

# EXTENSION Today



## IN MARSHALL COUNTY

*In Marshall 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 Marshall 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.*

### Marshall County Master Gardeners

Marshall County Master Gardeners hosted two educational workshops this year as well as two "hands on" activities for youth. The first workshop gave container gardening enthusiasts instructions on using various containers for the production of vegetables and flowers. Forty people attended, and local businesses donated door prize items related to the container gardening theme. Master Gardeners promoted this event by placing flyers around the county, posting invitations to Facebook, and using two local radio station talk shows. The second workshop focused on making your own stepping stones or pots, or whatever else you can imagine utilizing hypertufa, a lightweight version of concrete, to mold and shape containers to your liking.



The first activity for youth was incorporated into Youth Ag Field Day, which was attended by 379 fourth graders. Master Gardeners helped youth plant a vegetable seed into a paper sack. Youth scooped up potting soil, placed it in the sack, planted a lettuce or bean seed, and took it home with them. Master Gardeners provided the youth with after care instructions for maintaining the plant. The second activity was with the 4-H Cooking Club. Master Gardeners showed youth how to plant and care for herbs they could use with home cooked meals.

Over the course of the year Master Gardeners reported 300 hours of volunteer time. Independent Sector announces that the 2010 estimate for the value of a volunteer hour has reached \$21.36, this equates to \$6,408.

### Reaching Out to Marshall County

#### Educational Programs

Programs presented	387
Total participants	3,701
<i>Educational Contacts</i>	
Clientele visits	720
Electronic media consultations	4,250
Newsletters distributed	8,401
<i>Volunteer Development</i>	
Volunteers	320
Volunteer hours	25,850
Clientele reached by volunteers	5,500



### Western KY Beef Conference

Beef producers are seeking low cost management approaches to maintain profitability. A beef conference was planned and conducted which emphasized market trends/conditions, grain market movements and expectations for the future, and maximizing low cost, yet complete feeding of beef animals.



Bovine Health Management was also a topic at this educational event. Thirty-eight producers from counties (5) throughout western-most Kentucky attended the Beef Conference in Marshall County on

December 14, 2010. Ninety-six percent of producers agreed that topics presented were relevant to their needs and ninety percent indicated they had gained knowledge. When asked if they would apply what they had learned, eighty-eight percent agreed.

Topics were presented by: Dr. Michele Arnold, UK College of Agriculture Extension Veterinarian; Kenny Burdine, UK Beef Extension Associate; Kevin Laurent, UK Extension Beef Associate. District 7 West Agriculture and Natural Resource Agents promoted and recruited producers for this educational event. This event was sponsored by the Purchase Area Cattleman's Association and the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

### Producing and Marketing Horticultural Crops

New vegetable and fruit crops that growers might want to consider were discussed at a December 9, 2010 educational meeting targeted for commercial vegetable and fruit crop producers in far western Kentucky.



Resources available through the New Crop Opportunities Center and other organizations were referenced. Additionally, a topic encompassing selling to grocers, wholesalers, restaurants, auctions and a horticultural market outlook for 2011 were discussed. Fourteen producers, from counties (5) throughout western-most Kentucky, attended this educational event. Eighty-eight percent of producers agreed that topics presented were relevant to their needs and seventy-nine percent indicated that they had gained knowledge. When asked if they would apply what they had learned, seventy-one percent agreed. Topics were presented by: Christy Cassady, UK College of Agriculture, Coordinator of the New Crop Opportunities Center; and Dr. Tim Woods, UK Agricultural Economist. District 7 West Agriculture and Natural Resource agents promoted and recruited producers for this educational event. This event was sponsored by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.



### Couponing 101

Kentucky family incomes are decreasing, due in part to the current 9.8% unemployment rate. Many families find it necessary to alter spending habits in order to make ends meet. Couponing 101 is an educational program that teaches how to use meal planning, grocery shopping strategies and couponing in order to cut the family grocery bill by as much as 50%.



The Marshall County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences taught the Couponing 101 class 23 times to more than 460 participants in a 5 month period. Each class included meal planning, using a master shopping list, keeping a price book, coupon etiquette, store policies, coupon resources and stockpiling.

