

Annual Report to the People

December 2011
Horry 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.

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

CLEMSON
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

PSA & Extension Restructuring

To help manage state funding cuts and prepare for the future, Clemson's Public Service Activities (PSA) division is implementing a restructuring plan over the next two years (2010-2012). The goal is not just to cut the budget; it's to ensure that Clemson has a viable PSA organization with the capacity to fulfill Clemson's land-grant mission and serve the state's No. 1 economic sector – agriculture and natural resources. Key outcomes of this plan that seek to ensure that:

-  PSA will focus its remaining state dollars on the core mission of agriculture and natural resources research, Extension and regulatory programs.
-  PSA budget reductions will exceed state budget cuts in order to create resources that can be invested in core agricultural research and Extension personnel and programs in priority areas.
-  PSA will align its focus areas with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) programs in order to be competitive for federal grants.
-  Every effort will be made to keep all county offices and all Research and Education Centers open.

Horry Extension Works for You

For homeowners, farmers, lawn care and golf course managers, the Horry Extension Service is a valuable source of information. Services include soil and water testing, as well as plant problem and disease diagnoses. Samples are brought to the local office and sent to Clemson, where testing is done by professionals at the Agriculture Service Lab. A small fee is charged for these analyses. Lawn and gardening questions can usually be answered by either your local horticulture agent or Master

Master Gardener volunteers in the county office in Conway. Soil and water tests help clients learn how to fertilize their lawns and gardens for optimal results. Other lab services available through the local office include testing of feed and forage for equine and cattle producers, diagnoses of turf problems, and weed and insect identification and other services. Your local extension office welcomes questions and encourages citizens of Horry County to make use of these valuable services.

Agritourism Means Business in the Pee Dee



Locating a “U-Pick” operation, farm stand, pumpkin patch or corn maze in the Pee Dee Region is just a few clicks away now thanks to an online resource launched by Clemson Extension. The *Pee Dee Agritourism Passport* incorporates Google Maps to enable residents and visitors to locate on-farm lodging, produce stands and other agriculture related businesses. The website divides an array of businesses into easy to follow categories, including wineries, seafood, Christmas tree farms, farm museum and more.

The program is integrated with the SC Market Maker platform, a program managed by Clemson. Market Maker and the Agritourism Passport were developed as a means to share information about food and farm based businesses with the public. The programs together connect all elements of the food chain, from farmers to fisherman to processors and distributors – so they can more efficiently conduct business.

By boosting exposure to South Carolina’s agritourism activities, Extension is helping local farm businesses prosper. Additional work seeks to broaden the project scope beyond the Pee Dee Region by incorporating information about agritourism businesses statewide. For details see www.peedeeagritourism.org.

Pesticide Training Benefits Business and Environment

The importance and value of Pesticides in the production of agricultural crops has been recognized for years. Without such products the modern farmer would be unable to produce the quantity and quality of crops necessary to meet consumer demand.

When used correctly and in accordance with the label requirements, potential negative impacts may be substantially mitigated. Clemson Extension plays a fundamental role in the education and training of private and commercial chemical pesticide applicators to ensure use in



accordance with recommended guidelines.

Applicator licensing and recertification programs hosted by Extension agents emphasize the fact that the “Label is the Law” while advocating the responsible use of chemicals that are vital to the agricultural economy in Horry County.



Extension Horticulture

Horticulture is a busy word for Horry and Georgetown County Extension service. Summers are filled with local Master Gardeners manning Plant Problems Clinics spread throughout the two county area. Four weekly clinics were held in a variety of locations including Farmer’s Markets and local shopping malls. These clinics served over 2000 clients including home gardeners as well as the professional horticulturalist. Extension and Master Gardeners were also involved in the planning and implementation of a community vegetable garden in cooperation with the local solid waste authority. Twenty-five gardeners took advantage of the space to grow some wonderful vegetables. The spring Master Gardener class was held in Horry County with 12 gardeners completing the course. There have been over 650 local residents trained to be Master Gardeners by the staff of the Horry and Georgetown Extension Offices. A quarterly lecture series was started at the North Myrtle Beach public library with the first lesson covering home vegetable gardening. Thirty-six aspiring vegetable gardeners attended and all agreed that their knowledge of growing vegetables in the hoe garden could be accomplished with proper planning and the use of good horticultural practices.

