

# Annual Report to the People

December 2010  
York County



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## Mission Statement

The mission of the 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.

## Fall Livestock Show has Regional Impact

4-H Volunteers formed a committee to offer a livestock show for our county livestock members and opened this show to the state 4-H and FFA members. The committee has raised the funds and hosted an annual show since the fall of 2002, a total of nine years.

In 2010, a total of 185 participants showed 286 animals (chickens, goats, sheep, dairy and beef cattle or horses). A total of \$12,526.83 was spent to host to show. This show brought in tourism to our county with participants from eight different counties.



## Youth Learn Life Skills through Agriculture Projects

York County 4-Hers Are Managing Their Own Livestock, Learning Responsibility, Business Skills and Entrepreneurship.

- **4-H Swine Project:** Sixty-three youth completed this project by buying and raising a feeder pig to market hog that is sold auction at the end of the project.
- **4-H Dairy Heifer Project:** Participants housed and raised a dairy heifer for 18 months, had their heifer bred and sold the heifer at the end of the project. 9 York 4-H members were awarded heifers in spring of 2009 in the state project. 8 youth were awarded heifer in the spring of 2010 and are actively caring for their heifer. 2 others participate with heifers purchased independently.
- **4-H Pullet Chain Project:** Youth raised 25 day old chicks to laying hens. Some youth have an egg business. 14 youth participated.
- **4-H Meat Goat Project:** 17 youth participated by raising their own goat.
- **4-H Sheep Project:** 8 youth participated by raising their own market or female lamb.
- **4-H Beef Project:** 5 youth participated by raising their own beef cattle.

# Growing York County: A Personal Column

York County has been one of the fastest growing counties in the state the last few years with a population growth of around 19% since 2005. Many professionals are moving to greater Charlotte area from other parts of the country and are seeking information about gardening in the Piedmont region of South Carolina and the challenges of our red clay soils. With a population of approximately 190,000, mass media is one way to disseminate timely gardening information.

Extension is ideally situated to provide unbiased, research-based gardening information that is specific to the local growing conditions. There is a large amount of gardening information available to the consumer, but with the advent of national gardening television shows and Internet sites, it becomes near impossible for the consumer to glean out the information that is pertinent to their situation. It is Extension's responsibility to provide sound gardening information to help consumers save money, help protect the environment, and improve their quality of life. After all, gardening is the nation's number one pastime.

In late 2003, Extension met with the editor/founder of YC Magazine about the possibility of a monthly gardening column. This publication was still in the development stages and was to have its inaugural edition to come out in January, 2004. After discussing the situation and providing some writing samples, the *Growing York County* was born. The columns are timely information on plant selection, maintenance, and pest management to name a few. Digital images are provided and used to add to the understanding of the subject matter.

To date, over 75 gardening columns have been written for *YC Magazine*. Included within the columns are over 600 digital images that have been printed. Each monthly edition has a circulation of 13,000. These publications are found in public buildings, medical offices, restaurants, and many other places that the general public visits each day around York County. Not only can Extension use this effort to educate the public on gardening, but the editor gives leeway to allow the promotion of garden related Extension programs that would be of interest to the consumer.



*Paul Thompson, Area Horticulture Agent, has authored a monthly YC Magazine Horticulture Column since 2003.*

# Extension Provides Horticulture Training

Many individuals become involved in the landscaping industry with very little horticultural training as reflected in the quality of their work and customer satisfaction. Unless the individual has the financial backing to deal with setbacks and landscape failures, it may take a company several years to recover from a bad start, or they may fold completely.

To address these issues Extension organized a plant identification training and a Commercial Ornamental and Turfgrass Short Course (COTS). These classes were taught at Bartlett Tree Laboratories arboretum and focused on plant identification, soils, fertilizers, landscape installation and maintenance, plant anatomy and physiology, marketing, greenhouse and nursery production. Coursework prepared participants to become SC Nursery and Landscape Association "Certified Nursery Professionals."

The plant identification class had 16 graduates while 9 individuals graduated from the COTS program. Of these, four individuals took the written exam and all passed, with three of these four receiving their CNP designation for passing both parts of the exam. The certification process is a proof of a certain level of competency, and certification can be used by companies to promote their professionalism over their competition.



# Extension Keeps our Food Safe and our Residents Healthy

The Food Safety and Nutrition Program works closely with youth, seniors, coalitions, and community groups. Successful youth activities include partnering with 4-H to provide summer nutrition / cooking day camps, healthy cooking clubs and the summer parks program.

Partnerships are key to success for the Food Safety and Nutrition Program and include 9 ½ years of cooking T.V. shows with a local school, teaching cooking, safe food handling and kitchen safety. Other partnerships include municipalities,, Carolina Community Actions, Catawba Indian Nation, and school districts.



*Angela Forbes, left, Area Food & Nutrition Agent, teaches a nutrition class*

Nutrition education for individual groups is also provided. Seniors in congregate meal sites have benefited from ongoing monthly nutrition / food safety programs for several years. Two congregate meal sites

participated in a research project and received weekly lessons on food safety and nutrition. Pre- and Post-tests were administered and classes taught between the tests. It is tests and anthropometric data will determine if participants learned and changed their nutritional habits. Groups average twenty to twenty-five people.

Family and Community Leaders (FCL) is a community group including eight clubs, with about 80 members. Extension provides leadership, guidance, and technical assistance to FCL, and health-related education to clubs which meet monthly.

## Extension Delivers Feral Hog Management Program

Feral hogs have been a problem in South Carolina for a long time. In recent years, feral hog populations have expanded to 150,000 animals and are present in 42 of the 46 counties. Feral hogs cause millions of dollars in losses to the agriculture community



each year. Pseudorabies and Swine Brucellosis are very dangerous diseases that are carried by feral hogs. These diseases are transferable to livestock and humans. In addition to agricultural losses, golf courses and subdivisions experience devastation to their lawns and turf. Feral hogs also destroy valuable wildlife habitats throughout the Southeast.

An in-depth program has been developed that focuses on feral hog biology and control methods. This program offers landowners all the information needed to successfully reduce feral hog numbers on their property. This helps prevent landowners from wasting time and money with techniques that simply aren't effective. The program has been presented to several local associations during the past year, with approximately 125 individuals participating. The program has the potential to save South Carolina farmers and landowners millions of dollars in property and crop damage.

## Local Food: Acres of Opportunity

Local food is more than just nutritious and delicious - it is a critical ingredient in regional economic and community development.

York County Extension has played a pivotal role in developing York County's local food industry through land-based entrepreneurship development, producer grant support, farmer's market support (Downtown York and Rock Hill's Old Town Market) as well as healthy eating education.



*Clemson Extension and the SC Department of Agriculture partner to promote York County grown products at the Old Town Market in 2010*

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## York County Well Represented in 2010 State 4-H Congress



Outstanding 4-H teens from across the state came to Clemson University for the 2010 State 4-H Congress to participate in a variety of leadership, citizenship, and workforce / career preparation activities.

- **Ten York County teens** from York County qualified to attend State Congress.
- **Five York County teens** were named State 4-H winners for their 4-H accomplishments. They received a trip to National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, GA and \$500 college scholarships.
- **One Teen** was on State 4-H Teen Council to plan the event for 2010 and **one new teen** was elected to the new teen council for 2010-11.