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

UGA Extension in Lee County conducted meetings on pecans, corn, cotton, peanuts, weeds and crop diseases. Businesses supported county production meetings led by Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) agent Doug Collins. He demonstrated the construction and use of ambrosia beetle traps to protect young pecan trees to a group of 29 pecan growers at the pecan field day. Collins taught the soil and plant-physiology modules to the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer class in Dougherty County. Technical assistance was performed through 449 site visits, 1,050 face-to-face interactions, 601 in–office visits and 759 phone contacts. Nine monthly newsletters were produced and emailed to more than 50 farmers and members of the agricultural industry. Collins wrote 51 weekly newspaper columns that were published with accompanying photographs in the Lee County Ledger. Topics included homeowner issues like gardening and landscaping. Six newspaper articles by the agent were published in the Farm Beat section of the Albany Herald. These articles dealt with topics related to commercial agriculture. WALB-TV broadcasted four interviews with the ANR agent. The station’s broadcast is seen by 80 percent of the 30-county viewership. Collins collaborated with UGA Extension Agricultural and Applied Economist Greg Fonsah to create a pecan–production budget for small-scale producers. The agent collected data from growers to use in the budget, provided input based on his own expertise, and created a poster to share the findings. Courtney Wingfield, the county Extension secretary, handles client soil, water and plant tissue samples for laboratory submission and helps growers obtain and receive credit for pesticide licenses.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Lee County 4-H Club, led by 4-H Agent Mallory Wise and Extension Educator Anne Spelts, was involved in a wide variety of activities in 2018. 4-H’ers learned a wide range of skills, from marksmanship and teamwork to reasoning and public speaking. The Project SAFE (Shooting Awareness, Fun and Education) Shotgun Team has five certified coaches and 25 team members. Lee County was represented at the Area Poultry Judging Competition and at the Area Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging Competition. We had 11 middle–school and high–school participants at District Project Achievement and one went on to compete for Master 4-H status, the highest 4-H achievement, at State 4-H Congress. Also at District Project Achievement, two Lee County 4-H'ers were elected as Southwest District Junior Board Members. There were also 10 fifth– and sixth–graders competing at Project Achievement in Moultrie, Georgia.

This past summer, a total of 30 students and three adults attended summer camp. Youth also had the opportunity to attend a variety of summer events including trips to Lake Blackshear, Launch Trampoline Park, museums and an escape room. In an effort to raise funds for camp and shooting sports, Lee County 4-H’ers sold more than 5,000 pounds of Vidalia onions. Other opportunities enjoyed by youth include a new club called “Fit In!”, animal club, our after–school club for middle– and high–schoolers and numerous community–service events.
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.