Ellig Earns Top 4-H Honor

Deon Legette, Regional Lead Agent

The Clemson University 4-H Presidential Tray awards are designed to recognize the top four Senior 4-H members in the state who are National 4-H Congress alumni and have outstanding accomplishments in 4-H leadership, citizenship, and project work. Miss Katherine Ellig was one of the 4-H Presidential Tray recipients, and she received a $1500 college scholarship.

Katherine began her 4-H journey in Virginia when she was nine years old. She first joined a horse club, then a rabbit club and was quite active in various shows and fairs. After moving to SC at age 14, she branched out into other projects such as the Small Garden project, Healthy Lifestyles, and Personal Development. She has served in many leadership roles in the Kershaw County 4-H Horse Club, West Wateree Ropes and Reins 4-H Horse Club, Kershaw County 4-H Rabbit Club, and Leaping Lizards 4-H Club. She credits 4-H to her most significant achievements—being a State 4-H Winner, receiving a scholarship and trip to National 4-H Congress, and being a member of the National 1st place Horse Bowl team. Katherine is the daughter of Jerry and Sandy Ellig of Cassatt. She currently attends Savannah College of Art and Design where she is majoring in fashion design.

Summer Feeding Program

Katherine Shavo, Area Food Safety and Nutrition

Combating childhood obesity and food insecurity are important for the future of families and communities in Kershaw County. Vision Kershaw 2030, the long-range planning tool for the county, recognizes this and includes an emphasis on creating sustainable opportunities to promote the health and wellness of Kershaw County residents. (Continues to page 3)
The Kershaw County Family and Community Leaders met at Hall’s Restaurant in Lugoff on April 18 for their Spring Kershaw County Council Meeting. The guest speaker was Katherine Shavo, the new area extension agent for Food Safety and Nutrition, who gave a great presentation on a person’s daily food choices and his or her eating habits. She emphasized how this can make an important difference in an individual’s health including how a person looks and feels. During the year, club members also collected clothing, socks, underwear, blankets and comforters to be carried to the needy at Freedom Center in Lynch, Kentucky.

Baron Dekalb Elementary Supports Healthy Lifestyles

Deon Legette, Regional Lead Agent

Encouraging children to eat healthy and participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day is essential to their optimum health. The 1st through 5th graders in the Baron Dekalb Elementary afterschool program completed the 4H Healthy Lifestyles program. This exciting national 4H program, sponsored by Walmart, encourages young people to develop and maintain healthy and active lifestyles. The project emphasized healthy eating and active living for youth. The six hands-on, interactive lessons with food samples and games were led by 4H volunteers, Mrs. Doris McGougan and Mrs. Ida Rwirangira. Topics included Limiting Sugary Drinks, Eat More Fruits/Vegetables, Reading Food Labels, Eat More Whole Grains, Eat Healthier Fast Food, and Power Up Your Breakfast. Students received weekly newsletters with a summary of the day’s lesson and recipes. The youth were also able to sample healthy snacks after each session. As a result of this project, six 4H clubs were established. The students also planted a vegetable garden with peppers, tomatoes, and squash.

Down on the Farm

Jackie Jordan, Area Horticulture Agent

Most children are not aware of where their food comes from. As we move towards a more technologically advanced society, less and less people grow their own food. The Kershaw County Advisory Committee was concerned about the disconnection between citizens of the county and the importance of agriculture to South Carolina’s economy. Kershaw County extension agents partnered with Wayne Belger to develop a successful Down on the Farm experience for local second graders. Each agent set up a booth demonstrating their field of expertise. Horticulture Agent Jackie Jordan planted a small garden. The garden contained broccoli, cauliflower, collards, kale, mustard greens, carrots, and cabbage. The students walked thru the garden and were taught about plant growth and problems the garden faced.

Impact: Every child and some of the adults were surprised to see how some of their favorite vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower grew in the field. The students were delighted to pick a carrot out of the garden and see how large cabbage can grow. 183 students total participated in Down on the Farm. The students were exposed to several aspects of agriculture from agronomy to forestry, animal husbandry to horticulture. All of the teachers and schools that attended reported a positive experience and asked that we offer the program again in subsequent years.

