

EXTENSION Today



IN LAUREL COUNTY

In Laurel County we're growing ideas that make a difference in your life, your family, and your community. We have a dedicated staff of trained professionals delivering educational programs in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community and economic development. The Laurel County Cooperative Extension Office is your connection to the University of Kentucky and the world.

You'll see some key numbers in this report. But the numbers don't show you the people or the impact of our work. So the rest of this report shows the faces behind some of the numbers.

Cooking at "The Kitchen"

Having identified a community need for a certified demonstration kitchen, the Laurel County Cooperative Extension Service spearheaded an expansion project at the London-Laurel County Farmers Market



Learning to make smoothies at The Kitchen.

to construct a kitchen facility. With \$90,000 funding from Laurel County Extension District Board, Laurel County Agricultural Development Council, and the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, "The Kitchen" promotes

local products, provides a place for producers to expand sales by making HB 391 products, and provides a space to educate the public about food safety and cooking skills.

Family and Consumer Sciences staff used The Kitchen to offer over 50 different nutrition, food preservation, and food preparation classes for adults and youth. These programs reached 6,428 people and brought over 700 new people to the farmers market. When surveyed, 85% of local producers said programming at The Kitchen had brought new customers to the market.

As a result of increased shopper activity, Farmers Market membership increased by 25% for the 2011

Reaching Out to Laurel County



Educational Programs

Programs presented	832
Total participants	31,974

Educational Contacts

Clientele visits	112,341
Telephone consultations	35,679
Newsletters distributed	67,815

Volunteer Development

Volunteers	719
Volunteer hours	29,576
Clientele reached by volunteers	53,249

market season. To help the farmers with crop diversification and the realization of greater profits, the Horticulture agent presented educational workshops such as sustainable gardening, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), plasticulture, and sessions regarding production of crops such as blueberries, strawberries, shiitake mushrooms, and even maple syrup production.



During the workshop, OSU's Dr. Gary Graham demonstrates adding taps to maple trees.

The Market is open from May through October. Classes at the Kitchen are offered year-round.



Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

4-H Make a Health Difference Day



According to the United Health Foundation and America's Health Rankings 2008, obesity rates have in-

creased in the United States from 12.2% to 28.7% since 1990. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 17% of children and adolescents are overweight; two-thirds of adult Americans are overweight, and nearly one-third are obese. In an effort to promote healthier lifestyle choices and to encourage more physical activity, the Laurel County Extension agent for 4-H Youth Development, the Laurel County Health Department, Baptist Regional Medical Center, the American Cancer Society, Unite, Southern KY AHEC, and many other community organizations, sponsored a health fair event that was proclaimed "Make a Health Difference Day" by Mayor Troy Rudder of London.

The event was held in October 2010, at the dedication of the newly constructed walking track, in order to educate citizens about health related issues. The focus of the event was to raise public awareness and to encourage citizens to adopt healthier lifestyles through prevention and improvement efforts. Participants were offered free flu shots, healthy recipes and food samples, Relay for Life activities, tobacco cessation tips, a walking challenge, health screenings and more.

Approximately 150 adults and children who attended the event enjoyed a variety of activities, games and prizes including a jump rope contest, exercise sessions, inflatable jumping house, scooter races and hula hoop contests. Local fourth grade students who participated in the 4-H Health logo contest were given the opportunity to be recognized on stage at the event. Participating students designed a "health" logo that represented their idea of a healthy lifestyle. First, second and third place winners were awarded prizes by the Laurel County 4-H Council.

Seventy-two percent of the participants surveyed during the event stated that they learned something new about health issues. Twenty-four percent were-

n't aware of many of the health concerns facing the citizens of Laurel County. Fifty-five percent of participants stated that they participated in three or more activities during the event and 84% of participants took home recipes that provided healthier versions of popular recipes. Ninety percent of participants stated that they would encourage more events like the "Make a Health Difference Day," event and they would likely attend.

Meat Case Crash Draws a Crowd

In an effort to promote local beef farmers and the dietary benefits of beef consumption, the Laurel County Cattlemen's Association recently conducted a "Meat Case Crash" at a local supermarket. The event was funded through a grant received from the Kentucky Beef Council.

To reach as many shoppers as possible, the event was held on the Friday afternoon before Memorial Day. A large grill was set up at the entrance of the store where Association members demonstrated preparation of a variety of beef cuts, including brisket, chuck roast, and hamburgers. Inside the store, a table was located beside the market's meat counter where

members distributed samples of the cooked beef, free recipes, lean beef selection guides, disposable



meat thermometers, and other information. The beef farmers answered a variety of questions from the customers, ranging from the safety of beef consumption to the conditions in which the cattle are raised.

