**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**

Stewart County’s Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) program continues to grow under the direction of County Extension Agent and Coordinator Liz Singley. Her focus is providing programming to increase the health, wellness and financial capacity of individuals and families living in Stewart County. To increase youth knowledge on financial matters, she taught multiple personal finance classes to economics students at Stewart County High School. Additionally, she held nutrition and wellness classes at the Stewart County Senior Center every month to encourage the elderly to practice healthy lifestyle choices. Singley also secured local support for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Obesity Grant awarded to Stewart County. To help the youngest residents of Stewart County develop healthy eating habits, she taught the Food, Fun and Reading program at Head Start. In addition, 182 Stewart County pre-K, kindergarten and elementary students were taught proper hand-washing techniques to help reduce the spread of germs and school absenteeism. The Stewart County FACS program received a Department of Family and Children Services Relationship Smarts Grant. The Relationship Smarts curriculum was used to teach 51 seventh- and eighth-grade students the importance of maintaining healthy relationships and developing effective communication skills.

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

The Stewart County 4-H Club had a successful year. Members attended both Cloverleaf and Junior/Senior District Project Achievement events where they learned research, writing and public speaking skills while developing the confidence to stand up in front of a group and deliver a presentation. A total of 24 Cloverleaf 4-H’ers, four juniors and five seniors competed at the district level with nine members placing first. Deontavious Kitchens competed at State 4-H Congress in the General Recreation Project after placing first at District Project Achievement.

Stewart County 4-H’ers were active all summer. Thirteen members attended Cloverleaf Camp at Camp Burton on Tybee Island. Three junior members attended Junior Camp at Camp Fortson in Hampton, Georgia, and four senior members attended Senior Camp at Rock Eagle. Stewart County 4-H had several educational and fun out-of-county opportunities for youth, visiting an Atlanta Hawks game, Georgia Aquarium, Stone Mountain, Wild Adventures and the Georgia National Fair. Stewart County 4-H members competed in Cotton Boll Consumer Judging. They learned to compare goods based on quality and value when determining which item to purchase. In September, Blair Harris joined the Extension staff as the 4-H program assistant. Stewart County 4-H continues to thrive and grow under her leadership.

**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Stewart County is known for its agriculture and natural resources. Agriculture occupied 59,254 acres and generated $19.4 million in total farm-gate value in 2017. Timber sales and hunting leases accounted for $10.3 million of the total farm-gate value in 2017, or 53 percent. Row and forage crops grown on 8,506 acres make up 28 percent of the total farm-gate value ($5.4 million), with peanuts and cotton being the most widely grown crops. Other crops were grown on fewer acres but were a valuable source of diversification for farmers, especially hay, corn and wheat. Pecans provided another $1.2 million in farm–gate value. Other agricultural enterprises in Stewart County include livestock (primarily cattle and horses), guide services and wildlife food plots. Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent Laura Griffin worked with the Stewart County Schools on management and plans for athletic fields.

![Image of students participating in 4-H activities]

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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

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.