Emphasizing Natural Resource Programs in the Lower Pee Dee

Forestry and Natural Resource Agent Ben Powell has shifted his program emphasis to other natural resources topics for the counties of the lower Pee Dee (Horry, Georgetown, Marion, Williamsburg). Ben instructed several courses for the spring course of the Winyah Master Naturalists and will continue to do so in the spring of 2012. He has responded to landowners seeking guidance with controlling nuisance wildlife and managing

their land to improve habitat for game species. He also works with other agencies and landowners to stay on top of and limit the spread of invasive species in the region. Partnering with Jim Westerhold of Horry Georgetown Tech and the Department of Natural Resources, Ben coordinated invertebrate surveys of the impoundments at Santee Costal Reserve to teach students about the importance of invertebrates to waterfowl management and to inform the

property manager on invertebrate communities and their response to mosquito control. Ben has advised numerous private pond owners on the best ways to solve pond maintenance challenges and improving fish pond productivity, and he is planning recreational pond workshops for the spring of 2012. In response to renewed interest from local beekeepers, Ben has facilitated the formation of the Blackwater Beekeepers Association.

Farmer's Markets Drive Economic Revitalization

The Waccamaw Market Cooperative (WMC) was formed by Clemson Extension in 2011 for the purposes of supporting farmer's market programs in Conway, North Myrtle Beach and Loris under a unified management structure. The resulting coordination allowed market planners to manage the operation of distinct markets in all three locations while leveraging resources from public and private sponsorship to create a cooperative market brand. Markets were open in each location from May through October, resulting in a total 104 market days available to local farmers and producers.

According to the American Farm Bureau, farmers on average retain \$0.19 from each retail food dollar. The cost of processing, packaging, distributing, transportation and retailing consumes the other \$0.81. In contrast, growers who direct market their products, via markets, CSA's and similar venues retain 100% of the food dollar.

Based on an economic impact report generated for the Conway Farmer's Market, projected gross annual receipts in 2011 totaled \$316,064.00 with an economic impact (using a 1.93 multiplier) of \$610,003.52. When market shoppers are drawn to a destination market, they frequent nearby retailers, spend additional cash and contribute local and state sales tax revenue. Additional impacts maintained by consumers that shop in the market's neighborhood are estimated at \$291,200.00. The economic activity and resulting use of public facilities within a revitalizing retail district focuses both money and attention on areas in need of redevelopment. Market's both incubate new business opportunities for growers and artisans at the same time they support small business in the vicinity of operations.

In its first year of operation as part of the WMC, the North Myrtle Beach Farmers Market operated for a total of 52 days. With an estimated

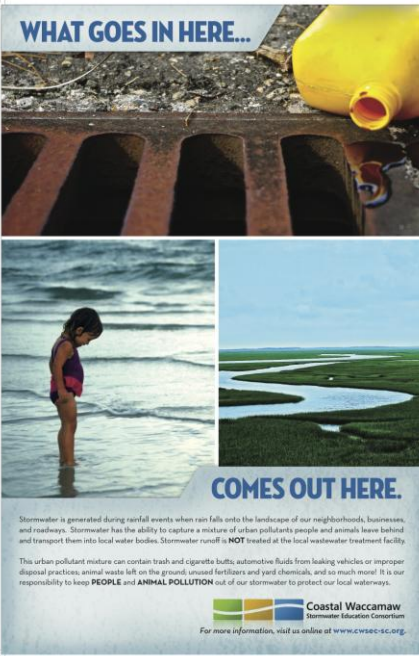


annual consumer attendance of 10,400 people the estimated direct economic impact to participating vendors was \$553,585.76. Market surveys indicated that 76% of shoppers said that they spent money at adjacent businesses on market days resulting in an estimated economic impact of \$215,280.00.



