

# EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

## *Changing Lives*

### IN LARUE COUNTY

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



*LaRue County Extension Office expansion is in progress.*

### **Expanding our Footprint**

The LaRue County Extension District Board has had an ongoing discussion for several years about expanding our meeting room space. Multiple times throughout the course of a year we have challenges with our current meeting room capacity and the availability of rooms for Extension groups to meet. To solve these problems our Extension District Board has decided to increase our meeting room size by fifty percent and also install a moveable divider wall in the expanded area. This permits us to use one larger room or two smaller rooms when needed. The expansion will include a foyer as well as a hallway to separate the bathrooms and kitchen from the meeting area(s), preventing any interruption to programming.

We hope to have construction completed in early January. Our meeting room policy will continue to only allow educational meetings to be scheduled, and Extension programs will have priority. The expansion will allow us to "Expand our Footprint" on LaRue County and provide our stakeholders with improved and updated areas for learning to take place.

### Program Efforts

- 90** producers who reported saving money or reducing cost of operation
- 220** indicated an increased awareness of sustainable agriculture practices
- 750** producers incorporated best practices (regarding soils) recommended by Extension
- 10,985** hours KEHA (Extension Homemaker) members volunteered in community service or for Extension activities
- 1500** people reported eating more healthy foods or increasing their fruit and vegetable consumption
- 250** individuals reported improved knowledge and skills related to securing financial stability
- 600** youth have improved their communication skills
- 550** youth reported that they are not engaging in risky behavior
- 185** youth report using knowledge and skills developed from 4-H science and technology programs in daily life.

## FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

### Making Healthy Lifestyle Choices

**2017 Walking Challenge:** Exercise reduces your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. It can also improve your mental wellbeing and increase your energy. In Spring 2017, the LaRue County Extension Service promoted a six week Walking Challenge. Seventy-seven persons participated on 14 walking teams and the FCS agent distributed over 390 pedometers to the public at our annual Extension Expo. In all, challenge participants took over 31 million steps and traveled around 15,591 miles over the six weeks. This competition encouraged participants to adopt daily commitments to physical activity.

### Securing Financial Stability

**Promoting Financial Literacy: outreach to employer site** The LaRue County Extension Service helps promote financial literacy year-round to the public through newspaper columns and social media posts on our office Facebook page. Starting in 2016, the FCS agent offers quarterly onsite financial literacy (Moneywise) classes to employees at Nationwide Uniform. It has a diverse workforce of around 230 employees, most of which are female.



Women need to plan on being single at some point in their lives, whether through divorce, widowhood or the decision not to marry. This means everyone needs to develop expertise at handling financial decisions and ultimately acquiring some level of financial independence. Of the 18 employees regularly attending the Moneywise class, the majority reported these actions taken: they now have set a savings goal; spend less on eating out; have checked their personal earnings record on

SocialSecurity.gov; and have recently checked their records with one or more of the three main Credit Reporting Bureaus.

### Empowering Community Leaders

**Leaders sharing Skills & Service to others:** Two groups that help share their skills to benefit others are the Nifty Needles sewing service group which is led by a Master Clothing Volunteer and the County Quilt Club, which was started at the suggestion of a local leader. Both groups have adults and some youth volunteers. This helps to pass textile skills onto another generation. The FCS agent helps both groups with their resource management, communication and promotion.

Both groups meet monthly and work on ideas brought forth by any volunteer. In the last year, the Nifty Needles made over 454 items that were donated for local and area needs or to international charity projects such as: lap quilts for Hosparus patients; pillow case dresses for Haiti; aprons for 4 preschool classrooms; twin quilts & pillowcases for youth at Camp Courageous; comfort caps for cancer patients and homeless veterans; and shoulder-seatbelt pads for patients with medical ports.

The County Quilt Club supports community development and appreciation for heritage skills by participating in the annual Lincoln Days Celebration Quilt Show and held their own free public Quilt Show this summer.

### Accessing Nutritious Foods

**Youth Facility Garden Project:** Life Connection is a residential facility located in LaRue County that is home to 40 boys, grades 6-12, who are wards of the state. This year the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Assistant along with the County Agriculture Agent assisted the boys with a garden project. They met twice a month with the youth during the growing season. Seventy-five percent of the boys had never planted a garden before. Gardening skills that were taught to the youth included preparation of the ground, planting, weeding and harvesting.

The EFNEP assistant showed the residents how to prepare the harvested produce, which also increased their food safety knowledge. The garden vegetables were also prepared and served by the facility staff for the residents. As a result, the boys increased the variety and amount of fresh vegetables they consume.

## **4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

4-H Camp is a long standing tradition in LaRue County. 4-H Camp offers youth the opportunity to live in a cabin group setting while attending classes to try new activities and challenges. While at camp, campers learn new skills and work to respect others who may be different from them. Many friendships are developed at 4-H Camp that last a lifetime.

