

Report to the People

Annual Report 2018

Highlights:

- Extension volunteers in all programmatic areas gave 52,812 hours of service valued at \$24.69/hour (Independent Sector, 2018) which resulted in an economic benefit of \$1,303,928 to Forsyth County.
- \$230,000 in outside grants, gifts and in-kind donations.
- 1,733 people increased their knowledge in local foods and agricultural systems.
- 740 tobacco producers and pesticide applicators were trained on Good Agricultural Practices.
- Ten new small farms started farming and selling goods at local Farmer's Markets.
- 170 Community Gardens in Forsyth County.
- 5,616 residents were trained in garden and landscape practices, in areas such as turf grass, soil management, growing food, water conservation and quality, storm-water and erosion.
- 3,754 youth increased knowledge in STEM education, including 1,667 females.
- 168 families enrolled in EFNEP with 427 youth involved in 4-H EFNEP.
- 4-H community service hours = 1,312 = \$32,393

Meeting the Needs:

N.C. Cooperative Extension, the outreach arm of both N.C. State University and N.C. A&T University, focuses on bringing the university to the people by enhancing county partnerships.

Extension programs reflect the needs of community members in their quest to learn new skills, attitudes and behaviors which enrich their lives. Extension programs focus on emerging issues with real world impacts.

The Agents and staff in the Forsyth County Extension office are part of a non-formal education network that utilizes research, experiential learning and service activities.

N.C. Cooperative Extension is committed to delivering high-quality, relevant educational programs and information to Forsyth County citizens and their communities.

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Dear Friends of Extension,

Thank you for your interest in learning more about N.C. Cooperative Extension. Here, you will find several key programs that our team of professionals are now delivering to community members and stakeholders throughout Forsyth County. Our county is exceptional in its landscape of urban and rural communities and cities. We live in a beautiful county that embraces a variety of people, places and activities.



Extension is a multifaceted and locally-based source of tried and true information that can help people address important issues in their lives. Our programs in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences and 4-H youth development have long standing, excellent track records in assisting people to help themselves by utilizing a hands-on approach to learning.

Over time, Extension has seen a visible shift in emerging issues that are related to urbanization. In addition to core programs, our Department is taking a closer look at urban topics, such as community development, distressed environments, crime, poverty, aging and unemployment. We examine these issues and are striving to build partnerships as we create programs designed to make a difference through programming in youth programs, urban farming, community gardening, STEM education, improving health and wellness and workforce preparedness.

We invite you to take a look at our programs and see how you can become a part of our Extension family.

Kimberly Gressley

Kimberly Gressley
N.C. Cooperative Extension ~ County Extension Director

***Many Thanks to our 2018 Advisory Council....
Your guidance, creative ideas and vision are appreciated!***

Edgar Miller, Chairman
Spencer Cook
Marilyn Odom
Charlette Lindell
Vernon Switzer
Claudia Whitaker
Toby Bost
Robert Jones
Joycelyn Johnson
Wes Carpenter
Gloria Smith
Joanette McClain
Rev. Francis Manns, Jr.
Steve Barnes
Janice Hillanbrand

Agents and Staff



*Mary Jac Brennan
Horticulture: Urban,
Small Farms & Local Food*

*April Bowman
4-H Youth Development/
Livestock & Forages*

*Tim Hambrick
Area Agriculture,
Field Crops*

*Shae King
Family & Consumer Science*



*Jami Lawhon
Area Family &
Consumer Science (.50 FTE)*

*Monique Pearce-Brady
4-H Youth Development*

*Leslie Peck
Commercial &
Consumer Horticulture*

*Phyllis Smith
Natural Resources &
Environmental Systems
(.75 FTE)*

Forsyth County Support Staff:

Betsy Butler, Maintenance Technician (.50 FTE)
Tembila Covington, Program Assistant, Urban Agriculture
Megan Gregory, Community Garden Coordinator
Kitrinka Gordon, Office Assistant
Kathy Hepler, Administrative Assistant
Vacant, EFNEP & SNAP-ED
Vacant, Volunteer Coordinator
Derek Morris, Technician Horticulture
Rocio Sedo, Extension Program Associate ~ EFNEP

Major Forsyth County Center Programs....

4-H Youth Development Program, School & Community Outreach

April Bowman & Monique Pearce-Brady, 4-H Agents

4-H is centered around home and community involvement. 4-H members enroll in club and outreach programs while choosing to explore: science and technology, healthy lifestyles, animals, plant sciences, citizenship, leadership and leisure activities. Volunteer leaders assist youth in 4-H club work, outreach programming, and learning about their community. 4-H is enriched by schools, partner organizations, stakeholders and donors who share a common vision of growing youth for the future in rural, urban and suburban communities.

