

The Power of Extension

Robeson County Center

February 1, 2017

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Contact Us

O. P. Owens Agriculture Center
455 Caton Road
P. O. Box 2280
Lumberton, NC 28359
Phone: 910-671-3276
Fax: 910-671-6278
<http://robeson.ces.ncsu.edu>

Facebook:
Robeson County Cooperative
Extension

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An Inside Glance into Cooperative Extension

The Power of Extension Newsletter provides a snapshot of the educational programs conducted by North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Robeson County Center, which impact the lives of Robeson County citizens. 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.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension focuses on three main areas: Agriculture, Food, and Youth. Locally, that means we have three main departments: Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. Providing research-based and relevant educational opportunities for citizens in Robeson County is our highest priority.

Extension as a Community -- October 8, 2016, changed the lives of many citizens in Robeson County. Hurricane Matthew was a much stronger storm than forecasted, dumping massive amounts of rain throughout the county and neighboring areas as well. More than 150 roads were closed and 75 are still in need of repair. To assist with Hurricane Matthew recovery efforts, Robeson County Cooperative Extension staff reported to the Emergency Operations Center even while county offices remained closed. Working together with other county employees as well as hundreds of volunteers across the county, necessities were distributed to those in need after the storm. Extension staff worked tirelessly for many hours. From the moment the storm hit, agents took to social media to get the word out about dangers, damage, and cleanup efforts. Extension publications and information were posted to the Extension Facebook page and shared on Twitter and even agents' personal pages to reach as many folks as possible. While working at the Southeast Ag Distribution Center, job titles did not differentiate what was done. Everyone - whether secretary, program assistant, or agent - stepped up to spend 10- and 12-hour days outside filling residents' trunks with food, water, ice, and other available items as needed. When dry tractor trailers were needed for all the clothing donations, it was the crops agent who got on Facebook with a plea and, within minutes, had someone willing to bring them and park them where needed to help with the efforts. As challenges presented themselves, the staff worked together to problem solve and make the disaster relief effort flow as smoothly as possible. After the county offices opened for business, calls began coming in from all over the United States from other Extension Centers and 4-H programs wanting to help. Robeson County Extension received and distributed over \$40,000 of new and used items after the storm and continue to get calls from other County Extension Centers that want to help.

Christy Strickland

Christy Strickland
County Extension Director

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AGRICULTURE



Raised Bed Gardening Workshop -- In Robeson County, the median household income is \$35,806. Approximately 32 percent of the population lives below the poverty level. Robeson County is considered a TIER 1 county based on economic indicators. According to the North Carolina Health report, Robeson County ranks 97th out of 100 counties in terms of overall health. Forty-one percent of adult county residents are classified as obese with 39 percent not engaging in moderate physical activity 30 minutes a day five or more days a week. Almost 40 percent of youth ages

two to four are either obese or overweight. Robeson's top three leading causes of death are heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, all of which are directly related to low physical activity and poor nutrition. The negative health concerns and a strong national and state Local Foods movement means there are great interests and opportunities for county residents to purchase and consume locally produced foods. To address this need, Cooperative Extension presented an interactive, hands-on workshop to 13 participants. Evaluation and Results - Pre and post survey information was completed by 100 percent of the participants. Evaluations revealed 100 percent gained knowledge in pest and disease monitoring. Ninety-two percent gained knowledge in extending the season, proper timing of planting various crops, and plant spacing. Eighty-five percent gained knowledge in selecting a proper site for the raised bed and selecting the proper soil substrate. One hundred percent plan to try inter-planting different crops or succession planting, and 92 percent plan to manage water more effectively. More raised bed workshops will be planned due to this success.