Jackie in the garden with students
Backyard Poultry Workshops for Local Chicken Enthusiasts

Brian Beer, Area Livestock Agent

The number of small, backyard poultry flock owners is on the rise locally and statewide. With changes in municipal regulations allowing backyard flocks, many people are starting their own backyard flocks. Most of these have never owned chickens before and are eager for information about caring for their birds. Two Backyard Poultry Workshops were held in Camden during 2016 to educate backyard flock owners about proper production practices, local regulations for owning chickens, and maintaining flock health. The first was held in April 2016 and focused on getting started with backyard chickens, flock nutrition, housing, selecting quality birds, and biosecurity for small flocks. A second workshop, focusing on flock health (diseases and parasites), was conducted in August 2016. A total of 47 participants attended the two workshops. Evaluations showed participants increased their knowledge and were better equipped to properly care for their chickens. Eighty percent of participants surveyed indicated they would implement a new production practice as a result of attending.

Dr. Julie Helm, Clemson University Poultry Veterinarian explaining Biosecurity to Backyard Poultry Workshop Participants

(Summer Feeding: continued from page 1) Kershaw County United Way (KCUW) administers the USDA’s Summer Feeding Program and makes it available to all children throughout the county. This year KCUW teamed up with the Clemson Extension Food Safety & Nutrition Agent Katherine Shavo to enhance the program with evidence-based nutrition education. The Summer Feeding Program provides meals, snacks, and activities to all Kershaw County children and teens, up to age 18, during the summer months when school is out. The summer months can be a vulnerable time for youth who without access to school meals can have a greater risk of hunger and/or obesity than during the school year. To get children exposed to and excited about eating healthy foods Katherine, who is also a registered dietitian, planned and delivered nutrition education at four meal sites to over 230 children. The recipes featured a demonstration of age appropriate, healthy recipes that the kids could make at home. The recipes used low cost, healthy foods like whole-grain breakfast cereal, low fat yogurt, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Session activities included identification of favorite and untried fruits and vegetables using the South Carolina Department of Agriculture Color the Palmetto Tree. The recipe was also provided in both English and Spanish. Many children enjoyed learning the Spanish word for their favorite fruit. The recipes for children were a big hit and the children were quite animated while saying what favorite fruits they would use to make the recipe at home. At the site where two sessions were presented, approximately one third of the children reported having made the first recipe at home, and were very excited to have a second recipe to make at home.

Flood Aid

David DeWitt, Area Agronomy Agent

October 3, 2015 brought to South Carolina a thousand year flood. Many of the state’s best agriculture lands were covered by over twenty-five inches of rainfall within a period of just a few hours. These rains came at the absolute worst time for crops as most were just becoming ready to harvest. This flood was followed by many weeks of continuous rain and warm temperatures that totally destroyed anything that remained of the crops. May 18, 2016 the South Carolina Senate followed the State House of Representatives in over-riding the Governor’s veto of the Farm Aid Relief Bill. This bill provided $40 million in relief to help offset some of the agriculture losses in South Carolina. The South Carolina Department of Agriculture and Clemson Cooperative Extension Service worked together to educate and train farmers how to fill out application forms to ensure they each received proper funding. This process in Kershaw County involved an educational seminar attended by over twenty people and ten one-on-one sessions to fill out an application. Kershaw County farmers received $82,358 in aid. This money could only be spent on farming expenses to help maintain the future of the farm, and only covered 20% of the farmer’s total losses. This aid will not be enough to revive a struggling business, but did make a difference to paying some carry-over 2015 debt and allow hope for a good crop in 2016.
Most people are aware of threatened endangered species, however most of these are animals such as the red-cockaded woodpecker or sea turtles. Many don’t consider the longleaf pine as a threatened species. Technically it’s not, however the longleaf pine ecosystem is. This is an ecosystem defined by the incredible species diversity found within. Longleaf pine was once the most extensive forest type in North America. It is estimated that it covered approximately 90 million acres and spanned from the Gulf of Mexico into Virginia. Today, less than 3.4 percent of longleaf pine forests exist. As a result, there have been numerous programs generated to increase awareness of longleaf pine and proper management methods necessary to restore the ecosystem.

A one-day Longleaf Pine Opportunities and Management workshop for private landowners and forestry professionals was held in Camden, SC. This was a partnership between USDA, Kershaw County Conservation District, Clemson Extension, SC Forestry Commission, The Longleaf Alliance, Tree Farm, and Society of American Foresters. Ryan Bean, the forestry and natural resources extension agent in Sumter County, spoke to more than 50 attendees on the topic of “Fire Ecology and Wildlife”. Other topics included “Natural History”, “Establishing Longleaf Pine”, and “Financial Assistance Programs”. A field tour followed the workshop demonstrating planting, herbicide use, and prescribed fire. Through continued education and implementation of practices the longleaf pine ecosystem can be restored!

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