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

UGA Extension in Cherokee County and Cherokee County 4-H Club offered a variety of programs to provide agricultural and environmental learning opportunities to youth including fifth grade agricultural science lessons, specialty clubs and judging teams, a Farm-to-Fork day camp and an agriculture expo cosponsored with the Cherokee County Farm Bureau. Extension staff also assisted with the countywide Cherokee County Farm Bureau first-grade agricultural coloring contest.

The Cherokee County Extension staff presented science-based lessons that correlated with what students were currently learning during science classes in school, along with hands-on experiments and activities. Lessons covered microorganisms, plant classification, inherited traits, zoonotic diseases, and weathering and erosion. Each lesson met Georgia Performance Standards for fifth-grade science.

Nine hundred twenty-nine students from seven different schools in Cherokee County participated in agriscience lessons during fifth-grade 4-H club meetings. All students completed a survey at the conclusion of the school year. Data collected from these surveys yielded the following responses:

- Seventy-seven percent of students demonstrated knowledge of key terms related to 4-H agriscience lessons.
- Eighty-seven percent of students recognized that zoonotic diseases can be passed between people and animals.
- Eighty-two percent of students recognized that offspring can resemble their parents.
- Eighty-four percent of students recognized that an epidemic does not affect only a few people.
- Eighty-nine percent of students recognized that they should look at several different characteristics in order to classify plants.

Cherokee County teachers gave positive feedback and found that the lessons reinforced their current fifth-grade science curriculum.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Fruit field days were organized and presented at two different locations, one in Cherokee County and one in Dade County. The first field day was an advanced training for 23 Master Gardener Extension Volunteers from 11 counties across north Georgia. This training included a half-day of theory on variety selection, site considerations and pest management from UGA Extension specialists. The second half of the training was hands-on, with stations on pruning, spray equipment and safety, and pest identification. The subsequent field days in Cherokee and Dade counties were attended by 43 individuals from six counties and followed the same model of theory and hands-on teaching formats.

To complement the field day activities, a grafting class was offered to increase knowledge of fruit-tree propagation. Extension fruit specialists presented the theory and techniques of grafting, and materials were provided to graft five trees each for 46 participants from 11 counties across north Georgia.

A total of sixty-five people participated in the field day trainings. As a result of the trainings, knowledge increased in the following ways:

- One hundred percent improved their knowledge of common diseases and insect pest of fruit in Georgia.
- One hundred percent improved their knowledge of site considerations and variety selection.
- One hundred percent indicated that they feel more confident making pruning and pest management decisions.

A total of 46 people participated in the grafting class. The results of a survey taken after the grafting training showed:

- Ninety-two percent indicated they had no previous experience grafting.
- One hundred percent improved their knowledge of grafting techniques.
- The follow-up survey showed that approximately 75 percent of grafts were successful after four months.
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-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.