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

Since the early 2000s, the Newton County agricultural community has wanted a place to educate residents about the importance of agriculture.

Farmers, county agents and agricultural teachers, along with organizations like the Newton County Commission, Newton County Farm Bureau and the Piedmont Cattlemen's Association, worked together to build a first-class agricultural center stationed on the Georgia FFA-FFCLA Center in Newton County. The facility, which is nearing completion, is a $5.1 million agricultural center, with nearly half the cost generated from local funds.

The center will have far-reaching programming uses for local residents such as FFA and 4-H competitions including shooting sports and horse and livestock shows. The local Cattlemen’s Association will host field days at the new center. Future impact is unlimited, with a 10,000-square-foot show barn, a 10,000-square-foot stalling barn, and a 35,000-square-foot horse arena, all located on 45 acres.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Newton County 4-H’er CJ Harris not only leads STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) programming locally, but he also earned state recognition as a mentor in 2018.

At State 4-H Congress, Fulton County 4-H member Buckley Wiley spoke alongside Harris to discuss how Newton's 3D Hand-a-Thon, centered on making and assembling prosthetics, inspired him.

“CJ inspired me by the way he was teaching other people. I knew I wanted to teach people about 3D printing, but I didn’t know how. He inspired me to start another 3D printing club for 4-H [in Fulton County].”

Harris said, “Buckley is a fine example of why we do what we do. I feel I planted a seed that allowed others to grow with this wonderful E-nable project. I feel so special and accomplished that I achieved one of the goals I set out to do ... We hope to continue to plant seeds. Don’t let anyone tell you you're too young. Don’t let anyone tell you you’re not talented. Don’t let anyone tell you that you can’t do something, because you can. You can plant those seeds and grow however you see fit.”

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Project F.R.E.E (Fostering Relationship and Economic Enrichment) promotes healthy relationships for families through UGA Extension. Couples and co-parenting programs are designed to help parents form, improve and sustain healthy relationships. Project F.R.E.E. also provides services to help families make progress toward lasting economic stability.

Project F.R.E.E. has served more than 400 families within the Newton, Walton and Oconee county areas. The classes are designed for singles as well as committed couples with a curriculum taught by qualified professionals. Classes are provided at no charge to participants, and organizers also provide free childcare.

Quotes from participants about the program include,

“My partner and I were contemplating divorce when the Elevate program was recommended to us. We learned to communicate better and agreed that divorce was no longer an option. Project F.R.E.E. is a phenomenal program and we have been recommending it to all of our married friends!”

“Project F.R.E.E. is a great program. The class for singles gave me some pointers for coping with stress and communicating better with my children’s father. I am so glad I attended!”

ugaextension.org/newton
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.