

Report to the People

Harlan County • 2019

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



Harlan County students learn preparedness skills

Disaster Preparation

Harlan County has faced numerous natural disasters, such as, flooding, snow storms and wildfires. These events also led to power and water outages. In October, the Harlan County Extension Service teamed up with the Harlan County Emergency Management and Harlan County Health Department to host a Disaster Preparedness informational program. Participants learned of ways to prepare for disasters that may arise. The tips included making a plan, storage of necessities and making sure all family and household members know where all items are located, just to name a few.

Also, disaster preparedness informational tips were provided at least once per week, during September, via the office social media page. A timely article was placed in the local newspaper to make readers aware of the things they could do. Currently, 20 students at Harlan County High School are participating in MyPI Kentucky, an 18-week certified disaster preparation course, led by Extension and Harlan County Emergency Management.

For More Information, Please Contact us at:

Harlan County Extension Office • (606) 573-4464 • <https://harlan.ca.uky.edu>
519 South Main Street, Harlan, KY 40831

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Woodland Owners Program

The Harlan County Extension Service worked with the University of Kentucky to provide a five part “Woodlands Webinar Series: A Primer for Beginners.” The series provided educational programming for landowners and Kentucky Master Loggers.

The Certified Master Loggers in attendance received continuing education credits and allowed them to stay close to home while receiving the free continuing education. In following up with landowners, one stated they enjoyed the programing and attended so they could learn more about managing their woodlands. Another participant stated that they had just bought a track of woodland and the programs allowed them to make decisions on management and the next steps for that tract.

Sustainable Agriculture

The sustainable agriculture programs are conducted throughout the year using resources from the University of Kentucky and local leaders such as beekeepers and farmers.

Programs consisted of basic gardening, herb gardening, fall gardening and raised bed gardening sessions, participants in these programs recognized the need to test and supplement the soil, identified varieties of vegetables and research the best time to plant and the amount to plant each of the recommended varieties.

A maple syrup program increased participants awareness of a new agricultural opportunity that is being developed in the region. The participants examined the potential and discussed the resources that are available through Extension.

Beekeepers and potential beekeepers attended programs of establishing beehives and recalled the equipment needed. They were able to compare the cost and benefits of establishing a colony and determine if they should pursue beekeeping. At least four individuals have become or are in the process of becoming new beekeepers.

Buckle Up For Life Grant

According to officials, a car seat can drastically reduce childhood deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes by up to 75%, if installed correctly. Due to many families in Harlan County using outdated car seats or car seats in bad condition, the Harlan County 4-H Agent applied for a car seat grant in 2015, through "Buckle Up For Life." The original grant, awarded in 2015, was in the amount of 65 convertible seats and 26 booster seats.

That grant was such a huge success, a second grant was applied for in June 2019 and 50 convertible seats and 26 booster seats were awarded. The 4-H program worked with families in need of car seats by providing an educational session taught by Kentucky State Police and Cumberland Valley Area Development District.

Those present received a car seat and correct procedures for installation. According to Kentucky State Police, this event is a free service to the community to make sure car seats and restraints are installed correctly. Nationwide, as well as in Kentucky, there is about a 95% misuse rate.

Approximately 60% of Harlan Countians receiving seats said they could not afford new seats and that their old seats had expired. This program has made a huge impact by removing more than 150 outdated cars seats and boosters from service.

Environmental Camp

In 1998 the Harlan County Extension 4-H Program hosted a one day 4-H Environmental Camp held at Camp O' Cumberland Scout Camp near Wallins. Two schools attended bringing all their fourth grade classes. There were four environment classes presented.

What began as a one day affair grew to a two day 4-H Environmental Camp in 2000 held at Camp Blanton. In 2001, the camp was held at Kingdom Come State Park, where it became a three day camp, featuring seven presenters from different agencies across the county and state.



Students learning about the environment

For the past 18 years, the camp has been held at Martin's Fork Lake. The 22nd Annual 2019 4-H Environmental Camp was held September 4-6, with presenters from Kentucky Division of Fish and Wildlife, Kentucky Division of Air Quality, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Food and Environment Department of Forestry, Kentucky Division of Forestry, Division of Soil and Resources, Recycling, and Stacy White, Whitley County Agriculture Agent. More than 400 fourth and fifth graders, from nine schools, attended.

