Lafayette County
University of MO
Extension Council
2012
Annual Report

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A unique partnership exists between University of Missouri Extension and local government. In Lafayette County, we’re proud of the many ways our partnerships with local government, organizations and coalitions have worked to improve lives of our residents. This annual report is intended to be a snapshot of program highlights. We look forward to continuing to help the residents of Lafayette County as they Live and Learn.

Olin Struchtemeyer     Lynda Johnson
Extension Council Chair        County Program Director

The Lafayette County Extension Council receives funding from the Lafayette County Commission and local donations. The Extension office also generates some income through sales of Lafayette County plat books and maps. These funds are used to operate and maintain the Lafayette County Extension Center. Furthermore, these funds are used as leverage to secure additional grant and program dollars to the benefit of Lafayette County residents.

2012 LAFAYETTE COUNTY EXTENSION COUNCIL | The Extension Council serves as an advocate for University of Missouri Extension in Lafayette County. Elected and appointed members provide assistance in setting and accomplishing extension education program goals and objectives, developing the annual operating budget and determining local educational priorities.

Olin Struchtemeyer, Chairman, Mayview  Angela Limback, Secretary, Alma
Bill Oelrichs, Vice Chair, Higginsville  Joe Piepmeier, Treasurer, Wellington
Christa Bell, Higginsville  Aaron Brandt, Concordia
Randy Dowell, Odessa  Joyce Haynes, City of Higginsville
Clark Heman, Napoleon  Jennifer Jellum, Lexington
Donna Limback, Farm Bureau  Debby Payne, Concordia
Gil Rector, County Commission  Josh Steffens, Lexington
Elizabeth Wagner, Odessa  Martha Wyssmann, Alma

LAFAYETTE COUNTY FACULTY

AGRICULTURE/ NATURAL RESOURCES
*Whitney Wiegel, Ag Business Specialist
Wyatt Miller, Agronomy Specialist
Patrick Davis, Livestock Specialist

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Georgia Stuart-Simmons, Community Development Specialist

FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES
*Lynda Johnson, Nutrition & Health Education Specialist
*Kathy Bondy, 4-H Youth Specialist
Lisa Wallace, Human Development Specialist
*Family Nutrition Associates:  Kathy Smith, Pam Gladbach & Dena Skinner
*Marsha Corbin, Healthy Lifestyle Alliance Associate
*Jen Butler, Physical Activity Associate

SUPPORT STAFF
*Judy Elling, Administrative Assistant

*Headquartered in Lafayette County

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WOMEN LANDOWNERS AG CONFERENCE Eighty-five participants learned about farm business organization choices, financial statements, personal organization, the economics of feeding cattle, cattle marketing programs, niche farming, farm recordkeeping software, farm timber, and conservation. Educating farm managers about these topics improves farm incomes and enhances the quality of our environment.

FARM & SMALL BUSINESS ESTATE PLANNING SHORT COURSE Empowered rural business owners with knowledge and tools to preserve businesses for generations to come and to provide income and jobs for rural residents. Nine business owners gained skills and confidence in creating successful estate and succession plans and reported a significant increase in their knowledge of the probate process, wills, trusts, taxes and other estate planning issues.

GOAT PRODUCTION WORKSHOP SERIES Fifteen novice and veteran goat producers increased knowledge and skills related to goat health, nutrition, and reproduction, increasing farm productivity, improving animal welfare and enhancing farm profitability.

VINEYARD PRUNING WORKSHOP Thirty vineyard owners and aspiring growers learned to prune vines for vineyard health and productivity. This workshop supported a growing Missouri agricultural industry that is making a positive impact on the state and county economy.

FENCE LAW SEMINAR Landowners learn about Missouri’s fence law and prevent disputes and economic damages. When Missourians understand the laws which govern property rights and responsibilities in our state, it creates a better environment in which to live. Twelve Lafayette County landowners attended the Fence Law Seminar held in March of 2012.

ELECTRONIC SPREADSHEETS FOR FARM & BUSINESS MANAGERS Electronic spreadsheets give people the ability to manage and analyze their information quickly and accurately, improving decision-making and managerial efficiency. The Electronic Spreadsheets training teaches people how to use computer software to construct spreadsheets that can be used to help them analyze and solve problems. This training also benefits non-participants by improving the skills of entrepreneurs, business managers, and government officials, which improves the overall productivity and capacity for economic growth of the community. In 2012, six Lafayette County residents improved their management and analysis skills through this training.

