

March 2021

From the Director's Desk

The Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Staff is committed to serving the citizens of Montgomery County in the areas of Agriculture (Livestock and Horticulture), Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development. If you are unfamiliar with any of our programs, please stop by and visit us at 203 West Main Street, Troy. We would love to share all that we have to offer with you in person. We hope that you will take the time to read through our newsletter and reach out to us with any questions you may have or register for one of our upcoming programs.

The information below includes three great opportunities for local farmers in Montgomery County. The first opportunity provides farms with the opportunity to receive free PPE for their workers. The second opportunity provides information regarding the Covid vaccine for farmworkers and the third opportunity provides more information regarding a great marketing opportunity to increase customer base/support for your local farm.

Personal Protective Equipment Available for Local Farms

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 among farm workers, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is working with Cooperative Extension to provide personal protective equipment to workers on local farms. Materials to be distributed include cloth masks, procedure masks (also known as surgical masks), face shields, hand sanitizer, hand soap and cleaning supplies. Please call us at (910) 576-6011 to request the items needed.

Covid Vaccine Available for Local Farms

All frontline essential workers are now eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine, including people who work in food and agriculture. For more information and/or to register online, visit: <https://www.montgomerycountync.com/news-events/covid-vaccine-information>

Forms can also be provided in our office. Stop by to pick one up or give us a call and we can email it to you.

What is the NC Farms App?

The App provides a very simple, mobile and user-friendly way for visitors to find local destinations to shop, eat, learn and enjoy what makes North Carolina a great place to visit. It was developed by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the purpose of this app is to connect local residents and visitors to farmers and locally grown products from across the state. Anyone can download the free app.



Why should I list my farm on the Visit NC Farms App?

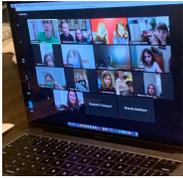
- Showcasing your farm on the app allows you to reach a broader audience of potential customers and repeat patrons.
- You'll be listed among an expansive and ever-growing collection of agriculture-based offerings.
- With both a map and a list view, users will be able to easily find the farm closest to them or filter based on offerings.
- Your farm listing will feature a brief summary, engaging imagery, and push button shortcuts to call, visit your website, or get directions.
- User and member feedback ensures that the app stays relevant and up to date.
- Your farm listing gives you access to real-time marketing opportunities through push notifications to app users.

If you are a farm in Montgomery County interested in including your business in the Visit NC Farms App, please contact Chrissy Haynes at (910) 576-6011 or by email at chrissy_haynes@ncsu.edu for more information.



4-H Happenings in Montgomery County

Tracy Blake, 4-H Youth Development



Montgomery County 4-H youth are continuing to stay connected virtually through the Be You Montgomery Program. This month, 19 youth picked up kits and logged-on to learn about the connection between heart health and dental hygiene in honor of Heart Health Awareness Month. Dr. Terry Wood DMD, a local dentist in Troy, donated toothbrushes for all of the youth who participated. During the meeting, the youth also learned how to make heart healthy S'mores and stay active with our nutrition educator, Elizabeth Thompson, and FCS Agent, Rhonda Peters. Several youth made donations to our A & T sponsored food drive supporting small farmers and hungry families in the community as well. Next month's Be You Montgomery meeting will focus on up-cycling household items into something new. Registration: <https://forms.gle/ukuSgxiuqBChvu7A7>



Following the guidance of the new NC Governor's order, which increases indoor occupancy to 25 people, we are planning to offer face to face programs for youth over the summer. In addition, with the return to plan B face to face instruction in Montgomery County Schools, we are looking forward to offering the embryology (quail egg incubation) school program to 2nd graders across the county next month.

For more information regarding Montgomery County 4-H Programs or to register your child (ages 5 – 18) in 4-H, please contact Tracy Blake, 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent at (910) 576-6011.

Empowering Youth & Families Program Updates

Sara Little, EYFP Program Assistant



A free meal, fun games and activities, developing communication skills, and quality family... what do all these have in common? These are just a few opportunities you will have when participating in the Empowering Youth and Families Program (EYFP) this spring meeting on Tuesdays! Those who attend will be entered into a drawing to win tickets for a day of family fun.

