

The Power of Extension

Robeson County Center

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An Inside Glance into Cooperative Extension

If you have been anywhere close to the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Robeson County Center, this summer, you have probably seen or heard young people. Summer is a busy time for our 4-H program. I should probably say summer is a busy time for ALL of our program areas!

The Power of Extension Newsletter will provide a taste of the action. This issue highlights a variety of programs including helping our youth prepare for higher education and educating all ages on strategies to make wise and healthy eating choices. You will also read about the importance of bees, disposing of pesticides, fruit tree pruning, and a regional chicken project.

Extension offers something for everyone. We offer programs for children starting at age five and continue to provide lifelong learning opportunities for the young at heart of any age. As County Extension Director, it is my goal to make sure we continue to focus our programs on meeting your needs. North Carolina Cooperative Extension is moving toward focusing our work in three main areas: Agriculture, Food, and Youth.

As an educational leader, the organization works with citizens to determine the most important and urgent issues to the community. When the issues have been identified, the staff utilizes university resources to help address these needs. Providing research-based and relevant educational opportunities for citizens in Robeson County is our highest priority.



Christy Strickland
County Extension Director

4-H Youth Development



ASPIRE-ing to a Higher Education -- There are severe deficits in standardized test scores between urban and rural high school students. This deficit can be the determining factor for a rural student on whether or not they move forward in their education. The Robeson County 4-H Program partnered with North Carolina State University's ASPIRE Program to offer a 30-hour (10-week) ACT prep

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course. The goal of the program is to assist rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors in test-taking strategies and reaffirm their basic skills to allow them to score two points higher on this standardized test. As part of the course, youth must take four practice tests, complete homework assignments, and practice strategies taught to them. Six students from three different Robeson County high schools took part in the class. Evaluation and Results - Student attendance and test scores were collected, and a written evaluation was also administered at the end of the program to garner feedback. Several students also reported their scores from taking the actual ACT test one week after the class ended. The first practice composite ACT scores ranged from 11 - 24 (average of 16). By the end of the 10-week course, the scores ranged from 17 - 25 with an average score just over 21 (an average increase of 5 points). In a written evaluation, the students said they felt much more confident to take the ACT and felt they had a significant increase in knowledge. Half of the students reported their actual ACT scores after taking the class and gained anywhere from 2 to as many as 11 points on their actual test scores, high enough to be competitive for college. Due to the impact of this program, we will be offering another class in the fall.

Shea Ann DeJarnette, Extension 4-H Youth Development Agent



Empowering Youth to Become Strong Leaders -- Parliamentary procedure and Robert Rules of Order are common guidelines used by almost all organizations to govern meetings. The lack of knowledge and understanding of these guidelines can result in anxiety and stress for adults as well as youth. Cooperative Extension's 4-H Program hosted a workshop for 26 youth on parliamentary procedure. The 4-H members were trained on voicing their opinions and making decisions in an orderly democratic way. Evaluation and Results - Part of the evaluation involved a parliamentary procedure simulation

which involved all participants. Evaluation revealed all 26 youth learned proper protocol of a meeting using parliamentary procedure. The workshop helped build self-confidence in the youth participants, which enables them to properly conduct 4-H County Council meetings or other business meetings. Teaching parliamentary procedure gives youth a needed skill set to become strong future leaders.

Wendy Maynor, Extension 4-H Program Assistant

Family and Consumer Sciences

Learning About a Healthier Diet -- Over 30 percent of children in Robeson County are overweight or obese. Obesity in children increases the likelihood they will experience health problems later in life. To address this issue, Cooperative Extension's 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) delivered six nutrition classes to eight youth at the Robeson County Juvenile Detention Center. Youth learned how to read nutrition fact labels and how many teaspoons of sugar there is in soft drinks.



Evaluation and Results - During the last class, students shared some environmental changes they made such as not eating cereal that list sugar as the first ingredient, not drinking soft drinks, and make at least one recipe a month from the EFNEP cookbook. These few changes will have major results that may keep them from having serious health problems as an adult. Due to the success of this partnership, EFNEP will continue to partner with groups that encourage positive change in youth behaviors.

