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.

Floyd County Extension programs help empower citizens to make sound decisions to improve quality of life as it relates to their social and economic well-being and the environment in which we live. UGA Extension in Floyd County presented 150 educational classes in 4-H and Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) and made contact with more than 11,000 citizens. Outreach efforts led to the creation of 15 news articles or newsletters, 15 radio programs and two television programs. In 2018, Floyd County Extension processed 474 soil samples, 75 disease/insect sample on plants, 69 feed/forage samples and 23 water samples. Floyd County Extension staff received five professional awards for innovative and effective educational programming in 2018.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Georgia 4-H hosted the 2018 Cloverleaf District Project Achievement at Georgia Highlands with more than 1,000 people in attendance. The Floyd County 4-H Club had 52 Cloverleaf 4-H’ers compete. We had 20 adult/teen volunteers assist with concessions, carnival games and serving lunch at the event. We had 14 seventh through 12th grade 4-H’ers participate in the district competition, with two of our seniors placing first and one being invited through sweepstakes to compete at State Congress. During State Congress, our three participants placed in the top three. We had one first-place winner obtain the title of Master 4-H’er in Veterinary Science, and the others finished in second place.

4-H’ers developed their own unique food product, called “Clover Cups,” in preparation for the State Food Product Development Competition, in which they placed second in the state. These 4-H’ers not only developed the food product, they also conducted market research to determine the potential sales of their product. This information was included in the written proposal that was judged by UGA’s Department of Food Science and Technology. In addition to the written proposal, 4-H’ers also orally presented their product, marketing plan, safety protocols and nutrition information.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Cover crops provide important production and environmental benefits for farmers, but adoption rates remain low, around 8 percent in Georgia. A Statewide Cover Crop Variety Trial and Planting Demonstration was established at the Northwest Georgia Research and Education Center Farm in Rome, Georgia. This project was funded through a UGA Extension Innovation Grant awarded to the Cover Crop Extension Team. The demonstration project focused on the use of cover-crop varieties used both in forage systems for livestock and row-crop production. A combined workshop and field day were hosted in 2018 at the research farm with 65 attendees. Presentations included the grazing preferences of cattle for different cover crops and how to calibrate a seed drill to ensure the correct amount of seed is being planted. The workshop included a demonstration on how cover crops improve water relations, subsoil moisture and infiltration. The demonstration project highlighted cover-crop varieties commonly used in Georgia, illustrated the effect of planting date on cover-crop biomass and the differences in biomass between no-till and conventional planting techniques. The research trial compared biomass production in a commonly used oat variety with two forage oat varieties and the standard rye variety. Survey responses indicated that 62 percent would likely save or spend money as a result of this workshop. When asked how they would save money, top responses included saving money on forage production for livestock and by using a seed drill that uses less seed.
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.