In 2017, seventy campers, teens and adult leaders attended the four day 4-H Summer Camp at Lake Cumberland. In the camper survey conducted at the conclusion of 4-H Camp, the results showed that 80 percent of campers learned something at camp that will help them at home, school, or some other place. Survey results showed 88 percent of campers were responsible at camp either all of the time or most of the time.



*One of LaRue County's two girl cabins at 4-H Summer Camp.*

With the increased price for the 4-H Camp registration fee and the economic downturn, 4-H camp scholarships are more important than ever to help families afford to send their child(ren) to 4-H Camp. During the past nine years, over \$17,050 scholarship money has been raised. Donations are obtained from over twenty local businesses, community organizations and individuals who support the 4-H Camping program. From 2008 through 2017, 157 campers have attended 4-H Camp due to full or partial scholarships. Each year, an application is completed by families requesting funds. The scholarships are granted based on household income as well as 4-H involvement. Many families

express their gratitude for the help and state that if it were not for the help, their child would not have been able to attend 4-H Camp. Campers write thank you notes to the donors and express their gratitude for the opportunity.

**One scholarship recipient wrote:  
"Thank you so much for the chance to go to 4-H Camp. Without help, my parents couldn't afford it. I really wanted to go to 4-H camp and I loved it."**

This year 90 percent of campers reported that they felt good about something that they accomplished at camp, 90 percent also tried something new at camp and 85 percent reported that they want to come back to camp next summer.

## **4-H School Clubs and Project Clubs offered to LaRue County Youth**

In LaRue County, youth have many choices when it comes to 4-H clubs. All 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in public school are involved in a 4-H school club. A 4-H Teen Club is also offered to 7<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders and a Cloverbud 4-H Club is offered for 5 -8 year olds. In addition, youth can choose to be involved in one or more of the eleven 4-H project clubs. The project clubs normally meet monthly either in the evening or after school. Project Clubs offered are: Shooting Sports, Horse, Livestock, Rabbit, Poultry, Dog, Cooking, Gardening, Arts and Craft Explorers, Sewing, and Canoe and Kayak.



*Members and parents of the 4-H Teen Club recently picked up trash along ten miles of roadways. 4-H focuses on community service and offers members many opportunities to give back to their community.*

## **AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **Livestock–Beef Production**

There are over 13,000 head of beef cows in LaRue County, making it one of the largest farm income sources in the county. Advances in management practices have occurred as a result of programs presented by the LaRue County Extension Office and practices funded by the LaRue County Agriculture Development Council.



*Local cattlemen experience hands-on lessons about cattle handling and care.*

Surveys done with our local beef producers indicated that they would like to see more hands-on training and more programs offered that cover vaccinations for cattle. With that in mind, we held a field day to educate on proper cattle handling and vaccine protocols at a local beef farm which had recently upgraded their handling facilities through the local County Agricultural Investment Program.

Monthly educational meetings were held in conjunction with the County Beef Association. Average attendance was 68 producers for each meeting. Topics covered included Veterinary Feed Directives, Improving Cattle Handling Facilities, Farmer Health, and Weed Control in Pastures and Hayfields. In addition, we had 6 local beef producers enroll into our ten month Master Cattlemen Program where they received hands-on lessons related to many areas of livestock production.

### **Crop Production Systems - Grain Crops**

The number of acres dedicated to grain crop production in the county continues to grow. Grain seed companies continue to release updated technology through corn and soybean hybrids. Most plot research is performed at company plots,

or university plots that are located far from LaRue County. These don't accurately reflect the conditions and resources here locally to produce reliable results.

The LaRue County Cooperative Extension Service, in cooperation with a participating farmer and local seed dealers, continues to conduct an annual corn and double crop soybean variety trial. In September 2017, a field day was held, and 65 people attended to observe visible comparisons among the 30 corn replications and 28 soybean replications. Along with these visible observations, we had presentations from UK Specialists to discuss issues with the 2017 crop and what we can do to be proactive about those issues in the future. We also had a demonstration of the new Best Bean Buyer App that was just released from UK along with a reminder about grain bin safety to be fresh in our farmers minds before they start to get deep into the harvesting the 2017 crop.

Harvest results were compiled and distributed to over 150 local producers, and also shared with ANR agents in surrounding counties to distribute to their grain producers. They were also posted to our website, shared on social media, and featured in our local newspaper. Eighty-six percent of farmers at our field day said that the information that they learned at LaRue County Grain Field Days has helped them make better informed decisions on their farm. Eighty-six percent stated that they learned something at the field day that could help increase their return on their grain crops. agreed that the county variety trial results has helped them select the best varieties for their fields.



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*Extending Knowledge,  
Changing Lives*

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