

UT/TSU Cheatham County

Extension is still here for YOU!!!

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4-H Youth Development

Fourteen 4-H Honor Club members are participating in a “virtual exchange” with Middlesex County. Youth are zooming once a week to learn more about the other county. During the first meeting, we had introductions and shared county statistics. The one thing that stood out the most was the differences in population. Middlesex County has almost 900,000 people in 20 more square miles than Cheatham County. They have 56 high schools with more graduates in each school than our county graduates each year. Everyone in New Jersey was stunned when we told them we could probably count our traffic lights on one hand- for the entire county!!!! For future meetings, a 4-H member from each state will take everyone on a virtual tour of their favorite thing about living in Cheatham County or Middle Tennessee. Both Cheatham County Mayor, Kerry McCarver, and UT President, Randy Boyd, helped with an introduction video. We are excited for our 4-H members to learn about another area of our country!

During the week of April 13-17th, Cheatham County 4-H hosted an online sidewalk chalk contest. The goal of the contest was to fill the neighborhoods in our county with positive messages during a time of a pandemic. The entries were amazing and positivity was definitely radiated throughout the neighborhoods. We had over 20 entries in the contest.

On My Own is a youth financial education program that is delivered to 7th and 8th grade students. This curriculum teaches youth about their paycheck, paying taxes, personality types, and careers. They will also receive a family. After completing lessons, youth then go through a simulation where they have to make financial decisions and take their family scenario into consideration. Youth will purchase a house, car, daycare services, and even purchase clothes and something fun for their family.

Flexibility during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, is an important skill to have. So instead of delivering the curriculum in a classroom, we created virtual lessons and a virtual simulation for students to get the same outcome. These materials were supplied to all 7th and 8th grade teachers in the county, with 4-H Agents taking leadership on any questions and providing assistance to participants along the way.



Horticulture

The Cheatham County Master Gardeners held their annual plant sale- quarantine style. When the lockdown happened, the Master Gardeners had already committed to purchasing plants from growers, so they didn't want to cancel their one and only fund raiser for the year. Together we created an online order form, and marketed the sale. The online portion sold out in two days. People were given specific locations and times to pick up their plants and no contact delivery as well. As a result of this approach, the Cheatham County Master Gardeners had the most successful plant sale ever!



Family & Consumer Sciences

What better way to reduce stress during this pandemic than to get outside and MOVE! UT/TSU Extension is partnering with TN Dept. of Health, Cheatham County Community Enhancement Coalition and Colby's Army to offer the Walk Across TN challenge. We have 14 teams competing with 81 participants ranging in age from 6 years old to 89 years old! We have two teams that have already crossed the 500 -mile finish line. In the first two weeks teams have totaled over 3,800 miles walking, running, biking and gardening. We still have 6 weeks to finish the challenge.

Exciting news! Our office received a \$21,000 grant from 4-H Council/Office of Juvenile Delinquency to work with at-risk Middle School youth and their families. Aneta Eichler will be heading up this grant in collaboration with our office staff and the Cheatham County School District. The 4-H Mentoring grant will partner 30+ Cheatham Middle School students with mentors to work on various projects throughout the year. It is our goal to meet face to face each week, however, due to the pandemic, we will begin our meetings on-line and move to face to face programming in August. Family Nights will also be planned every two-three months. Cheatham 4-H Mentoring program will give at-risk students the opportunity to increase academic performance, improve attendance records, enhance social competencies and strengthen family bonds.



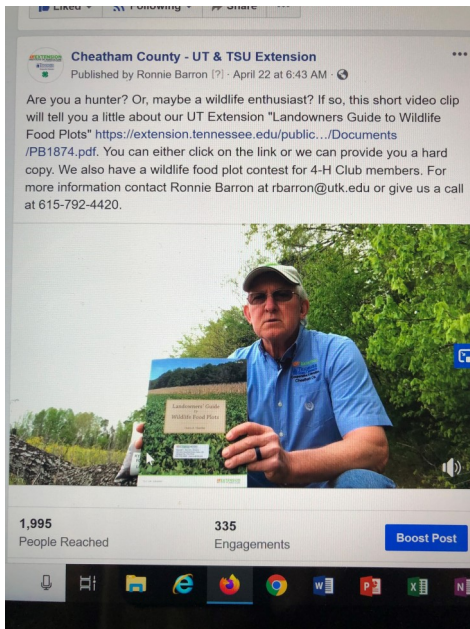
Agriculture / Administration

Needless to say, the COVID-19 pandemic has created some real challenges and at the same time, some real opportunities for our staff to engage in non-traditional methods of providing “Real Life Solutions” for the farmers, landowners, families, homeowners, and 4-H Youth of Cheatham County. I am very proud of how our entire team has worked together, using remote technology to continue our existing educational programming and even create new programs and methods to reach out to the community during this time. Although we still receive phone calls to our office (while working from home), our team has risen to the challenge, using ZOOM, social media, and texts messages to continue the educational mission of the University of Tennessee Extension and Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension programs.

As for the Agricultural programs, we continue to field calls from farmers, landowners, homeowners, and Hispanic farm laborers. While putting all of our educational meetings on hold (for the time being), UT has still allowed agents to utilize on-site farm visits (while following all CDC safety protocols) to assist producers with production issues and management decisions, and conduct planned on-farm demonstrations. We have also created and shared a few videos as well. We continue to keep producers up to date on product marketing, COVID-19 protocols for the farm, as well as crop and livestock production information. One of our local businesses, which recently began to produce hand sanitizer, has graciously donated 70 bottles of the product which we are distributing to local H2A Hispanic laborers as they arrive on our local tobacco farms. Since this item is almost impossible to find, we are hoping that this will help, in at least some small way, to keep our farm laborers protected from the virus. Although we may be in trying times, the opportunities to serve our Cheatham county clientele abound, and we look forward to providing Real. Life. Solutions.



Hand sanitizer for Hispanic laborers



Wildlife Food Plot publication video on social media



Livestock forage Crabgrass demonstration plot sown 4/23/2020



Assisting farmers with tobacco greenhouse production issues.