

Report to the People

Elliott County • 2019

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



From left to right: Katie C. Wallace, 4-H Youth Development; Mary Skaggs, Support Staff; Keith Center, Agriculture and Natural Resources

Elliott County Cooperative Extension Service is part of the University of Kentucky, College of Food & Environment. Extension is the most comprehensive outreach program at the University of Kentucky.

The mission of the Cooperative Extension Service is to make a positive difference in the lives of citizens in Elliott County. Extension agents and volunteers share research results from both land-grant universities in Kentucky, the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University. County agents serve as the link between every Kentucky county and experts at both universities. Programming is diverse and focused on the areas of: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development.

Elliott County staff includes the following: Keith Center, Agriculture & Natural Resources; Katie C. Wallace, 4-H Youth Development; and support staff Mary Skaggs.

For More Information, Please Contact us at:

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4-H Youth Development

4-H Shooting Sports Partnership Provides for Local Families

In August of 2018 Elliott County 4-H Youth Development Agent, Katie Wallace, was approached by Dr. Mark Mains in hopes of creating a program for Kentucky Shooting Sports clubs that involved donating harvested deer to help fight food insecurity. After researching, Katie found a group that had this as their mission. Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry is a non-profit organization that works closely with deer hunters, meat processors, and food banks to provide lean, high quality protein. Through this partnership Elliott County 4-H Shooting sports was able to provide venison for 30 families in the county. The venison was given out at the monthly God's Pantry Food Drop Distribution held at the Elliott County Extension Office. One Elliott County 4-H Shooting Sports Participant said, "I didn't realize there was a need for food in our area. I'm glad, through shooting sports, we can help our community and learn about nature."

A recipient of the program said, "These young people are really helping their community. With the abundance of deer and this program our community is going to be helped greatly."

The growth of this program was a goal of the 2019 shooting sports club. To help continue to this program and make it more accessible for donors 4-H shooting sports volunteers worked with Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry and local processor to give potential donors a greater opportunity and easier access point to drop off donations. Club members set a goal for feed 100 families during the 2020 donation.

Country Ham Project Successful on Local and State Level

Since its beginning 2018 the Elliott County 4-H Country Ham project has grown exponentially. One of the biggest areas of growth for this program was the installation of a ham house at the Elliott County Cooperative Extension Office.

This ham house was made possible by a generous donation from the Elliott County Farm



Youth participant, Heather Smith, preparing her country ham for the Kentucky State Fair.

Bureau Board and insurance agent Bobby Adams.

During the 2019 country ham project four youth and ten adults participated in the program to cure their own country ham. Not only do participants have the hands-on opportunity to practice the centuries old practice of salt curing, participants also learn the science behind how this curing process occurs. Youth participants also have a speech component during the project that allows them to develop their communication and public speaking skills.

This year Elliott County youth participant, Heather Smith, found success as the Kentucky State Fair during the 2019 Kentucky 4-H Country Ham Day. Heather won first place with her speech in the 2000-2001 non-smoked division, first place with her ham in the 2000-2001 non-smoked division, and high overall individual in the 2000-2001 age division. All participants received blue ribbons at the Kentucky State Fair with their country hams.

As a final component of the country ham project youth were offered the opportunity to help plan and organize a local country ham brunch to bring awareness to the project and give participants the option to earn money through a country ham auction. 2019 was the first year for this event and it was very

successful. Over 50 individuals were present for the brunch. Youth participants were able to network and discuss the program with community members during the brunch. In total over \$600 was made in order to put back into the country ham project for the next program year. Youth that sold their country ham during the auction made over \$500.



Participants at the 2019 farm field day learning about high tunnel technology.

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

2019 Farm Field Day

A Farm Field Day was hosted by the Elliott County Agriculture Council, Cooperative Extension Agent for ANR Keith Center, and Dail and Ethel Howard, at the 504 Fire Department and Dail and Ethel Howard's Farm on October 12, 2019. Topics included: Maple Syrup Production and High Tunnel Gardening. Concluding the field day, was the Beef Quality and Care Assurance (BQCA) Certification training videos and exams where 12 producers attended and completed the training, with 55 participants attending the Farm Field Day and touring Dail and Ethel Howard's Farm and learning about Maple Syrup Production and High Tunnel Gardening.

