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**

Many students try to plan for their futures, but life happens and it is important for youths to know what they can do to prepare for these life moments. This was the theme of the Georgia 4-H Life 101 Financial Literacy Retreat held at Andrew College May 18 and 19. Sixty-two Georgia 4-H’ers in sixth through eighth grades, six Certified Teen Leaders from 10 Southwest District counties, and two Florida delegates got a taste of college life while learning about growing financially.

Friday during the retreat, 4-H’ers heard from the president of Andrew College, assumed roles as game show contestants as they played The Price Is Right or Not, participated in a community-service activity and enjoyed recreation activities such as yoga, basketball, a corn hole tournament and line dancing. To end the evening, each 4-H’er created their own ice cream sundae before heading to the dorms to spend the night. On Saturday, a variety of Financial Literacy classes were taught by 4-H and Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) agents and instructors from the community on budgeting, basic banking information, the importance of saving while young, making healthy life choices, the relationship between educational attainment and career opportunities, and what comes out of a paycheck. This conference was made possible with the assistance of Extension Innovation Awards from the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and all of those locally who assisted.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

UGA Extension in Randolph County distributes FACS newsletters focused on diabetes prevention and healthy living information within the county. FACS agents also send the monthly “Growing Together” publication, which goes to 125 Head Start students and daycare centers in the county. Monthly presentations on various topics are offered to low-income residents on various FACS topics.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

The newly donated UGA Extension complex is enclosed within a fence and open land. As in most areas of rural Georgia, home gardens are a large part of everyday life. Traditions and practices are passed down through generations on how, what and when to plant these home gardens. Because most of these home gardens are not profit-driven, the productivity is often not measured. The Randolph County Extension office decided to establish a garden with two main goals in mind, to provide an opportunity for local schools and 4-H members to come and learn via local field trips, and to provide local gardeners real-time scenarios with actual techniques and practices to improve garden yields and production.

Several local elementary classes visited the garden and the 4-H agent taught hands-on lessons using living examples of plants, flowers and fruit, which helped tie together lessons from the classroom. Many local gardeners visited the plots and experienced the drip irrigation system in person. Throughout the summer, updates on garden productivity were published in the local newspaper. The produce that was grown and harvested was shared with the public. On 6,617 square feet (0.15 acres), we grew 524 pounds of watermelons, 88 pounds of tomatoes, 20 pounds of peppers, 222 pounds of okra, 356 pounds of squash, 104 pounds of sweet corn and 45 pounds of field corn for a total of more than 1,359 pounds of produce. The impacts of the garden are multifaceted and have the potential to be ongoing. It has and will continue to provide educational opportunities for youth and 4-H groups as well as demonstrate conservation gardening techniques and practices to support local gardeners.
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.