock Eagle. Forty-four 4-H’ers, parents and staff enjoyed a jam-packed week of learning opportunities, adventures and tons of fun. Summer programs also included bowling and a multicounty trip to Summer Waves where 4-H’ers enjoyed the sun, water slides and meeting other Southeast District 4-H members. Each program averaged 10 to 20 Charlton 4-H’ers, parents and staff. Charlton County 4-H is excited about our continued growth, and we look forward to continuing to “make the best better.”
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.