Annual Report to the People

November 2016
Cherokee County

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service

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.”

Extension in Cherokee
Our office is busy! Each year, we host a variety of meetings, events, and workshops. This past year we hosted a fencing workshop, the Sire Seminar workshop, both the Strawberry and Peach Producers’ annual meetings, a row crop meeting, and a pond workshop. We organized a small ruminant workshop and collaborated with two other counties to put on a coyote workshop. Our office also hosts a few local group meetings.

**The Gaffney Garden Club** hold their meetings every 2nd Tuesday (Sept-May) at 6pm. *President: Marshall Goforth, 864.491.1265*

**The Cherokee Bee Club** hold their meetings every 3rd Tuesday at 6pm. Annual fees are $15. *President: Mike Ballenger, 864.219.4725*

**The Cherokee Cattlemen** hold several meetings throughout the year. Annual fees are $40. *President: David Parker, 864.415.5296*

Come by the office to learn more about the clubs, soil sampling, plant and pest diagnostics, feed testing, and other services offered by Extension.

It’s Amazing What a Little Paint Can Do
In addition to painting the front office and meeting room, many pictures have been displayed to give a brief history of Extension in Cherokee County. From chicken sales in the 20’s to farming in the 40’s to cooking in the 70’s to the hay shortage in the 80’s to 4-H activities in the 90’s, there is a lot to see. Come check out the many updates at the Cherokee Extension Office.

Above: Window frame filled with historical pictures in the meeting room

Left: Cherokee Extension front office

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Coyote Control Workshop  
Jeff Fellers, Forestry & Wildlife Resources Agent

On February 25, 2016, Cherokee, Spartanburg, and Union Counties held a joint meeting on coyote control. The meeting was held in Jonesville, SC, a central location between the three counties. Coyote management has become a hot topic across the state of South Carolina. They have a significant impact on wildlife and domestic animals. The workshop provided the basic information on coyote biology, as well as demonstrations for trapping coyotes. We partnered with the SC Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to reach as many people as possible. We had a good turnout from all counties involved. Overall we had 52 people attend the meeting and actually had to close registration due to the limited size of the facility. Below are some of the results from a short evaluation conducted after the meeting.

What County do you live/hunt/manage land?
- Cherokee - 19% of Participants
- Spartanburg - 31% of Participants
- Union - 44% of participants
- No Answer - 6% of participants

Did you find tonight’s Workshops beneficial?
- Yes - 100%
- No - 0%

Breakdown of Participants (They could circle more than one)
- Landowner/Manager - 81% of Participants
- Hunter - 50% of Participants
- Outdoor Enthusiast - 31% of participants
- No Answer - 6% of participants

New Workshop Series is Full of Bull  
Chris LeMaster, Livestock & Forages Agent

The Sire Seminars kicked off 2016 with a 5-wk course on beef bulls. Cattlemen from across the Carolinas met every Thursday in January for expert presentations and topics strictly related to bull management and sire selection. Despite the huge economic and genetic importance of this animal, many cattlemen and programs often overlook the bull. Extension Agents, Clemson Faculty, veterinarians, and industry representatives provided information from bull selection and evaluation, genetics, economics, artificial insemination, reproduction, breeding soundness exams, nutrition, to herd health. Several continuing education hours were offered to area veterinarians. This program proved to be helpful for veteran and novice cattlemen alike. Due to the success of this program, it will be offered again in January 2017, just in time for the bull-buying season.
Therapy Dogs Help Educate Youth
Ginger Bowen, 4H Agent

In 2015-2016, 4-H reached 3,782 youth through 37 active 4-H clubs in Spartanburg and Cherokee Counties. While 24 clubs concentrate on goats, beef cows, chickens, nutrition, science, healthy lifestyles, and gardening, the other 13 are 4-H Pet Pal Clubs.

For over eight years, the Spartanburg Humane Society and Spartanburg County 4-H have been partnering to create and enhance a program that educates youth on issues affecting companion animals. The Humane Society educator, Ingrid Norris; 4-H Coordinator, Ginger Bowen; volunteers, teachers, and certified therapy dogs have made the 4-H Pet Pal program possible.

The 4-H Pet Pal Clubs have a winning combination of youth learning leadership skills and the importance of tending to a companion pet. Pet Pal Club lessons include: the importance of grooming, annual veterinarian visits, nutrition, manner training, adoption options, and parasite control. The clubs always strive to use the hands-on approach, practicing the 4-H Motto, “Learn by Doing”.

