COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE | UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives

IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Extension provides practical education you can trust by helping individuals, families, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

EXTENSION HELPS TO FEED THE COMMUNITY

The Cooperative Extension Service strives to meet the needs of our community. During the past year, the Extension Service has been working to nourish families through partnerships with local agencies and caring volunteers.

In August 2014, Extension worked with the WOW Coalition, KY Association of Food Banks, Feeding America, Lincoln Trail District Health Department, Community Action, Judge Settles and others to distribute food to those in need. The Feeding America Mobile Food Pantry brought fresh produce and other items to Idle Hour Park, where the sun shined as volunteers gave the food to local families.

The first time went so well that everyone wanted to continue this effort. Since December 2014, food from Feeding America and commodities from Community Action have been distributed each month at the Recycling Center. It takes many people to make the process successful. The WOW Coalition reached out to the community for help and received a wonderful response. In addition to those mentioned above, volunteers have included 4H Volunteers, the New Pioneers for a Sustainable Future, Dominican Sisters of Peace, Alltech employees, the St. Catharine College Wrestling Team, Isaiah House Recovery Center residents, and others. Thank you to all who have taken the time to help your community!

Priority Program Efforts

544 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
85 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
246 local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
210 producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
68 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
850 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
180 individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
560 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
58 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices

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.
HORTICULTURE

The WC Horticulture program consists of more than just gardening. It includes community, leadership, and economic development and promotes a healthy and sustainable environment. Below are just a couple of this year’s highlighted programs.

**Washington County Master Gardener Program**

The Kentucky Master Gardener Program is a rigorous volunteer based program consisting of 16 classes covering a gamut of relevant horticultural topics taught by Extension Agents and Specialists. Participants attend classes, do homework assignments, and take a final at the end of the course. Master Gardener Program participants must also volunteer at least 30 hours to the community through extension related programs. The 2015 class consists of 16 people ranging in ages from early 20's to mid 70's. The interaction of gardeners with vast experiences along with the presented material makes the Master Gardener Program an excellent educational opportunity. Participants have volunteered doing such things as teaching gardening techniques, organizing Wheelbarrow Series supplies, planning and evaluating educational trial gardens, working the Master Gardener Association Booths at local festivals, and volunteering for farmer’s market events. According to Volunteer Sector an hour of volunteer time is worth $23.07 per hour. This class alone has contributed $11,073.60 to Washington County!

**Wheelbarrow Series A Continued Success**

The Gardeners Wheelbarrow Series has continued to be the cornerstone of Horticulture programming in Washington County. The 2015 lineup included 20 topics taught twice, once in the morning and once in the evening to accommodate client’s busy schedules. A few of the topics included Introduction to Bee-keeping, Primocane Blackberries and Raspberries, Calla Lilies, True Lilies, Heirloom Vegetables, Clematis, Sweet Potatoes, and much more. There were 504 total participants for the series. A particularly popular class, with great feedback, was “Starting Seeds Outdoors In Winter.” Participants brought recycled milk jugs and soda bottles with them and the Extension Office supplied the seeds and soil. Participants learned the technique of starting seedlings, especially perennial flowers, outdoors in the dead of winter. In late spring participants returned to rave about their experience and success! One participant stated “Why did I not know about this great seed starting way?” Another said, “I had so many plants I didn’t have room for them all.... I gave perennials to friends, family, and neighbors.” One even stated, “If I had purchased all the plants I started at a nursery I would have spent several hundred dollars! I will start all of my perennials at home from now on.” Programs like these have helped to introduce many non gardening members of our community to the potential of their own back yards, not only as a source of beauty but as a means to feed their families and in some cases even bring extra income through the sell of extra produce, honey and plants. Perhaps even more of an impact is the effect these classes are having on the overall health of the community. A healthful diet has become an increasing expense for families. Vegetables and fruit that can be grown at home, and even started from seed, can make a healthy lifestyle available to all income levels. Many that have attended have stated that this has lead them to be more active through their gardening and eat healthier because they want to eat the things that they’ve grown.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

WC 4-H continues to be a success due to the on-going support from their volunteers. Both parents and community members work together to offer new and traditional programming to provide life skill opportunities to local youth. This past year, 808 youth participated in one or more 4-H activities led by 266 teen and adult volunteers. Thank you to our volunteers who help “Make the Best Better”!