According to a teacher, students learn best from hands-on experiences, stating "Lab experiments and good textbooks are crucial instruments for learning about the environment, but nothing can replace the outdoors. Learning from experts in their respective fields makes environmental education a true-to-life experience for students".

Food Preservation

Seventeen participants attended the Harlan County Food Preservation Workshop. Participants had some experience with food preservation using the boiling water canner and freezing foods, but had not used the pressure canner or the dehydrator.

Presentation and hands on activities were conducted by retired FCS Agents Jennifer Klee and Peggy Helton and was hosted by FCS Agent, Lora Davidson. During discussion of Home Canning Basics, participants learned about the correct equipment and supplies

needed to ensure safe canning.

Participants learned principles and steps to home canning, drying, and freezing. They canned green beans in the pressure canner, canned tomatoes and salsa in the boiling water canner, dried apples and tomatoes in the dehydrator, prepared corn to preserve in the freezer, and also made strawberry freezer jam.

Participants expressed appreciation for the hands-on activities. They were excited to learn new skills exclaiming that they never knew using the pressure canner could be so easy! By the end of the workshop, they were confident in their abilities to use food preservation equipment safely.



Fresh canned tomatoes

Diabetes Self-Management

Diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, kidney disease, heart disease, and amputations. It claims the lives of more than 80,000 Americans each year. According to the Center for Disease Control, it was the country's seventh leading cause of death by disease in 2016.

Harlan County was ranked 114 out of 120 states in Kentucky for Health Outcomes and has a diabetic rate of 19% followed with an obesity rate of 35%. Harlan County Family & Consumer Sciences collaborated with the Harlan County Health Department and Kentucky Homeplace of Harlan County to offer the Diabetes Self-Management class. This program was offered for six weeks with a total of over 25 participants each week.

Findings from the program are as stated: during the programs, all participants express the need for more information that they do not feel they receive from their physicians and are always left

feeling like they do not know how to manage their diabetes when they are first diagnosed.

- 95% of participants by the end of the program expressed that they had learned a great deal more and felt that they were in better control of their numbers.
 - 80% of participants stated that they had a better understanding of what diabetes was and how it affected their body.
 - 100% of participants stated that they are actively engaged in some type of physical activity each day.
- 95% reported better glucose readings by the end of the program.

Get Moving Kentucky

According to the Kentucky County Healthcare Profiles in Harlan County, 32.5% of adults are obese. Of those adults, 15.3% have diabetes and the health rankings show that 27% stated that they have poor or fair health. Harlan is ranked #114 overall in the state of Kentucky.

Studies show exercise reduces risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancer. Increasing of energy can improve mental and overall well-being. Harlan County Extension promoted an eight-week walking program, challenging participants to walk at least three days a week for 30 minutes per day or to be active for at least 30 minutes per day. The program had more than 850 participants participated in the program with 83% of participants completing.

The participants turned in weekly walking logs that described how they chose to be active for the week and how long they were active. Exercise activities were offered at the Extension office one day per week where participants could engage in simple walking exercises as well as chair exercise. Participants they had a combined total of 105,424 minutes of exercise by walking, biking, running, swimming and various exercise programs.

Some other stats are: The Get Moving Kentucky, physical activity based program, educated community members on the importance of exercise, health benefits and healthier eating. Participants not only educated themselves in being more physically active but also to make better eating choices as they do. Participants were eligible for a

prize for those who completed the challenge.

One participant stated, “being active on this program has kept me accountable, pay more attention to my activities throughout the day, and motivated me to exercise and to get my family active with me.”

Extension At a Glance

- 300 Number of participants engaged in home and consumer horticulture programming
- 200 number of Extension programs/ activities conducted by Extension Homemaker members
- 350 Number of youth who use their skills to conserve natural resources
- 45 Number of producers the implemented sustainable practices as a result of participating in Extension programs
- 874 Number of those who reported knowledge gained about the benefits of spending time in physical activity
- 56 Number of individuals reporting improved knowledge (such as knowledge of ways to reduce expenses; cut spending; and save for emergencies)
- 200 Number of youth that report making healthy lifestyle choices
- 14 Number of individuals that attended woodland education programs
- 55 Number of individuals reporting knowledge, opinions, skills, or aspirations regarding the safe storage, handling, and preparation of food
- 40 Number of youth who participated in summer out of door day camps

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