Tamika McLean, Extension 4-H EFNEP Associate



Smart-Size Your Portions and Right-Size You -- Portion size has changed dramatically over the past 20 - 30 years. They keep getting bigger and bigger and are often more food than we really need. That's what is called "portion distortion." We get so used to large portions of food that when we see a "normal" portion, it looks too small. Portion sizes are not all that's gotten bigger — we've gotten bigger, too! There are more overweight Americans now than ever before. One reason for this is that we are eating larger portion sizes both at home and when we eat out. If we manage our portions, or "smart-size" them by eating the right amount of food, our bodies will be the "right size." That's why the Cooperative Extension Adult Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) worked with a group of 18 participants from Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare in Lumberton to teach them about not only proper portion size but also to think about portion size before preparing meals. Evaluation and Results - A pre and post survey were conducted of all participants specifically asking, "How many of you think about portion control when you prepare your meals?" Of the 18 participants, only 4 raised their hands in the pre survey, or 22 percent of participants. In the post survey, 12 participants, or 66 percent, stated they will monitor their portion control more closely now. Smart sizing our portions and doing physical activity can help us maintain a healthy weight. Due to the impact of this program, we will continue to offer it in the future.

Rosemary Crumb-Pipkin, Extension Adult EFNEP Assistant

Food Preservation Hands-On Classes -- Food-borne botulism is a rare disease with potentially deadly and paralytic consequences and is associated with improperly canned low-acid foods. According to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 percent of reported botulism cases (1996-2014) from home-prepared foods were from home-canned vegetables. These outbreaks usually occur due to lack of knowledge. In an effort to address this need, Cooperative Extension provided two hands-on food preservation workshops to 10 participants. Two participants attended both workshops. Evaluation and Results - A written evaluation was administered at the end of each workshop to all 10 participants. The evaluation revealed 100 percent of participants improved skills in processing pickles, tomatoes, and salsa in a water bath. The evaluation also revealed 88 percent plan to begin using research-based recipes and safe food preservation techniques while the remaining 12 percent were already using research-based recipes and techniques to increase the safety of their food. By canning at home, participants are able to preserve fresh, local foods and feel a sense of pride in preserving their own food. Due to the success of these workshops, future food preservation classes will be offered. The consumer benefits with improved health from safe, healthy foods. Local growers who sell the produce also benefit with increased sales to canning consumers.



Janice Fields, Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Agriculture



Increasing Membership in the Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association -- Membership in the Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association has decreased in the past few years due to a lack of new beekeepers and visibility. In order to address these concerns, Cooperative Extension and the Robeson County Area Beekeepers conducted a Beginning Beekeepers School. This is the second consecutive year the school has been conducted after a six-year absence. Topics were taught by experienced beekeepers and provided attendees with the tools needed

to be successful. Evaluation and Results - The number of persons who attended and graduated from the school and became association members was one of the methods used to evaluate the success of the school. Also, after the completion of the school, participants completed an evaluation which included a pre and posttest. In 2015, a total of nine persons attended the school. Due to aggressive marketing of the school through news articles, E-mails, and brochures, the number participants increased this year to 18. The posttest indicated that 100 percent of the participants had gained the knowledge needed to be successful beekeepers. After attending the school, they became members of the Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association and were assigned a mentor. With the increased visibility and the number of new beekeepers, the association will continue to be viable.

Nelson Brownlee, Extension Area Farm Management Agent

Pesticide Disposal Event Saves Thousands -- Inventories of unwanted pesticides (insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides) by pesticide applicators, including homeowners, need to be properly disposed of to prevent health and environmental hazards. Inventories of such products occur by accumulating partially used pesticides in storage from previous years, applicators retiring or no longer in business, or from individuals who acquire property with pesticides left in outbuildings. These individuals are burdened with finding ways to properly dispose of unwanted chemicals. Based on this need,



Cooperative Extension held a one-day pesticide disposal collection event in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services's Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program. A certified contractor weighed and counted each container of pesticide as it was delivered the day of the collection event. Results - As a result of the free amnesty event, the certified contractor collected 346 containers for a total of 6,047 pounds of unwanted pesticides for proper disposal. Disposal of unwanted pesticides by private individuals would cost on average of \$7 per pound. The combined savings for all participants was \$42,329. Proper pesticide disposal contributes to the improvement of environmental and public health by keeping pesticides out of the environment and reducing the risk of pesticide exposure to all citizens.

Mac Malloy, Extension Field Crops Agent



Fruit Tree Pruning/Training Workshop -- Southeastern North Carolina is primarily rural with a high poverty rate and a high obesity rate. Agriculture is a primary economic indicator in the area. In the last decade, there has been a move from row crop farms to alternative/local food crops. Working with producers and consumers to gain gardening skills and food preservation skills (to expand the longevity of fresh, local foods), we can increase that economic impact. We hope to help them increase sales and encourage them to

implement new practices that will increase yields and product quality which will impact their customer base, increase the individual producers' sustainability, and directly affect the health of the residents of the county for the better. Cumberland, Bladen, and Robeson horticultural agents joined together to offer a Regional Fruit Tree Pruning/Training Workshop partnering with NCSU Extension Specialist Dr. Mike Parker and Geraldine's Peaches and Produce in Robeson County. Evaluation and Results - Thirty of the 38 participants completed a program evaluation. One hundred percent gained knowledge on how to prune an open vase form peach tree. Ninety-seven percent gained knowledge on proper spacing of lateral branches in apple and pear trees. Ninety-four percent increased knowledge on training for a central leader, reasons

to prune, and the proper time to prune. After the program, 91 percent will now plan pruning time to optimize tree health and fruit production. One hundred percent of the respondents would recommend this training to others. When asked of any value saved or potential gain by increased fruit production, the responses averaged over \$200.

