

# Annual Report to the People

October 2011  
Oconee County



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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Clemson University 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.

## Multi-county Ornamental Plant School Provides Educational Opportunity for Upstate Horticulturists

Commercial ornamental horticulturists need continuing education opportunities to stay current with best management practices and pest management strategies; allowing them to become more competitive in the marketplace. Additionally, these professionals are required to obtain pesticide license recertification credits to maintain their pesticide applicator licenses as required by law.

To meet this need, a team of Clemson Extension Agents and Specialists coordinated a day-long Ornamental Plant School (OPS) in Clemson, SC. Dr. Ellen Vincent discussed proper tree planting techniques and Dr. Sarah White provided information on selecting quality trees for landscapes. Cory Tanner addressed simple steps to maximize water efficiency in the landscape and minimize runoff and erosion. Dr. J.C. Chong covered insect pest identification & integrated pest management responses, and Drs. Steve Jeffers and James Blake discussed common diseases of ornamental plants and appropriate management strategies. Resource materials were provided and five (5) SC pesticide license recertification credits were awarded to attendees.

Fifty-eight commercial horticulturists consisting of nursery operators, landscapers, and municipal grounds crews attended the program, and most were from surrounding Upstate counties (Greenville, Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson). However some came from as far away as Charleston, SC. Thirty-seven attendees completed and returned program evaluations. Of those respondents, 86% reported that the information presented was "very useful". All respondents reported that the program met their needs/expectations and that they will use the information presented in their job. Thirty-six of 37 respondents reported that they gained new knowledge by participating. By all reports the 2011 OPS was a great success and welcomed by the industry.

## Upstate Master Naturalist Program Graduates 20 Students



*Master Naturalist class at Jones Gap*

The Upstate Master Naturalist Program graduated its fifth class on November 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Cherokee Worldview Garden in the South Carolina Botanical Garden on the campus of Clemson University. During the 12-week course the class of 20 students visited the upstate's finest natural areas including Table Rock State Park, Kings Creek, Burrell's Ford, Jones Gap State Park, Stumhouse Tunnel, Oconee State Park, Caesar's Head State Park, Jocassee Gorges, Jumping Off Rock, Bunched

Arrowhead Heritage Preserve, Lake Conestee Nature Park and the Clemson Experimental Forest.

The graduates of the program now have the opportunity to participate in many different types of volunteer activities. These might include assisting in a nature outreach program at a park, museum, nature center or school; assisting a scientist collecting bird census data; collecting data on water quality or many others. They also have the opportunity to continue learning by participating in advanced training and other activities offered by the Upstate Master Naturalist Association. All 20 students have joined the association bringing the current membership to nearly 100 Upstate Master Naturalists.

The Upstate Master Naturalist Program is one of seven host sites offering this Clemson Extension program statewide. The Upstate program is a partnership between the South Carolina State Park Service, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Offices in Pickens, Oconee and Greenville Counties.

The mission of the South Carolina Master Naturalist Program is to create a corps of citizen volunteers well trained in the fundamentals of natural history, nature interpretation and the interface of humans and nature in order to empower them to contribute their time and talents to responsible, science-based environmental stewardship.

## Carolina Yards & Neighborhoods

This program covered 9 principles that decrease the time spent managing the landscape, reducing dollars spent on irrigation and fertilizer. Students learn how to create an attractive and healthy yard by working with South Carolina's



environment, rather than against it. 95% of participants said they gained new knowledge by participating in this program. And 90% said they planned to change the way they care for their landscape as a result of this class.

## Sustainable Small Farms & Backyards



This program covered Beekeeping, Livestock, Forages, Fruit and Vegetable Gardening, Soil Fertility and Marketing. It was a 6 week program. It educates small farmers and homeowners on how to grow their own crops and sell the excess at the Farmer's Market. **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.



## Cattlemen Learn about Calving Difficulties

Dystocia or calving difficulty occurs in all herds of cattle from time to time. Dystocia can be caused by large birth weight, abnormal presentation, or simply muscle fatigue of the cow, particularly in young cattle. Cattlemen often have to assist cattle with these abnormal births. Dealing with these births successfully can be critical to the survivability of cow and calf. Learning to recognize the birth stages and the ability to make the timely decision to get involved and assist the birth process can affect the profitability.

A regional meeting sponsored by Clemson Cooperative Extension Service was conducted in October 2010. Matt Poore, NCSU Extension Specialist, presented the program that demonstrated principles of dealing with dystocia in cattle. During the presentation, Poore showed the possible presentations of the calf during the birth process and how to assist with abnormal presentations. Sixty cattle producers attended the training and learned the general principles which Poore presented.

