

Annual Report to the People

November 2011
Cherokee 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.”

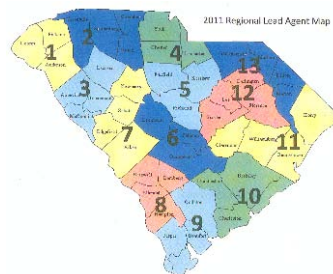
Regional Lead Agents

This past year has brought many challenges to South Carolina and also to Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service as it did in 2010. Since 2008, Clemson University’s Public Service Activities state funding has been cut by over 46%. State funding is now at the same dollar level as 1985 without adjusting for inflation or population growth in the state.

Clemson PSA once again offered voluntary separation and voluntary retirement incentives. With a much smaller staff within local offices, extension personnel, agents and specialist work together to provide services, programs, and information.

Upon a proposal from the County Operations Committee, a regional lead agent/county coordinator structure for the Extension county offices has been developed. Instead of a lead agent in every county, there will be 13 regional lead agents with supervisory responsibility for Extension personnel in three to four counties, in concert with program team managers. In addition, there will be county coordinators responsible for daily office operations and for maintaining contact with stakeholders and community leaders in their assigned county. Regional lead agents will serve as the coordinator for their home county. Both the regional lead agent and county coordinator roles are one-year appointments at the discretion of Extension administration.

This model is designed to standardize operations across the state, improve communication of county office policies and increase accountability to our stakeholders. It reduces our overall administrative investment and frees up more agents to focus on developing and delivering programs. It also offers early career personnel an opportunity to build leadership skills and advance their careers through the county coordinator position.



New Office Hours



The Cherokee County Clemson Extension Service Office has scaled back its hours due to a reduction in the budget. The office is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon and on Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

County Extension Agents, David Parker and Ginger Johnson, keep the office in operation. David works Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Ginger works Tuesdays in Cherokee County and the remainder of the days in Spartanburg County at her main Clemson Extension Headquarters.

With the reduction in staff our programs have decreased this past year. We just don't have the staff to carry on as usual. However, programs are still being conducted, phone calls answered and walk-in clients assisted.

At the present there are no intentions on closing the Cherokee Office. David and Ginger are glad to be a part of the Cherokee Office and still want to meet the needs of the people. Feel free to stop by the office during the above hours. Bring your soil and grass samples, insects, vegetables, and fruits with diseases and we will do our best to help you out with your problem.

Sustainable Small Farms & Backyards

Matthew Burns, Area Livestock & Forage Agent

Sustainable Small Farms and Backyards covered Beekeeping, Livestock, Forages, Fruit and Vegetable Gardening, Soil Fertility and Marketing. It was a 6 week program. There is a strong demand for education relating to small scale agriculture and farming. The Sustainable Small Farm and Backyards class was designed to teach producers and homeowners how manage and produce safe wholesome food products from livestock and gardened crops. It educates small farmers and homeowners on how to grow their own crops and market the excess through locally grown markets. **90% of participants said they gained new knowledge** from this program and **90% planned to change the way they garden/farm** as a result of this program.

Programs Offered in Cherokee County

David Parker, County Extension agent

The Cattlemen's Association met 3 times during the year, with an average attendance of 75. Each meeting featured an educational program and a sponsored meal.

The Cherokee County Office also hosted and assisted with the Annual Peach Producer's and Strawberry Producer's meetings. Both were regional meetings, attended by approximately 70 producers each and featured speakers from North Carolina State, University of Georgia, University of Tennessee and Clemson University. Pesticide recertification credits were offered at both meetings.

Five (5) private applicators were certified during the year, and 3 applicators received recertification hours through video delivery.

Programs were presented to The Gaffney Rotary Club, The Cherokee County Republican's Women's Club, and The Gaffney Garden Club. I also presented a program to the Laurens Master Gardener class.

I worked with a local textile plant and was able to have their waste product fed to cattle instead of being sent to the local landfill. This resulted in significant savings for the plant and the cattle producer.

David Parker returned to the Cherokee County Extension Service on a part time basis in April of 2011. He works 15 hours per week, keeping "office hours" of 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, with 3 hours of "flex time" per week to make farm and home visits. His main duties are to handle telephone calls and walk-in clients, receive agricultural samples, work with the Cherokee County Cattlemen's Association, and coordinate pesticide applicator's training and recertification.

www.clemson.edu/extension/county/cherokee

The 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.

Staff

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4-H Program

Ginger Johnson, County Extension Agent/4H

The one day that I work in Cherokee County I try to get the following done. From 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. I have office duty and take care of phone calls, walk-ins and soil samples. From 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. I work with afterschool 4-H programs.

At the present I work with The Boys and Girls Club and the afterschool program at B.D. Lee Elementary School. A 4-H Food and Fitness Club meets once a month at B.D. Lee Elementary School. We are also working with youth that are on site at The Boys and Girls Club. The children have planted strawberries and are learning all about gardening. This past summer "4" Food and Fitness Classes were taught at The Boys and Girls Club. The New My Plate Food Guide by USDA was introduced to the youth. The Food Guide Pyramid was also used to enhance the New My Plate Guide. Fitness classes were also taught this summer.

Cherokee County 4-H'er Cole LeMaster, age 6, and Luke LeMaster, age 5, participated in the 4-H Goat Project. The 2 boys along with their parents traveled the Upstate showing their goats at County Fairs. The Final Goat Show was in Newberry where the boys showed their goats for the last time before the goats headed off to market. Ribbons were given to both boys for an outstanding job on their 4-H Goat Show Record Book that they turned in at the last show.

Tractor Supply has always been a big supporter of 4-H in Cherokee County. This past year they sponsored the "Clovers all over Campaign" to help raise money for 4-H. Thank you Tractor Supply for your generous donation!

My time is limited in Cherokee County but we are still working to build back a 4-H program. Volunteers and Community Partners are essential for the success of 4-H. Without Volunteers and Partners 4-H would not be possible.

If you are interested in being a part of 4-H please contact Ginger Johnson at 864-489-3141.