The Empowering Youth and Families Program focuses on improving parenting skills of caregivers in order to assist their youth in making healthier choices, improve family relationships, and opioid prevention education. After a 10-week session of one meeting a week, you will have the chance to meet other families involved in EYFP across the state to develop a community event for your county.

The focus of this program is on middle-school youth, but is open to families with siblings who are fixing to enter middle school or just entered high school. Youth in middle-school are at the age of peer pressure and are becoming more independent and making decisions for themselves while also being exposed to new things. They will learn refusal skills, goal setting, identifying personality traits, and how to communicate openly to their caregivers.



Register today by link below or by scanning the QR code. For more information, please contact Sara Little EYFP program assistant at slittle6@ncsu.edu.

Registration Link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1AO2rsTMrgRvXmJPcA8c1vbVki2dsg8PRRMrJvsA0cK0/edit>



Family & Consumer Sciences Updates

Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent
Elizabeth Thompson, Nutrition Educator

Living Well Month

Raising kids, eating right, spending smart, living well – that’s the theme of the national Living Well Campaign that is being promoted by the Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, both at the national level and here in Montgomery County, North Carolina. The goal of the Living Well Campaign is to provide people with the education and information they need in order to “live well.” Whether you are trying to improve your physical health through nutrition and physical activity, make and stick to a budget, or get parenting tips to create stronger families, Extension probably has a research-based answer. Be sure to look for our daily wellness challenges on Facebook, as well as other Living Well information.



Meanwhile, consider these eight tips to make every month a “Living Well” month: (1) Engage children in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. Adults need at least thirty minutes of physical activity. (2) Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. (3) Eat a variety of healthful foods. (4) Read, read, read. (5) Learn something new. (6) Check out parenting, finance, nutrition and/or food preparation programs offered by Extension. (7) Maintain a healthy home. (8) Keep your family finances in check. If you have questions or need any additional information about these topics, please email rtpeters@ncat.edu



Small Farms Week Food Drive

Cooperative Extension at N.C. A&T has been conducting a food drive for the past several years as part of Small Farms Week. This drive celebrates each of our farmers and helps us to

feed food-insecure people right here in Montgomery County. Thank you to every single individual and organization that has contributed to this worthwhile cause. Without farmers, none of this would be possible. We look forward to meeting our goal – and having that table completely filled up! Stay tuned for total donations!



March is National Nutrition Month and is sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition Dietetics. Nutrition month focuses on helping people to make correct food choices as well as developing healthy eating and getting physically active. For the month of March, I challenge you to get up and get active. You can go out for a walk in the neighborhood, exercise with friends, do some jumping jacks- even dancing or clean-

ing the house will get you up and moving. The more fun you have, the more likely you will want to keep doing it. My family and I love being outside on beautiful days. If my boy could be outside all day, that is where he would be until it is dark! While being physically active, you also should consider eating a well-balanced diet every day. Try adding different kinds of fruits and vegetables to your plate each meal. Fruits and vegetables provide many beneficial nutrients and they are low in calories and high in both fiber and water so they will fill you up as well. Having these different fruits and vegetables will also help lower the risk of serious and chronic health conditions including obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, along with other conditions.

Here is a simple/delicious recipe to include fruits at breakfast. If you are allergic to peanut butter, you do not have to add the peanut butter.

Breakfast Banana Split

Ingredients:

- 1 small banana
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- ½ c. low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 2 Tbsp. granola cereal
- ½ c. strawberries, sliced (blueberries or other fruit can be substituted)



Directions:

Peel banana and slice strawberries. Spread peanut butter over banana. Spoon yogurt into the middle of banana. Top with granola and strawberries or whatever fruit you picked.

To find out more about FCS programs in Montgomery County, visit www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu or visit us on Facebook. If you would like to discuss bringing programs to your community, please call Rhonda Peters or Elizabeth Thompson at (910) 576-6011 or email rtpeters@ncat.edu or eathompson@ncat.edu

Agriculture Updates

Kaitlyn Lamaster, Extension Agent, Horticulture

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

The Montgomery County Beekeeper's Association met virtually on February 18th, 2021 at 6PM. The group does not plan to meet in March. Instead, members and community members are encouraged to join the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association virtually for their spring 2021 web series. Dates for the event include March 18th (7-9PM), March 25th (5:30-7:15PM), and April 1st (7-9PM). Access information regarding the event will be shared as the dates approach. More information can be found at <https://www.ncbeekeepers.org/special-events/ncsba-spring-2021-web-series>.



