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
Jackson County ranks in the top 10 counties in beef cattle production in Georgia. Spring and summer rains in 2018 produced good soil moisture levels. Jackson County forage crops produced well, as did weeds. The weed most significantly impacting Jackson County cattle is known as the perilla mint. Good soil moisture conditions for the 2018 growing season unfortunately resulted in a strong crop of perilla mint, which is toxic to cattle, horses and other ruminant livestock.

Several producers contacted UGA Extension in Jackson County with concerns about precautions to take when discovering the weed. After visiting with a producer who witnessed cattle loss due to perilla mint, the Extension agent provided one-on-one education and consultation. The Extension agent also followed up with community education through mass emails and Facebook postings of a publication and toxic-weed YouTube video. More than 200 producers were reached during this educational process. The Jackson County producer was able to move his cattle herd into pastures that did not have perilla mint until the affected pastures were mowed and sprayed properly. There were 112 cattle in the herd, valued at $99,000. The producer credits the Extension agent with saving his herd and continues to be supportive of sharing his story to educate other producers of perilla mint toxicity. The farm gate value estimate shows that Jackson County has more than 15,000 beef cows. Some producers reported 2 to 5 percent losses on their farms due to perilla mint. An estimate of just 3 percent savings across the county is a $279,000 benefit to cattle producers. The Extension agent made a positive impact in saving and improving performance for cattle, horses, sheep and goats with education on perilla mint and other toxic weeds.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Georgia 4-H is the premier 4-H camping program in the country. Jackson County youths from fourth through 12th grade have opportunities to attend overnight programming at 4-H facilities located across the state. For many students, 4-H overnight camps and leadership conferences are the first time that they have left the protective wings of their parents. The growth of independence and self-worth gained from these programs is noted with every experience.

Cloverleaf Camp is a highlight for the 4-H program. Nearly 80 students in fourth through sixth grades traveled to Jekyll Island in July for a week of exploration, sand and sun. The shining accomplishment for the week was that, in follow-up evaluations, 100 percent of campers reported that they felt extremely loved by the Jackson County 4-H staff. Surprisingly, only 6 percent of campers named the beach experience as their first or second favorite activity. Rather, the acclaimed segments were making new friends and having experiences not specific to beach camp. The evaluation results prove that added effort and programming at the county level accentuated the camping experience. Combined with world-class facilities and extraordinary camp staff, Georgia 4-H camping is changing the lives of youth.

Our specialty clubs continue to thrive. Our junior and senior robotics teams were award-winning and are growing in scope. The senior team competed and placed at the international level. Shooting sports continue to be solid programs. The .22 rimfire team won the state competition, had the high shooter at state and placed in the top 10 at nationals. Leadership, public speaking, community-service projects and judging teams enriched students and volunteers.

ugaextension.org/jackson
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 302,400 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.