

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

IN MUHLENBERG COUNTY

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



Muhlenberg County Extension Council members; back row, left to right: Jimmy Fleming, ET Pendley, Wade Walters, Shawn Conkwright, Danny Travis, Marty Arnold, and Jerrell Belies. Front row, left to right: Brenda Walker, Mary Divine, Anne McGill, Martha Hargrove, and Jackie Peterson.

Improving the Lives of Muhlenberg County Citizens

The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

Our mission is to make a difference in the lives of Muhlenberg County citizens through research-based education. We take the university to the people, addressing issues of importance of all citizens. Whether it is agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, or 4-H youth development; the Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service impacts the lives of all citizens of Muhlenberg County. We hope that you will take time to review the programs highlighted in this report and we look forward to seeing you at one of our programs soon.

Program Efforts

- **2,055** Number of youth reached by volunteer-led Extension programs/activities
- **560** Number of individuals who reported eating more healthy foods
- **60** Number of individuals who completed soil tests as needed
- **1,200** Number of youth who apply the skills learned in 4-H and in other activities at home, school or in the community
- **70** Number of producers who plan to adopt one or more fertility management recommendations
- **5,026** Number of hours KEHA members volunteered with Extension youth development work
- **184** Number of youth who reported being a better leader (due to skills improved through Extension programming)
- **30** Number of residents indicating a willingness to support local food markets as a result of awareness raised through Extension programming
- **1,401** Number of pints of vegetables, soups, meats, or other value-added products canned through water bath canning
- **1,063** Number of youth that can express themselves through the arts

Making History in Muhlenberg County



Muhlenberg County native and current Kentucky State 4-H President, Jenna Woodson.

Through various 4-H experiences, youth have many “firsts” as a direct result of 4-H Youth Development programs. Whether it’s a first overnight stay away from home at 4-H Camp, or a first friend for life met in Clover Bud Club, these experiences provide positive impacts on 4-Hers’ lives that carry them throughout their journey to adulthood. For one Muhlenberg County 4-Her, her first was also a county first, making history. On June 13, 2018, Jenna Woodson was elected Kentucky State 4-H President, an honor that was in the making since her first overnight 4-H trip to Teen Summit, where she was exposed to the coveted green jacket.

Jonna was elected to office at 4-H Teen Conference, held on the University of Kentucky campus in Lexington. “During this four-day conference, teens develop valuable life skills, leadership competencies and communication abilities. Delegates have an opportunity to practice independence while staying on the University of Kentucky campus. Delegates are encouraged to explore their future education and degree plans by exploring all the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment can offer.” - Rachel E. Noble, Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development.

One of the core missions of 4-H is to expose youth to experiences where they can envision themselves in a future leadership role, such as Jenna’s personal experience. From an eager nine year old attending 4-H Camp for the first time, to earning the highest honor in Kentucky 4-H, it has been a joy watching Jenna flourish. Throughout

her 4-H journey, she has served in many facets from volunteering to work at community events, serving as a teen counselor at camp, creating a service project to benefit the Humane Society, and presiding over the Teen Club as President. Jenna has put in the time necessary to master the essence of 4-H, and now will use her newly appointed opportunity as Kentucky State 4-H President to give back to all of Kentucky 4-H.

Let’s Bake!

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service recognizes the importance of teaching children basic cooking skills, and in an effort to further those skills, presented a program called Let’s Bake. The Let’s Bake program had 30 participants from the ages of nine to 13 and was led by the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, 4-H Youth Development Agent, SNAP-Ed Program Assistant and 4-H Youth Development Program Assistant. During the program, participants experienced hands-on baking while learning to properly and safely use an oven. Participants also learned proper food safety techniques such as handling raw eggs, decreasing germs and testing finished products for doneness. Important skills, such as identifying kitchen tools and measuring ingredients were also taught.



Participants of the Let’s Bake program demonstrate how to properly prepare their pan for baking.

Because of this program, 47% of participants increased their knowledge of properly and safely using the oven while baking and 57% of participants increased their knowledge of measuring wet and dry ingredients. Three of the participants have now joined the 4-H Cooking Club and continue growing their skills in the kitchen.

Sewing Programs Teach Participants Life Skills



Participants in the 4-H Sewing Program, which is led solely by volunteers, show off their finished project.

It has been stated that the estimated value of a volunteer's time is \$24.14 per hour. If you compare that to the average minimum wage in Kentucky, which is \$7.25 per hour, you will notice how valuable a volunteer and their service is. Cooperative Extension Services all across Kentucky rely heavily on volunteers in order to have successful programs. In Muhlenberg County, our 4-H and adult sewing programs are solely volunteer led. These programs have grown tremendously over the past year thanks to our community members stepping up to take on leadership roles. Each fall, Freda Toomey, a local Homemaker, volunteers her time to teach 4-H youth sewing skills. This year she gathered 15 other volunteers and with their help taught 13 4-H youth one-on-one sewing skills that will stay with them for a lifetime.

