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

Family and Consumer Science (FACS) programming offers a wealth of resources to consumers throughout the state. Programming and resources on money, home, health, food, family and even textiles can be found in counties with a FACS agent. The Telfair County Extension FACS agent held 64 standard programs during 2018, reaching more than 2,367 citizens. In addition, the FACS agent held seven presentations, which reached more than 179 local citizens. In-service trainings held by the FACS agent resulted in 29 hours of contact with 68 individuals. With more than 1,200 office contacts for the year, it is easy to see that FACS programming, resources and information in Telfair County have never been more relevant. Working with community partners, the FACS agent also provided five educational exhibits throughout 2018, reaching more than 1,000 people. With newspaper articles, authored and nonauthored newsletters, curricula, exhibit displays and other creative works, the FACS agent has reached 65,139 individuals throughout the county, state and nation.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

In 2018, Telfair County Extension’s Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) program worked with producers and homeowners on various issues including row crops, fruit and vegetables, pastures, ornamentals and aquatic environments. We have sent numerous soil, water and feed samples to be tested. Production meetings were held for cotton, peanuts, corn, and fruit and vegetables. In 2018, Telfair County grew more than 1,000 acres of watermelons and a little more than 125 acres of various other produce commodities. The ANR agent worked daily with many of the producers scouting for insects and sending plant tissue to the lab for testing. In 2018 there was an outbreak of gummy stem blight in watermelons. A spray method and spray schedule were created and conducted to mitigate the impact of the disease. Different modes of action were used in the applications, and several different chemicals were included in the spray plans for the best control and feasibility. Telfair County is diverse in agriculture. Timber still remains the largest industry in the county. We strive to offer the best service, delivering unbiased, science-based information to our community.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Development opportunities for youth continue to increase with expanded participation in offered programs, including District Project Achievement for fourth through 12th grades and summer camp. Seeking to expose area youths to as many opportunities as possible, the Telfair County 4-H Club provides a variety of programming each year. Cloverleaf 4-H’ers are exposed to many different experiences to spark an interest in lifelong learning. Activities offered range from fun events such as farm day, when 4-H’ers visit local farms and farm animals, to practical and educational lessons, such as check writing and money management. Our Junior and Senior 4-H’ers are exposed to various programs, and they also get leadership experience by helping to lead and assist in Cloverleaf 4-H activities.

Telfair County 4-H enrollment for 2017 was 321 students. Of those, 55 participated in Project Achievement, 12 participated on BB Team, 22 attended summer camp, 75 went to summer day camps, 20 participated on Shotgun Team and 10 served as Certified Teen Leaders.
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.