Commercial & Consumer Horticulture

Leslie Peck, Horticulture Agent

Professional landscapers and pest control operators find pest identification and in-depth skill training provided by N.C. Cooperative Extension as a necessity in today's competitive environment. Additionally, working with a team of over 100 Extension Master Gardener SM Volunteers, Forsyth County citizens benefit through educational programming for the home gardener.

Community Gardening

Megan Gregory, Community Gardening Coordinator

This program supports residents in establishing and sustaining community gardens, primarily by developing local leaders' skills in community organizing and sustainable horticulture. By growing gardens and garden leaders, we help residents improve access to fresh produce, enhance environmental stewardship and provide outdoor education for all ages.

Natural Resources and Environmental Systems

Phyllis Smith, Natural Resources Agent

Through workshops, site visits, participation in county-wide events such as Forsyth County Creek Week, and collaboration with the Forsyth County Beekeepers Association, this overall program focuses on teaching Forsyth County residents about natural resources and establishing Best Management Practices for improving air and water quality, caring for trees and forest resources, protecting pollinators, and promoting positive interactions between Forsyth County residents and native wildlife in North Carolina.

Field Crops

Tim Hambrick, Area Agent

Field days, seminars and other educational programs help agricultural producers and industry representatives. Emphasis is placed on presenting and discussing new research-based information that has been locally tested by University and industry sources.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Jami Lawhon, FCS Area Agent & **Shae King** FCS Agent

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) in Forsyth County is responsible for planning, executing and evaluating effective and comprehensive family and consumer sciences programs that meet the needs of the county's population, in the areas of food, nutrition, family finance, home maintenance, parenting education and safety.

Livestock & Forages

April Bowman, Livestock Agent

This program focuses on understanding the factors that determine productivity and resiliency of forage-livestock systems, grass-based bio-energy systems, and the interactions among plants, animals, and the environment.

Horticulture for Small Farms, Urban Agriculture and Local Foods

Mary Jac Brennan, Horticulture Agent

N.C. Cooperative Extension provides educational programming for small and limited resource farmers, as well as new urban growers and other residents about fruit and vegetable production on the farm and in home gardens. Extension works to provide technical advising on marketing of locally grown produce and food products to consumers through farmers markets and local stores.

E.F.N.E.P. & SNAP-ED

Rocio Sedo & Shae King, Program Coordinators

The Extension Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) began in 1969. The program's mission is to empower families through nutrition education & the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-ED) for healthy lifestyles and a positive future. EFNEP provides current education in nutrition, home management and sanitation, budgeting and referrals in English and Spanish.

4-H Youth Development



Because of our work:

- One hundred-sixty-six (166) youth exhibited 356 livestock animals at the 7th annual **Clover Classic 4-H Livestock Show**. Over \$8,000 was donated from 25 sponsors.
- Forsyth County 4-H and Livestock were part of a team that planned a **bus tour to farms and agricultural businesses in four states**. The inaugural tour included sixteen stops, six days, and 33 participants (adults and youth ages 10-18). Survey results showed that 84% of the attendees gained knowledge about agriculture and more importantly, 61% aspire to implement something that they learned. Two of the youth attendees now hope to attend college at Purdue University which was one of the tour stops. The 2019 tour will be to Southwestern and Central Virginia and will include stops at Virginia Tech.
- Forsyth County 4-H'ers placed second in the nation at the **4-H Forestry Invitational!** The fourth time Forsyth County has represented the state in a decade (all with different team members). Former team members served as coaches for the current team.
- Forty-six classrooms and 2,996 youth participated in **4-H embryology**, including 1,504 volunteer hours, from 84 volunteers. Teachers reported that 2,692 of the youth gained knowledge in STEM as a result of the program.
- Youth served 1,312 hours of community service in 2018 with their 4-H club. Volunteers contributed 4,181 hours of service, totaling \$135,622 of volunteer service to the county (Independent Sector, '18).



EFNEP & SNAP-ED



Because of our work:

- In 2018, the **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** enrolled 168 families ~ an increase of 8% over 2017 ~ and taught them how to become more physically active, to make healthy food choices, and to prepare nutritious meals. Last year's report shows that about 97% of participants improved their nutrition practices and daily physical activity.
- **EFNEP** makes a big difference in Forsyth County. 99% of our participants practice better food resource management and 100% have improved their food safety habits. These results were realized because 64 volunteers assisted our staff in 2018. This demonstrates 2,038 hours of volunteer time amounting to \$50,328 of in-kind value to our county.

