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**

Bermudagrass stem maggot (BSM) was first discovered in Georgia in 2010. In 2011, farmers experienced the first BSM damage in Wayne County. Since then, BSM has become a destructive pest in Bermudagrass hay fields across the county. As BSM enters the larval stage, this insect damages the grass by feeding on the node, resulting in the death of roughly half of the upper part of the grass leaf blade. While the degree of damage depends on several factors, producers have reported up to an 80 percent yield loss in late summer due to this pest. The Wayne County Extension agent used unbiased, science-based research from the UGA Forage Team to educate hay producers on how to detect, treat and prevent BSM. This information includes specific insecticide selection, strategically timed applications and early detection methods for BSM. The Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) agent delivered this information through presentations at local cattlemen’s meetings, field days and on-site visits, along with multiple phone calls and office visits. Without this valuable information, from the Extension ANR agent, Wayne County hay producers would have lost an estimated $600,000 per year.

**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

4-H Project Achievement participants develop writing and presentation skills that help them perform better in school-related tasks and become more self-directed learners. Through the 4-H Project Achievement process, youth explore an area of interest, gain knowledge and skills within that chosen area, and prepare presentations that prove what they have learned about their specific topic. Last year during Cloverleaf District Project Achievement (DPA), the Wayne County 4-H Club had more than 49 students participate and rank third place or higher in their respective categories. Wayne County 4-H’ers truly exemplified the 4-H slogan of “learn by doing” and successfully shared their projects and topics with others. Each of the qualifying youths who participated in Cloverleaf DPA began with a writing contest on a topic of their choosing. The contest then yielded a selected number of participants who built upon their topic and developed them into speeches, posters and presentations with the help of teachers, 4-H staff and 4-H Certified Teen Leaders, leading Wayne County to a victorious turnout at the competition.

**FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES**

The senior adult population in Georgia is increasing. Older Americans are one of the fastest-growing demographics in the country, and it is estimated that, by the year 2020, there will be more than 77 million people over the age of 60 in the U.S. Providing information that leads to better health and nutrition is vitally important for this demographic group. Wayne County is a rural community with limited resources and access to healthcare, thus creating a need for more groundwork and preparation by Extension offices across the state of Georgia. The Family and Consumer Sciences agent has conducted various programs including information on the importance of eating healthy, monitoring high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, food safety and a list of other educational topics. UGA Extension in Wayne County serves as a resource for nutrition and health awareness for senior citizens, providing information and engaging them to make dietary changes and improve their quality of life.
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.