Eighty percent of participants reported they now use meal

planning with couponing to save more on their grocery bill. Sixty percent said they consistently save 20-50% and have shared what they learned with family and friends.

Participants made these comments after a 12-week follow-up: "The weekly meal planning should be a MUST for every household. Couponing 101 has increased my level of consciousness about how I should manage our household spending." "This is one of the best classes I have ever attended! Using what we learned in Couponing 101 has allowed us to keep gas in our automobiles, where before it was a struggle."



### After School Programs Offer Opportunities for Marshall County Children

In 2009, the Marshall County Family & Consumer Sciences Agent secured grant funds to partner with the local Arts Commission to begin an after-school program for children's chorus. Since that time, the program continues to grow and has since added an after-school theatre group for children.

For the past five years, the Marshall County Extension Office and Marshall County Arts Commission have collaborated with the aid of a dozen volunteers to offer a summer morning ART (smART) Camp for 40 students in grades 2-6. The two week camp offers instruction in visual and performing arts and culminates in a production at the high school performing arts center to showcase art projects, costumes, props and a public performance, all created by the students.



Such after-school programs offer quality art experiences with qualified instructors and allows interaction among students from all across the county, including public, private and home-school settings. In 2010-2011, over 400 children participated in programs sponsored by the Extension/Arts Commission partnership.

### Volunteers Provide Valuable Leadership in Marshall County

UK Cooperative Extension Homemakers provide Marshall Countians with a valuable network of support and a recognizable entity of leadership in the community. Volunteer leadership allows the Extension Service to reach a larger clientele base throughout their communities.

Members acquire skills through monthly learning sessions and club meetings



where they learn teaching strategies to be shared with family and friends. Many homemakers are teachers/leaders of programs that are far-reaching throughout Marshall County and the State of Kentucky. Leaders have used skills to teach hands-on programs in parenting, literacy, health, home environment and household management.

The Family Literacy program has benefited from \$7000 in books and reading resources given by Extension Homemakers to the Head Start program over the past 10 years. As a result of this program, families report increased reading activities in their homes and schools.

At the 2011 Kentucky Extension Homemakers' state meeting, Marshall County Homemakers were recognized for contributing more than 21,500 hours in teaching activities and community service over the past year. This is valued at over \$459,000 to the people of Marshall County (most current hourly rate of \$21.36 furnished by the Independent Sector Nonprofit Information Center).

#### 4-H Health Rocks Changes Lives

Marshall County's 2010 KIP data indicated a decrease in alcohol use by 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders compared to 2008, but an increase in illegal prescription drug use. Marshall County agencies and schools are working to tackle these issues and the UK Cooperative Extension Service is part of these efforts.



To battle substance abuse among youth, the *4-H Health Rocks!* program was expanded

in 2010-11. The Marshall County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development and 4-H STAR Team teens presented lessons to approximately 400 Benton (6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade) and North Marshall Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade). The five lesson topics taught included Cycle of Addiction, Dealing with Stress, Decision Making, Ways to Say “No,” and Identification of Drug Symptoms / What Drugs Look Like.

Upon completion of the lessons, the students were asked to complete an evaluation. Out of the 299 evaluations collected:

- Students identified two physical or emotional symptoms of stress including depression/sadness/loneliness (72 responses), too much/lack of sleep (64), and bad temper/mood swings/anger (46).
- Students identified positive ways to relieve stress including talk to someone (e.g., counselor, parent) (89) and walk/exercise/sports (67).
- Students identified negative ways to relieve stress including drug/alcohol use (75) and hit something or someone (40).
- 102 students reported the “one thing” to remember when making a decision was to think about the

consequences.

- 148 students noted to “just say NO” when faced with a situation where someone was pressuring them to do something they did not want to do.

The students were also asked to name one thing they learned from the *4-H Health Rocks!* lessons that they did/used following the lesson. Students reported:



- Ways to “say no” such as making an excuse, walking away, be firm, etc. (108 responses)
- Positive stress relief through activity, talk with someone, etc. (77 responses)

The Ways to Say “No” lesson seemed to have the greatest impact with students writing:

- “I said no when someone offered me a drug.” (6<sup>th</sup> grader)
- “A way to say no, because I have been asked to have meth but I ignored them and kept moving.” (6<sup>th</sup> grader)
- “Was at a party and got offered a drink and I said “NO!” (7<sup>th</sup> grader)
- “I used a way to say no when offered alcohol.” (8<sup>th</sup> grader)

When asked if they would recommend other teachers implement *Health Rocks*, one 8<sup>th</sup> grade student wrote “Because it changed my opinion about different things.” A 6<sup>th</sup> grader wrote “Because it teaches kids a lot of good life decisions.”

