4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

In 2018, 336 youths were enrolled in Crawford County 4-H. This represented all fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in addition to homeschooled students and junior and senior members. While in-school programming constituted a majority of our enrollment, 50 students completed at least one out of school activity.

Crawford County students were everywhere this summer! Sixteen students attended four different five-day, overnight camps and learned about everything from herpetology to health, zip-lining to white water rafting, water filtration to foraging, independence to creating lifelong friendships.

In-county programs also did exceptionally well and were well attended. We saw 29 different students for 10 programs ranging from sewing camps to visits to Noah’s Ark.

This summer, our staff had 1,328 hours of contact time with Crawford County youth.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Millicent Price is the FVSU Family and Consumer Sciences agent for Crawford County. Some programs offered in FACS are:

- Money management and budgeting
- Food and Nutrition Education
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Nutritional and health awareness for adults and children
- Positive youth development

Crawford County has become a food desert. Piggly Wiggly closed in 2016, making it difficult to access affordable food. County residents must travel 15 to 20 miles to the nearest grocery store. A countywide collaborative effort established monthly visits by the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank. Through the direct efforts of the FVSU county agent, 100 families were able to access fresh produce and goods.

Georgia ranks 18th for obesity in youth aged 10 to 17. Motivating youth to stay fit and eat healthy can reduce their chances of becoming overweight, and decrease their chances of having type 2 diabetes. The FVSU Crawford county agent, in collaboration with the Crawford elementary school, provided technical and education activities to 74 youths. Of those, 70 percent demonstrated the ability to read food labels and choose healthier snacks. The participants engaged in track and field events and fitness activities.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Crawford County Extension made more than 1,500 contacts through in-office and on-site consultations, phone calls and emails. More than 170 participants were delivered a weekly Agriculture and Natural Resources newsletter that focused on listing local food sources, announcing in-county and surrounding area Extension courses available and timely tips. More than 150 soil, water, forage, insect, weed and plant-disease samples were processed through the local office.

Several courses were offered throughout the year and focused on sources of local food, composting, hay and forages, as well as a three-day Middle Georgia Sheep and Goat Short Course. Nearly 20 participants logged 10 hours each of education with the sheep and goat short course. With Crawford County’s leadership, five extension agents representing six counties brought lessons to beginning sheep and goat producers. Partnership with Fort Valley State University (FVSU) also was utilized to bring participants to a working farm for hands-on experience.
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.