Mack Johnson, Extension Horticultural Agent



2016 Regional Chicken Project -- There is a growing interest in youth to participate in small animal projects. Chicken projects create a more affordable livestock showing option in comparison to the larger species. Cooperative Extension knows the value of livestock projects and the life skills they provide for children. As a collaborative effort between Extension/4-H and school ag education classes (FFA), livestock and 4-H agents from eight counties offered the chicken project. Participants could choose between raising laying hens or broilers. Broilers could be given back to be processed and donated to a food bank. The goal was to provide lessons in raising chickens, showing chickens, recordkeeping, and money management. There were 112 participants who signed up and 89 participated in the show. Youth raised laying hen chicks from three days of age to four months of age and broiler chicks from three days of age to seven weeks of age. There was an organized showmanship contest, breed show, and recordbook contest. Youth attended two mandatory training sessions. Cape Fear Farm Credit provided financial support for this project, including prize money. Prize money in the amount of \$420 was given out to those participants who placed in the top three in each category. Evaluation and Results - Data was collected through an online evaluation prior to the show, with 87 people completing it. An evaluation was also given at the show and completed by 44 people after the project was finished. Ninety-eight percent were very satisfied or satisfied with the overall experience of the project. Evaluations showed that 90 percent of youth improved on responsibility and work ethic, 84 percent improved on communication skills, and 96 percent learned new ideas on raising and showing chickens. Some quotes from participants were: they “could learn about chickens and still have fun” and “my favorite part was actually getting to work with the chickens; hands-on learning is the easiest way for me to learn.” A parent said, “what I like best is the opportunity for my child to learn more about chickens and the responsibilities that go along with caring for animals.”

Taylor Chavis, Extension Livestock Agent



Upcoming Events

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CALL TO REGISTER
August 16 - 17 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. August 18 - Review August 22 - Exam	ServSafe Food Safety Certification Training	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Janice Fields 671-3276 Deadline has passed
August 16 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
Starts August 20	ASPIRE - ACT Prep Program -- Go to http://harvest.cals.ncsu.edu/cals-academic-programs/paths-to-cals/aspire-program/ for an application and to see a complete schedule. Deadline: August 12	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
August 22 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H 4-County Master Volunteer Training	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
August 25 1:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Small Farm Outreach Meeting: Linking Resources to Farmers and Landowners	Bladen County Center 450 Smith Circle Drive, Elizabethtown	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
August 27 Time TBD	4-H ACE College for Volunteers	Cumberland County Center 301 East Mountain Drive, Fayetteville	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
September 1 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
September 12 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
September 12 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H County Council and Volunteer Leaders' Association Elections	To Be Determined	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
September 19 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H 4-County Master Volunteer Training	Moore County Center 707 Pinehurst Avenue, Carthage	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
September 20 - 21 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. September 22 - Review September 26 - Exam	ServSafe Food Safety Certification Training \$125 (check or money order only) until deadline; \$140 after deadline Fee Deadline: August 30 Final Class Deadline: September 6	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Janice Fields 671-3276
September 20 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
September 27 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Pesticide Recertification Training 10 - 12, Private Applicator V 1 - 3, Private Applicator X and Commercial A, B, D, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, and T	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mac Malloy 671-3276
September 29-October 8	Robeson Regional Agricultural Fair	Robeson County Fairgrounds 3750 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Lumberton	
October 6 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
October 10 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
October 18 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
October 21 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	4-H Volunteer Appreciation Banquet	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
November 1 - 2 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. November 3 - Review November 4 or 7 - Exam	ServSafe Food Safety Certification Training \$125 (check or money order only) until deadline; \$140 after deadline Fee Deadline: October 11 Final Class Deadline: October 18	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Janice Fields 671-3276
November 3 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
November 14 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CALL TO REGISTER
November 15 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
December 1 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	4-H Youth Achievement Night	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
December 1 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
December 5 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H County Council and Volunteer Leaders' Association Officer Orientation	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
December 12 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
December 20 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
January 5, 2017 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
January 9 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
January 17 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276

For more information about additional upcoming educational opportunities, please check out our calendar at:
<http://robeson.ces.ncsu.edu>

