

UT/TSU Cheatham County

Extension is still here for YOU!!! July 2020

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4-H Youth Development

July has been a planning month for the Cheatham County 4-H staff. After a conversation with Dr. Beck, we became aware that conducting face to face in school 4-H clubs will not be possible. But, that doesn't mean that our students won't have 4-H opportunities. A needs assessment has been distributed to teachers and principals to determine their wants and needs when it comes to delivering 4-H educational programs to their students. So far, teachers are all willing to work with us in delivering a virtual format. We are busy developing this and planning for virtual in school 4-H clubs. Another tool to reach more youth will be utilizing both project groups and community clubs. Recruiting volunteers to lead these clubs will be crucial as well as training them not only on how to conduct 4-H club meetings, but also on how to keep our youth safe during this pandemic. Although we are faced with many challenges, we are rising above them to meet the needs of our youth.

During July, 327 service learning kits were distributed to 4-H members to continue serving our community while at home. Kits will benefit our first responders, animal control, and Colby's Army.

4-H Mentoring Grant - Seventy-five students from Cheatham Middle School have been invited to participate in a one year 4-H Mentoring Program. This was made possible through a partnership with 4-H and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. UT/TSU Extension received \$21,000 to provide these youth and their families a mentoring experience and extended support system. Students will be provided 2 hours of skill building opportunities each week while families will be invited to participate in various fun engagement nights throughout the year. Our volunteer mentors are busy finishing up training and paperwork to be ready to start their new roles on August 17!



Agriculture

During the month of July, 95 Hispanic (H2A Program) tobacco farm workers from 13 different farms, received farm safety training. The training was conducted in their native language, which is required each year for the GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) Tobacco certification. The trainings took place on local farms (using social distancing). One of the trainings took place in Dickson County and was actually conducted in a cave (where a group of famers typically strip their crop each year)!

Another training opportunity for local tobacco farmers and their workers was an online CPR class. The training, funded by a grant which was received by our UT Extension Area Farm Management Specialist, Iris Cui, allowed two people per farm (either farmers or Hispanic workers) to participate. Originally we had planned a “hands-on” class, but due to the pandemic, we had to opt for Plan B. Each farm that participated also received a free thermometer (donated by GAP Connections, Knoxville, TN) to assist with checking workers temperatures on a daily basis to monitor for COVID-19.

Also, we informed local farmers of the USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (which is basically a farm stimulus program for crop and livestock producers). To date, we have assisted 20 producers (and still counting) with filling out paper work in order for them to receive their funding. These funds could potentially bring in over \$500,000 to our local farm economy.



Family & Consumer Sciences

The month of July has passed with a flurry of planning meetings and trainings within the department of Family and Consumer Sciences. There are many exciting programs on the horizon including Extension Health and Wellness Ambassador training, The Red Sand Project and our Extension Fun Family Virtual Fair!

It's summer time and our thoughts and activities have been turned toward the garden. We have a new task force group putting together a needs assessment to evaluate the interest in a Cheatham County Community Garden. This group has met twice and will be ready to send out further information in the upcoming months.

Our Let's Preserve Facebook group has grown to include over 100 members. There are currently 11 learning modules on this page including the use of a water bath canner, pressure canner, atmospheric steam canner and a dehydrator. We are now hosting a “Fill The Cupboard” virtual exhibit where members can upload pictures of their products for prizes.