

# Wave a Year Gone By: Meade County 2022 A Year In Review

## Priority Program Efforts

**8,439 citizens** (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming

**6,207 families/caregivers** reached with extension related information on accessing healthy foods

**816 Producers** adopted resource management technologies (IRM, IPM, soil fertility management) as a result of extension programs



The Meade County Cooperative Extension Service mission is to develop programs which meet the needs of our diverse community. Programs are based on needs, interests and concerns of Meade County. Extension provides programs in the various areas of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development and community and economic development. Whether it is a program to strengthen family life, assist in farm management, or help youth acquire knowledge, this year's participation from University of Kentucky extension specialists, agents, volunteers, leaders and the community has been outstanding!

Twenty-twenty two brought a need to add to the Meade County Cooperative Extension Service facilities. The expansion added a new learning kitchen with twelve learner stations, a classroom, multi-media station, multipurpose room and a dividable meeting space which can seat up to 250 people.

After two years of planning and delays because of the pandemic, the 7,500 square feet new addition to the Extension Service is complete. All three agents were heavily involved with the whole process -forming a building committee, designing, and decision making during the process. Forty-three building committee and District Board meetings were held, during the 14 month process. The educational opportunities along with the number of people that can utilize the facilities now has greatly expanded. This will help market our mission and should help accomplish many extension goals.

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## Never too Young to Start Saving

Learning to save money and resources early in life can lead to proactive habits for the future. Each year the Meade County Extension office works with a local bank to secure sponsorship of a Piggy Bank Contest. The contest, part of activities leading up to Kentucky Saves Week, is open to local students in grades K-12 and is broken down into four age categories. The winner of each group receives \$100 with an additional \$100 going to the overall winner. The overall winning bank is sent to district competition where if selected, will be displayed throughout the month of February in the state capitol.



Jennifer Bridge  
County Extension for Agent Family  
and Consumer Sciences Education

This year the overall county winner was also selected as the area winner so it spent several weeks on display in Frankfort. The young person who won the contest chose to invest her winnings and will keep track of her investments to learn how to grow her money. Overall, 27 participants entered the contest and learned about the importance of saving money.

## Sweet Enough Without All That Sugar

Americans consume on average 10 Tablespoons of sugar per day. Consuming excess amounts of sugar can lead to poor health and obesity. To create a base understanding of types of sugar and nonnutritive sweeteners, a program titled "Sweet Enough Without All That Sugar" was held in the Lincoln Trail Area to reach extension homemaker club members through a train the trainer program as well as the general public who had an interest in the topic. Evaluations after the program indicated 97% of participants increased their knowledge about ways to reduce sugar in the diet, the role of sugar and sweeteners in health, and added nutritive sweeteners. One hundred percent of the participants plan to look at the food label or nutrition fact panel when purchasing and preparing foods and 99% plan to reduce the amount of sugar in their daily diet as a result of the program. Each of the participants agreed the program was effective and applicable to daily living.

## Power of Produce

To address the need for youth education related to fresh local produce, the extension partnered with our local farmers' market to offer POP. The six week Power of Produce program was a part of extension's Tuesday's at the Market and featured an activity related to fruits and or vegetables as well as recipe or fresh produce tasting. A POP activity and reflection booklet was given to each child participating. Participants could earn up to \$5 in pop bucks each week to spend at the market. An average of 36 attended four or more weeks with attendance ranging from 52 to 74 per week. At the end of the six week series, booklets were exchanged for insulated lunch totes filled with activity booklets, pencils and crayons to help with back to school needs. The booklets contained a variety of information related to the child's experience at the market, how they spent their pop bucks and foods they liked as part of the tasting. The most popular recipe they tried and liked was the yellow squash supreme followed by the berry salsa and carrot muffins. The most popular activity focused on making cantaloupe melon balls. Most children also shared that they exercised during the week with activities such as running and swimming.



