

# Annual Report to the People

December 2010  
Marion County



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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is to provide sound, scientifically based information to South Carolinians and help them use that information to improve the quality of their lives.

## Financial Fitness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



Many of our high school students do not receive training or information concerning the importance of saving for the future and understanding how to use credit wisely. Many of them do not understand that education plays an important role in their future lifestyle.

From September until December 2009, members of the Creek Bridge High School 4-H Club participated in a Money Management Program. During these three months the agent taught a Financial Planning Program, which covered topics such as: Understanding the Financial Planning Process, How Income Affects Your Goals, Managing Income and Credit, Your Career and Your Financial Future, and The Cost and Benefits of Staying in School. Sixty-seven 11th and 12th graders were exposed to financial fitness information.

## Saving \$ Through Barn Efficiency Practices

The tobacco grower in Marion County continues to see an increase in input costs with little if any increase in what they receive for their tobacco crop. The two top issues of major concern are: Curing costs and labor. Curing cost is something in which Clemson Extension Agents can assist. The barns of the growers are often old, most have leaks, and are poorly insulated.



Extension agents educate farmers on barn insulation by recommending changes that will save considerable money. Meetings that focus on curing efficiency demonstrate fuel savings associated with additional insulation. As a result, 100% of Marion County tobacco farmers are in the process of insulating their barns leading to an estimated savings of \$480 savings per barn. This will pay for the cost of the insulating in two years, and in some cases one year. This is a quick way to add a considerable amount of profit to their bottom line.

## 4-H Supplies Attire for Prom



Katie's project, a nonprofit organization established to help ensure prom is a reality for all students, supplies prom dresses or tuxedos to help build confidence and instill the value of goodwill and community service. On March 10 and 11, 2010, Katie's Project partnered with the Marion County 4-H Leadership Club and the Community Development Program to coordinate a boutique inside the Marion County Clemson Extension Service Office. Everything from shoes to accessories was donated by the public, and the students were able to come in and shop for prom attire. The two day display featured an array of items in different colors and sizes. Within three hours of opening the Boutique, forty-two young ladies had already selected their gowns and accessories for the prom. At the end of the two day period, seventy-five young ladies had gotten their attire for prom. Katie's Project estimated that Marion County parents saved at least \$15,000 because of the service provided by the Marion County 4-H Program and Katie's Project.

## Helping Marion's Small Businesses

Small business is the backbone of the US economy accounting for over 50 percent of the private sector workforce. As a general rule, only about half of new small businesses last more than five years. The recent economic downturn placed tremendous pressures on the small business community; many struggled to make ends meet. From a downturn in sales to limited access to capital, small business owners need to develop new markets, new customers, and enhance their service to established customers. Helping small businesses retain and expand their customer base is critical, particularly in a county with high unemployment.



A series of workshops were held to help small businesses in Marion County maintain and grow their market share through e-commerce and use of social media. E-commerce permits even small businesses in remote or distressed areas to compete by expanding their customer base. The classes, taught by marketing experts, were well attended and received. The first class focused on developing e-commerce opportunities while the second class concentrated on innovative ways to use social media as a business marketing tool.

## Livestock Programs

Lee VanVlake, Area Livestock Agent, implemented two Goat Management Seminars. These programs included information on forages, management, goat health, reproduction, nutrition, hoof care, fencing, facilities, soil sampling, and toxic weeds.

- Assisted with the Pee Dee Cattlemen's Association. Producers from Marion County are members of this association.
- Made farm visits on a weekly basis to assist and educate livestock clientele in Marion County. Farm visits include education on forages, marketing, reproduction, bull selection, heifer selection, pasture management, facilities, and equine management.
- Plan, coordinate, and implement 4-H wether goat project and 4-H barrow project shows.
- Fire Ant plots were used in Marion County. The focus of these plots is to research how well Fire Ant Baits work in a pasture or hayfield situation.

