2018 ANNUAL REPORT: HALL COUNTY

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

Hall County has continued to grow both commercially and residentially. In rural areas, agricultural land can be an attractive target for development as the county population pushes past 200,000. With this continuous change, there is an increased need for agriculture awareness.

In response to this, UGA Extension in Hall County has developed successful partnerships with a variety of community groups such as the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. Hall County Extension has been able to provide insight into the agriculture industry across the county. Another successful awareness effort includes an agriculture day for a local elementary schools. Students and teachers learned valuable information about the poultry, dairy, beef and vegetable and fruit industries.

There are approximately 152 active Master Gardener Extension Volunteers in Hall County. Our Master Gardeners enjoy serving the county by providing more than 12,000 horticultural volunteer hours annually. The focus of the Master Gardener program is to educate the public through environmental stewardship, home food production and gardening with youth.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

The Hall County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) program has been working to extend nutrition and health education to residents in Hall County. The program’s main focus areas are chronic disease prevention at all ages, food safety and food preservation, as well as general nutrition topics. In order to distribute this information, partnerships were forged with local business and civic groups as well as local schools, libraries and nonprofits. More than 1,500 face-to-face contacts were made in nutrition classes, workshops and hands-on demonstrations including monthly senior-nutrition lessons at the Senior Life Center. FACS Extension in Hall County assembled 27 exhibits around the county, including local farmers markets, to address food safety and budgeting when purchasing foods, reaching more than 700 contacts. Lessons were taught in middle- and high-school FACS classes with topics ranging from green cleaning to using technology in the early childhood classroom.

The Hall County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) served 165 clients with a total of 438 direct educational sessions. EFNEP reached 380 family members and volunteers donated $714 through in-kind service hours. Our community partnerships included Avita Community Partners, Good News Clinic, Lanier Technical Institute, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Project Search and the Salvation Army. Clients reported measurable improvements in the four core areas of the program, which include diet quality (90 percent improvement), food safety (84 percent), food budget (79 percent) and physical activity (63 percent).

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Hall County 4-H Club is known for its excellence in hands-on education in and out of the classroom. The Hall County 4-H staff delivers agricultural awareness and science enrichment programs in the school environment to more than 1,275 students monthly. A key element to school programs is the opportunity for youth to learn about public speaking through the 4-H demonstration process. Writing and presenting 4-H demonstrations accomplish a variety of Georgia Performance Standards in an enjoyable format. Schools connect to the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) through 4-H with student presentations titled “What I Want to Be When I Grow Up.”

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COUNTY AT A GLANCE

Population: 200,560
2017 Georgia County Guide, Georgia Public Library Service

Georgia Health Factors Ranking: 27/159
2016 County Health Rankings and Roadmap, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Georgia 4-H Enrollment: 1,763
Georgia 4-H enrollment system, FY17

Agriculture, Food, Fiber, Horticulture and Related Total Economic Contribution:
Jobs: 19,276
Output: $4,472,050,230
2019 Ag Snapshots, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

Farm Gate Value: $238,027,436
Top Commodities: Poultry (broilers), 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.

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