

May/June Highlights

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UT/TSU Cheatham County Extension is still here for YOU!!!

During the month of May, Cheatham County Extension staff were tasked with helping distribute masks to our community. Masks were distributed in a drive through format, which routed community members around to our office and helped with the long lines the health department received during testing. Due to the need in the community, we also had a night distribution and a weekend distribution. In total, our office helped to distribute over 2,500 masks to our community.

On May 30th, 4-H Agents, Tammi Fralick and Sierra Knaus and Family Consumer Science Agent, Aneta Eichler, volunteered to help with a food distribution at Ashland City Elementary School. One Generation Away sponsored the food distribution and more than 300 Cheatham County families were able to receive free food.



4-H Youth Development

Since traditional 4-H camp was canceled this year, all youth signed up to participate in camp received a “camp in a box” as a surprise. The box included a camp shirt, paracord bracelet kit, ingredients to make s’mores, a playground ball, and water balloons. All of our camp leaders helped make videos to go along with the contents. Videos were posted on our youtube page for campers to watch. The videos included gun safety, flag ceremonies, how to play Gau Gau, how to play 4 square, tie dye, making a paracord bracelet, and how to make s’mores at home. The kids and parents were so happy to get something to help the kids enjoy their “campless” summer.



Cheatham County Master Gardeners

The Cheatham County Master Gardeners have been busy during this spring. Although they cannot hold regular meetings, they have been working on projects throughout the county such as the Courthouse lawn and Government Services Complex. They have also maintained a pollinator garden at Cheatham Dam. During quarantine, many of the members of our association have spent time working on their own yards. To spotlight our members, a series of videos is being created by Master Gardener Coordinator, Sierra Knaus, and Tammi Fralick. The videos are being shared through social media and on our YouTube Channel- UT/TSU Cheatham County Extension.



Family & Consumer Sciences

Family and Consumer Sciences Programs Focus on Resilience

FCS Agents across the state have partnered in many creative ways to make sure we are providing our communities with the timeliest information. Cheatham County has been involved in two of those partnerships.

Aneta Eichler partnered with Lauren Patterson, Robertson County FCS Agent, to create a Facebook Learning group called Let's Preserve! We currently have 77 members engaging in weekly learning videos and live question and answer sessions. Members have learned how to safely preserve with a water bath canner, atmospheric steam canner and a pressure canner as well as best practices for freezing foods. We still have five weeks of information to share including canning meats, pickling, dehydrating, fermenting and vinegars.

Aneta also partnered with the Central Region Family and Consumer Sciences Agents to bring Wellness Wednesday topics to our Community. Each week's topic provides Facebook posts, news articles and information sheets. A sample of topics include healthy eating, physical activity, hydrating, financial wellness and strengthening relationships. A new topic is produced each Wednesday.

Other activities include:

13 Teams completed Walk Across TN. We collectively walked 15,283 miles in 8 weeks!

Taught 8 hours of parenting curriculum to mom at domestic violence shelter (zoom)

Taught one gentleman Parenting Apart: Effective Co-parenting 4-hour class (zoom)

Worked with one couple on budgeting, debt management, credit repayment and bankruptcy education. 4 hours on zoom.

Over 300 masks have been sewn and distributed through our Family and Community Education Clubs. Masks have been provided to health care providers, food service providers, church members, and hospice employees. In addition, fifty headwraps have been sewn and distributed to health care providers.



Agriculture / Administration

As of right now, we are in Phase II of the University of TN and TSU “re-opening” protocol, which means we are open to the public. But, we can only allow one person at a time into our office. We can however, conduct one-on-one trainings (pesticide training, co-parenting classes, etc...), process soil samples, conduct pest diagnostics, or take care of other business with the individuals. If our COVID-19 numbers continue at a low level, we will enter Phase III on June 29th, which means all staff can come back to the work place, while those who do not feel safe doing so, can continue to work remotely. In spite of the challenges of the pandemic, our staff has continued to be very proactive in delivering educational programming. We also, now have our own sign by the entrance to the county complex (we are very proud of this new marketing piece).



Extension Ag Education and homeowner educational programs have been booming with activities. Although UT currently has a “no group meetings” policy until July 31st, farm calls to work with producers, homeowners, setting up demonstration plots, diagnosing plant pest issues, and programming (one-on-one) with Hispanic laborers continues. We are currently working on 3 test/demonstration plots across the county: a beef cattle forage crabgrass demonstration, a soybean “sentinel plot”, and our annual Dark Fired Tobacco variety research plot. We are also conducting a CPR/First Aid online training class for tobacco growers and their Hispanic laborers. Below are a few “Highlights” photos from some of our programming efforts.



Farm and “on-site” visits are critical for farmers in all production systems.



On-line CPR/First Aid Training for Hispanic Laborers. Right on their smart phones.



Assisting farmers and homeowners with plant pest issues.



Training young beef producers the technique of tail bleeding for cow pregnancy diagnosis



Under the guidance of UT Forage and Weed Specialists, we are studying the efficacy of a new broadleaf herbicide on pastures.