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**

Farm-to-school activities enhance classroom education through hands-on learning related to food, health, agriculture and nutrition. However, these activities are time-consuming and challenging to an already-stressed school system. The Muscogee County School District serves more than 32,000 urban students in 53 schools, providing a huge potential for impact but a major barrier to providing these opportunities. In partnership with the Muscogee County School District and Georgia Organics, UGA Extension in Muscogee County worked to increase opportunities across all age groups and earned a statewide Golden Radish Award recognizing farm-to-school accomplishments. In 2018, six new school gardens were established and four gardens increased in size. In-school farm-to-school activities reached 2,050 students in seven schools. UGA Extension provided support for the construction of two gardens in the Fort Benning Community Schools district and supported their application for the Golden Radish Award. This year, Fort Benning Schools became the first Department of Defense school district in the state to be recognized with a Golden Radish Award. Several media outlets covered these accomplishments, and Mayor Teresa Tomlinson declared October Farm-to-School Month in Muscogee County.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

In 2018, UGA’s Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) directly reached 549 adults in Muscogee and Talbot counties, representing households of 1,895 individuals. EFNEP assistants provided 2,163 sessions of the series-based Food Talk and Hablemos de Comida curricula for adult participants. Community collaborators volunteered 715 hours of their time, valued at $17,017 of in-kind services. In all, 186 adult participants attended sessions of the Food Talk or Hablemos de Comida series to become program graduates. These EFNEP graduates reported improvements in behaviors related to the core areas of EFNEP, including diet quality, physical activity, food safety and food-resource management.

Parents as Teachers and Healthy Families Columbus home-visiting program reached 221 families, made 431 referrals to community services and completed 2,467 home visits. First Steps screened 568 families and made 1,340 referrals to community services.

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Through the Summer 4-H Day Camp, offered by Columbus–Muscogee and Chattahoochee 4-H, teen leaders learned how to research and create programs to deliver to younger youth. In total, teen leaders created and delivered eight lessons on healthy lifestyles, arts, crafts, drama, performing arts, communication and sports. Participants used many skills in preparation of the lessons, including organization, research and using technology. In teaching their prepared lessons, the teens learned firsthand how to present to a group, how to keep their audience engaged and how to think on your feet. One member stated, “I learned that if you want something to work out, you have to put a lot of effort into planning and organizing and being enthusiastic about the project you are presenting.”

Through the series, 16 elementary youth were reached in a span of four days, learning important lessons about healthy snacks, physical activity, healthy communication, performing arts and theater, and they even toured a local television station and the Columbus Citizen Center.
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.