Livestock and Forages

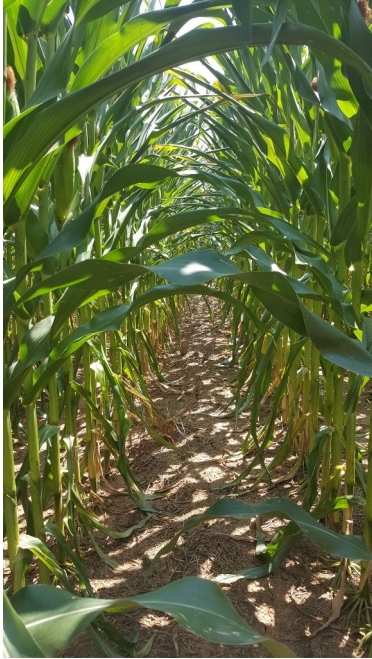
Because of our work:

- **Backyard Poultry Lunch N Learn** five-week series hosted 49 people. One hundred percent of the participants gained knowledge and are planning to apply what they learned or are already practicing something new, including disease management and health. Two participants have decided NOT to raise poultry after attending the series. Six respondents indicated that the course saved them an average of \$355 per person.
- Two producers were awarded **NC AgVenture grants**. (One forfeited the grant due to a relocation.) The remaining producer was awarded \$8,300 in grant funds and is now generating \$1,400/month in beef sales and has hired a part-time person to work on the farm.



Field Crops

Because of our work:



- 137 tobacco producers in Forsyth and surrounding counties have been GAP certified. **GAP certification** allows producers to sell their crop for a 1.90-2.00/lb average. Without GAP certification producers would have to sell strictly on the open market, obtaining an average price of approximately 1.35-1.40/lb. That 60 cent gap in average price is tremendously important when you consider that Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin produce around 8200 acres of tobacco, averaging 2000 lbs/acre. GAP certification at a .50 price differential is worth 8.2 million additional dollars to be spent in the area.
- 69 local producers participated in **Auxin Training** in February, 2019. This training allows producers to safely use a new class of herbicide chemistry in the battle against herbicide resistant weeds. This training updates farmers in how to safely use these products in light of where to use them, amount of buffer to allow between treated and untreated areas, and how to protect the environment. Perhaps more importantly than how to use these materials, in many cases, this training protects not only the farmer, but the public and the environment as well.
- **Official Variety Tests (OVT's)** will now be held in our region. After a few years of discussion and encouragement, a corn OVT was held in 2018. In 2019, both corn and soybean OVT's will be held in our area. This offers tremendous advantages to local farmers as over 300 varieties/hybrids will now be tested under local growing conditions and on local soils, giving our producers excellent variety/hybrid choice information. This should help increase overall grain yield, resulting in additional income for the 7-8 county area.



Community Gardening

Because of our work:

- Sixty-eight (68) **Mentors**, trained and supported by **Forsyth Community Gardening**, strengthened community garden groups in diverse neighborhoods across Forsyth County. Twenty-two (22) new Mentors completed the initial 14-hour, bilingual training in asset-based community development and sustainable horticulture. Mentors started eight new community gardens, provided guidance in garden organizing and horticultural practices, promoted diversity and inclusion through accessible infrastructure and culturally relevant programs, and facilitated hands-on education for children and youth.
- Forsyth Community Gardening provided education in sustainable horticulture through five **public workshops (two of which were bilingual)**, ten programs at partner organizations, hands-on gardening instruction and technical assistance during 75 workdays and site visits from staff, and a newsletter. As a result, 80 garden groups (involving over 1,100 people) implemented best practices to increase production and conserve soil and water quality, including: crop rotation, soil testing, cover cropping, cultural practices for pest management, composting, and season extension.
- Seventeen (17) teens from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods participated in a **Youth Urban Gardening Internship (YUGI)**. Through paid employment, interns gained training in sustainable gardening, cooking and nutrition, and leadership life skills. Interns improved their gardening knowledge and skills, academic achievement in science, confidence speaking in public, and career readiness. They also developed healthy habits such as eating more vegetables and adopting safe food handling practices. Intern family members accessed nutritious produce from the YUGI garden and learned about healthy eating from YUGI students.



