



2017 REPORT TO THE PEOPLE: WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY

Formation of the Pollinator Team

Beekeeping and pollinator conservation is gaining interest across South Carolina, especially in the Pee Dee. New local beekeeping associations are forming and existing associations such as the Blackwater Beekeepers are swelling their ranks. As interest grows, so does the need for training and problem solving. Clemson Extension coalesced a pollinator team. These agents and the Pee Dee's natural resources agent, Ben Powell, provide technical assistance to local beekeepers and coordinating beekeeper trainings. Ben provides expertise related to hive management, controlling hive pests, marketing bee products, proper pesticide use and regulation, pollinator plants, and pollinator conservation and identification. With his assistance, the Blackwater Beekeepers Association has grown every year. The beekeepers attend outdoor festivals and markets and go to classrooms across the Pee Dee to raise awareness about pollinator conservation to thousands of people. The Association offers mentoring for new beekeepers, special trainings for advanced beekeepers and an annual beginning beekeeper short course. The next short course is scheduled for January 16th, 2018 at the Horry County Extension Office.



▲ Blackwater Beekeepers practice several methods for rearing new queens.



▲ Lee Van Vlakte teaching a Beef Cattle Outlook workshop.

Beef Cattle Outlook Workshop

Over the last two years the beef cattle industry in South Carolina has seen extreme volatility within the market. With the extreme fluctuation in prices, producers are looking for ways to lower input cost and make key management decisions. Management decisions are critical to a producer to reduce the risks of a volatile cattle market. The Livestock and Forages team planned, coordinated, and implemented 3 one-day workshops on Beef Cattle Outlook and Volatility for cattle producers. The Pee Dee Region hosted the first of these regional meetings with over 50 producers attending from throughout the Pee Dee Region. The workshop covered topics that included Beef Cattle Outlook, Understanding and Managing Input Costs, Economics of Breeding Methods, Economics of Castration, Benefits of Backgrounding, and Understanding and Utilizing Cattle Futures. Over 150 cattle producers throughout South Carolina attended the three workshops. Producers gained knowledge in management options to reduce volatility risks, lowering input costs, and increasing profitability, all which are critical aspects of a successful cattle operation.

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



▲ Some of the Wild Williamsburg participants before heading down the nature trail at the Pee Dee Rec.

Williamsburg Hosts Ag Day Camps

Summer is always an exciting time for 4-H youth, and it was no exception for the youth in Williamsburg County. Williamsburg County hosted two different day camps this summer, both were filled to max capacity.

The first camp was Wild Williamsburg, a day camp focused on natural resources; youth explored topics such as entomology, local wildlife, and river systems.

The camp ended with a kayaking trip down a local river. It is important that children be given the opportunity to learn about and explore their county's natural resources, and 4-H provides a great outlet for that. The next day camp was Down on the Farm, a day camp focused on agriculture in Williamsburg County.

The youth participated in the Farm Bureau Ag Simulator, a painting class focused on agriculture subjects, and a tour of a local tobacco farm where they learned the history of tobacco in this state and the intensive process that goes into growing and harvesting tobacco.

Both camps were popular and vital for Williamsburg youth. This is a strong agricultural county, and many youth have not been taught about agriculture and how it impacts the county they live in.



▲ Some of the Down on the Farm Camp participants pose in front of the tobacco while out touring Baxley Farms.

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