Before discussion and playing of the Beef IRM video's producers in attendance were asked by a show of hands how many had requested a soil test or brought in soil samples for analysis to the Elliott County Extension Office, how many conducted forage test, how many raised a garden, and how many had tapped maple trees. Over 85 percent of the producers completed soil test, however only 14 producers in attendance had ever had there forage tested. Twenty-one producers stated they were still raising a garden

and seven participant stated they were either currently tapping maple trees or had tapped maple trees in the past.

After the program 27 producers have either called, text, emailed or asked me to conduct soil samples this fall or next spring, 51 producers have signed up to have their forage analyzed and samples pulled for the East KY Hay Contest, five producers stated they were going to try and raise a garden for the first time and sign up through NRCS to try and have a High Tunnel Funded and three participants indicated they were interested in tapping and collecting maple syrup this winter.

Mini Farm brings Agriculture back to Eastern Kentucky Community

A mini farm at Elliott County High School is teaching students business and entrepreneurship skills they can use in their future careers and showing residents how they can use agriculture to improve their lives. The mini farm is a project of Gary Selby, the high school's agriculture teacher, and Keith Center, an agent with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. They started the project to rekindle interest in agriculture among the county's young people.

"Even though we are in Appalachia, our local knowledge of agriculture is diminishing," Selby said. "This project lets students know a little more about where their food comes from and builds up their work ethic, which is something they can use throughout life."

The project has grown to cover most of the three acres behind the Elliott County Schools complex that includes three of the county's schools. As the project progressed, Center and Selby relied on the expertise of many UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment experts on crop site selection, facility design and educational information.

"I have learned about writing grants and business proposals and even presented them to the principal to ask for permission on some of the things we have done," said Marissa Mayse, high school senior and FFA president who plans to pursue a career in agricultural law. "It has given us skills we can use for whatever career field we might go into."

Family and Consumer Sciences

Elliott County Hunger Addressed through Food Bank Distribution

One day each month the Elliott County Extension Services transforms into a food bank, distributing food to 144 families throughout the county. This food distribution gives over \$10,000 worth of items annually. The food available each month varies, but provides a balance of essential nutrients that may be lacking from day-to-day diets. Like the old adage states, "It takes a village." There is no way this program would be as successful as it was without strong community and state partnerships. God's Pantry Food Bank from Lexington provides the food each month, inmates from Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex bag and sort items to be handed out, and countless volunteers throughout the year that help Elliott County Extension staff distribute food to our clientele.

Cooking Courses Offer Individuals the Opportunity to Cook through the Calendar

With over 41% of the county being obese an important focus for the Elliott County Cooperative Extension office is programming involving nutrition and physical health education. The Cooking through the Calendar program utilizes the 2019 University of Kentucky Food and Nutrition Calendar. Each month focuses on a different recipe featured in the calendar. Participants view a live demonstration of the recipe being prepared and are able to sample the recipe at the end of the program. The program also reviews the monthly tips in the calendar about being more active. Participants are able to ask questions and discuss healthy living throughout the program. On average each month the program has 12 to 15 participants. One participant said, "I love the recipes included with the calendar. They are cost effective, easy to prepare, and taste delicious!"

Extension At a Glance

- 1462 youth who apply the skills learned in 4-H and in other activities at home, school, or in the community.
- 626 youth who reported that they can set and accomplish a goal
- 246 youth who are more aware of preparing and eating healthy, local food
- 22 volunteers who have taught at least two hours of curriculum based instruction to 4-H members
- 102 youth reported being a better leader due to skills improved through Extension programming
- 50 individuals who report preparing more healthy home cooked meals
- 500 individuals more likely to buy a Kentucky fruit or vegetable as a result of receiving a Plate It Up! Recipe card
- 115 producers who gained knowledge of farm profitability for their enterprise from Extension programming
- 750 residents indicating a willingness to support local food markets as a result of awareness raised through Extension programming
- 108 landowners who implemented one or more new best practices for soil conservation as a result of Extension programming
- 125 individuals who use communication, problem solving or group process skills to address organizational issues and need

***It Starts With Us.
Healthy Families. Healthy Homes.
Healthy Communities.***