

2017 REPORT TO THE PEOPLE: PICKENS COUNTY

Farmer of the Year Named

Every year a farmer from the state of South Carolina is recognized as our “Farmer of the Year”. The SC Farmer of the Year attends the Sunbelt Agriculture Expo in Moultrie, GA and competes against nine other southeastern states for the top prize of overall Swisher Sweets Farmer of the Year. This past year, the SC Farmer of the Year was Pickens County resident and Bee Well Honey Bee Supply owner, Mr. Kerry Owen.

Four judges visited Kerry’s honey operation this past August, and everyone was blown away with his success and amazed at his impact on his family and community. The little roadside stand that started the honey business can be found in his newest retail location in Pickens.

Lindsey Craig, area livestock and forage agent for Pickens County, was proud to nominate Kerry and have him represent Pickens County and South Carolina as the Swisher Sweets Farmer of the Year.



▲ Students at the Pickens County Career & Technology Center show off their downspout planter box. Learn more about how to protect local water quality by following us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pickenscountystormwaterpartners



▲ Clemson University President Jim Clements, SC Farmer of the Year Kerry Owen, SC Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers, and Clemson University Vice President of Public Service & Agriculture George Askew

Innovative Project to Reduce Runoff

Downspout planter boxes are an effective way to manage stormwater coming off of a roof; instead of letting the water flow from the downspout to the street, these planter boxes with plumbing turn that rain into a resource for plants. Downspout planter boxes collect rainwater similarly to a rain barrel, but they take out the extra step of watering plants from a hose or watering can. Instead, plants are watered directly from the planter box. Agriculture students at the Pickens County Career & Technology Center had the unique opportunity to build a downspout planter box with assistance from Clemson Extension water resources agent, Rachel Davis.

Students constructed the 2x3 foot cedar box, lined it with a pond liner so that it is water tight, and assembled the PVC underdrain and overflow systems to allow for drainage after larger storm events. The planter box will eventually be installed on one of the downspouts at the Career Center. Gravel will fill the bottom of the planter to allow for drainage, and a selection of native plants will be planted in a mixture of sand and compost. This is one way that we can reduce the amount of runoff and help protect downstream water quality.

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



LIVESTOCK
& FORAGES
316



HORTICULTURE
1,858



4-H
4,278

NUMBER OF
PROGRAMS



WATER
RESOURCES
1,174



181
AGRIBUSINESS



▲ Liberty Elementary 4-Her's send a message of thanks to Janine Sutter, Pickens County 4-H agent.

Local School Becomes All 4-H School

Liberty Elementary School in Liberty, SC became the first all 4-H School in Pickens County by encouraging every child to sign up as a 4-H member. The Liberty Elementary 4-H members each received a membership card and the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of programs and projects.

The teachers also benefit by being the first to hear about free and low-cost curricula such as Embryology, Health Rocks!, and Conflict Resolution from Janine Sutter, Clemson Extension Pickens County 4-H agent.

Because they are 4-H members, each child at the school can attend 4-H Summer Camp and other fun activities as well as join local 4-H Clubs such as the Silver Spurs Horse Club or Junior Gardener 4-H Club at the SC Botanical Garden.

Young artists can participate in drawing contests while future toastmasters will enjoy the chance to compete in public speaking competitions.



◀ Graduation for the 19 members of the Upstate Master Naturalist Class of 2016 was held in the SC Botanical Garden on October 26, 2016. The Upstate Master Naturalist Program is coordinated by Dr. James H. Blake who also serves as State Coordinator of the SC Master Naturalist Program.

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