#### Preparing for the Workforce

In 2010-11, the Marshall County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development was requested by a teacher to conduct workforce preparation lessons with 8<sup>th</sup> grade Benton Middle students in the “Careers Class.” The 4-H Agent used the “4-H World of Work” and “Step Up to Leadership” curriculums to design this program.



The program included four lessons:

- “What Does an Employer Look For?” including a personality trait discovery activity.
- How to complete a job application and appearance/behavior when completing in person applications and during interviews.
- Interview tips and mock interviews.
- “Teamwork in the Workplace” including team building activities and processing these activities back to how a workplace needs to function as a team.

At the end of the series, the approximately 55 students were asked to write down three things they learned as a result of the workforce prep program. Their responses included:

- 43 noted something in relation to job interviews including how important it is to make a good impression with appropriate dress and behavior (e.g., being on time and cell phone etiquette).
- 39 learned the importance of good teamwork in the workplace and how to get along with others.
- 15 noted lessons learned on job applications including how to complete them, to be honest when filling them out, and their importance.

Other topics learned by the students included:

- Different people look at you in different ways and finding out how I'm seen by others. (Result of the personality trait activity.)
- It's good to help/ask for help when needed.
- Employers look for employees with good qualities.



### Trips and More Trips – Do 4-Hers Get Anything Out of Those?

A large component of the 4-H teen experience is attending conferences and going places. The UK Cooperative Extension Service offers a wide variety of regional, in-state, and out-of-state experiences for teens ranging from retreats to Issues Conference to visits to other states. But sometimes, we might ask ourselves...Do the 4-H teens get anything worthwhile out of all of these trips? And for Marshall County 4-Hers, it is most definitely a YES!

The Marshall County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development recently polled members of the County 4-H Teen Club who participated in a variety of in and out-of-state trips in 2010-11. Below are highlights from the teens on just three of the "trips:"



*4-H Southern Region Teen Leadership Conference (SRTLTC)*-Learned more about Operation Military Kids (OMK) program and ways they can help military kids and families cope when a family member is deployed. The teens also noted it was very interesting to meet 4-Hers from other Southern Region states and learn how their 4-H programs and clubs operate. One of the teens reported she learned more about the kind of leader she is and what she can do to improve her leadership skills.

*Issues Conference* – One Marshall County 4-Her noted he "learned a lot of valuable leadership and problem solving skills that I think will be very valuable later on

in life." One of the other teens noted she "learned how to work as a team with my action group and the process of creating a presentation. I also learned how to develop my organizational skills."



*Marshall County 4-H Frankfort Trip* – Marshall County had its own "Capital Experience" where the teens toured the Governor's Mansion and visited House/Senate sessions. They also met with Senator Leeper and Representative Coursey where they shared information with the legislators on the Teen Club and STAR Team. The legislators also discussed various pieces of legislation with the teens and asked their opinions. The teens reported learning a lot about how government works and how decisions are made.



Some other results from the above trips include:

- From Issues Conference, one was selected to the 2011 Planning Committee and the Marshall County teen who served on the 2010 Committee was elected to return and be the Co-Chair.
- The 4-H Agent and Program Assistant have observed a stronger willingness and dedication by the teens to take the lead on programs, fundraisers, and officer roles. Two served as officers for the Purchase Area 4-H Teen Council and one went through State Officer Candidate slating process.

For Marshall County 4-H, it is safe to say that all of these 4-H trips DO make a difference in the lives of our youth!

### The Marshall County Cooperative Extension Service

*We deliver information, education, solutions.*

For more information, contact us at:

1933 Mayfield Highway

Benton, KY 42025

(270) 527-3285

Fax: (270) 527-1555

[www.ca.uky.edu](http://www.ca.uky.edu)

