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
Contributing nearly $20 billion to agriculture in the U.S., honeybees play a vital role in Georgia’s farming communities. Lanier County’s diverse row-crop and small-fruit production benefits from pollination, making it no exception. Kimberly Kester, Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) agent for UGA Extension in Lanier County, teaches youth and adults about honey production, honeybee pollination and how bees impact our food supply. A new series of classes for beginning beekeepers introduces the community to effective and research-based beekeeping practices. In collaboration with university specialists, on-farm row crop research results in improved crop varieties, enhanced integrated pest management and increased profitability. Beef and small ruminant producers also benefit from hands-on management workshops and university research publications provided by the agent.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
The Lanier County Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agent collaborated with the Lanier County High School FACS teacher to educate future food-service workers in the proper methods of food safety and meeting FACS course requirements. The FACS agent presented the six-hour ServSafe® employee training in a two-day format to students. The lecture and hands-on activities focused on maintaining proper temperatures, cooking to correct internal temperatures and personal hygiene. Students also role-played food-safety scenarios at home and at food-service jobs. Twenty-eight students participated in the ServSafe® employee trainings. The evaluation showed that 100 percent of participants received a score of 70 or better on the post-test and received the ServSafe® Employee Certification. Analysis of pre- and post-test scores showed that 96 percent of students improved their scores, indicating a significant improvement in food-safety knowledge. The ServSafe® Certification Exam served as the pathway assessment for the FACS Food and Nutrition course, resulting in 11 senior students being eligible for graduation.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
The Lanier County 4-H Club had a successful year. 4-H has continued to grow in the community. 4-H partners with the school system to offer in-school club meetings to fifth through 12th grade students as well as after-school events and evening club meetings and activities. In 2018, Lanier County 4-H had a 16 percent increase in summer camp participation and a 44 percent increase in District Project Achievement (DPA) participation. Lanier County had one delegate advance to State 4-H Congress. Both summer camp and DPA teach youths invaluable life skills by providing them with the opportunity to build communication skills, increase confidence and develop leadership skills.

Lanier County 4-H also offers a variety of other activities including a Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging team, Modified Trap Shotgun team, leadership conferences, summer activities, community service opportunities and livestock shows. The 2018 Lowndes Area Market Hog Show Grand Champion was exhibited by a Lanier County 4-H member. By participating in various activities, 4-H'ers are learning skills to prepare them for a productive future. The 4-H agent has strong goals to continue to build the club’s capacity through fund development and volunteer support.

ugaextension.org/lanier
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.