

EXTENSION Today

IN MERCER COUNTY



We are 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

Mercer County Cooperative Extension Office is your connection to the University of Kentucky and the world. You'll see some key numbers in this report. However, the numbers do not show you the impact of our work. This report shows the faces behind some of the numbers.

The Mercer County Cooperative Extension Service continues its mission to bring research-based information from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture to local individuals and families. As we reflect on 2011, it is apparent that Cooperative Extension continues to expand its reach to serve and touch the lives of our clientele. Even though our roots are planted deeply in the needs of rural families, our 21st century goal is to assist all families. It is our pleasure to serve all the citizens of Mercer County.

Throughout 2011, Cooperative Extension programming continued in the fields of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development and community and economic development. During this time of economic recession, the “back to basics” approach of Cooperative Extension continued to help families meet the challenges of limited resources. Please take time to review the programs highlighted in this report.

County Extension Council:

David Hopewell, Chair Jack Hood, Vice Chair
 Cara Morris, Secretary

Extension District Board:

Dale Cinnamon, Chair Jared Baker
 Tim Ellis, Vice Chair Brenda Semones
 Gina Moffitt, Secretary Kathryn Tuggle
 Jack Hood, Treasurer
 Milward Dedman, Judge Executive



Reaching Out to Mercer County

Educational Programs

Programs presented 487

Total participants 14,691

Educational Contacts

Clientele visits 841

Telephone consultations 4,012

Newsletters distributed 24,200

Volunteer Development

Volunteers 288

Volunteer hours 1,801

Clientele reached by volunteers 12,107

Family & Consumer Sciences Statistics:

3 organized clubs with 49 members

4 special interest groups with 55 members

6 bi-monthly newsletters – 501 individuals

Agriculture & Natural Resources Statistics:

280 Plant Disease/Insect/Weed Identifications

593 Fertilizer Recommendations

9 Monthly Newsletters; 4 Quarterly Newsletters

1454 Office Calls ~ 178 Farm/Home Visits

200 Radio Programs

4-H Youth Development Statistics:

Total Youth participating - 2024

44 School Clubs with 1145 members

18 Specialty Clubs with 436 members

42 Adult leaders and 75 Teen leaders



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.

Community | Economic Development



Financial Reflection

With ten percent of Mercer County families living below the poverty level and 163 grandparents responsible for caring for

their grandchildren, financial planning and literacy is important to the community. In response to the economic situations facing families today, Linda McClanahan and Luci Hockersmith, Mercer County Extension Agents worked with local banks, funeral homes, and financial advisors to offer three major programs. Serving more than 120 individuals, a QuickBooks Seminar, Estate Planning and Investments 101 programs were held to address some of the financial challenges that exist. Estate planning survey results show that 88% of the participants did not have an estate planning team in place and 78% did not have an estate plan at all.

Mercer County Cooperative Extension Service coming to a community near YOU.....

November 7th, 6:00 PM, Salvisa Fire Department
November 8th, noon, Harrodsburg, Mercer Ext Office
November 16th, 5:00 PM, Dixville Fire Department
November 22nd, 6:00 PM, Burgin School

Why: Plan of Work

- Help us develop solutions for YOU
- Help us identify issues in YOUR community
- Help us address needs in YOUR home, on YOUR farm

- Help us direct programs for YOU

What: Community Forum

- Chili will be provided at night meetings
- Pancakes and sausage will be provided at the noon meetings

FREE for everyone to attend

FREE door prizes and goodies

Did you know?

We offer free soil testing and you can also borrow tools and equipment. We have a grain moisture tester, soil probes, hay sampling probes, moisture/temperature probe, sprayer calibrator, soil compaction meter, electrical conductivity meter, measuring wheel.

Agriculture & Natural Resources



Farm/City Breakfast

Several years ago farm organizations saw the need to bridge the rural-urban

divide and created the Farm/City Breakfast, a collaborative effort between Mercer County Extension Service, Farm Bureau Federation, Soil Conservation Service and Chamber of Commerce. 2011 was the 10th Annual Farm City Breakfast and drew our largest crowd near 200 with featured speaker Dean Scott Smith, UK College of Agriculture. The farm city breakfast brings together rural/urban citizens and local businesses to learn from each other and fellowship. Door prizes are provided by local agriculture businesses and KY State Parks. Local banks provide sponsorship.

Supporting Our Future

It has been well-documented and noted by agriculture groups that young and beginning farmers need our support. In response the ANR agent with five other local agents offered KyRiver FarmStart program for beginning farmers (<10 years experience). Forty nine participants from 45 farms made this one of the largest in the state. Participants attended 12 classroom sessions covering individual components of business plans and basics of getting started farming & 3 field days on livestock, forage and horticulture production. Based on surveys completed participants had an average of 101 acres, 3 years experience and were 46-60 years old. 100% of respondents indicated the program was useful.



Educational Programs

Commodity specific educational programs are held throughout the year ranging from livestock to crops and horticulture. Training opportunities such as Beef Quality Assurance and Pesticide Applicator Training are conducted. These programs are made possible through collaboration with agriculture organizations in Mercer County and other County Extension Offices.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Meltdown Mercer County

Ranked 55 of 120 counties in the 2007 "The Health of Kentucky": a county assessment by the KY Institute of Medicine, Mercer County still has its challenges, including obesity. Mercer County Extension Agent, Luci Hockersmith, encouraged physical activity, nutritional wellness and personal accountability through two ten week programs called Meltdown Mercer County. Using the Weight



the Reality Series and Get Moving Kentucky curriculum respectively, fifty participants received research based materials to enhance overall wellness and reduce weight. Round one participants reduced their weight by an average of 3.5 percent while round two participants reduced their weight by an average of 4.28 percent.