## Walktober

Fall is the perfect time to get outdoors and increase physical exercise. According to the recent Behavioral Risk Factor Survey System (BRFSS), approximately 30% of Kentuckians are physically inactive. To provide an incentive to be more physically active, a group of FCS agents worked together to offer Walktober in their counties. Each agent localized the 4-week online challenge to increase walking/steps. In Meade County, a Qualtrics survey was created to register participants. The program was promoted via newsletters and social media sites. Initially, 26 people registered, 22 female and 4 male, with the majority between the ages of 36 and 55. Information on the benefits of walking along with a chart to track their progress was emailed to each person. At the end of the four weeks, participants were asked to submit information related to the goal set and number of steps during the tracking time. Nine people submitted information reflecting a total of 1,783,551 or 713.5 miles of steps with all of them reaching their personal goal. Each participant who submitted results received stretch bands and an exercise towel.

## ***Financial Reality 4-H Style***

Recent years of tough economic times have increased awareness of the need for financial literacy; however, Americans still have a long way to go toward making improvements. Youth are not getting the financial education which they will need for adulthood. According to the 2008 results of the Jump \$tart Coalition Survey among 12th grade students received only an average score of 48.3% average on financial literacy testing. (2008 Jump \$tart Coalition Survey Results). The Meade County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development Education partnered with the administrative team (principal, youth service center coordinator, 7<sup>th</sup> grade counselor and 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teachers) to implement the 4-H It's Your Reality program for all 385 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at Stuart Pepper Middle School. Eleven students from the Meade County High School student bank and FBLA organization served as the booth hosts and mentored the middle school students on paying their monthly bills and navigating their personal financial management.



**Deana K. Reed,  
County Extension Agent for  
4-H Youth Development Education**

The 4-H It's Your Reality program works to teach students life skills, the importance of valuing their education and how the effects their life choices can impact their futures. The program was presented in the classrooms by the social studies classroom teachers; the five lessons covered topics such as money habitudes, budgeting basics, financial goal setting, credit card basics, and having and balancing a bank account. After participating in 4-H It's Your Reality Program: 89% of students felt they were good or excellent at budgeting their money, 90% felt they were good or excellent at making wise financial choices, 89% recognized the importance of the link between their career choice and their preferred lifestyle, 85% understood what it costs to raise a child, and 89% planned to save for a future economic goal.



## ***Kentucky 4-H Passport Kitchen***

The Kentucky 4-H Passport Kitchen program provided young people from Kentucky the opportunity to experience the food cultures of different countries in a self-paced experience. As part of the 4-H Passport Kitchen program, young people received six country kits in the mail during a six-week window. These kits provided all the needed instructions to complete a recipe, a video explaining the recipe, one ingredient for the recipe, information about the country, and a worksheet to help them explore beyond the kit. The self-driven and on-your-own design of the program allowed young people and their families to engage in it as part of their mealtime experience. The materials in the kits also gave young people and their families the opportunity to explore cultures that are oftentimes not their own.

One Meade County family shared how they put into action the skills they learned during their 4-H Passport Kitchen experience. Their mother shared the following, "Around Thanksgiving, my husband had a potluck at work. The theme was- bring or make a dish from a place you visited or lived. Our children were born in Hawaii - a place we called home for 14 years. What we loved most about Hawaii was the diverse food and culture. Our children volunteered to make the potluck meals- all on their own! They made a list and bought the ingredients. Our children felt very proud to honor their roots of Hawaii by sharing these meals. They applied all they learned from the 4-H Passport Kitchen program."



## ***Kentucky 4-H Teen Summit***

According to research, middle school is a time where young people find their place in this world, they are exploring where their strengths and interests align (Fagell. P.L., 2019). Therefore, it is imperative to provide positive experiences where young people may explore the world in a safe environment. 4-H Summit provides youth the chance to learn about opportunities provided through 4-H, while developing friendships, leadership skills, and communication skills that may benefit them as they explore their strengths and interests in relation to the world.

The Meade County 4-H delegation consisted of three female youth who are participating in a school year-long Junior Teen Leadership Academy experience. Their participation at the 2022 4-H Summit further enhanced their leadership development and allowed them time to network with other Kentucky youth interested in honing their leadership skills as well. In addition, the Meade County 4-H Youth Development Agent lead a workshop and a funshop focusing on abstract art and the personal production of art projects.

A major benefit of 4-H Summit is the confidence instilled in middle schoolers to go back to their community and find ways to become a leader and share their new skills with others. All three of the Meade County delegates have done just that once returning home. They have increased their participation in 4-H Youth Development programming and done so by stepping into leadership roles and mentoring younger youth.