At the conclusion of the 2011 season the communities in which these farmers markets are based are more confident than ever that they may serve as a rallying point economic revitalization. As a result the Conway Farmers Market was awarded the 2011 C.P. Quattlebaum Award for "Outstanding Contribution to Quality Development, Restoration, and Design..." and the City of North Myrtle Beach has allocated \$50,000.00 for the construction of a new farmer's market pavilion anticipated to open in the upcoming season.

Carolina Clear Provides Stormwater Education



Working through Clemson's Carolina Clear program, the natural resources agent, Ben Powell, has delivered outreach services and programs designed to inform the residents of Horry and Georgetown counties about the importance of local water resources and the best ways to protect them from stormwater pollution. Through partnerships with the members of the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium and a comprehensive plan of work, the Carolina Clear program has completed several outreach efforts in the Greater Myrtle Beach Urbanized Area. The program designed and

delivered public service announcements on television and billboards. Agents delivered numerous presentations on protecting water resources to community groups, civic organizations, and professional associations. The Spring Greening event received household hazardous waste for proper disposal from Horry County residents. Two very successful workshops taught HOAs and professionals about shoreline protection using native vegetation, and the local agent designed and coordinated a shoreline restoration project at Futrell Park in Myrtle Beach. Another workshop involved the installation of a rain harvesting demonstration site and informed professionals and decision makers about the potential for rain water harvesting systems as a means of managing stormwater.

In August 2011, Carolina Clear brought on a new agent, Chris Ramaglia, to coordinate the program in the coastal waccamaw region.

Livestock Programs Coordinated Regionally

Livestock and forage programming is coordinated on a regional level in the Pee Dee so livestock and forage producers can meet in at a central location. Extension staff along with State Animal and Forage specialists from Clemson University assist three Pee Dee Region cattlemen's associations with a minimum of 12 educational programs each year. Together there are over 150 livestock producers who are members of the cattlemen's associations. The associations are the Pee Dee Cattlemen's association, Central Cattlemen's Association, and the Sandhill's Livestock association. Other Livestock and Forages programs held in the Pee Dee Region include equine management seminars, goat management seminars, calibration field days, manure management programs, and 4-H livestock care presentations.

Goat Management Seminar Benefits Local Farmers

The Goat Industry in the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina continues to grow. Due to this increase, goat owners in the region are looking for ways to improve their care and stewardship of the land on which they keep their goats. Owners are looking for cutting edge programs to increase their knowledge base of management practices and answers to some of the obstacles they deal with everyday on the farm.

Area Livestock and Forages Agent Lee VanVlake coordinated the formation of a committee to design and implement a Goat Management Seminar that addresses these issues. The committee made up of USDA employees, goat producers, and Extension agents conducted the Seminar covering topics such as soil sampling/fertility, forages, kidding, herd health, de-worming, reproduction, hoof trimming, and good management practices to ensure optimum performance of their goats and also to be good stewards of the land.



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Extension is MAKING IT GROW!

Tony Melton, Area Horticulture Agent may be best known throughout the state as a panelist on SCETV's Emmy award winning program Making It Grow. However, Tony also works as a County Agent in a total of 13+ Counties in the Pee Dee region, including Chesterfield, Horry, Sumter, Clarendon, Marlboro, Dillon, Georgetown, Lee, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg. Working with commercial vegetable, fruit, nut, ornamental, and turf producers, Tony coordinates 2 commercial associations, the Pee Dee Plant Professionals and the Pee Dee Vegetable Growers Association. Presenting Extension's message and educational benefits to the people of S.C. through regular editorials and appearances on

Making It Grow has become a passion of Tony's work. The weekly program is a live, interactive call-in show produced by ETV and Clemson University featuring guest speakers on gardening topics, while highlighting interesting places and products from around the state. Other cast members include host Rowland Alston Jr., Debbie Hayes, and Amanda McNulty. Watch Making It Grow on SCETV, each Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