## County Zoning Ordinance Important to Farmers and Landowners

In 2008, Oconee County adopted a county zoning ordinance which will ultimately affect all landowners in the county. Most farmers and landowners do not favor zoning, because they feel it limits their ability to make decisions about their own properties. Initially, all properties were zoned "Zone Free." This initial zoning was to get everything in place for the county to begin zoning all properties without the struggles with individual landowners. In 2010, Oconee County entered into a phase of zoning where landowners were to petition for the zoning. Landowners were not informed about the zoning process or the possible zoning districts that were available for them to petition their properties.

Clemson Cooperative Extension and the Oconee County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored two programs to educate producers regarding these zoning issues. The first was on February 10, 2011 at a meeting of the Oconee County Cattlemen's Association. The second was conducted on during the Upstate Apple Growers Meeting on March 4, 2011. Extension took the educational lead to provide information about the zoning petition process, where to get forms, and the available zoning districts. Additionally, landowners were provided contact information for individuals within the County Zoning Department that were willing to assist landowner in the process.

## Confined Animal Manure Managers Trainings

The Confined Animal Manure Manager (Camm) program team consists of agents and specialists with Clemson University, the Clemson Extension Service, the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The team was assembled in 1998 to comply with State Regulation R.61-43, which states:

*An operator of a new or existing swine facility, lagoon, manure storage pond, or manure utilization area shall complete a training program on the operation of swine manure management created by Clemson University.*

*An operator of an animal facility or manure utilization area shall attend a training program on the operation of animal manure management under the program created by Clemson University.*



During 2000-2010 Oconee Clemson Extension has cooperated with the statewide team to provide this critical training for area farms. One training was held to allow producers to obtain recertification credits (2-7-2011). Trainings provided 2 hours of recertification credits to attending farmers. A total of 44 farmers were trained.

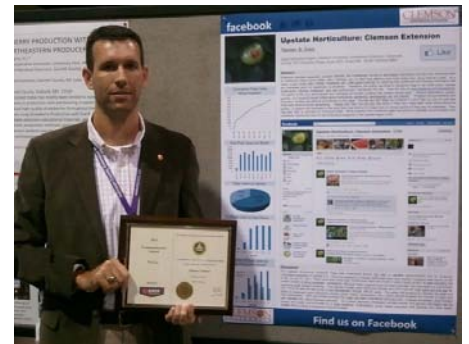
# Peach Producers Participate in Field Day

Peach growers in Oconee and surrounding counties attended a field day at Clemson's Musser Fruit Research farm on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to look at varieties that may fit in their operation. Clemson University has been doing peach variety research for many years and apple growers in Oconee started adding peaches to their fruit operation a few years ago. Peaches have added to profitability of their operation while expanding markets for them. The field day gives growers a chance to meet with extension specialists and researchers one on one and discuss varieties, market trends and climate conditions that all go into choosing varieties to plant. Taste plays a big part also in choosing a peach, nectarine or plum to plant. Planting a certain variety is a long term and expensive decision for the grower. He/she wants to be as certain as possible that the variety chosen will be a winner for them. At the field day, growers got to see and taste at least 40 varieties of fruit. Production information including yield, size, ripening season and other factors are available to the growers. All of our tree fruit operations now have peaches in their operation and people in Oconee county can find good quality peaches grown right here in our county.

## Beginning Beekeeper Class Includes 4-Hers and Volunteer Leaders

The Oconee Beekeepers Association Board met in Early January 2011 to plan programs for the year. At the meeting there was a request made to host a beginning beekeeper class. The board agreed to host a beginning beekeeper short course in early 2011. This is an opportunity for people interested in learning about beekeeping to participate in a class to learn a lot about keeping in a short amount of time. The class is taught by experienced beekeepers who are members of the association. After some work of mouth advertising and fliers in local businesses were placed, the new class of thirty students was filled. This class had several 4-H youth enrolled, ages 11-15 years of age with some of their parents. One of these 4-Hers had been keeping bees for a couple of years already. One of the 4-H leaders had requested that we do a short course because they wanted to start a 4-H beekeeper club. The club leaders had already been identified and participated in the short course. Members of the Oconee beekeepers assisted the 4-Hers with getting equipment to get started. At the end of the course Oconee has thirty newly trained beekeepers that will be keeping bees and thus helping with the pollination of crops in the county. In addition we have a new 4-H bee keeping club where members are learning about the amazing honeybee.

## Upstate Horticulture Facebook Page Wins National Award



Clemson Extension Agent, Cory Tanner's Upstate Horticulture Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/UpstateHort](http://www.facebook.com/UpstateHort)) was selected as the 2011 National Award winning web site for the National Association of County Agricultural Agents in Overland Park, Kansas. It was selected from 44 total entries submitted by Extension agents from across the US

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*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.*

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## Pickens, Oconee, and Anderson County Master Gardener Program



This program offers research-based horticultural information in an exciting and educational format. Participants then use their new knowledge to serve the Certified S.C. Master Gardeners. 95% of participants said they gained new knowledge from this program and 90% said they planned to change the way they garden at home as a result of this program.



