

2017 REPORT TO THE PEOPLE: MARION COUNTY

Record Keeping Workshop

One of the biggest issues South Carolina growers have had to contend with in recent years are low crop prices and high input costs. Though profit margins are slim, growers must find a way to make a living and support their families. South Carolina growers excel in production, but keeping up with expenses and making good financial decision can be tricky. A Record Keeping and Financial Decision Making Workshop was held in Mullins at the Garden Alley Restaurant on March 21, 2017. A number of row crop, vegetable, and livestock producers attended to learn about keeping records and tracking profitability. Clemson Ag Economists presented information on what information is important for farmers to record and how to use those records to make decisions in crop production practices, increasing efficiency, expanding or downsizing operations, etc. Speakers from the FSA and Farm Credit were also present to discuss the importance of having thorough records when seeking loans and insurance claims. Annually, crops and livestock are worth \$3 billion in SC, therefore, Clemson Extension will continue to assist growers in making sound financial decisions which maximizing their production and earnings.



▲ Row Crop Agent William Hardee showing some insects caught in a sweep net at the Row Crop Scouting Workshop



▲ Clemson Ag Economist Scott Mickey speaking about the importance of record keeping in financial decision making.

Row Crop Scouting Workshop

In 2016, Marion County grew 33,000 acres of crops with corn and soybeans accounting for 2/3 of the acreage. Insect pests present a significant threat to these crops each year. With input costs high and crop prices low, it's in growers' best interest to protect their crops in the most effective and efficient manner possible. This starts with scouting. A Row Crop Scouting Workshop was held in Marion at the Baxley Farm Market on August 3, 2017. Growers, crop consultants, and retailers attended to learn scouting techniques, pest identification, and treatment thresholds for corn, cotton, soybeans, peanuts, and tobacco. Those in attendance learned the importance of using insecticides only when pest populations exceed economic thresholds as opposed to spraying at regular intervals. The role of beneficial insects in cropping systems was discussed as well. Pesticide credits were offered to with private and commercial applicators to ensure proper and continuous training on using pesticides. Row crop production will continue to be a major industry in Marion County, therefore, Clemson Extension will continue to educate growers on the most effective methods of pest control.

SC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
AT A GLANCE



AGENTS
133



PROGRAMS
11,158



CONTACTS
242,239



**YOUTH & FAMILIES
REACHED**
104,156



AG ED
163



AGRONOMIC
133



76
FORESTRY



**FOOD
SAFETY &
NUTRITION**
2,967

**NUMBER OF
PROGRAMS**



**LIVESTOCK
& FORAGES**
316



HORTICULTURE
1,858



4-H
4,278



**WATER
RESOURCES**
1,174



181
AGRIBUSINESS



▲ Chefs in the Making! - Students of a Marion County EFNEP program prepare food for a tasting.

Marion County Embraces EFNEP

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service in Marion County has a new team member. Wanda Vandroff joined Clemson in March of 2017 as the Nutrition Education Assistant for Expanded Food and Nutrition Program Education (EFNEP). She will be educating the Marion County community about nutritional diet options and initiating the conversation for making healthier choices in what families eat. Ms. Vandroff has introduced Expanded Food Nutrition Education Classes throughout several communities within Marion County ranging from summer camps to after school programs.

All of the age appropriate lessons provide opportunities for students to explore nutritional choices with hands on experiences preparing food tastings, physical activities, and stimulating curriculum.

Students receive a certificate of completion at the conclusion of the 8 class lessons. They also take away a better understanding of why healthier nutrition choices add value to life and the knowledge gained can be shared by all.



◀ New EFNEP Agent Wanda Vandroff gives a parent health presentation at Springville Head Start

<http://www.clemson.edu/marion>