

# Commissioners Report

## Chatham County Cooperative Extension Annual Report from 2014

### Mission Statement

North Carolina Cooperative Extension partners with communities to deliver education and technology that enrich the lives, land and economy of North Carolinians.

### EXTENSION...

### MEETING CHATHAM COUNTY NEEDS

Cooperative Extension programs provide an environment that supports learning opportunities and growth. Extension programs are dynamic and flexible and are adjustable as internal and external forces reflect a need to do so. Put simply, programs reflect current issues, and often provide real world experiences. The motto- learn by doing – truly reflects Extension’s model.



### Highlights of 2014



**\$60,247– donations, grants, etc.  
to support programming**

**Face to face contacts – 57,587**

**Non face to face – 493,527**

**192 non Degree Credit Classes**

**774 Volunteers worked 3227  
hours valued at \$71,446**



North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive Action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

## 4-H and Youth Development

For the second consecutive year, the Chatham County 4-H program provided a Butterfly Embryology Program in six local Chatham County schools to address students' lagging performance in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (S.T.E.M.) in conjunction with the introduction of new concepts related to life cycles. Educator evaluations showed that 94% of students improved their science grades by measures equating to one letter grade upon completion of the program, and 99% of participating students showed/expressed greater interest in science-related curriculum. In previous years, the local public school system and PTA entities were able to purchase similar kits for elementary classrooms, but have since discontinued this budget item. Chatham County 4-H was able to purchase supplies for 22 classrooms (totaling \$3,080 and provide research-based curriculum from the university that had not been available previously.



*4-H Day Camp at Northwest Park*

4-H provided 42 youth with the opportunity to attend overnight 4-H camp in July at the Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Educational Center in Reidsville, NC. Emphasis was placed on youth further developing critical life skills related to responsibility, conflict resolution, and problem solving. In addition, 223 local youth participated in 4-H day camping programs to increase knowledge and learning opportunities related to agriculture, nutrition, safety, science, and physical activity.

Did you know about the Leader in Training program at Betsy Jeff Penn that trains older teens to be future counselors and focuses on developing their leadership skills

*Science Discovery participants on the USS North Carolina in Wilmington*



For the second consecutive year, 4-H partnered with the Pittsboro-based nonprofit organization, the Livestock Conservancy, to bring a unique approach to its annual 4-H Embryology Program. The Livestock Conservancy, whose efforts to help preserve and reinstate many historic and rare breeds of livestock and poultry in the United States have led to increased heritage breed numbers worldwide, along with its members, donated rare breed chicken, duck, and turkey eggs to utilize in the project. This partnership not only allowed students to learn core curriculum related to life cycles and S.T.E.M. concepts, but also allowed students to help preserve valuable rare breeds in their own local community.



4-H was able to implement a 4-H Embryology Program in 20 kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms across the county, enabling educators to utilize research-based, hands-on curriculum to

deliver valuable experiential learning opportunities to over 530 enthusiastic students. Final evaluations showed that 97% of the participating students reported interest in pursuing science-related clubs/careers and over 83% of students' science grades improved by measures equating to one letter grade upon completion of the program. This program was offered to the school system free of charge due to the charitable support of the local United Way of Chatham County. Funds equating to over \$3,200 were saved by the local public school system as a result.



The 2014 Chatham County 4-H Livestock Show, held in conjunction with the 4-H Farm Credit Showmanship Circuit, was a huge success with a total of over 60 talented 4-H youth showing more than 100 goats and beef heifers during the course of the day. Monetary donations which totaled over \$2,500 in contributions were provided by the United Way of Chatham County, Chatham Co. Farm Bureau, Chatham County Livestock Association, and Carolina Farm Credit. Several local businesses, families, and 4-H supporters provided over 130 hours of volunteer labor valued at \$2,630.



*Chatham County 4-H is a United Way Agency*



## Family and Consumer Science Programs

Presented SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education) to 175 - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders encouraging healthy eating and physical activity. At the conclusion of the program, 70.2% of students reported improving their overall knowledge of nutrition and healthier drinks, 63% of the classroom teachers reported observing changes in their students' behavior. 92% of parents reported they have observed their children eating more fruits and vegetables and drinking water more often.



Led a workshop entitled "Healthy Snacks for Kids" for Childcare providers from 7 surrounding counties. This train-the-trainer program provided them with educational materials to assist childcare providers to bring new snacks and physical activities into the facility.



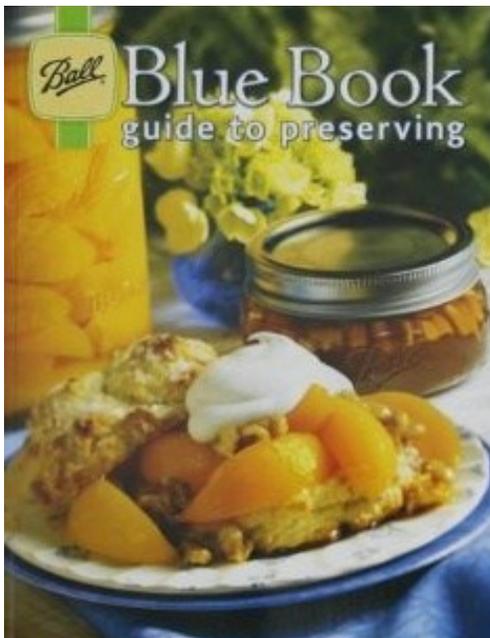
Presented two healthy eating and physical activity programs to 111 youth attending 4-H Day Camp at Northwest Park.

