



Left to right: Gerald Gribbins, Angela Freeman, Elizabeth Burton, Charlsey Scott, Angela Rodgers, Rebecca Despain, Kimberly Hope-Thomas, Kara Back, Carolyn Morris, Pat Hardesty

TAYLOR COUNTY REPORT TO THE PEOPLE 2023



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The Taylor County Extension
Service facilitated 571
meetings and served over
17,000 clientele.

Agriculture and Natural Resources



Farmers are facing many more challenges as they continue with their operations. Besides resource depletion, disconnected public, urbanization, pests, markets, and soil erosion, farmers are also facing high suicide rates, increased potential of fraud and transitioning assets to the next generation. To help address these challenges the following meetings were hosted by the Taylor County Extension Council:

Fraud Awareness – A representative from the FBI Fraud Task Force presented to approximately 90 people the most common types of fraud tactics, red flags, how to protect themselves, and how to report fraud. According to the show of hands, approximately 15% of participants had been scammed.

Raising Hope Picnic - A recent study from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicated that farmers are twice as likely as people in other occupations to die by suicide. Knowing the present stresses on our farmers, a Raising Hope Picnic was held. Approximately 76 people participated in the picnic and learned from two speakers that it was okay to have the feelings they are having and how sometimes devastation can lead your life in a different direction that has a great outcome. It was stressed that there is hope and help for those with mental health issues.

Farm Transition - A Farm Transition Meeting was held because of discussion in the Taylor County Extension Council Meeting on transitioning farmland and other assets to the next generation. Approximately 90 participants learned how to identify needs and goals, how to communicate to heirs, who to include in the succession plan, asset-based considerations, and farm succession resources. As a result of the meeting, a participant stated that after meeting with the financial advisor, he and his son saved over \$70,000 by restructuring.



Horticulture

- During the 2022 Taylor County Fair there were 19 Horticulture entries.
- Three project days were held during spring break for 4-Hers to create their entries.
- These projects consisted of terrariums, dish gardens, upcycle, container gardens, annual containers, and leaf collections.
- Laityn Gray received class champion in upcycle and grand champion reserve overall in the state horticulture division.
- In 2024 there will be County Fair project days again in the spring with hopes to include more projects that the 4-Hers can enter within horticulture.



**Taylor County had 20
4-H Horticulture exhibits
entered in the state fair.**



- During the Kentucky State Fair there were six youth on the junior horticulture team.
- The team consisted of John Hall, Isaiah Hall, Dakota Kester, Kristen Eastridge, and Hayley Stone.
- The junior team placed 3rd in the state.
- There were three teens on the senior team. The senior team consisted of Whitley Eastridge, Victoria Stone, and Mariam Hall.
- The senior horticulture team placed 2nd in the state as reserve grand champion.
- Whitley Eastridge placed 2nd in the state in highest individual score as reserve grand champion.
- The youth that participated in the practices did not have to compete at the state fair.
- In addition to the nine youth who competed at the state fair, there were two Cloverbuds and four 4-Hers who learned about judging produce and plant identification on the county level.

4-H Youth Development

Taylor County Youth are “buzzing” with a new 4-H club. The Taylor County 4-H Bee Club has sparked the interest of many youths and adults alike in our community in its short time of existence. Youth are excited and fascinated learning about bees and how they make honey.

Through a Kentucky 4-H Foundation Agriculture Mini Grant in 2022, Taylor County 4-H purchased two educational beehives to be placed at the Taylor County Extension Office. These beehives have been used for educational demonstrations with our 4-H’ers and local bee association, the Green River Beekeepers.



Throughout the year, fifteen youth attended the 4-H Bee Club meetings to learn about honeybees, pollinators, honey and were able to open our hives to see a working beehive and check on the bees. Nearly 90% of the youth involved in the club do not have beehives at home. This is their first experience working with bees, building confidence, and learning beekeeping so that they one day could have an apiary at home someday if they like.



On July 12, 2023, the 4-H Bee Club got its first, sweet taste of their hard work. They participated in a hands-on experience of harvesting over 70 pounds of honey from just one of their hives! The President of the Green River Beekeepers, Michael Pellittiere, taught the youth the entirety of the honey extracting process, from fume board to storage. The honey was then sold by the club as a fundraiser and the proceeds went back into the club for future projects. Over \$600 was raised from this one harvest. 100 percent of the youth stated that they have learned a new skill from this club AND had fun while doing so.

Family & Consumer Science



The Kentucky Master Farm Homemakers Guild is dedicated to honoring farm women and promoting agriculture in Kentucky. A person recognized as a Kentucky Master Farm Homemaker:

- Is a member in good standing of the Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association and has been a member at least three years;
- Is a farm woman who owns a working farm and is included in the labor and/or management of the farm;
- Derives a percentage of the family income from the farm operation;
- Is knowledgeable and supportive of the Cooperative Extension Service;
- Gives unselfish service to her family, community, state, and nation; and
- Is nominated from the club, county and/or district where KEHA membership is held.

