

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

CLAY COUNTY 2023

KENTUCKY  KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

UK MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT
KSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY AND THE SCIENCES

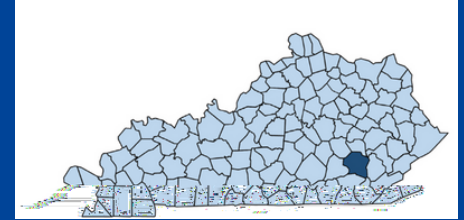


Photo credits: Swinging bridge courtesy of Les Nicholson of Les Nicholson Photography. Elk on the right courtesy of Jilliam Cooper from Getty Images (Canva). Redbud courtesy of Peter Dutton of Getty Images (Canva). All other photos courtesy of Will Bowling.

Interesting Fact: Clay County is the Gateway to the Elk & Redbud Capitals of Kentucky and the Land of Swinging Bridges!

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Leadership Club

Workforce Prep and Leadership Skills

Schools across Kentucky are seeking partnerships among organizations to prepare students for the workforce. According to the Department for Education, “The top five skills currently valued by the nation’s largest employers are professionalism, teamwork, oral communication, ethics and social responsibility and reading comprehension.” Numerous school systems are collaborating with local organizations to achieve these goals to prepare students for success.

This school year, the Clay County Middle School Jobs of America’s Graduates (JAG) Program partnered with Clay County 4-H on a variety of workforce/leadership lessons, activities and community service projects. The Leadership Club consisted of fifty-five students and met monthly by focusing on a variety of topics including personal skills, career assessments, building resumes, job applications and interviewing tips. Concluding each topic participants were presented with discussion questions and activities to complete. For instance, students worked in groups practicing a variety of interview questions and were given scenarios of the do’s and don’ts during interviews.

Students not only focused on workforce prep but also the importance of leadership. Students were asked to develop two community service projects to complete within the school year. One project consisted of a canned food drive for Thanksgiving and another food donation for flood victims in Knott County. Word spread quick and the Leadership Club involved other classrooms as well, which resulted in a large donation of food items. These items were donated to local families in need.

Evaluation results revealed:

- 90% felt more confident with interview skills.
- 81% reported participating in a community service project for the first time.
- 92% reported gaining skills in setting goals and developing an action plan.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Holiday Cooking School

During the holiday season, we acknowledge the significance of cooking, nutrition, and food storage this time of year. The Wilderness Trail Area Family and Consumer Science Agents organized a Holiday Cooking School. The event focused on educating participants in Food Safety & Preservation, food preparation and savoring the flavor of our foods.

The Holiday Cooking School drew attendees from the eight counties in the Wilderness Trail Area (Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Laurel, and Whitley), totaling 169 participants and hosting 29 vendors.

Post-event feedback revealed:

- 100% of participants learned safe leftover food storage practices and expressed a commitment to implementing food safety practices in their future cooking and food storage endeavors.
- 70% of participants reported an enhanced understanding of incorporating common spices into their cooking, blending them together, and integrating them into their food preparation.
- 68% stated that their comprehension expanded on different types of herbs, ways to incorporate them into their cooking, and common pairings in their dishes.
- 97% of evaluated participants indicated that they would change their behavior in using herbs or spices as a result of the program.





Holiday Cooking School Event

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Vegetables Taste Good!

In Kentucky, 23.8 percent of youth ages 10 to 17 are obese according to State of Childhood Obesity website (stateofchildhoodobesity.org). Kentucky is ranked number one among the fifty states.

To help address this, the Clay County Cooperative Extension Service SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education) assistant for SNAP-Ed, partnered with eligible individuals at Goose Rock Elementary After School Program.

The Team Nutrition and Yummy curriculum was incorporated to teach youths the importance of eating healthy. The program also included a healthy food sample. Over the course of the program, participants sampled different types of vegetables as well as other foods.

Concluding the program:

- 68% K-2nd grade students showed improvement identifying vegetables.
- 64% showed improvement in eating vegetables.
- 73% increased having vegetables for a snack in 3rd -5th grades.
- 100% improvement in consuming vegetables in 6th-8th grades. One participant shared, “You know how to make vegetables taste good.”



Healthy choices provide many benefits!!

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES



Old Homeplace Farm

Sustainability on Historic Family Farm

The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Clay County Cooperative Extension Service and the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council held the Eastern Kentucky KFGC Field Day at Old Homeplace Farm in Oneida. The event featured a tour of the 90-acre pasture-based farm, a cookout, and educational presentations on sustainable farming practices.

This event was an opportunity for farmers, livestock producers and consumers to learn about the benefits of forage-based agriculture and the importance of supporting local food systems. The field day showcased the multi-generation family's management philosophy and their unique challenges raising cattle, sheep and goats on a mix of bottomlands and steep hillside pastures. “Old Homeplace Farm is one of the most innovative livestock producers in the state,” said Ray Smith, extension professor and forage specialist in the UK Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. “They manage hillside pastures in Eastern Kentucky to maximize production and produce direct-to-consumer meat products. They have few weed problems by using cattle, goats and sheep in their grazing system.”

Tour stops included grazing paddocks, where participants saw a multi-species grazing system in operation. Raising multiple animal species allows them to use different parts of the pasture and reduce the risk of parasite infestations. The family also uses novel tall fescue varieties and native warm-season grasses, both of which reduce the potential for fescue toxicity issues during summer months.

Concluding the event:

- 70% gained knowledge of rotational grazing practices.
- 80% gained knowledgeable information on stocking rates and multispecies rotational grazing.
- 75% could name a type of native warm season grass and a type of native cool season grass.

Meet Our Staff.....



Connie Fields, Staff Assistant, Melanie Portwood, Staff Assistant, Ashley Adkins, Agent for Ag & Natural Resources, Alissa Ackerman, Agent for 4-H Youth Development, Connie Downey, Senior NEP Assistant.

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Lexington, KY 40506



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