Mack Johnson, Extension Horticultural Agent

Environmental Quality Incentives Cost-Share Program -- Due to the lack of knowledge, small-scale producers do not know about the high-tunnel cost share through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Programs (EQIP) that are available. They are constantly searching for new programs to keep their land sustainable and profitable. In 2014, I partnered with the USDA Office Advocacy and conducted an outreach workshop on linking farmers to agricultural resources that can provide financial assistance to their farm. At the outreach workshop, farmers learned about the high-tunnel cost share Environmental Quality Incentives Program and how to complete the NRCS program application. Evaluation and Results - Since completion of the workshop, follow-up interviews have been conducted with the five farmers. Since 2014, the five farmers completed applications through the EQIP cost-share program and were granted \$6,900 each to install a high tunnel on their farm for a combined total of \$34,500. The new high tunnels allowed these farmers to expand their produce operation, extended the growing season, and increased profits by 30 percent. In the future, small/part-time farmers can continue to benefit from educational opportunities provided by Cooperative Extension.



Nelson Brownlee, Extension Area Farm Management Agent



Weigh wagon with scales being used to record individual plot yield.

Helping Growers Through On-Farm Variety Comparisons --

North Carolina is a deficit producer of grain for animal feed, importing as much as 20 percent of its feed needs for the pork, poultry, and cattle industry annually. To alleviate this deficit and reduce grain hauling transportation costs, NCSU and North Carolina Cooperative Extension initiated a program to work with the agricultural industry to increase crop yields 10 percent. Extension agents in nine southeast North Carolina counties, including Robeson, supported this initiative by participating in a multi-county corn variety demonstration program. This annual

demonstration gives local farmers an opportunity to make side-by-side comparisons of variety performance from numerous companies in multiple growing environments. Evaluation and Results - The program provides an on-farm evaluation of top commercially available varieties with the goal of generating more consistent average yields in poor, fair, and excellent growing seasons. In 2016, results showed a combined yield average of 184.5 bushels per acre. A 34-bushel difference was measured from the highest- to lowest-performing variety. Given a \$4 per bushel price, making proper corn variety selection could have resulted in a 2.1 million bushel combined increase in production with a \$8.4 million value for all Robeson County corn producers when comparing the top-yielding variety to the lowest-yielding variety. Farmers can use these results to help make future seed selection decisions to remain profitable.

Mac Malloy, Extension Field Crops Agent

Hay Field Day -- Hay quality and production is an important part of a livestock operation. It allows livestock to have forages to eat when there is no green grass and many farmers in southeastern North Carolina produce hay to sell. Cooperative Extension livestock agents from Bladen, Cumberland, Hoke, Robeson, Sampson, and Scotland Counties conducted a Hay Field Day. Participants saw weed and herbicide demonstration plots which showed how well they controlled weeds.



They learned about hay equipment maintenance and troubleshooting and saw hay equipment in action. Five hay dealers brought equipment to demonstrate. Continuing education credits were given for pesticide and animal waste licenses. Evaluation and Results - Sixty-five farmers attended. Over 90 percent of participants gained new knowledge about weeds, herbicides, and hay equipment. Eighty-five percent will make changes on their farm due to knowledge gained. Ninety continuing education credits were earned, allowing 45 farmers to retain their licenses. There were many positive comments on the field day which included: "The dealers coming in and doing demonstrations and having equipment there to see was really nice. I was impressed with the plots showing the effects of the different chemicals and grateful for the handouts, which are useful. Weed identification and chemical use was great. I need to learn more about the proper chemicals to save as much money as possible. It was an excellent field day and very informative. I was reminded about temperature when spraying can make a difference in the results. After the talk, I printed out some herbicide labels I use. It was a good reminder that weather conditions affect how different chemicals may work and why sometimes I see the same herbicide gives a better kill than other times."

Taylor Chavis, Extension Livestock Agent

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Facing Our Fears -- Research shows public speaking is the number one fear for adults. Being able to speak in public is an important component of leadership and career development. Developing public speaking skills and overcoming the anxiety as a youth helps increase success as an adult. The Robeson County 4-H Program held a Public Speaking and Presentations Contest. Youth between the ages of five and eight were encouraged to deliver a speech or present a show-and-tell demonstration. Youth, ages 9-18, competed in three different age categories for placing. This makes practicing and developing public speaking skills fun for our youth. Evaluation and Results - Information was collected during the contest, and oral evaluations were conducted with parents and youth as they prepared for district competition. Of the 31 youth who competed in County Activity Day, 19

qualified to compete in District Activity Day. In addition, 90 percent of the youth who competed in district qualified for state competition. One parent stated their child exhibited higher self-esteem, more confidence, and tremendous growth compared to last year.

