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**

In 2018, UGA Extension in Gordon County hosted three educational workshops in the areas of commercial vegetables, commercial small fruits and homeowner vegetable gardening for citizens of Gordon County and the surrounding area. Commercial vegetable workshop topics centered on production tips and tactics, basic insect management plus disease management for the area. Small fruit workshop topics covered insect pest management in grapes, managing disease in commercial blueberry and blackberry, production of brambles and strawberries, biology and management of insect pests in berry crops, and strawberry disease management. Homeowner gardening topics covered were troubleshooting, equipment for the garden, and extending the gardening season into fall and beyond. Sixty-four total commercial growers, homeowners and county agents participated in these classes. Participants responding to a survey stated that they learned at least one thing that they did not know prior to attending one of the workshops. Popular topics were information on either better or new varieties and varieties in our area. Other popular topics were common pests, including spotted wing drosophila, and insect control methods, such as insecticides and trap plantings. One commercial grower stated, “One of the most informative grower meetings that I have attended. Disease information will help my operation.” In addition, 16 newspaper articles based on vegetable production were printed in the Calhoun Times. Youth education was conducted for approximately 625 youth and 33 adults at Ag Day events and the local fair in the area of plant growth and soils.

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

With both school systems having an intense focus on career readiness, the Gordon County 4-H Club is the foremost provider of experiences that teach life skills and focus on positive youth development, offering a wide range of in-school and extracurricular activities to more than 1,700 members in 2018. In schools, standards-based lessons are delivered to fourth- through 12th-graders to encourage exploration of career clusters and pathways. Outside of school, Gordon 4-H provides individual, project-based contests in which nearly 60 4-H’ers participated, teaching research and public speaking skills. Gordon County 4-H’ers also have the opportunity to participate in leadership training and citizenship programming to lead their community and engage in community service. Additionally, Gordon County 4-H offers 14 competitive teams, developing teamwork and good sportsmanship through six judging teams, three shooting-sports teams, one quiz bowl team and four livestock-show teams. In 2018, Gordon 4-H hosted one of the Georgia 4-H Area Poultry Judging Contests, one Area BB Match, the Gordon 4-H Market Goat Show, the Northwest Georgia Lamb Classic and the AgGeorgia Farm Credit Weekend Spectacular for youth that exhibit cattle, sheep, swine and goats.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

In 2018, Gordon County Extension hosted multiple events offering Family and Consumer Sciences programming to local residents. The first event was part of the Gordon County Extension Lunch and Learn series at the Gordon County Agriculture Center. The event was titled “Spice Up Your Life!” and was based on chronic disease prevention with a presentation and cooking demonstration on the use of spices to cut down on salt use. Other events included two classes in the Cooking for a Lifetime program.
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.