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.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Young people become self-directing, productive, contributing members of society through 4-H. Meriwether County Extension 4-H Agent Ashley Harman works with homeschooled and local public-school students, delivering educational opportunities for youth in grades five through 12. Our program complements and enhances basic, grade-level curriculum by bringing UGA resources to classrooms where 4-H programs are taught. The Meriwether County 4-H Club offers opportunities for youths of all ages. District Project Achievement gives 4-H’ers the opportunity to present a project from areas of their choosing. These projects can highlight any hobby or interests the 4-H’er may have. This is a great tool to build public-speaking skills and to showcase 4-H’ers work and success. It also helps boost self-confidence in and out of the classroom. Meriwether County 4-H’ers can take advantage of spending a week at one of Georgia's five 4-H centers. They can participate in our shooting-sports program by joining the archery or shotgun teams. Volunteer leaders offer their skills to help in the programs. During the summer, 4-H’ers can take part in many day camp opportunities. 4-H’ers will have the opportunity to learn to live healthier lives through nutrition and physical fitness. Meriwether County 4-H believes in giving back to the community through service and contributions to local charities and events. Everyone works together for the common goal of engaging children to become self-sufficient adults who contribute to society.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
For more than 100 years, UGA Extension has provided free, reliable, research-based information in language that anyone can understand. UGA Extension in Meriwether County can assist citizens with questions about crops, livestock, home lawns, gardens, fruits and vegetables, natural resources and the environment. Meriwether County Extension provides technical assistance for agriculturists. Meriwether County Extension currently provides laboratory testing services for soil, water, forage and radon testing, as well as phone consultations for agriculture, natural resources, gardening, horticulture, pest management, lab testing-interpretation matters and more. Expertise in conservation, management of natural resources and personalized services are provided for farms, businesses and homes, as well as at events. This past year, all first- and second-graders in the county were able to see firsthand the importance of agriculture in Meriwether County.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
Due to the resurgence of consumer interest in locally grown produce at farmers markets, Family and Consumer Sciences agents have developed a series of “Farm, Fresh and Fast” publications to be distributed at local farmers markets and U-pick farms. These educational pamphlets, along with many other publications on health and nutrition, are available at the Meriwether County Extension office. The easy-to-read publications will help residents make wiser food choices and save money with information on how to use fresh products when they are in season.
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.