AGRICULTURAL LENDER SEMINAR Held annually, this five-hour seminar is designed to improve agricultural lenders ability to service area farmers’ credit needs. University professors and Extension experts share up-to-date information regarding ag production costs, markets, legal, policy, and tax issues. Improving awareness and knowledge among agricultural lenders cultivates better relationships between farmers and banks. Given the capital intensiveness of farming, these relationships are pivotal to a vibrant agricultural economy.

PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE TRAINING When used according to label directions, crop protection chemicals improve farmers’ ability to defend their crops and pastures against weeds, insects, and diseases. Laws exist to restrict the use of some pesticides to educated/licensed applicators. University Extension partners with the Missouri Department of Agriculture to educate and license farmers who wish to apply restricted-use pesticides on their farms. In 2012, over 90 people completed the training offered through the Lafayette County Extension Center.

INDIVIDUAL AG CONSULTATIONS In 2012, Extension agricultural specialists serving Lafayette County responded to over 600 requests from Lafayette County farmers for assistance in making farm management decisions.

NEWSLETTERS, ARTICLES, RADIO INTERVIEWS University Extension agriculture specialists use a variety of media outlets to communicate research-based knowledge & information to Lafayette County clientele. In 2012, Extension agricultural specialists wrote or participated-in over 80 media articles/interviews that were available to Lafayette County residents. Lafayette County media and residents view Extension as a reliable source of relevant information and practical training.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS & PROGRAMS University Extension partners with and offers services to other agricultural organizations within Lafayette County. University Extension agriculture specialists presented at 7 different Lafayette County agricultural organization meetings in 2012. Presentation topics ranged from nitrate toxicity in drought-stressed corn to aflatoxin concerns to livestock management. The audience for these presentations was well over 400 people in total. Partnerships and presentations like these strengthen the knowledge and community-base of the county’s farmers and ag businesses.
HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

ACTIVE & HEALTHY SCHOOL PROGRAMS With assistance of MU Extension training & consultations, faculty in all six area public school districts have implemented Active & Healthy School Programs. As a result, over 2,234 students, grades K-5, in Lafayette County have increased their physical activity and make healthier nutrition choices. Through the AHS programs, teachers lead multiple classroom activity breaks (3 to 5 minutes long) to foster better learning and reduce discipline issues; and a variety of activity zones or stations are set up on the playground so all students can be more active. Studies suggest the prevalence of obesity is more strongly related to decreases in energy expenditure than to increases in calorie consumption; and active children have a better chance of becoming active adults.

HEART TO HEART: THE HEART TRUTH FORUM 172 attended the Heart to Heart: Health Forum for Women that focused on the #1 killer of women, heart disease. Free health screenings, a keynote address on “Strong Hearts, Strong Bodies, Strong Minds”, and workshops including Go Red for Women-the Heart Truth; Vitamin D-What’s All the Hype?: Healthy Transitions-Menopause; and Don’t Let Stress Get You Down provide key information to help empower women to improve health. Surveys indicated 40% of participants were first-time attendees; 59% felt better prepared to care for self & health; 39% felt better prepared to talk with healthcare providers; 39% will manage chronic health conditions better; 71% plan to eat more heart healthy; 75% plan to exercise more. This programming reduces healthcare costs, saving taxpayer dollars and lowering insurance premiums, and is a collaborative effort involving MU Extension, local health departments, area hospitals, and Health Care Coalition.

MATTER OF BALANCE 14 individuals participated in A Matter of Balance, an 8-week program designed to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. Participants learned to set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors, and learned simple exercises to increase strength and balance. When you support MU Extension’s Matter of Balance program, participants will increase their physical activity and may improve strength, balance and flexibility, resulting in reduced risk for falls, better overall health and greater independence. These health benefits decrease the likelihood of a participant entering a nursing home, which costs on average $51,465 per year in Missouri. The money saved benefits the community by keeping more discretionary income in circulation locally. It also keeps people actively, independently contributing to society longer.

FOCUS ON KIDS 86 divorcing parents learned how to break the cycle of negative parenting by developing co-parenting skills. This reduces need for child abuse, social and mental health services, and legal fees on child support and visitation in the community. Participants overwhelmingly reported they were more knowledgeable about the effect of divorce on children and gained tools to enhance their co-parenting skills.

MISSOURI ON THE MOVE walking program was implemented in every community in Lafayette County. Over 700 walkers tracked their activity level and were encouraged to increase their steps by 2000 steps or more over the course of the eight week program. Participants reported having better attention spans, feeling better mentally and physically, weight loss, improved joint pain, improved sleep, enjoyed team spirit and felt more motivated to move. The majority of the walkers reported that they will continue walking on a routine basis after the program ended.
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H PARTICIPANTS  415 members in thirteen community clubs gained life skills in decision making, public speaking, and working with others. Members learn by doing under the guidance of adult volunteers who teach projects ranging from aerospace and arts to veterinary science and wood science. Clubs also involve youth in community service, camping, citizenship experiences and educational trips.