**Labo**

Washington County 4-H member Alexia Samudio hosted Himari Okomoto, a Japanese youth through the 4-H International LABO Exchange Program this summer. The program is geared for middle school students to help them expand their knowledge of other cultures. Interested families begin the application and approval process in January and February for the four week summer exchange.
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

Culinary Challenge

A new program for high school students is the 4-H Culinary Challenge. Similar to “Chopped” on the Food Network, teams of 3-5 must take three “mystery” items and working from a pantry of basic herbs and supplies, create a dish in 45 minutes. They must plate a dish attractively and also clean their preparation area during that time period. This year’s team consisted of (from left to right) Hannah Harmon, Gwen Campbell, Madeline Townes and Tommy Harmon. Coaching this year was Washington County 4-H Youth Development Agent, Roberta Hunt.

Food for Kids Backpack

WC 4-H Teen Club members created a PowerPoint on the Food for Kids Backpack program and used it to help local civic groups understand the food insecurity problem experienced by students in Washington Co. The program fed 64 students every weekend and during holidays for the 2015 school year. The 4-H Teen Club is responsible for the program funding and delivery is through the local Family Resource Centers. Food is purchased through Feeding America. Pictures show Hannah Eagle and Jenny Begley accepting checks from the Springfield Lions Club and the Jim Beam Bourbon Festival.

Teen Leadership Washington County

The 2014-2015 class of Teen Leadership had the opportunity to see nationally renowned leadership speaker, John Maxwell. The Mitchell Family Foundation sponsored the event in Lexington, making it a possibility for many youth and adults to experience Maxwell’s presentation. The Springfield Washington Economic Development Authority helped sponsor TLWC on the county level to make the trip.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

The WC Family and Consumer Sciences program continues to promote the improvement of individual and family life through education and outreach. The Washington On Wellness (WOW) Coalition serves to promote all aspects of wellness within our community. A couple of program highlights from the Family and Consumer Sciences program, the Homemakers Organization, and the WOW Coalition are shown below:

Homemakers Help Families During the Holidays

The Homemakers have a long standing tradition of collecting and donating beef stew to the Community Action Food Pantry around the holidays. On November 18, 2014, Norma Jean Yankey (the Food, Nutrition, and Health Chairperson) delivered a total of 70 cans (1310 ounces) so that people in need could have more food for Thanksgiving. We are fortunate to work with such a generous group of volunteers!

Halloween at the Park

The Washington on Wellness Coalition introduced a new event to promote physical activity, creativity, intellectual wellness, safety, social wellness, and strengthen our sense of community. Halloween at the Park took place on October 30, 2014. Families enjoyed frightful fun with games, contests, and a physical activity challenge called Zombie vs. Survivor. This event was made possible through donations from the community and numerous volunteers. Halloween at the Park will continue as an annual event.
AGRICULTURE

Total Confinement Barn:
The Washington County Extension Office assisted a local producer in researching new technology and assisting in partial financing for this technology. This total confinement barn is a new concept that has spread to Kentucky from Iowa. University of Kentucky Extension Specialists have been involved supporting the producer along with the Governor’s Office Agriculture Policy, Kentucky AG Finance Corporation with a $50,000.00 low interest loan.

County Agriculture Investment Program - CAIP 2014-15
Again this year the Washington County Extension Office was responsible for managing the Tobacco Master Settlement, County Agriculture Investment Program (CAIP funds). Washington County’s allocation was $245,901.00. We used $195,689.00 to complete the 95 producers who were pending from the previous round of CAIP applications. Each producer received $2,000.00 for a 50/50 cost share. The County AG Development Board governing this program also reserved funds for 40 Beginning Farmers to have $5,000.00, 50/50 cost share program to encourage them in the agriculture industry. In general, we could say the $245,901.00 X 2 X 9 = $4,426,218.00 of economic impact for Washington County in this Tobacco Cost Share Program.

Fiber Mill:
In an effort to diversify our county agriculture industry, a local producer wanted to build a fiber mill to process various forms of animal fiber into consumer use. The producer contacted us and we contacted the Governor’s Office Agriculture Policy and we were able to help them secure a $50,000.00 low interest loan from Kentucky AG Finance. This money will help them leverage other funds to complete this entrepreneurial agricultural program.