Mercer County 2nd Sunday

Encouraging physical activity and overall wellness through a third annual 2nd Sunday Event at Old Fort Harrod State Park where program partners sponsored activities such as Zumba, corn toss, ladder golf, youth races, clogging, football throws, walking tracks, and bicycle safety. Having more than 200 participants in attendance joining in the varied activities, spoke volumes to the city commissioners and county judge that were in attendance. Since the event, plans for a "Model Block Project" are well underway to develop that street into a more family friendly and walkable environment with plans for YMCA expansion and permanent Farmer's Market structure.



Did you know?

Aluminum Tab collection - Collaborative effort with 4-H and FCS, collected 1,219 pounds of tabs, \$816.73 donated to Indian Summer Camp.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

4-H Annual Election Day Pancake Breakfast

fundraiser—\$5.00 each benefit Mercer County 4-H, November 8, 6:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Mercer County Extension Office.

Community Chili Supper, fundraiser—\$6.00 each benefit the Love Tree sponsored by Young Farmers, November 19, 6:00 p.m. at Mercer County Extension Office

4-H Youth Development

4-H Teen Leader Develops

It is great to witness to a seed grow into mature plant, this is what 4-H has done for one Mercer County Youth, Nick Yeast. Nick was seeking a direction in his life. He had the opportunity to be a Junior 4-H Camp Counselor his freshmen year of high school, this when the seed started to blossom. He began to learn about the opportunities 4-H had available and eagerly seek the opportunity to grow in 4-H. Nick had a goal to run for state 4-H officer. He was able to reach this goal this last year. He has had the opportunity to travel throughout the state and country and meet people and develop his personal and leadership skills. Nick has developed into confident, hardworking young man who will be a success in whatever he applies himself.



Paintball 4-H Club

When you hear the word paintball, usually it gives the impression of mischievous youth who are vandalizing and running in a bad group of youth. Well we are changing the way society views youth involved in paintball. The mission of the 4-H Paintball Club (4-H Team Crusaders) is to develop character, community, service, and teamwork, the actual playing paintball is secondary. The program has seen over 75 youth participate in the program over the last 5 years. The club has been actively involved in community service projects, they have partnered with Mercer County Fiscal Court with Roadside Clean-up projects, Relay For Life, and local food bank with fundraising events.



School Enrichment Events held

Reality Store (287 - 8th/9th grade students)

Dollars & Sense (303 - 5th grade students)

Earth Day (260 - 5th grade students)

Ag Exploration Day (281 - 3rd grade students)

Healthy Kids Day (294 - 4th grade students)

American Private Enterprise System (APES)
(30 - 11/12th grade students)

Safe Night (425 - Middle grade students)

Safety Day (242 - 6th grade students)

FarmsCool Week (1400 Pre-3rd grade students)



Leadership Appreciation Breakfast

The Mercer County Extension Council hosted a Leadership Appreciation Breakfast. Members of the CEC wanted to express appreciation for the local leaders and elected officials

who all work to improve the lives of Mercer Countians. A hearty country breakfast was prepared and served by members of the council as well as the local Cooperative Extension Service staff. County Extension Agents provided updates about programming in each of their respective areas. Discussion was also led about direction for the future. Extension Council President, David Hopewell then presented the 3rd Annual Service to Extension Award to Tess Caudill.

Social Networking

Move over snail mail, social networking sites is changing the way we communicate and



send information. Today's society including youth as well as adults utilizes social networking sites as one the main methods of communication. To reach our clientele on a local level, Mercer county Cooperative Extension Service, Mercer County 4-H, Mercer County Farmers Market and Kentucky Fort Harrod Beef Festival are utilizing Facebook as outreach and communication tool to reach clientele.

Facebook has allowed for us to expand our awareness of our organizations in a way not easily accomplished through more one-to-one communications strategies. We also have created group pages that target messages and information to specific audiences: Mercer County 4-H Teen Council and Mercer County 4-H Junior Teen Council, Mercer County 4-H Cloverbud Club, Mercer County 4-H Horse Club. Facebook pages and groups have given our clientele the opportunity to seek out connections, post to their profiles, and make friend-to-friend recommendations about our organizations. It has allowed us to build our clientele base and a proven outreach method for our organization.

Did you know?

72 Mercer County 4-H Youth volunteered over 2,136 hours over the last year.

Get Connected

Do you have the desire to join and get connected with others in our community?

There lots of ways to do this.

Perhaps you would like to join

one the Family & Consumer Sciences Groups, Commodity Groups, or become a 4-H member or 4-H volunteer. In addition, we are in need of volunteers to assist with Kentucky Fort Harrod Beef Festival or Mercer County Fair and other related Cooperative Extension Events. Please contact us for more information, we look forward to hearing from you.



Stay Informed

If you would like more information about our current programs and current events, you have several options. If you would like to be added to any of our newsletter lists just call or drop by our office.

Radio - Tune into WHBN at 8:10 AM to hear Luci or WRNZ at 7:34 AM to hear Linda on the County Agents Corner.

Webpage - <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/mercer>
As always you can drop by our office. We would love to meet you and share information.

Mercer County Extension Service Staff:

Linda McClanahan, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Luci Hockersmith, Family & Consumer Sciences

Dana Anderson, 4-H Youth Development

Bobbie White, 4-H Program Assistant

Ann Ashford, Staff Assistant

Kathy Clark, Staff Assistant



The Mercer County Cooperative Extension Service

We deliver information, education, solutions.

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