Commercial and Consumer Horticulture

Because of our work:

- In 2018, 146 volunteers in the **Extension Master GardenerSM Volunteers Program** contributed 8,479 service hours amounting to \$209,347. Through their participation, 97% of Extension Master Gardener Volunteers have gained the skills and knowledge they need to share what they know about gardening with others.



- Over 5 days, 654 students attended the **Youth Education Program** at the Arboretum at Tanglewood Park. Students participated in lessons about composting, soil, plant parts, herbs, seeds, plant adaptations, and carnivorous plants. 93% of students said they learned something new during Youth Education. Teachers reported that students especially enjoyed observing the basil seeds they planted during Youth Education grow and thrive in their classrooms.



- In 2018, 132 horticulture professionals attended **continuing education classes** offered by the Extension Horticulture Agent. Landscapers, nursery and greenhouse growers gained information about protecting their personal health, protecting the environment, as well as identifying and managing plant pests, including invasive plants.
- Throughout the year, 844 adults attended one of 26 **home gardening classes** offered by Extension. Participants learned to better manage their gardens and landscapes, including plant selection, establishment, and maintenance.

Family and Consumer Sciences

Because of our work:

- **The North Carolina Extension & Community Association, Inc.** strengthens, develops and coordinates adult education to improve the quality of life of its members. This group of women in Forsyth County encompasses over 100 individuals from six clubs. This program has a rich history that dates back to its inception in Raleigh in 1920.
- The Area FCS Agent created, implemented and evaluated a needs assessment for Forsyth County. Over 300 respondents replied. As a result, the **Med Instead of Meds** program will be piloted in the Spring, 2019, for county employees. Later, classes will be offered for Forsyth County residents to boost health and wellness.

Horticulture for Small Farms, Urban Agriculture and Local Foods

Because of our work:

- 1,733 adults, including **food producers and food business owners** improved knowledge of local food and agricultural systems (693 were limited resource individuals) and 1,136 adults gained knowledge or acquired skills related to vegetable/fruit gardening. (454 were limited resource individuals)
- 38 producers increased their production as a result of **horticulture small farm and local food programming**.
- 85 **producers** were advised directly about: selling their agricultural products to local markets, how to improve local food marketing knowledge and diversify marketing strategies into local markets. In total, 18,216 contacts were made in **Horticulture Small Farms, Urban Agriculture and Local Foods**.



Natural Resources and Environmental Systems

Because of our work:

- A **Rain Garden workshop** trained 21 participants about the economic and environmental benefits of reducing storm water runoff. Fourteen attendees earned continuing education credits. Because the workshop included the installation of plants in a pre-constructed rain garden, the Town of Kernersville received 42 hours of volunteer landscaping assistance, a value of \$1,037.



- 190 residents received assistance with wildlife management or pest control, addressing safety issues, structural damage of homes and outbuildings, and impacts on crops and gardens. Twenty clients received assistance with snake identification and were offered advice on altering habitat conditions surrounding homes and outbuildings to minimize future encounters. Other requests for assistance covered a variety of species including carpenter bees, yellow jackets, hornets, termites, mosquitoes, raccoons, opossums, squirrels, bats, skunks, moles, voles, woodpeckers and Canada geese.



- 64 local beekeepers participated in a Piedmont winter hive mortality survey to analyze the effects of hive insulation, ventilation, supplemental feeding, and mite treatment. The data collected will be used to update winter hive maintenance recommendations to assist beekeepers in avoiding the cost of hive replacement, which currently averages around \$115 for a 3-pound package of honeybees or \$175 for a 5-frame nucleus hive.

Forsyth Soil and Water Update

Mike Bowman & Jerry Dorsett, Soil & Water Conservationists

- The Forsyth Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is one of 96 SWCD's in the state. The SWCD operates under the authority of NC General Statute 139 and Forsyth County, to work with landowners, land users, organizations and government agencies to improve the county's natural resources. The district is led by a five-member board of public officials. The Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) is one of 90 in the state and operates under authority of Chapter 106, Article 61 of NC General Statutes and Forsyth County to protect and preserve farmland. The VAD is led by a seven-member board.
- During 2018, technical assistance was provided to 344 farmers and 133 homeowners. The no-till drill was used by 23 farmers to plant 188 acres. Six farms qualified for \$36,722 in cost share for best management practices. Education programming was provided to 119 participants. Eight farms with 732 acres were enrolled in the VAD, bringing the total to 99 farms with 6,215 acres.
- The SWCD cost share and technical assistance components are key to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, providing federal programs to farmers in the county.