Collaborated with Chatham County Health Department and Family and Consumer Extension Agent from Lee counties to conduct four (4) ServSafe food safety classes for over 157 food service employees in Chatham and surrounding counties. Classes had a 98% passing success rate for participants in the ServSafe classes.





Conducted 4 weeklong cooking programs for youth ages 9 – 14 years totaling 32 youth. Participants developed skills for leading healthier lifestyles through food preparation, label reading and increase of their kitchen skills.



Conducted four Home Food Safety Preservation classes for 51 participants.

## Promoting Agriculture and Local Foods

Conducted 12 farmer workshops and field days for approximately 800 participants

Conducted a Cut Flower Production Workshop that attracted 150 growers

Conducted 128 *Enhancing Sustainability* Workshops since 2001 for over 7,880 participants from all across North Carolina and surrounding states

The Growing Small Farms website grew to over 550 pages and received 315,000 visits in 2014

Supported local farmers' markets through direct advice and assistance, market promotion, vendor recruitment, educational programs, and website development and training

Expanded and maintained demonstration pollinator garden at Chatham Mills; conducted 13 garden tours for 330 local farmers and gardeners in 2014; the website for the pollinator garden was expanded to include a virtual tour with over 150 photos, a bi-weekly "what's in bloom" list, and much more

Conducted annual Pollinator Day Celebration that attracted over 300 participants for educational programs and activities for youth and adults



Gave 28 educational presentations in 2014, including a presentation at an international conference in California in the fall of 2014 highlighting Debbie's use of social media for agriculture outreach

Trees and shrubs enhance our environment by helping to mitigate climate change, providing habitat for birds and wildlife, removing pollutants from our air and water, stabilizing the soil, and bringing beauty and cooling shade to our landscapes. "Fall Is for Planting" is a 2 hour workshop offered by the Chatham County Center to help residents select, plant, and care for locally adapted, non-invasive varieties of trees and shrubs suited to their landscape conditions and to promote fall as the best time to install landscape plants. 49 residents attended the workshop, from which they gained knowledge and skills that will enable them to select appropriate species for their landscape, improve their soil, plant trees and shrubs properly, water and fertilize plants more effectively, and add new varieties of woody landscape plants to their yard.

## Agricultural Profitability

A multi-county horse field day drew a crowd of 22 horsemen to learn about pasture management, feeding management, hay quality, improved horsemanship and a local farm's therapeutic riding program. 91% said they learned "much" or "a lot" about each topic presented at the field day and 80% reported gaining knowledge that they would use to save/make them money in their horse keeping.



325 Small Scale poultry farmers participated in mini- schools, an all-day seminar, on farm tours, and several evening type educational programs. Topics included bio-security, management, nutrition, housing, brooding, and forage management etc. Farmers saved 200-500 dollars per farm by attending and using information shared with them.

A residential rain garden certification workshop held in October taught landscape professionals, government employees, and homeowners the principles and skills needed to correctly design and install residential rain gardens. To offer this two-day, hands-on workshop, Chatham Extension partnered with the Town of Pittsboro, Chatham County Soil and Water Conservation, Pittsboro Presbyterian Church, and stormwater experts from NCSU's Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department. During the workshop, 26 participants learned the principles of rain garden design and helped install a rain garden at a local church. At the end of the workshop, 13 participants opted to take and passed an exam to become certified Residential Rain Garden Professionals. The knowledge and skills gained during this workshop have enabled participants to properly design and install rain gardens that will capture and treat stormwater runoff and protect local water resources.



A farm tour designed to provide training credits required for Certified Animal Waste Operators to maintain their licenses attracted 28 farmers, students and Extension educators excited to learn about the latest in milking equipment technology, grazing management and value added marketing. Ninety percent of the farmers reported learning something on the tour they would use to make decisions on their farm.



Red imported fire ants are an invasive species that have established in 71 NC counties including Chatham. Their painful stings pose a health hazard to people, pets, livestock, and wildlife in residential, commercial and community landscapes, farms, and natural areas. According to the USDA, the cost of control, damage repair, and medical care related to fire ants nationwide is \$7 billion each year. 'Taking the Fire Out of Fire Ants', a free two hour program offered by Chatham Cooperative Extension in September, was attended by 52 local residents, farmers, livestock producers, and grounds managers. Program attendees reported increasing their knowledge of fire ant biology, control products, and management options, and gaining skills that will help them successfully manage fire ants on their property. In addition, 48 participants received two hours of continuing education credit to maintain a pesticide license necessary for their job or farm operation.



225 poultry growers learned more about nutrient management, environmental stewardship, biosecurity, rodent control, proper animal handling management, and the importance of using clean water on their bird performance. These poultry growers shared that they saved 500-1000 dollars per farm by attending and participating in our Extension Educational programs.

Chatham Extension's commercial and residential horticulture program interacted with over 1800 local residents during 2014. Through events, consultations, e-newsletters, and other outreach efforts, Extension shared information that will help landscape professionals and home gardeners create and care for landscapes and gardens that are less reliant on pesticides and fertilizers, conserve and protect water resources, provide habitat for wildlife, increase property values, enhance community aesthetics, and yield fresh fruits and vegetables to nourish families.

205 broiler supervisors impacting over 900 broiler farms were educated to help farmers save 500-1000 dollars per farm. Topics taught included bio-security, vaccine programs, profitability, energy savings, lighting, ventilation, litter and mortality management, and water line maintenance.