

TAYLOR COUNTY REPORT TO THE PEOPLE 2024



The Taylor County Extension Service facilitated 728 meetings and served over 13,600 clientele.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Sustainable hay, pasture and lawn management is critical to a thriving landscape in Taylor County. With approximately 20,000 acres of pastureland, 15,000 acres of hay land and 9,000 homes, weeds tend to be a primary pest. To address weed issues that decrease productivity and aesthetic values, the Taylor County Cooperative Extension Service, Taylor County Cattlemen's Association, and Taylor County Master Gardeners hosted a Hayfield and Lawn Walk Field Day with 42 participants.

The first step of weed control is proper identification. Participants were shown live specimens in their growing environment and discussed plant characteristics to aid in identifying the weed. Once a weed was identified, cultural, mechanical, and chemical control options were discussed, as well as timing of control practice.

Several participants commented they learned what their weed problems were and how to control them. As a result of hosting the field day, a weed identification and control program was taught to a gardening class by the host.



Participants learn how cultural practices, along with mechanical and chemical controls can make forages more productive.



Dr. J. D. Green discusses how weed populations change with cultural practices like fertilization and stocking rates.



At Karen & Roger Benningfield's, Dr. J. D. Green discusses lawn weed identification and control.

Horticulture



Three county fair project days were held for 4-Hers to create horticulture projects for the county fair. These projects consisted of hanging baskets, annual containers, vegetable containers, herb gardens, dish gardens, house plants, and terrariums. In addition to these projects, three days were set aside for leaf collection projects.

Forty-one 4-Hers participated in these project days and as a result 52 projects were entered into the county fair in the horticulture/natural resources division. This is the highest number of horticulture entries Taylor County has received.

The Taylor County Master Gardeners judged the projects at the county level and gave feedback to each 4-Her. They provided praise and suggestions on how each project could be improved. Eight horticulture entries went to the Kentucky State Fair, and all received either blue or purple ribbons. The window box entry won Grand Champion Reserve. This is the second year in a row a Taylor County 4-Her has received this award.

The Senior Horticulture Judging Team also received Grand Champion Reserve, and Kristen Eastridge received Grand Champion Reserve in individual at the State Fair.

**Taylor County had 52
4-H Horticulture exhibits
entered in the county fair.**



4-H Youth Development

In 2023-2024 Taylor County 4-H introduced a new leadership program geared toward increasing the involvement of teens in the Taylor County 4-H Program through the Taylor County 4-H Ambassadors Program. In its pilot year, five teens from two school districts and three schools learned leadership skills, completed community service projects, and increased the visibility of Taylor County 4-H in the Community.

This year, our ambassadors attended Chamber of Commerce luncheons, networked with local businesses, and met Taylor County leaders, including County Government officials and our State Representative. The program ended the year with a trip to the State Capitol.



One Ambassador said about the program “It has taught me many different things like responsibility, integrity, passion, and so much more. I have a drive to work through tough problems, creativity that allows me to innovate to solve challenges, and learned that it is okay as long as you try again.”



Another Ambassador said, “Taylor County 4-H has invested in me, and has given me a place to fit in. It has given me a love of different activities. Most of all, 4-H has given me confidence. Many different people involved in 4-H have invested in me, and I now feel like it is my time to step up. I have gained experience and leadership skills that could benefit new and existing 4-Hers to realize their potential and reach their goals. 4-H has so much to offer youth, and I know that I can share the experiences that I have been blessed to have with 4-H.”

100% of the Ambassadors learned something new about 4-H and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Taylor County residents are increasingly facing the challenges that arise with aging. Many are often lost in making financial, medical, and quality-of-life decisions. Although resources are available to assist with aging in Taylor County, many residents still do not understand what these resources are or how to utilize them. Often, this results in confusion and anxiety, preventing many from making the best decisions for their situations, or simply not utilizing resources at all. This issue impacts not only seniors, but also family members and caregivers.

