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

The Habersham County Extension office’s primary focus is to provide information and technical expertise to homeowners and agricultural producers. Through office and farm visits, UGA Extension provides comprehensive soil, water, feed and forage analyses as well as insect and disease diagnoses. The information gathered is used to make unbiased, research-based recommendations to save producers and homeowners time and money. UGA Extension in Habersham County continued its work in the areas of watershed assessment and restoration. Local farms implemented best management practices including exclusion fencing, heavy-use watering areas and heavy-use feeding areas, totaling $100,000 in impact in 2018.

In spring 2018, we conducted a Master Gardener Certification Course for 18 interns to enhance our volunteer group, Headwaters Master Gardeners. Each year, Master Gardener Extension Volunteers contribute volunteer programming and service hours in our local community. Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent Steven Patrick was recognized as Fisheries Conservationist of the Year and received the National Search for Excellence in Natural Resources Award and the Forestry Award from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. He served on the UGA Viticulture Team and UGA Water Team, which led to on-farm research in viticulture, water quality and fisheries in our local community.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

A wide variety of free UGA Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) publications are available at the county office, and we offer phone consultations with FACS agents in surrounding counties who can address a range of issues. This year, the Habersham County Extension office hosted a radon program and food-preservation update and has requested funding for a permanent position in 2019.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The true strength of the Habersham County 4-H Club is its diversity of programming. Our highlights include Christine Budd achieving Master 4-H status in the Food Fare project by winning the Food-Fare competition at District Project Achievement and State Congress. Catie Long finished second at State Congress in the Performing Arts General project. Camden Hughes represented Georgia as a delegate at Citizenship Washington Focus. Our Cotton Boll Consumer Judging Team finished second at the district contest with Tianna Ramey placing first in Senior Reasons and third overall at the competition. Christine Budd finished as the High Senior Individual at Poultry Judging. Rachel Dailey led our county team with a fourth-place High Individual performance. Georgia 4-H’s Performing Arts Ensemble has six Habersham County 4-H Club members as part of its 39-member cast. Each of these members also participates in our local Fine Arts Club, which has performed at the Chattahoochee Mountain Fair, county commission meetings, the farmers market and other locations. Bryan Skelton placed second and Otis Budd placed third in the Southeastern Teen Kayak Fishing Championship and Ethan Mosher placed third in the Southeastern Youth Kayak Fishing Championship. “Hooked on Wild Waters” filmed the event for a television show, which can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtHVXcI_mBY.

Andy Haygood received the Innovative Work in School Relations from GAE4-HA. We also received the awards for the Highest Increase in Senior Camp Participation, Highest Percent Increase in Senior Camp participation, and Highest Percent Increase in Cloverleaf Camp Participation. Sarah Smagur received the State 4-H Volunteer of the Year Award.
COUNTY AT A GLANCE

Population: 45,086
2017 Georgia County Guide, Georgia Public Library Service

Georgia Health Factors Ranking: 47/159
2016 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Georgia 4-H Enrollment: 597
Georgia 4-H enrollment system, FY17

Agriculture, Food, Fiber, Horticulture and Related Total Economic Contribution:
Jobs: 3,318
Output: $779,400,318
2019 Ag Snapshots, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development
Farm Gate Value: $281,428,366
Top Commodities: Poultry (broilers), Poultry (layers), Poultry (pullets)
2017 Georgia Farm Gate Value Report, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
was founded in 1914 by the federal Smith–Lever Act. It’s a unique partnership between UGA, county governments and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Cooperative Extension System of land–grant universities. Today, UGA Extension serves more than 2.1 million Georgians annually through a network of specialists, agents and staff who provide unbiased, research–based information driven by local needs and clientele input. From publications to in-person workshops and events, UGA Extension is ready to meet the needs of the state and its communities.

Learn more at: extension.uga.edu

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.

ugaextension.org/habersham