If you are interested in attending future meetings or learning more about the group, please contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at kaitlyn_lamaster@ncsu.edu.

Plant Pathogens 101



A Plant Pathogens 101 workshop has been formulated between the Montgomery County Horticulture agent, the Moore County Horticulture agent, and the Richmond County Commercial Horticulture agent. The date has been set to March 5th at 12PM. The workshop has been approved for pesticide certification credits NODX & L. The workshop will help commercial growers and homeowners understand the plant pathogens that could be infecting their plants. It will serve in aiding attendees in determining what type of pathogen they are dealing with as well as the steps needed to obtain

a positive identification. Registration and more information can be found at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/plant-pathogens-101-tickets-139727355281>

NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Montgomery County

The Montgomery County Extension Master Gardeners met virtually on March 3rd, 2021 at 1:00PM. The group reviewed ideas for fundraisers throughout 2021, the new Intranet system for North Carolina Cooperative Extension Gardener Volunteers, and potentials for future educational events.

The group discussed having their spring plant sales. Plans are in place but the date is to be determined.

New Volunteers have been working on their initial training to gain Master Gardener certification. They are just about halfway through the course and meeting virtually to become a certified Master Gardener!

The group plans to meet on Wednesday, April 7th at 1:00PM. The meeting will be hybridized to allow a small group to meet in person and others to join in virtually.

If you are interested in joining the group or learning more about the Master Gardeners and what they do, please contact Kaitlyn Lamaster at kaitlyn_lamaster@ncsu.edu or call 910-576-6011 ext. 26.

Agriculture Updates

Jamie Warner, Extension Agent, Livestock

New United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Announced: In December, 2020 President Joe Biden nominated former Iowa Governor, Tom Vilsack for his pick as the 32nd United States Secretary of Agriculture. On February 23rd, the Senate confirmed this nomination with a vote of 92-7. This isn't Vilsack's first rodeo in this position as he served that post for eight years under Barak Obama. Now that he has been confirmed, he is set to work on helping farmers hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, which has sickened thousands of workers, created production complications and logistical dilemmas and deepened the challenges of hunger and food insecurity in the nation.



Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Deadline Extended: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will continue to provide additional assistance through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). The deadline of February 26th was eliminated so applications for the expanded eligibility for some agricultural producers and commodities as well as the updated payments to producers who previously applied for the program are still being considered. **Producers have been given a minimum of 30 additional days to contact their local FSA office.**

Montgomery County is serviced by the Area FSA office located in Lee County. For help from this FSA office contact Marlo Dunn, County Executive Director at 919-775-3407 Ext. 2 or marlo.dunn@usda.gov. All USDA Service Centers are open for business but you are encouraged to schedule an appointment. Please visit farmers.gov/cfap2/apply for more information.



North Carolina State of Agriculture Address: On Wednesday, February 24th the NC Department of Agriculture Commissioner, Steve Troxler presented his State of Agriculture for North Carolina. Also invited to speak was Dr. Blake Brown from NC State which addressed the Economic Outlook for the state's agriculture industry. The event was sponsored by Farm Bureau. During the course of his speech, Commissioner Troxler promised to continue his commitment and support of the agriculture industry and farmers of our state. He also promised that we WOULD have a State Fair in 2021. If you missed it, the recording can be accessed at the following

site: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/6xoydcopmyhzw8f/troxlerStateOfAg.mp4?dl=0>

Farms, Food and You Podcast: The most recent episode, “*Putting Advanced Farm Tech To Work*” is a great way to see how mechanization over the last hundred years has helped farmers produce MORE food, MORE efficiently than ever. Is it going to be enough to help them feed a fast-growing world population? Tune in to find out as Award-winning producer Brandon Batten, of Four Oaks, discusses the present and future of ag tech on his family farm. Brandon holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree from NC State, manages production on his family’s farm and owns Flying Farmer, a company dedicated to using technology and data analysis for farmers and land managers. This episode as well as past episodes can be accessed here: <https://cals.ncsu.edu/farms-food-and-you/>.