**Andy Mills,**  
*County Extension Agent  
 for Agriculture & Natural  
 Resources Education*

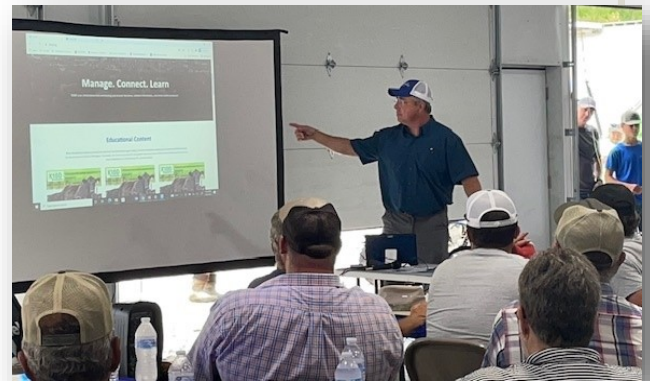
## ***Youth Beef Show at Kentucky State Fair***

For 30 years this ANR agent has been working the state fair youth beef show and as the superintendent for the last 17. For many youths, showing at the state fair marks the end of their beef project. One intent of the youth beef project is to encourage youth to produce cattle in their adult lives. Therefore, to help foster this desire, the experiences the youth have during their project need to be real but also, hopefully, positive. As the superintendent of the show, this ANR agent can try to make sure this ending finale of their project is as positive as possible.

Fifteen CES agents and ag teachers help approximately 150 youth house and show approximately 350 head of cattle over a four-day period. It is the job of the superintendent to help plan the logistics of shows, set up stalling assignments, make sure other workers know their assignments, divide classes for shows, inventory and pass out awards, help decide ten months prior on rules and housing changes, set up and create a check in procedure, handle all complaints and concerns, enforce the rules and guidelines, and most importantly help participants and workers have a pleasant experience. This ANR agent wants to continue educating beef producers with research-based information from the University of Kentucky. Therefore, the ANR agent knows he is trying to help and encourage future clientele.

## ***Ag Field Day***

The purpose of the Meade County Ag Field Day is to educate farmers and landowners on improved agricultural practices that are economical and safe to man as well as the environment. Meade County has a tradition of holding a field day on a local farm and producers expect the Extension Office to implement it. For many years now, the Meade County Extension Office collaborates with the Meade County Conservation District and the Natural Resource and Conservation Service to plan and host an Ag Field Day every other year. Planning started in October 2021 for our August 2022 Field Day. An eight member committee has met three times and has made two farm visits during the planning process. Two long term demonstrations were started in the spring. Six tour stops, four production Ag: Animal Reproduction, Technology in Ag, Forages, and BQA, along with the conservation that goes into a Heavy Use Feeding area. The X10D App was a part of the lunch discussion.



## ***Growing Giants***

For the sixth year in a row Andy Mills, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent has collaborated with the KY Giant Pumpkin Grower's Association, Meade County Tourism Board, Meade County FFA, and a local Agritourism farm to plan and implement a national weigh-off for giant vegetables, especially pumpkins and watermelons. Over 300 people attended the event from seven different states. It is estimated that this event generates nearly \$10,000 for our community. Spectators are given the chance to learn about growing vegetables through questions and answers available from growers. Educational posters on pollination and plant anatomy are on display to help spectators understand some of the growing and management process. It takes 18 volunteers for a total of 126 volunteer hours as well as several hundred dollars in donated equipment used to conduct the event. The Meade County event once again was the number one weigh-off in the world for watermelons.



## ***Learning Through LEAP***

Throughout the United States the percentage of adults meeting fruit and vegetable intake is low. According to the Centers for Disease Control, in Meade County, only 8.8% of the population are getting the recommended intake of fruit and less than 6% are getting the recommended intake of vegetables.

In an effort to teach healthy habits and introduce fruits and vegetables at an early age, the Meade County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program partnered with the Family Resource Center at Ekron Elementary to offer a LEAP (Literacy, Eating, and Activity for Primary) program. Weekly, for six weeks, a book was read to 40 first graders. The books talked about different things like, how the plants grow, along with food safety, physical activity, gardening, and trying new foods. After the story was discussed, students sampled a fruit or vegetable snack they had never eaten before.



As a result, 65% improved their diet quality. At least 75% improved their food safety as far as handwashing. The students looked forward to the classes each week and would ask what the assistant would be bringing to sample the following week.