Karen Benningfield was nominated and received the KY Master Farm Homemaker award, and was inducted in the Guild in May, 2023. She has been working on a farm with her family for 29 years. She is also active in her church, Taylor County Homemakers, Busy Bloomer Garden Club, Taylor County Master Gardeners, Extension Office activities, Taylor County Cattlemen's Association, Order of Eastern Star, and Mason.



Taylor County Homemakers and Taylor County Extension Staff attended the induction to the Guild reception to show support.



The Taylor County Extension Homemakers also donated hand-made goods to several vulnerable populations through community service projects throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year. For Taylor County Cancer Center patients, Homemakers held seven blanket workshops to donate a total of 50 no-sew blankets. For Hospirus patients, Homemakers donated 21 hand-made lap throws. For Taylor Regional Hospital patients, Homemakers donated 90 hand-made heart-shaped pillows. Additionally, the Quilts of Honor Club quilted and donated 30 quilts to U.S. Veterans. The time and dedication these acts of service demonstrate the Taylor County Extension Homemakers' commitment to improving individuals and the community.

Nutrition Education



In the United States, a majority of children exceed the recommended amount of empty calories in their diets and fail to meet the recommendation for fruits and vegetables-especially dark green vegetables.

Cooking related programs for children have the potential to improve children's diet quality as research has shown that cooking involvement is associated with more positive food choices. (College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

Programs that encourage youth to try new foods and prepare their own food are a large part of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program in Taylor County.

80% of teens improved their ability to choose healthy foods.

60% improved knowledge of safe food handling practices.

27% reported acquired skills or knowledge to be more food secure.

Students reported often preparing healthy recipes learned through the program at home for their families, or that they had tried a previous recipe and their family liked it.

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program Assistant in Taylor County partnered monthly with Taylor County High School Culinary program to provide Teen Cuisine.

Teen Cuisine is designed to teach youth from grades 6 to 12 essential life skills to promote optimal health – both in the present and in the future. The curriculum addresses key concepts about nutrition, food preparation and cooking, food safety, and physical activity using approaches and strategies that enhance learning and behavior change among teens.

Additionally, in response to several students reporting food insecurity at home, one lesson focused on meal planning and menus designed around items from food boxes provided by food pantries and commodities.



15,467

Number of people impacted by Advisory Councils, community organizations, and other volunteers including County Ag Investment Program (CAIP), Chamber of Commerce Ag Committee, farm bureau, county fairs, festivals, etc.

15,040

Number of hours Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association members volunteered in community.

249

Number of people who collected soil samples for testing.

200

The number of hours of youth or adult volunteer related education provided in the county.

183

Number of people who gained knowledge in consumer and home horticulture include native plants, disease and pests, composting, site analysis, and proper maintenance.

121

Number of youth who were educated on health and well-being through 4-H programs.

116

Number of people who gained knowledge of forage production, management and/or profitability which could include species, best management practices for species, forage harvest and storage, pasture renovation.

86

Number of people who increased knowledge of farm health and safety practices.

54

Number of people who used Extension resources to identify plants or weeds.

45

Number of beekeepers who used Extension resources in their production.



SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH YOUR TAYLOR COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

Agriculture & Natural Resources and Horticulture

- Plant Disease Identification and Control Recommendations
- Insect Identification and Control Recommendations
- Weed Identification and Control Recommendations
- Plant Identification
- Soil Testing
- Forage Analysis
- Rations Balanced
- Wildlife Control Recommendations
- Mosquito Eradication
- Home & Farm Visits
- BQA Certifications
- PQA Certifications
- Pesticide Certifications
- Master Gardener Program

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Family & Consumer Sciences

- Pressure Canner Gauges Checked
- Food Preservation Recommendations
- Home Base Processing, Micro-processing Certification & PBPT (Produce Best Practices Training)
- Master Clothing Volunteer Program
- Programs focusing on the following life skills: Making Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Nurturing Families, Embracing Life as You Age, Securing Financial Stability, Promoting Healthy Homes & Community; Accessing Nutritious Foods, Empowering Community Leaders
- Nutrition Education Classes

4-H Youth Development

- 4-H Programs including in-school clubs, after-school programs, 4-H summer camp, day camps and workshops. Special interest groups offered are livestock judging, sewing, cooking, crafts, robotics, science and engineering.
- 4-H Clubs offered include Art, Cloverbuds (Youth Ages 5-8), Archery, Bee Club, Livestock, Horticulture and Shooting Sports.



Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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with prior notification.