Participants meet once a month for nine months, typically beginning in September and ending in May of each school year. Clubs are held during school and after school depending on the needs of the youth. Programs last from sixty to ninety minutes each and have between 20 to 25 youth enrolled. All 4-H Pet Pal Clubs have elected officers that have been taught basic leadership skills on how to conduct a brief business meeting. Officers open and close every meeting. The gavel is used, roll is called, pledges are said and minutes are recorded and read. The target audience for this particular club is any youth between the ages of 9 and 14.

4-H would not be possible in Spartanburg & Cherokee Counties without the support of volunteers, parents, teachers and good partnerships. 4-H has partnered with school districts in both counties to make sure 4-H is available to all youth in each district.
Peaches, Strawberries, & Stinkbugs, Oh My!

Andy Rollins, Upstate Commercial Fruit & Vegetable Agent

This was the last year for the peach variety trial located at James Cooley's farm near Chesnee. Although cold damage was clearly evident this year, damage was not as severe as last year. The picture below shows one beautiful peach, but if you look closely, other fruits were damaged and did not ripen properly. After picking and evaluating peach quality for many years, all the information has now been compiled and put onto the new peach website (www.clemsonpeach.org). This website helps growers select varieties that are available and will produce efficiently for them.

To help growers combat the devastating Peach Oak Root Rot disease, two farms, each with different peach selections, are contributing to the research. On one farm, evaluations of new peach rootstocks are being conducted while the other farm begins a new trial. The combined information may be helpful to peach growers.

A multi-state variety trial of two unreleased strawberry cultivars are showing promise. NCSU Associate Professor and Small Fruit Specialist as well as strawberry and blackberry breeder, Dr. Gina Fernandez is the primary inspector on the grant that Extension and Upstate strawberry growers are interested in. This is an on-farm trial at Mr. Cooley’s farm, Strawberry Hill USA. Yields, taste and quality of the fruit and plants will be measured.

Earlier this year, in conjunction with Dr. Ted Cottrell, USDA ARS research entomologist, a continued stinkbug monitoring project determined when populations began to rise with use of insect pheromones and trapping (see pic). Each week, Ms. Desirae Kissell, an intern, continues to help collect insect counts allowing timely decisions to be made. Unlike last year, major damage was avoided by applying a properly timed insecticide treatment, made possible through this research.

Through continued research of the Spotted Wing Drosophila problem in blueberry plants, two years of data and a better understanding of lower risk options are now available. One option, in particular, uses red spheres with an attractant (sugar) and a pesticide in the caps. The spheres draw them in and kill them without using pesticides directly on the fruit. This idea is great in that it reduces pesticide use and performs better than the control; however, it still doesn’t do as good a job as commercial pesticides registered for this use.
Agronomic Crops in the Upstate  
*Chris Talley, Area Agronomy and Row Crops*

The upstate of South Carolina is not known as a large corn and soybean production area. However, there are still a large number of row crop producers who either farm full-time or part-time. These producers are still in need of valuable research based information provided through Clemson University to help them maximize their production systems. With the emergence of new invasive insects such as the Sugarcane Aphid, Glyphosate resistant weeds like Palmer Amaranth, and potential devastating diseases like Asiatic Soybean Rust, the need for this type of program is even more critical.

In 2016, Area Agronomic Crops Agent Chris Talley conducted a row crop meeting at the Cherokee Extension Office in Gaffney. Over 20 local producers from surrounding counties and North Carolina participated in this program. They were given information on weed management options for corn and soybeans, as well as insect management in soybeans, and soybean disease management. In addition, this program allowed South Carolina producers with a private pesticide license to obtain one hour of recertification credit toward their license.

This was one of the first row crop production meetings that Clemson Cooperative Extension has offered in Cherokee County in a number of years and was very well received by local producers. Plans are underway for more row crop meetings in the near future for producers in this part of the state.

Pond Management Makes a Splash  
*Chris LeMaster, Livestock & Forages Agent*

Although recreational ponds are very popular in SC, many residents have questions on pond and fish management. Participants in the Pond Management Workshop received presentations, hands-on demonstrations, and manuals from Natural Resource Agent, Dr. Cory Heaton, on topics ranging from pond fertility and liming, fish stocking and habitat enhancement, wildlife control, water quality, and aquatic weed control. Overall, participants learned ways to save money and enhance their pond enjoyment.
The Upstate Small Ruminant Workshop provided hands-on information on forages, marketing, nutrition, health, management, and even BBQ preparation. Carolina Savanna Farm provided an excellent location for live demonstrations with a variety of forages, a large goat herd, comfortable facilities, and great management.
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