**Teri King,**  
*Expanded Food and  
Nutrition Education  
Senior Program  
Assistant*

## ***Food Insecurity***

According to FeedingAmerica.org, within Meade County there are over 3,600 food insecure people. Food insecurity is measured by the lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

To help with this, Meade County's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program partners with Feeding America Kentucky's Heartland, Meade County Ministerial Association, and several other community partners to provide a mass monthly distribution of food boxes to over eight hundred Meade County residents each month.

Assisting with this distribution allows extension to connect with Meade County's low-income population. Nutritional information and healthy recipes are included that can be utilized with the items in the box, which helps with food prep and helps reduce food waste. This introduces people to Nutrition Programs at the Extension Office, which some of those recipients have participated in.



## ***Nutrition and Incarceration***

Breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and poor health is a challenge, especially when incarcerated. There are several contributing factors to these issues. The lack of nutrition education is one of the factors. To slow the cycle, the Meade County Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program partnered with the Meade County Detention Center and conducted a seven week Healthy Choices for Every Body Program. During classes, seven female inmates learned about nutrition, food safety, meal planning, food budgeting and the importance of physical activity. At each session basic kitchen skills were taught as a healthy recipe was prepared. The participants enjoyed sampling the recipe each week.

By the end of the program, almost all (94%) improved their food resource management knowledge. While they are incarcerated it is hard to control their food intake, but 82% have improved their diet quality by eating the fruits and vegetables when they are offered. Before this program 100% of the participants thawed their proteins on the counter, they now understand the food safety dangers of that practice. They are all excited to put their new skills and knowledge to use when they are released.

## ***Organ Wise Program***

According to the State of Childhood Obesity website, during the pandemic the national rate of obesity among kids ages 2 to 19 increased to 22.4% in 2020, up from 19.3% in 2019. In Kentucky, 23.8% of youth ages 10 to 17 have obesity, giving Kentucky a ranking of 1 among the 50 states.

To help educate youth the Meade County Cooperative Extension Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program partnered with Ekron Elementary and conducted a six-week Organ Wise Program. The curriculum is based on obesity prevention while introducing the "Organ Wise Guys". The main emphasis of the curriculum is on healthy eating and physical activity. Each lesson included a story and a healthy snack of fruits or vegetables. Some students mentioned they had never tried some of the options before and really liked them.



## Meet The Staff



**Left to Right Front Row: Deana K. Reed (Agent for 4-H Youth Development), Sue Ellen Stull (Staff Assistant), Gina Markins (Staff Assistant), Teri King (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Senior Program Assistant), Forest Thompson (Custodian), Donna Curl (Staff Assistant), Jennifer Bridge (Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences), and Andy Mills (Agent for Agricultural and Natural Resources)**

### *Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives*

## What's New For 2023

### ***Agriculture & Natural Resources***

- ◆ Beef Cattle Management Done Right —4 part series that compares the statistics of operational management of the beef cattle operator to the University of Kentucky Extension Service's recommendations for improved practices and shows financially how practical the changes are.
- ◆ Carbon Marketing pertains to the relatively new opportunities for Kentucky farmers to enroll in carbon credit programs in order to capture some money in carbon markets.
- ◆ Growing Giants series is back with a powerhouse list of presentations from some of the top growers in the state where participants will learn how to grow their own 300 lb. Watermelons and 1,500 lb. Pumpkins.
- ◆ Getting the Most From Your Fertilizer is an extended project where plots are being tested to see how grasses respond to nitrogen fertilizers applied at different times of the year.

### ***4-H Youth Development***

- ◆ 4-H Health Rocks
- ◆ 4-H Horse Club
- ◆ 4-H Homeschool Experience
- ◆ Teen Leadership Academy
- ◆ 4-H Jekyll Island Teen Trip
- ◆ Ky 4-H Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences Academy

### ***Family and Consumer Sciences***

- ◆ PASTA—Parenting the Second Time Around, a monthly series for grandparents and kin raising children
- ◆ Laugh & Learn Playdates monthly series for ages 2—5 and caregivers
- ◆ Edible Education: Everyday Science in the kitchen
- ◆ Health & Wellness Ambassador Program
- ◆ Food Preservation—Beginning & Intermediate

