Agriculture and Natural Resources

As the seventh-largest county in Georgia based on land area, Emanuel County produces both a wide variety and large amounts of agricultural commodities. Emanuel County’s top 10 commodities include cotton, beef cattle, peanuts, pine seedlings, pine straw, pecans, soybeans, peanut hay, corn and silage. Together these top commodities assist in providing a 2017 farm-gate value of more than $69.6 million. With row crops dominating the top 10 commodities grown within Emanuel County, we see roughly 43,000 acres producing numerous varieties and species of row crops. We also have more than 300,000 acres of timberland resulting in just over 69 percent of the land being covered in forest. Emanuel County farmers, landowners and foresters work diligently to maintain their roles as important producers of agricultural products within the state. To assist our local homeowners, landowners, foresters and farmers, UGA Extension in Emanuel County provides a variety of services, including sampling and diagnostics, general information and knowledge, research and assistance to improve local production and maintenance of Emanuel County’s agricultural commodities.

Family and Consumer Sciences

Food safety education is offered to the food industry to encourage proper food safety and prevent foodborne illness. In the U.S. each year, foodborne disease results in an estimated 48 million people with gastrointestinal foodborne illnesses, 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In 2018, the Emanuel Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agent collaborated with other Southeast District FACS agents to deliver food safety education to 238 participants. Agents coordinated, conducted and evaluated ServSafe® Manager and ServSafe® Food Handler courses and exams for local food service workers and students completing the Nutrition and Food Science pathway. The FACS agent developed a PowerPoint presentation and coordinated with the state specialist to distribute UGA Extension food-safety posters in schools. The agent distributed three articles on food safety to two local newspapers, reaching 12,000 readers.

Two hundred thirty-eight participants received 74 hours of food safety education. Sixty-seven participants completed the ServSafe® Manager course and exam, resulting in a 73 percent passing rate. Forty-nine participants received national certification. Fourteen students completed the ServSafe® Food Handler Safety course and exam, resulting in an 86 percent pass rate. Twelve students received certification and the completion of the pathway.

4-H Youth Development

UGA Extension 4-H faculty delivered a Georgia 4-H Certified Teen Leader training that equipped rising seventh through 12th graders in Bulloch, Candler, Emanuel and Evans counties to serve as Certified Teen Leaders. Teens were equipped with materials to assist them with becoming successful leaders for their communities. Through the program, all 22 participants became Certified Teen Leaders through Georgia 4-H and are equipped to support local programs.

Before the workshop, 44 percent of participants reported knowing at least something about the Teen Leader role, 44 percent agreed that they knew something about the ages and stages of 9- to 11-year-olds, 67 percent felt confident serving as a Teen Leader, and only 17 percent strongly agreed that they felt comfortable handling difficult situations. After the training, 89 percent of participants reported knowing about the ages and stages of 9- to 11-year-olds and 89 percent strongly agreed that they felt comfortable handling difficult situations. One hundred percent of participants reported knowing a lot about the role of a Teen Leader and all 22 felt confident serving in that role.
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.

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