Due to their involvement with the 4-H Sewing Program, many volunteers have gone on to participate in other sewing programs, such as the Sit and Sew Class and the Block of the Month Club. These programs are also led solely by volunteers.

The Block of the Month Club was started by a Master Clothing Volunteer nominee wanting to grow the community's interest in quilting. Fifteen participants met monthly to enhance their knowledge and skills in quilting. Through their participation in the Block of the Month Club, many have decided to increase their volunteerism in other Extension programs. Several participants are involved with the 4-H Sewing Program and most are now members of Muhlenberg County Homemakers. If calculated, the value of the time put into the Block of the Month Club would be over \$1,500. The club continues to be a success and

because of the Block of the Month Club, quilt exhibits at the county fair doubled this year.

Teaching Youth Healthy Habits

According to the State of Obesity website, the state of Kentucky has a 33.5% rate for childhood obesity. Teaching healthy habits to students at a young age is an excellent way to change unhealthy behaviors and instill healthy habits for the future. The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent and the SNAP-Ed Program Assistant partnered to address the childhood obesity problem in Muhlenberg County during the 2017-2018 school year. A four-week LEAP (Literacy, Eating and Activity for Primary) Program was presented to every kindergarten and first grade class, 495 students. The LEAP Program teaches students in primary grades about making healthy choices such as choosing healthy snacks, being physically active and washing their hands. During the program, a book is read to the students over a topic that reinforces healthy living, the students then participate in an activity that reviews the material discussed in the book and finally the students prepare a healthy snack to enjoy.

As a result of the program 47% of students improved at recognizing a healthy snack and 94% of students improved in one or more core areas such as recognizing fruits and vegetables, washing hands, recognizing healthy snacks, and recognizing dairy foods.



Students participated in several activities during the LEAP Program. This student is participating in the MyPlate Relay, placing foods in the correct food group.

Families Learn Better Eating Habits

The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Service provides practical education by helping individuals, families, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

Vi Wood, SNAP-Ed Program Assistant taught 64 limited resource families how to serve more nutritious meals, keep foods safe, and utilize local food resources effectively. One hundred percent of the families that completed the minimum seven lesson Nutrition Education Program: Healthy Choices for Everybody made an improvement in the nutritional quality of their diet.

Families enrolled in the Healthy Choices curricula showed a 58.6% improvement in food resource management skills. Seventy percent of families learned to plan meals ahead of time, while 64% of families now cook dinner at home more times per week. Overall 55% of families in the program showed improvement in their food safety behaviors. Forty four percent of participating families were able to use community food resources, such as food pantries, less often due to increased skill at food resource management.

Managing Forages for Their Full Potential



Dr. Chris Teutsch, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Forage Specialist talks to a group of cattle and forage producers during the 2017 County Forage Tour.

Feed is the number one cost associated with beef cattle production. The Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources worked with Dr. Chris Teutsch, Extension Forage Specialist to conduct a forage tour highlighting utilization of current and potential forage crops. Twenty-three producers attended the tour where they gained knowledge on utilizing endophyte friendly fescue, annual ryegrass, crabgrass, and wheat. The cooperating farmer on the tour commented, "I just saved \$4,000 by not destroying the volunteer wheat and planting this field in endophyte friendly fescue too." Two other farmers utilized the information they gained from

the tour and no-till planted orchard grass and endophyte friendly fescue.

Assessing Freeze Damage to Wheat Paid Dividends

The spring of 2017 appeared to be questionable at best for the winter wheat crop due to two major freeze events. Producers utilize winter wheat for both grain and straw, thus increasing the economic importance of the crop. Darrell Simpson, Muhlenberg County Cooperative Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources utilized his knowledge and information from Dr. Carrie Knott, University of Kentucky Grain Crops Specialist to assist producers in ascertaining whether the winter wheat crop should be destroyed or additional nitrogen and fungicides applied to increase yields. Bi-weekly field visits were utilized for two weeks after the freeze event to determine the level of damage to both the grain and straw. The entire wheat acreage was taken to harvest. Two producers reported that the grain and straw yields were some of the best they had produced. One producer shared his actual production records for both grain and straw for the 151 acres he grew. One forty two acre field yielded 90.85 bushels of grain per acre and 68 bales of straw per acre. His average yield was 78.08 bushels of grain per acre, averaging \$5.06 per bushel, grossing over \$59,000. He commented that he was glad that he had not destroyed the crop and that he had never sold wheat into a rising market during harvest.



University of Kentucky
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Muhlenberg County

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