To educate the Taylor County community on resources available to seniors, a Senior Resource Summit was held at the Taylor County Cooperative Extension Office in partnership with Hosparus Health and Taylor Regional Hospital. The Senior Resource Summit consisted of four speaker panels on various topics related to aging and caregiving, and over 20 vendors from across the community. The topics discussed during the speaker panels included preparation for aging expenses, understanding hospitalization, proper caregiving, and understanding pharmacy insurance and expenses. Each speaker panel had time for questions and answers from the audience, in addition to tangible resources to bring home. Vendors offered business cards and information on their services related to aging, such as housing, insurance, etc. The goal of the Senior Resource Summit was to educate seniors, families, and caregivers on resources available to assist with aging and how to choose the resources that work best for individual situations. The target audience of the Senior Resource Summit was primarily seniors, but also family members and caregivers of seniors.

Overall, the community's response to the Senior Resource Summit was overwhelmingly positive. Over 80 people participated on the evening of the program, and even more called the Taylor County Extension Office about information from the event in the days following. All three partners received positive feedback from participants both during and after the program, and some even shared their experiences via social media platforms.



Nutrition Education Program



On average, about 29% of kids make their own dinner at times. Cooking builds self-esteem. Children develop confidence, responsibility and independence when they can help you prepare a snack or meal. When they get more practice, they will be able to prepare more food on their own.



For two weeks in June, over 50 students at Campbellsville Elementary Summer School, sponsored by the Family Resource Center, participated in six classes of cooking activities with the Nutrition Education Program Assistant. Children who had completed kindergarten through 5th grade learned basic knife skills, measurements, mixing and cooking. Games and activities reinforcing My Plate and the basic food groups included a My Plate relay, Rainbow Food Game and My Plate board games. Students prepared simple snacks such as Berry Crunch Roll Ups and Yogurt Parfaits to easy meals of Apple Chicken Salad and Easy Stir Fry. The final day, students were treated to a play at Campbellsville University. They prepared a snack bag to take with them at a popcorn bar set up by NEP which included trying different seasonings for popcorn.

71% of Kindergarten through 2nd graders improved in one or more core areas with 64% improving in one or more skills to choose foods consistent with federal dietary guidelines. 100% of 3rd through 5th graders improved in one or more core areas with 94% improving in skills to choose foods consistent with federal dietary guidelines.



- 16,069** Number of hours Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association members volunteered in community.
- 2,211** The number of hours of youth or adult volunteer related education provided in the county.
- 500** Number of people impacted by Advisory Councils, community organizations, and other volunteers including County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP), Chamber of Commerce Agricultural Committee, Farm Bureau, county fairs, festivals, etc.
- 500** Number of people who gained knowledge in consumer and home horticulture.
- 378** Number of youth who were educated on health and well-being through 4-H programs.
- 88** Number of people who collected soil samples for testing.
- 86** Number of people who used Extension resources to identify plants, weeds, or insects.
- 80** Number of beekeepers who increased their knowledge on establishing and maintaining hives and honey production.
- 25** Number of Master Gardener volunteers who believe the Master Gardener program greatly improves the Extension Service's connection to the local community and believe they developed skills they can use in other areas of their lives.



Taylor County had a record number of 82 youth, and 14 teen and adult volunteers attend 4-H Summer Camp.

SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH YOUR TAYLOR COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

Agriculture & Natural Resources and Horticulture

County Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources, Pat Hardesty
County Agent for Horticulture, Kara Back-Campbell

- 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

County Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences, Kimberly Hope-Thomas
Nutrition Education Program Assistant, Angie Freeman

- Pressure Canner Gauges Checked
- Food Preservation Recommendations
- Home Base Processing, Micro-processing Certification & PBPT (Produce Best Practices Training)
- Master Clothing Volunteer Program
- Nutrition Education Classes
- 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

4-H Youth Development

County Agent for 4-H & Youth Development, Kelly Rexroat
County Staff Assistant for 4-H & Youth Development, Angela Rodgers

- 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.



County Staff Assistants, Carolyn Morris, Elizabeth Burton, Rebecca Despain
Custodian, Dave Becker

**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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