Wendy Maynor, Extension 4-H Program Assistant

Creating an Appreciation for Food -- Experts expect a food shortage is on the horizon for the United States. This is due to a combination of factors including the average age of the farmer being almost 60, the growing cost of land, increasing food prices, and lack of knowledge among youth on the business of agriculture. Robeson County's 4-H and horticultural agent partnered to implement a week-long Junior Master Gardener Day Camp. The camp touched on everything from diminishing carbon footprints to growing food, soil science, and team work. Evaluation and Results - Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through written evaluations at the end of the camp, and oral feedback, as well as observation was utilized during the camp. At the end of the camp, 91 percent of the campers stated they increased their knowledge about biodegradable planting material and would use such practices in the future. More than three quarters of 82 percent of the respondents said they now had the knowledge and would possibly grow fruits and vegetables in the future. Due to the success of the program, we will continue with our Junior Master Gardener Club that meets monthly and will have another week-long camp in the future.



Shea Ann DeJarnette, Extension 4-H Youth Development Agent

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES



Breakfast Is The Most Important Meal Of The Day! -- Research has provided growing support for the value of eating breakfast. Evidence shared in a compilation of studies has revealed that children who eat breakfast consume more energy in the form of calories and tend to have superior nutrient profiles compared to their breakfast-skipping peers. They are also more likely to stay focused and make better grades in the classroom. To ensure Robeson County children are learning the importance of eating breakfast, Cooperative Extension's Expanded

Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) partnered with the Public Schools of Robeson County to deliver a series of six healthy eating lessons to third through fifth graders as part of their school enrichment programming. Students participated in a hands-on activity that helped them become more aware of the nutritional benefits of eating a healthy breakfast. Using the Nutrition Facts panel from a variety of breakfast cereals, the children looked specifically for whole grain cereals with at least three grams of fiber, six grams (or less) of sugar, and enough iron to equal 10 - 25 percent of their daily recommendation. Evaluation and Results - Students were evaluated with both pre/post surveys that revealed 96 percent of students made core changes that agree with the food dietary guidelines. After taking EFNEP classes, students reported back to teachers and staff that their family changed breakfast choices to healthier options. Because of EFNEP, the children were getting the energy and vital nutrients needed to start an academically productive day.

Tamika McLean, Extension 4-H EFNEP Associate



New EFNEP Assistant -- I am the newest member of the Cooperative Extension family, and I'm ecstatic to serve as the Adult EFNEP Assistant. My name is Teresa Bethea, and I am here to serve you, the citizens of Robeson County. I'm a Robeson County native with a passion for providing educational resources that will increase the awareness of individuals, enhancing the quality of life for themselves and their families. Prior to joining Cooperative Extension, I worked with a diversity of individuals in helping them achieve their educational goals. I will embrace the opportunity to use those skills to help the citizens of Robeson County achieve their health-related goals by providing a forum through EFNEP. My goals as the Adult EFNEP Assistant are to provide a foundation to help individuals and families foster a lifestyle change to make wiser nutritional choices, increase their daily physical activity, manage their food resources, and practice food safety. With this knowledge, individuals and families are destined to be on the road to a healthier lifestyle.

Teresa Bethea, Extension Adult EFNEP Assistant

Food Safety -- Foodborne illnesses are nearly 100 percent preventable. The average cost burden per illness is \$3,630. In 2016, Cooperative Extension offered "HACCP in Schools" (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) training, ServSafe training and certification, safe home food handling, and food preservation and preparation classes to 341 youth and adults. Evaluation and Results - Based on a potential savings of \$3,630 for each foodborne illness, these trainings have collectively saved \$1,237,830 in costs associated with foodborne illnesses in Robeson County. In addition, based on a savings of \$75,000 for each foodborne illness outbreak, six ServSafe trainings (January-December 2016) to 53 participants (English and Spanish) have potentially saved 26 food service establishments and six school cafeterias \$2,400,000 in costs associated with foodborne illnesses. Also, 38 ServSafe certified participants will help their establishments avoid a two-point deduction from their health inspection score for five years. Based on needs and interest, food safety trainings will continue to be provided in Robeson County.



