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
As noted in UGA’s 2020 Strategic Plan, we live in a time of unprecedented environmental challenges. In recognition of this, UGA Extension in Fayette County strives to offer educational programs during which citizens can experience environmental issues firsthand, helping participants to make lasting impacts and encouraging a greater understanding of the human impacts on our environment. Through the Georgia Master Naturalist program, adults become more informed about habitats, natural resources and the natural environments of our state. The Fayette County Extension agent and the Coweta County Extension agent partnered together to cohost this program in fall 2017. Eighteen program participants experienced hands-on workshops and field trips in topic areas such as wetlands, birds of prey and reptiles, geology, lake and stream quality and testing, production agriculture, and more. During each of these programs, participants gathered new information and learned the human impacts for each topic area. A survey was conducted in 2018 to determine how the program impacted each participant and whether a change in environmental awareness resulted. Of the participants who completed the survey, 100 percent indicated that they learned more about our ecosystem and human impacts based on the presentations and programs offered. Participants indicated that they gained a new outlook on water quality, the importance of wetlands, and how counties use sanitation systems for our drinking water. Participants indicated that they had a deeper appreciation and understanding of environmental issues as well the interactions between flora and fauna.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Schools are instrumental in teaching youth the foundation and significant lessons for academic success. This focus on academics leaves students lacking knowledge and skills that are also influential in growing into a successful adult, such as money management, home and auto repair, cooking, health care, insurance, and time management. In response, the Fayette County 4-H agent began integrating life skills into lessons for the Senior Council club meetings, a club offered for ninth through 12th graders. At the October meeting, a lead mechanic at Delta was invited to give a lesson on basic vehicle upkeep and maintenance. Participants were told that every vehicle is different and that they should always refer to the vehicle manual. They were shown where the battery is located, how to attach jumper cables, how to check the oil, how to check tire pressure and where to find the air filter. Out of the eight high schoolers in attendance, 75 percent said that they drive their own vehicles on a regular basis; however, only 37.5 percent of the participants had any experience working with vehicles. Throughout the lesson, participants were asked to locate different parts of an engine. None of the participants could identify the location of the air filter or brake fluid, 25 percent were able to correctly identify where the radiator cap was located and 37.5 percent were able to find the vehicle’s battery. After the lesson was completed, 75 percent said that they learned something that they did not already know, 50 percent felt comfortable checking their own vehicle’s oil, 100 percent were able to correctly name the materials needed to jump a vehicle’s battery and 50 percent were able to give a specific example of something they learned.
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.

Learn more at: extension.uga.edu

An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution