Agriculture and Natural Resources

Franklin County has one of the highest farm-gate values in the state. A high percentage of that can be contributed to the broiler industry. Franklin County also ranks high in hatching-layer production and beef-cattle production. Many of the programs offered through UGA Extension in Franklin County address issues that arise within the cattle industry. Additional programs offered through the Extension office included home-gardening meetings, corn- and soybean-production meetings and beef-production meetings. Issues-based programming is a main focus for UGA Extension. Working with farmers to provide programming that meets the need of local production, the county Agriculture and Natural Resources agent works with university specialists to make an impact in the local community. In 2018, programs were offered through the county office to address issues in marketing cattle, parasite control, poultry and more.

Through university resources, the Extension office is able to provide answers for homeowners and farmers on many topics including soil fertility, safe pesticide application, water usage, home gardening and crop and pasture management. Extension offices provide soil, forage and water testing through the Agricultural and Environmental Services Laboratory at UGA. Agents also can identify plants, insects, diseases and weeds, and give fertilization and pest management recommendations.

4-H Youth Development

The Franklin County 4-H Club offers a plethora of educational opportunities, which aim to connect information learned in school, such as math, science, writing and social studies, to real world applications. Students in fifth grade participate in monthly in-school club meetings that align directly with the state educational standards and focus on presenting information in a fun, hands-on way. Middle- and high-school students have the opportunity to participate in 4-H at school during monthly club days. A homeschool program is also offered in the county and the current focus of this program has been on Project Achievement and youth development.

Franklin County youth have equal opportunity to participate in a surplus of activities that include livestock exhibition, poultry judging, livestock judging, Project Achievement and various community-service projects. In addition to this, camp opportunities are offered at all formal Georgia 4-H centers and through day camps and farm days.

Franklin County 4-H’ers are strongly encouraged to become active members of their community by participating in leadership activities and community service, all while advocating for things they are passionate about.

Family and Consumer Sciences

Although Franklin County does not have a Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agent based in the county Extension office, we strive to assist local residents with their questions. Common questions cover food safety, food preservation, dealing with mold and mildew, healthy meal planning, nutrition, family budgeting, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP–Ed) resources and more. These issues and others are answered through a wide variety of free UGA Extension publications available at the county office and phone conferences with FACS agents from surrounding counties. Often neighboring FACS agents are conducting programming that our county residents are welcome to attend.
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

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