2021 Regional Chicken Project Distribution Day: Registration for the *2021 Regional Chicken Project* closed on January 12th and chicks were ordered in early February; however, bad weather in the Midwest (where the hatchery is located) along with some shipping problems were going to delay the project until the end of April. Since this year’s show is tentatively set for the end of April, the Project Planning Committee worked quickly to secure a new vendor located in NC to procure our chicks. Chicks were picked up on February 20th in Claremont and were brooded over the weekend before being distributed the following week to showmen. Montgomery County Showmen received their laying hen chicks a few days sooner than originally anticipated on February 24th and because of the hatchery mix-up, this year they will be showing Rhode Island Blues, Speckled Sussexes, Barred Rocks, Buff Orpingtons, Black Australorps and Silver Laced Wyandottes in addition to the Rhode Island Reds that were originally expected. Broiler chicks are still being incubated (locally), will be hatched at a later time and distributed shortly thereafter.



2021 Youth Market Turkey Show Registration: Each year, the Prestage Department of Poultry Science along with several of NC’s poultry companies sponsor the annual Youth Market Turkey Show which is held during the first weekend of the State Fair. The show is for any youth ages 5-19 interested in learning more about turkey production, care and poultry showing. Registration closed on March 2nd and Montgomery County had six 4-Hers enter the competition which is slated to be mid-October.

Upcoming Virtual Events in February

4th – Reproductive Strategies for Beef Cattle: Join Dr. Brent Scarlett of Scarlet Mobile Veterinary Services as he discusses proven reproductive strategies for beef cattle producers in the Piedmont. This is the first session of the four-part Piedmont Regional Beef Series. The seminars are FREE but registration is required. <http://go.ncsu.edu/prbcwebinarseries21>



11th – Finishing Beef Cattle on Forages: For part two of the Regional Beef Series, Josh Baker of Southeast Agriseeds will address the group about various forages which are best suited for finishing Piedmont produced Beef Cattle. <http://go.ncsu.edu/prbcwebinarseries21>

16th – Bonanno’s Five Year Evaluation: It’s hard to believe it, but Dr. Richard Bonanno has been the Director of NC Cooperative Extension for five years now. As part of his review process, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will be holding a public seminar so that Dr. B can share Extension’s programs and successes since he took the helm. He also plans to discuss the future and ask for feedback from stakeholders in an effort to improve Extension programs for clients on the state level and in all 100 counties. The public session will be lived streamed via YouTube: go.ncsu.edu/bonanno-review-livestream.



18th – Evaluation of Carcass Quality in Live Cattle: Dr. Ty Lawrence of West Texas A&M University will be available to talk about live cattle evaluation, including carcass quality and tips for increasing quality before marketing. <http://go.ncsu.edu/prbcwebinarseries21>

25th – Warm Season Forage Options & Research Updates: Dr. Deidre Harmon will round out the final installation of the Regional Beef Series. During this session, Dr. Harmon will address the common varieties of warm season forages and the best areas to grow each one. She will also be talking about the current forage research projects that NC is conducting at the various research stations. <http://go.ncsu.edu/prbcwebinarseries21>



Carolina Farm Credit Corporate Mission Grant Opportunity: Each year, Carolina

Farm Credit supports organizations with grants of up to \$5,000 to help in their endeavors and to further the future of agriculture in our region of North Carolina. Applications must be submitted online by June 30th. You will be asked to attach a copy of your organizations W9 to the application prior to submission. Apply with the following link:

<http://carolinafarmcredit.com/about/community-support/corporate-mission-fund>

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Ask Extension

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension is a service that is meant to help serve the general community, both professionally and personally. If you have questions regarding any topic within Horticulture, Livestock, Family and Consumer Science, or Youth Development please do not hesitate to reach out! The office can be called at 910-576-6011 and your question will be directed to the agent that best fits your category. Emails can also be sent directly to agents that you feel would best know the answer. It is a good idea to include pictures if you have a specific situation at hand. The list of agents can be found at <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/people/>.

STAY UPDATED!!!!



If you haven't "liked" us or "followed" us on Facebook, take the time to do it today! Our facebook and webpages are updated regularly with news articles, posts, and pictures of current and future programs as well as news you can use. Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/North-Carolina-Cooperative-Extension-Montgomery-County-117219574995061/> and on our website www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email Kim_Gibson@ncsu.edu

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