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.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooking for a Lifetime Cancer Prevention Cooking Schools reached out to men and women ages 21 years and older who live in eligible rural Georgia counties. The school encourages participants to be screened for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. Another goal was to increase the participants’ awareness about eating and exercise habits, as well as choosing healthier foods in the grocery store to reduce risk for cancer and improve health. Sylvia Davis, Mitchell County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agent, offered four two-hour programs as part of the USDA Cancer Prevention: Empowering Communities in the Rural South curriculum. The program reached approximately 100 participants from July 2017 through June 2018. Following the program, 86.4 percent of participants said they were definitely going to get a Pap test and 82.5 percent were definitely going to get a mammogram. Eighty-three percent said they would definitely get a colonoscopy. Earlier detection through screening can contribute to reduced health care costs as well as improved survival from related cancers.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
The Mitchell County 4-H Club offers youth programming and events that increase students' knowledge of agriculture, water conservation, critical-thinking, leadership and public speaking. Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Mitchell County, so youth are subjected to it daily whether they realize it or not. Our club meetings focus on relaying information about different crops grown in Mitchell County and how they impact the daily lives of the 4-H’ers. Hopefully, the youth within our community will begin to see that agriculture is not only farming, but something that their parents are involved in, whether they work at the poultry processing plant, the grocery store or the insurance office.

Our annual, three-day 4-H2O Camp, which educates 4-H’ers about water use, conservation and efficiency, had 153 youths and adults in attendance. Overall, nine counties from the Southwest District participated in this event. We invited speakers from Georgia and Florida, Mitchell County 4-H’ers, and colleagues from C.M. Stripling Irrigation Research Park to assist us in instructing.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
In peanut production, fungicides are one of the most costly expenses. Fungicide programs range from $50 per acre to more than $130 per acre, so the more local data a producer has, the better decisions they can make. There are many fungicides out there to choose from, and all claim to be better than the others. UGA Extension has a very large data set on many of these, but there is always a need for better local data. Peanut diseases cost Mitchell County producers hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. The primary diseases are white mold and leaf spot.

This year, five different fungicide programs were tested. The programs ranged from older programs with only Bravo and Folicur to the newest Elatus and Miravis programs, along with more moderately priced common programs. Each treatment was evaluated for fungicide efficacy and disease ratings were taken right before digging.

The results of this study shows that growers can justify the increased cost of the newer fungicide programs. The yield increase will more than pay for the cost, with an average yield increase of 650 pounds per acre. Peanut contracts are averaging 20 cents a pound, resulting in an increase of $130 per acre, more than double the additional cost of the newer fungicides. Mitchell County averages more than 30,000 acres of peanuts a year. This equates to growers getting an additional $75 of income per acre.
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-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.