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

UGA Extension in Schley County holds peanut maturity checks every fall to help farmers determine the optimal digging dates for peanuts. Knowing the age/maturity of peanuts can help determine whether additional fungicide applications are needed. In addition to performing maturity checks, field visits are also made to help assess the health of the vines in the field and soil conditions. Vine health is very important when digging and harvesting peanuts. If vines collapse before farmers are able to dig, it can cause many peanuts to remain in the ground and not become inverted. If vines degrade rapidly once they are inverted, it can make it difficult for the harvester to combine the peanuts. Looking at the maturity and overall condition of the field optimizes choosing the date to dig individual fields of peanuts.

Peanuts are an indeterminate crop and form the harvestable crop underground. The variability of pod maturity can make knowing the best time to dig the peanuts for harvest very difficult. Digging just two weeks too early or two weeks too late can result in a 10 to 20 percent reduction in yield. A premature harvest can also reduce the grade of the peanut and reduce profits per pound. Looking at vine health and soil condition in the field is something else the county Extension agent takes into account. If peanuts are loose from the hulls or if the vines are declining at a rapid rate, it may be best to go ahead and dig versus waiting and possibly losing the most mature peanuts in the field, which would mean losing the potential for the best grade and highest weight.

Research indicates that harvesting too early or too late can greatly affect yield of a peanut crop. Harvesting two weeks early can cause an average loss of 720 pounds, based on a Schley County average of 3,600 pounds per acre. Harvesting one week late can cause an average loss of 600 pounds per acre. There is a potential for yield loss if dug too early, however digging too late can have a larger impact on yield. More peanuts have the potential to be lost during the harvesting process on fields that are past optimum maturity. Digging one week late can cause 600 pounds per acre to be lost and, at 0.21 cents per pound, adds up to $126 in losses per acre. Knowing peanut maturity benefits the quantity and quality of the yield.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Schley County 4-H Club helps young people find a supportive environment where they learn together and reach their full potential through challenges. In an effort with Schley County Schools, more than 220 4-H’ers participate in monthly in-school and after-school educational programs that build character and cover subjects like healthy lifestyles and agricultural awareness. Thirty-four Schley County 4-H’ers participated in the 4-H summer camp program, District Project Achievement, leadership-building opportunities and a new club called “Hunter Gatherers,” which teaches 4-H’ers the basics of survival and self-reliance while in the outdoors. All of these activities allow them to expand their horizons and prepare them for future involvement in the community.

ugaextension.org/schley
**COUNTY AT A GLANCE**

**Population:** 5,373  
2017 Georgia County Guide, Georgia Public Library Service

**Georgia Health Factors Ranking:** 64/159  
2016 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

**Georgia 4-H Enrollment:** 220  
Georgia 4-H enrollment system, FY17

**Agriculture, Food, Fiber, Horticulture and Related Total Economic Contribution:**  
Jobs: 253  
Output: $28,703,354  
2017 Georgia Farm Gate Value Report, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

**Farm Gate Value:** $27,621,332  
Top Commodities: Poultry (broilers), Timber, Peaches  
2017 Georgia Farm Gate Value Report, UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

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**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.