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 AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

The Paulding County 4-H Club remains one of the largest and most active 4-H programs in the state, with 2,473 4-H’ers enrolled in school-based and after-school clubs. Beyond participation numbers, we have engaged youth who are successful, well-rounded and represent us with pride in Paulding County and beyond. We continue to provide STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) support in fifth-grade classrooms, supporting the curriculum through standards-based science lessons in monthly club meetings. Included in this number are two specialty clubs, four judging teams and three target sports teams. These experiences provide youth with opportunities to gain skills in leadership, decision-making and responsibility. In 2018, Paulding 4-H had two district-winning teams in poultry judging and forestry judging, and two state-winning teams in Horse Quiz Bowl and BB competitions. We continue to provide public speaking skills through our core 4-H program, District Project Achievement. In 2018, Paulding County had 59 public speaking contest participants from grades five through 12. Of those, four went on to state competition, yielding one Master 4-H’er and three in the top three in their projects. Paulding County also continued a great tradition of community service through 4-H’ers who collected and recycled 578 pounds of pop tabs and donated the proceeds to the Ronald McDonald House Charities, receiving an award for the largest Northwest District pop-tab collection.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

In 2018, UGA Extension in Paulding County coordinated 65 programs, events and exhibits relating to water conservation, horticulture, farming and gardening for a total of 5,922 contacts. Among those programs, 24 volunteers participated in Rivers Alive cleanup, removing more than 120 pounds of trash from Mill Creek in White Oak Park and our program was awarded the Georgia Environmental Protection Division’s 4-H Rivers Alive Award. Additionally, we collaborated with Kennesaw State University, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy in Georgia and Paulding County Water System to organize the Raccoon Creek Symposium, highlighting research, education and conservation in Paulding County. The program numbers for Agriculture and Natural Resources would not be possible without the support of Master Gardener Extension Volunteers, who donated 1,797 hours of community service, valued at $41,366. Among their specialty projects, they funded and awarded a local student a $1,000 scholarship, developed and delivered school garden training for Paulding County educators, and delivered Master Gardener Sprouts programs in collaboration with the Paulding County Library System.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

Although we do not have an agent for the Family and Consumer Sciences program area, we have worked with nearby agents in other counties to help answer people’s food safety, childcare, housing and financial questions. We have also coordinated with these agents to bring some programming to Paulding County on food safety and health and wellness. This year, we again worked with human resources to bring Walk Georgia to county employees as part of the wellness initiative, and county employees logged 881 miles of activity during a six-week Walk Georgia competition.
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.

Learn more at: extension.uga.edu