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

The Webster County 4-H Club had a wonderful year of competition, learning and fun in 2018. Members attended both Cloverleaf and Junior/Senior District Project Achievement events, where they learned research, writing and public speaking skills along with the confidence to stand up in front of a group and deliver a presentation. Seven Cloverleaf 4-H’ers competed at the district level, and the majority placed in the top three. Five Junior 4-H’ers competed, with two winning first place in the Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors and Pizza categories and three placing second in the Cat Care, Flowers, Shrubs and Lawns and Arts categories. One Senior 4-H’er placed second in Performing Arts Dance and one Senior 4-H’er won first place in the Food for Health and Sport projects. AnnMarie Marchbanks competed at State 4-H Congress, the ninth straight year the county has had a State 4-H Congress competitor. Also in the spring, 11 4-H’ers participated on the Webster County Poultry Judging Team, identifying chicken parts, determining which chickens were the best layers and grading eggs.

4-H’ers were active all summer in 2018. Ten 4-H’ers attended Cloverleaf Camp at Burton 4-H Center on Tybee Island. They learned about ocean ecology, took marsh ecology and learned about ocean life and environment. Two junior 4-H’ers attended Junior Camp at the new Fortson 4-H Center in Atlanta. One senior 4-H’er attended Senior Camp at Rock Eagle 4-H Center.

Webster County 4-H had a slate of history-themed summer activities including two sewing classes, two cooking classes, two outdoor activity classes and a two-day summer day. The Webster County 4-H’ers also went on a history-based field trip to visit Andersonville National Historic Site and the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. Webster County 4-H had 98 total participants during the summer.

The start of school did not slow down Webster County 4-H’ers. Five 4-H’ers prepared mini-booths for the Georgia National Fair and Albany Exchange Club Fair. Other activities included decorating agricultural products, recycled products and the scarecrow competition at the Georgia National Fair. Six 4-H’ers participated on the Webster County Cotton Boll Consumer Judging team in the fall. They created commercials and advertisements about cotton, and determined the best product for a consumer to buy depending on their needs.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Webster County is known for its traditional farming and is home to diverse row crops, forages and livestock. Farmers in Webster County also stayed on the cutting edge of technology. Most currently use grid sampling when obtaining soil samples and spread lime and fertilizer at variable rates, with some areas receiving Extension-recommended application rates of lime and fertilizer and other areas receiving none. The UGA Extension coordinator worked with an area crop consultant who soil samples for farmers by grids. From October 2017 to June 2018, a total of 1,836 soil samples were collected from five-acre grids from 393 fields for 16 producers in Webster, Stewart, Sumter and Terrell counties. Prior laboratory analyses showed that only 50 percent of the acres required lime, which was put out only on the grids that required lime. This reduction in lime resulted in tremendous savings to these producers.
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.