4-H MEMBERS SUPPORTED BY YOUTH AND ADULT LEADERS  280 adult and youth volunteers assisted members in project and club work. Volunteers create, support and are part of the 4-H community. National statistics suggest that the average Missouri volunteer contributes 100 hours per year. Valuing their time at $18.80 per hour, based on average Missouri incomes, the contribution of Lafayette County 4-H volunteers was worth more than $526,400 in 2012.

4-H COMMUNITY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP  Community service is integral to positive youth development programs. Missouri 4-H youth report significantly more leadership experiences and higher scores on internalizing the value of service than their non-4-H peers. In 2012 Lafayette County 4-H members participated in programs to support the military, Adopt a Highway, Relay for Life and distributed food for food pantries and Christmas baskets, Toys for Tots and provided snack packs for Harvesters. 100% of 4-H Clubs participated in Community Service projects.

4-H BUILDING LIFE SKILLS  Life skills are defined in a variety of ways. 4-H gives special attention to youths’ interest, attitudes and engagement in science, engineering and computer technology. Active members spend almost ten times more of their out-of-school time engaged in science-based activities than their non-4-H peers. Project work builds important life skills. In 2012 Lafayette County members participated with nearly 1400 Lafayette County 4-H/FFA Fair Building exhibits and nearly 400 livestock and small animal exhibits.

“Through 4-H I have become more confident, outgoing, responsible and hard working. It’s sad for me to see this chapter in my life come to an end, but I feel it will always be a part of me because it made me who I am.”
Ten year 4-H member

“This is my last year of 4-H, my last 4-H story, my last club meeting, my last horse show and my last everything. These past 11 years have developed me as a woman and I am very grateful. I feel as if my life is just starting and 4-H was definitely my guiding star in shaping my future. I recently changed my major and I feel that my involvement with children through 4-H has developed my interest in middle school education. I hope to continue my involvement in 4-H and look forward to using the skills I learned as I embark on the next chapters of my life.”
Eleven year 4-H member
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TASTE THE FRESHNESS, BUY LOCAL Programs continue to build capacity of local foods movement and offer training for producers involved with the Lafayette County Farmer’s Markets in Higginsville, Lexington, & Concordia to increase profits, product quality, and marketing skills. With the support of the City of Odessa, an additional Farmers Market location opened in 2012. The implementation of EBT/ debit & credit technology is allowing SNAP recipients to make fresh food purchases at the Lexington Farmers Market. Social Innovation in Missouri (SIM) dollars funded cold storage units for food pantries increasing access to fresh produce for 300 limited resource families.

COMMUNITY WALKABILITY projects improve environments to encourage physical activity. SIM resources funded development of Master Connectivity Plans for Higginsville and Lexington, establishing priorities for sidewalk and ADA-accessible infrastructure. In addition, over 4000 linear feet of sidewalk were installed to improve safety for students walking to school and increase community access for physical activity.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT In Lafayette County, during 2012, business development specialists with MU Extension and the Small Business Centers served 14 people and their companies with business start-up and management counseling. 36 attended business training workshops. Business owners in Lafayette County reported the following impact: 24 new jobs; $768,788 in loans and investments in business; and $276,000 in increased sales.

MU EXTENSION NON-CREDIT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 242 Lafayette County residents increased knowledge, enhanced professional skills, & leadership through MU continuing education workshops, conferences, and institutes. Training is provided for firefighters, nurses, veterinarians, & businessmen, among others.

OLD TRAILS REGIONAL TOURISM PARTNERSHIP (OTRTP) is promoting economic development entrepreneurship, and agri-tourism in a nine-county region including Lafayette County. The OTRTP used collective marketing through their website, social media and a partnership with Missouri Life Magazine to encourage visitors to come to the region. More than 70 stakeholders participated in a regional economic summit hosted by the organization, focused on changing economic strategies for rural America.

FAMILY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

FAMILY NUTRITION PROGRAM participants learn about nutrition, make healthier meal & snack choices, eat breakfast more often, are more willing to try new foods, and increase their physical activity. According to the Trust for America’s Health, for every $1 invested in health prevention measures, Missouri taxpayers can expect to save $5.80 in health care costs paid out by the state. Children who improve nutrition & exercise habits achieve higher test scores. 3432 youth and adults participated in FNP programs in schools, libraries, WIC clinics, Head Start, food pantries and “Food Power”. 

Impact of FNEP Programs:
90% are more aware of nutrition
65% made healthier food choices
83% improved hand washing
62% increased their level of physical activity