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.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

UGA Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) Agent Ann Centner has been busy with FACS programming in Early County. A dedicated runner with a bachelor’s degree in consumer foods, the agent’s focuses have been healthy eating and meeting the recommendations for physical activity. A county-needs assessment revealed that 29.5 percent of adults are obese and 29.1 percent are inactive. Obesity, inactivity and a poor diet can contribute to certain cancers. This year the agent focused on cancer prevention cooking schools funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for rural counties. The agent educated citizens about cancer prevention nutrition and activity recommendations, cooking skills to implement recommendations, and cancer screening guidelines. Nutrition efforts were also provided to members of the community, namely through monthly visits to Head Start and local senior centers. Childcare continuing education was also offered, with eight participants gaining the 10 annual credits required. Virtual Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is available in Early County, and the agent encourages citizens to schedule an appointment to file their taxes.

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

The Early County 4-H Club is thriving. Youth in the county have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities and events within and outside of the county. The agent provides monthly programming in all of the schools, public and private, and to the special education class, called “Classy Clovers,” a group of students that otherwise may not have been served. Special programming is provided to lower grades, pre-K through fourth grade, throughout the year. The agent also offers a livestock program and Project SAFE (Shooting Awareness, Fun and Education), which includes archery and shotgun, summer camp opportunities and summer programming. Fundraising opportunities are made available to 4-H’ers to assist with activity fees. Community service opportunities, such as the operation of the local food bank, providing services for the local chamber of commerce and other community outlets, teach 4-H’ers the importance of giving back to our community and others. The agent collaborates with businesses and agencies to continue to bring needed services and timely programming to the youth and community of Early County.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Producers have longed for a growth regulator in peanuts. Many have tried traditional growth regulators only to come away disappointed when they did not work. Then Apogee came as a possible growth regulator. Apogee was applied to 18 rows by the length of the field and replicated four times. The rate used was 5.5 ounces per acre. Apogee was applied when 50 percent of the lateral branches were touching and the second application two weeks later. This trial was done four more times across a wide variety of planting dates.

Across all planting dates, the Apogee worked at controlling vine growth, but it cost $50 per acre. On the first planting date, Apogee out-yielded the untreated check by 500 pounds per acre and had a return on investment (ROI) of $45 per acre. Across the four trials, Apogee-treated areas had an average yield of 775 pounds per acre, more than the untreated and an average ROI of $87.25 per acre. This work has led to an additional 6,000 to 7,000 acres treated in Early and surrounding counties. This is an increase in potential profit of $567,125 combined for those growers. Many more have expressed that they will use it in the upcoming year after struggling with vine growth.

ugaextension.org/early
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.