Janice Fields, Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

2017 Upcoming Events

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CALL TO REGISTER
February 2 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
February 6 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H County Council and Volunteer Leaders' Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center 455 Caton Road, Lumberton	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
February 7 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland Tri-County Auxin Herbicide Training	Hoke-Robeson Gin 7480 Old Maxton Road, Red Springs	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 7 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland Tri-County Cotton Production Meeting	Hoke-Robeson Gin 7480 Old Maxton Road, Red Springs	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 13 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
February 15 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.	North Carolina Pesticide Exam	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Pesticide Section 919-733-3556
February 16 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.	Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland Tri-County Corn and Soybean Production Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 17 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.	Southeast Peanut Production Meeting	Powell Melvin Service Center 450 Smith Circle Road, Elizabethtown	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 21 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
February 21 - 22 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. February 23 - Review February 27 - Exam	ServSafe Food Safety Certification Training Fee - \$125 (check or money order only) DEADLINE - February 14 (\$140 after)	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Janice Fields Come by to pay and register
February 22 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Commercial Poultry Grower Meeting Can register online at: http://goo.gl/forms/WRTLQGjB9mc8tJ9N2	Duplin County Center 165 Agriculture Drive Kenansville	Taylor Chavis 671-3276 For info
February 22	Corn Growers Referendum	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center and Other Designated Polling Sites	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 24 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Pesticide Recertification Training 10 - 12, Private Applicator V 1 - 3, Private Applicator X and Commercial D, L, and N	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mac Malloy 671-3276
February 25 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Muscadine Culture and Pruning Demonstration	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
March 2 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
March 11 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Raised-Bed Gardening Workshop	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
March 13 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
March 13 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.	4-H Embryology Teacher Training/ Incubator Distribution	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
March 13 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H Volunteer Revolution Training	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
March 16 1:15 - 5:30 p.m.	Spring Alternative Tour	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
March 21 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
March 25 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.	4-H County Activity Day	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
March 30 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Tomatoes, Tomahtoes, and 'Maters	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
April 3 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H County Council and Volunteer Leaders' Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CALL TO REGISTER
April 4 - 5 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. April 6 - Review April 10 - Exam	ServSafe Food Safety Certification Training Fee - \$125 (check or money order only) DEADLINE - March 27 (\$140 after)	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Janice Fields Come by to pay and register
April 6 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
April 10 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
April 18 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
April 24	4-H Embryology Teacher Incubator Distribution for Round 2	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
May 4 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
May 8 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
May 13 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	4-H Animal Science Workshop for Animal Science Project Participants	Robeson County Fairgrounds 3750 Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive Lumberton	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
May 15 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	4-H Volunteer Revolution Training	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Shea Ann DeJarnette 671-3276
May 16 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
June 1 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
June 5 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	4-H County Council and Volunteer Leaders' Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Wendy Maynor 671-3276
June 9 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	4-H Etiquette Day Camp Ages 9 - 13	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Denese Prevatte 671-3276
June 12 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
June 20 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
June 26 - 30 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	4-H Junior Chef Academy Ages 9 - 13	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Denese Prevatte 671-3276
July 5 - 7 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	4-H Millstone Day Camp Ages 9 - 13	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Denese Prevatte 671-3276
July 6 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	Goat Club Meeting	Hoke County Center 116 West Prospect Avenue, Raeford	Taylor Chavis 671-3276
July 10 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Robeson County Master Gardeners Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Mack Johnson 671-3276
July 10 – 14 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	4-H Arts and Crafts Day Camp Ages 9 - 13	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Denese Prevatte 671-3276
July 16 - 21	4-H Overnight Camp Ages 9 - 14	Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Center Reidsville, NC	Jessie Jones 671-3276
July 18 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Robeson County Area Beekeepers Association Meeting	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Nelson Brownlee 671-3276
August 7 - 11 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	4-H Biotech Day Camp Ages 9 - 13	O. P. Owens Agriculture Center	Denese Prevatte 671-3276

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

