



UK EXTENSION PROMOTES WORKFORCE READINESS IN KENTUCKY

University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension enhances workforce development in Kentucky through innovative and evidence-based programs that aim to improve the employment skills and workforce readiness of Kentuckians.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS

prepare Kentucky youth for tomorrow by incorporating workforce preparation skills in core curriculum areas of agriculture and natural resources; family and consumer sciences; communication and expressive arts; science, engineering, and technology; health and well-being; and leadership. Kentucky 4-H offers workforce development skills through the Communications Contest where youth participate in mock job interviews and other employment skill building activities.

ADULT WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS such as Positive Employability: Preparing for Financial Success, provide clientele with tools for improving personal skills (e.g., communication skills, soft skills, professional etiquette) and resources to be workforce ready. Similarly, Time Well Spent: Productivity Skills for Success, a four-lesson workshop series, aims to enhance participants' time management skills, personal productivity, and ability to establish work-life balance.

VALUE ADDED CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS include Kentucky's Home-based Microprocessing Program, a unique collaboration with Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Department of Public Health - Food Safety Branch, that certifies farmers to produce and sell certain acidified and low acid canned foods (e.g., pickles, salsa, tomato sauce, and canned vegetables) using their home kitchens.

BLUEPRINT KENTUCKY provides the CREATE BRIDGES curriculum and training for Extension Agents to provide programs, processes, and strategy development for their local retail, accommodations, tourism, and entertainment businesses. Central to the CREATE BRIDGES curriculum is gaining a better understanding of employee training needs and support, and then developing localized strategies to address them.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

include the Tobacco Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program that aims to train tobacco growers on best practices for crop, environmental, and labor management. The Produce Best Practices Training (PBPT) program, a joint effort between UK Animal and Food Sciences produce safety team, UK Center for Crop Diversification, and Kentucky Department of Agriculture, aims to enhance produce safety knowledge and practices among growers who offer raw samples at approved farmers markets and roadside stands.

Kentucky Beef Quality and Care Assurance (BQCA) Certification, a collaboration among Kentucky Beef Network, UK Extension, and the National Beef Quality Assurance program, provides hands-on training and online modules to educate producers on best practices for cattle health, nutrition, transportation, record-keeping, biosecurity measures, environmental stewardship, marketability, etc., to meet industry and buyer requirements, and strengthen consumer confidence in Kentucky beef. Junior Cattlemen's Academy provides high school students with hands-on instruction on BQCA techniques including basic cattle handling, vaccine and needle safety, and identification and record keeping.



2024-2025 IMPACT

YOUTH OUTCOMES

6,169 YOUTH reported that they learned a new skill to prepare them for the workforce.

2,234 YOUTH completed a resume or interview through 4-H programs.

11,663 YOUTH participated in college and career educational programs.

VALUE ADDED CERTIFICATION OUTCOMES

655 PRODUCERS obtained value added processing certifications.

31 HOME-BASED MICROPROCESSING WORKSHOPS held across the state in 2024.

193 PARTICIPANTS received certification.

183 HOMEBASED MICROPROCESSORS certified to sell home canned products in 2025.

ADULT OUTCOMES

1,406 ADULTS reported improvements in their professional skills (e.g., communication, networking, time management, and soft skills).

583 PARTICIPANTS reported learning a new skill to prepare/improve themselves for the workforce.

174 PARTICIPANTS reported improvements in their job interview skills.

100% OF TIME WELL SPENT PARTICIPANTS plan to use the techniques learned to enhance their productivity and practice personal and/or professional self-care.

BLUEPRINT KENTUCKY OUTCOMES

\$712,000 generated in community investment through arts and design programming.

200+ ARTISANS AND CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS strengthened business skills, developed plans, or accessed vocational training to grow their enterprises.

TOBACCO GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) OUTCOMES

20 LIVE TOBACCO GAP TRAININGS in 2024, along with several online training modules to educate growers.

949 TOBACCO GROWERS TRAINED in 2024.

PRODUCE SAFETY PROGRAM OUTCOMES

10 ACTIVE TRAINERS
400 + EXTENSION PERSONNEL trained to deliver PBPT certification to sell or provide samples at farmers' markets.

1033 GROWERS trained to comply with federal produce safety rule.

2,931 GROWERS accessed farmers market opportunities.

BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE (BQCA) AND CATTLEMEN'S ACADEMY OUTCOMES

111 ACTIVE TRAINERS
6,717 BEEF PRODUCERS certified from 115 Kentucky counties.

1,098 STUDENTS completed BQCA training.

36 HIGH SCHOOL AG TEACHERS have become certified trainers.

65 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS from 24 counties attended the inaugural Junior Cattlemen's Academy.



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