Clemson Extension continues to deliver forestry programs through the Aiken County Forestry Association. This active organization is an affiliate member of the S.C. Forestry Association and offers many educational opportunities to clients interested in forestry. The Aiken Association held quarterly meetings on the following topics: Thinning Timber, Financial Returns from Southern Forest Investments, The Forest Resource and Industry Outlook in South Carolina and Aiken County, and The Timberland Valuation Process. Average attendance for these meetings was 35 landowners and forestry professionals.

Clemson Extension also supports the citizens of Aiken County by use of an Area Extension Forestry & Natural Resources Agent who provides advice on forest management and wildlife management through habitat modifications and food plots. This agent also aids with forestry related issues including disease and insect identification, pond issues and urban tree questions.

Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) and Clemson Extension held a joint meeting about forest genetics and seedlings. The tour was hosted at the SCFC Taylor Nursery located in Trenton, SC. The field tour was sold out with 50 landowners, with participants coming from the surrounding area counties.

Tim Adams (SCFC Director of Forest Products Marketing) was the guest speaker for much of the program. Gene Kodama (SCFC State Forester), Hamp Holmes (SCFC Taylor Nursery Director) and Stephen Pohlman (Clemson Extension Forestry Agent) also spoke at the event.

Participants were treated to a hay ride of the Taylor Nursery facility to see the operation side of growing seedlings before they can be sold to the public. Participants also saw the SCFC’s genetic trials where they test their crosses and get some of their seed sources.
**4-H in Aiken County**  
*Julia Cox, Area 4-H Agent*

- **Aiken/Edgefield 4-H Shooting Sports Club** is led by Jason Rhodes. This club teaches youth ages 9-15 shotgun safety, how to identify different parts of a shotgun, and how to become a skilled marksman. If you are interested in joining this club or obtaining more information, contact Jason Rhodes at (803)640-5848.

- **Gem Lakes Wildlife 4-H Club** is led by Bill Busser. This club teaches youth ages 5-19 about wildlife identification, outdoor safety, with an overall goal of constructing a handicap accessible trail through the Gem Lakes community to the lake. If you are interested in joining this club or obtaining more information, contact Bill Busser at (803)641-1851.

- **Aiken County 4-H Horse Club** is led by Marianne Matos. This club will teach participants 9 and older proper horse care and riding techniques. Anyone interested in joining this club or obtaining more information about the club should contact Marianne Matos at (570)517-9453.

- **Ridge Spring Middle School 4-H Agriculture Club** is led by Crystal Coleman. This new club teaches agricultural lessons to the middle school students at Ridge Spring Middle School. If you are interested in joining this club or obtaining more information, contact Crystal Coleman at the middle school.

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**Equine Management Workshop**

This workshop was an all-day event where we discussed topics such as forage variety and selection, herd health, fire ant control, facilities, fencing and manure management. Twenty-eight people attended this event, all attendees stated they learned something new and would make practice changes on their farms. This event was sponsored by Aiken Ag South and Diamond W Contracting.

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**Aiken County by the Numbers**

6 Extension Agents serve Aiken County

Aiken County residents received horticultural advice via the in-office MG Help Desk

58 Active Master Gardener Volunteers

Aiken County samples submitted to Clemson’s Ag Service Lab

2001 soil samples

2 plant tissue samples

14 feed and forage samples

32 plant problem clinic samples

40 animal waste samples

2 irrigation water samples
EFNEP Classes Involve Hands On

Blond Simmons, EFNEP, NEA

While working with the Litchfield Housing complex which is a part of the SC Regional Housing authority #3 the director has initiated into their program that all person doing a rental agreement will be enrolled into Clemson University EFNEP program that provides free service to them in nutrition and clean housing. The classes involve hands-on experience and handouts for participants to utilize in maintaining better health while keeping their homes safe and clean. Eating Smart, Being Active curriculum helps family to budget their food dollars wisely by planning ahead, selection of foods, and food safety. The residents have gained confidence in their cooking methods and cleaning their homes on a budget.

Historic Floods Impact Farmers

Jay Crouch, Area Agronomy Agent

The October 2015 rain event that led to historic flooding in South Carolina occurred at the worst time for many farmers. Cotton, peanuts, and soybeans ready for harvest were left standing in water where flooding occurred, or were so rain soaked by the continual rains that quality of the crops left them unable to be marketed. Lack of a marketable crop put an extremely large financial burden on many farmers who were left unable to repay operating loans. The South Carolina General Assembly passed legislation, named Farm Aid, that made available to eligible farmers financial assistance to be used for paying crop production expenses. Farm Aid eligibility software was developed in cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture and Clemson University and used information on crop sales, acres planted, and harvest records to determine payments made to farmers. Workshops were held across South Carolina that allowed farmers to bring their own records in for application, or one-on-one meetings were held with farmers for the same purpose. In excess of twenty one-on-one meetings were held in Newberry, Saluda, Edgefield, and Aiken Counties with several farmers qualifying for much needed assistance.

Fire Ant Bait Pasture Demonstration

Brittany Peacock
Livestock & Forages Agent

This field day covered fire ants and baits used to eliminate them from horse and livestock pastures. The attendees also had hands-on experience with the spreader; thirteen Aiken County residents attended this event.
Aiken County Master Gardeners (AMGA) contributed more than 2,992 total volunteer hours, with more than 2,020 contributing directly to the MG mission, to South Carolina/Clemson Extension Master Gardener endeavors from July 2015 to July 2016. The MGs drove more than 16,453 miles to conduct deliver educational, research-based programs to over 6,054 people.

Master Gardeners provide services and programs unique to Aiken County:
- AMGA accommodated 38 Speakers Bureau requests and spoke to 905 people.
- AMGA offers their almanac to Aiken County residents for the 9th year.
- AMGA provided home horticulture advice via the in-office MG Help Desk to 343 Aiken County residents in FY2015.
- AMGA presented 2 scholarships to Aiken County students in FY 2015.

Aiken County Master Gardeners
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