A total of 320 samples were prepared and distributed by 14 volunteers. Association members reported that, of the shoppers they polled, 78% said they felt more secure about the safety of consuming beef; 62% learned about the health benefits of beef consumption; and 82% discovered a new cut of beef or recipe for preparing beef.

Grow Appalachia Project

The Laurel County Cooperative Extension Service served a vital role in the implementation of the Grow Appalachia Project in Laurel County. This project is hosted by the Laurel County African American Heritage Center and is dedicated to helping mountain families plant a healthy future for themselves and their communities.

A joint program with the Horticulture and Family & Consumer Sciences Departments, the participants were offered skills and resources to grow sustainable nutritious food and were taught how to prepare and preserve food in a healthy way. Over 22,000 pounds of food were produced by the 30 families participating in the program.



Those who do not have room at home might consider a raised garden space at the Extension Office's Community Garden.

the excess produce they raised at the community garden. Canning and preservation workshops were provided throughout the growing season at The Kitchen by the Family & Consumer Sciences program.

100% of the food preservation participants stated that they had increased their knowledge of food preservation by attending the hands-on workshops. Of the 30 participants, 90% said they had used their new knowledge to can, dry or freeze their produce. One participant reported that her family easily saved over \$3,000 by producing and canning their own fruits and vegetables.

Gardeners Toolbox Workshop Series

The Laurel County Extension Service has noted a steady increase in the number of requests for information about home vegetable production and flower gardening. In an effort to address this interest, the Laurel County Cooperative Extension Service presented a series of educational sessions known as the Gardeners Toolbox Workshops.

In the series, home gardeners learn a wide variety of

skills, ranging from fruit and vegetable gardening to caring for their lawn and landscape plants. This



Holiday decoration made with twigs, raffia, greenery, pinecones and acorns.

year's series included workshops such as dry water features; building cold frames; planting butterfly and hummingbird gardens; herb container gardens; holiday decorations from nature; and landscape plants for winter interest. Several

workshops were also presented to provide information for commercial farmers as well as home gardeners in areas such as organic gardening; blueberry production; strawberry production; pruning and grafting fruit trees; and garden food safety.

The overall total of attendance was 262. Surveys conducted following the workshop showed that 82.5% felt the information presented was highly useful; 83% rated the quality of the presentations and the handouts as excellent; and 75% said they plan to attend other Extension related workshops in the near future. The survey also asked for suggestion for future workshop topics and, as a result, several sessions of the Gardeners Toolbox Workshops for the upcoming year were arranged to address those requests.

Expanded Food and Nutrition Program



The Expanded Food and Nutrition Program in Laurel County continues to serve the community's limited resource families, with 106 families being involved for this program year. Lessons were provided to help the families make nutritious

food choices. Subjects included budgeting, meal planning, reading and interpreting food labels, and keeping food safe. 132 volunteers were utilized to conduct the many facets of the program. A survey conducted at the end of the program showed that 100% of the families made a positive change in their food choices.

Many volunteers in the program were also utilized to serve meals to children at a summer feeding program site sponsored by Laurel County Cooperative Extension. Over the course of the eight week program, an average of twenty-five children per day were provided a nutritious lunch at the sponsored location.

Volunteer Impact in Laurel County

Volunteers are an essential part of Extension programming in Laurel County and serve in many different leadership roles that allow Extension clientele to benefit from their expertise and knowledge. They provide needed programming to the community, and volunteer countless hours of service by attending leadership trainings and conducting educational workshops.



Laurel County Extension Agents

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Art Club volunteer leader shares her creative talent.

In 2010, Extension volunteers attended and presented over fifty educational workshops that increased their knowledge of Extension programming, Youth Development, county needs and council efforts. These workshops consisted of

School Club Leader Orientations, New Volunteer Orientations, 4-H Club Officer Trainings, Council Development trainings (local and state), Community Education Programs and other Extension Leadership programs.

The efforts of adult and teen volunteers to conduct workshops and assist Extension agents with programs, resulted in 144 school club lessons, 90 hours of afterschool programming, 96 hours of overnight camping, 50 hours of day camping, 1000 hours of community-wide events and over 150 hours of school enrichment programming. Many of these programs would not have been possible without the efforts of community volunteers.



Volunteer leaders for the Shooting Sports Club must complete certification training.

A total of 100 volunteers reached over 3,500 youth through 15 different programs in 2010. Based on the average volunteer worth from Kentucky State Volunteerism statistics, the efforts of these volunteers had an economic impact worth \$30,348.00 in savings by serving over 1,686 hours through volunteerism.

The Laurel County Cooperative Extension Service

We deliver information, education, solutions.

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