Pesticide Trainings are provided to help producers get a license to buy and use restricted pesticides.



# Marion County 4-Her's Win State Competition

The SC 4-H Healthy Lifestyles Challenge, modeled after the Food Network's "Iron Chef," brought teens from across SC for a cook-off challenge at the SC State Fair.

The event, held Saturday, October 23, 2010 - "SC 4-H Day" at the fair, drew so much interest that fair organizers have requested a repeat performance at the 2011 State Fair.

As the competition began, teams of three to four members prepared assigned dishes, then made

presentations to the judges, including information about the serving size, nutritional value, utilizing the dish in a meal and the cost of the dish. They also interpreted a food label and prepared a fitness plan.

The purpose of the SC 4-H Healthy Lifestyles Challenge was to allow 4-H members to demonstrate their culinary and food safety skills. Judges and observers were able to witness not only how well these young people

can cook, but how much they know about overall health, nutrition and wellness ~ skills to take them through life," said Pam Ardern, Ed.D., SC 4-H State Leader.

Marion County 4-H Team consisting of William Blanchett, Arberya' Lewis, Brandon Murrell, and Shareka Pee placed first in the Senior Division and will represent South Carolina 4-H at the National Seafood Bakeoff in New Orleans in August, 2011.

## Expanded Food & Nutrition Education EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a federally funded program designed to assist limited-resource audiences in acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behavior necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet and nutritional wellbeing. EFNEP has 41 years of service to limited-resource families in 2010.



Carolyn Clark (above) - NEA conducts youth food and nutrition programs. Mamie Howell (right) - NEA discusses revised USDA MyPyramid initiative.

The EFNEP 4-H youth component focuses on providing food and nutrition education to children and youth from low-income families and those living in low-income urban and rural geographic areas. Carolyn Clark is the Nutrition Education Assistant (NEA) that provides EFNEP 4-H for Marion County. This year the programs were offered in schools in all districts, head starts, day care centers, recreation departments, churches and the technical school. Forty-four groups were reached with 858 youth and 61 volunteers assisting with the groups. These youth got hands on skill building in food selection, food preparation, food buying, and food safety.

Each year limited resource adults also participate in the EFNEP program in Marion County. The adults must be responsible for planning and

preparing the family's food with children in the home. This educational program helps participants acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavioral changes necessary to provide healthy diets, physical activity levels and overall health and wellness for their families. Mamie Howell is the Nutrition Education Assistant (NEA) that provides the adult EFNEP program. A total of 111 homemakers were enrolled in the adult program in 2010. A survey taken at the beginning and the end of the program showed that 98% of the homemakers showed positive changes in one or more nutrition practices (i.e., planning meals, making healthy food choices, preparing meals without adding salt, reading nutrition labels, or having children eat breakfast).



[www.clemson.edu/extension/county/marion](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/county/marion)

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## Clemson Extension Home & Garden Information Center - HGIC

The Clemson Extension Home & Garden Information Center delivers information to the residents of South Carolina via a toll free telephone number (1-888-656-9988) through an interactive voice response (IVR) system and a web site:

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic>



Nearly 600 recorded messages on landscaping, gardening, plant health, household pests, food safety & preservation, and nutrition, physical activity & health are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Callers use a four-digit code published in the *Home & Garden Information Center User's Guide* (EC 700) to retrieve the message they wish to hear. If a caller does not have a copy of the User's Guide, he/she can request one via surface mail, or find it on the Center's web site. The guide is also available from county Extension offices. Callers can also proceed through a menu system to access some of the messages without having access to the User's Guide.

There are 23 telephone lines into the IVR system to listen to recorded messages. From 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Monday through Friday (except university holidays), there will be up to five more telephone lines open to Information Specialists who are available to speak with consumers to answer questions not covered by the recorded messages. The Home & Garden Information Center is designed to complement Clemson's network of professionals and volunteers.