

## *North Carolina Cooperative Extension Montgomery County*



December, 2023

### **From the Director's Desk**

As we prepare for this last month of 2023 and head into a New Year in 2024, we stop to reflect on all that Montgomery County Cooperative Extension has accomplished in our community and we are making plans for new opportunities ahead! There is much work to do and I am excited to lead a wonderful team of professionals with NC Cooperative Extension in Montgomery County! We have lots of wonderful ideas and programs that our entire staff will bring in the New Year. If you have any suggestions of programs that you would like to see offered or if you would like to serve on any of our advisory committees (Agriculture, 4-H & Family and Consumer Sciences or our Extension Advisory Committee), please let us know. Now is the time to get involved. We need the voices of our community to continue to make the greatest impact possible. We look forward to a New Year in 2024 as we aim to bring research based knowledge from both of our land grant universities (NC State University and NC A&T State University) to the citizens of Montgomery County.

We hope that each of you have a very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year! For more information regarding any of our Cooperative Extension Programs in Montgomery County, please contact our office at 910-576-6011 or visit our website at [montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu](http://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu)

Our County Extension Director recently received a grant from the NCDOT through their Bicycle Helmet Initiative program to provide 100 helmets to children in our county. At this year's Candor Tree Lighting, 53 kids received a helmet free



of charge with the bicycles that were won during the event. Each year, more than 3,000 pedestrians and 850 bicyclists are hit by vehicles in NC. On average, about 160 pedestrians and 20 bicyclists are killed each year in NC. Properly-fitted helmets can reduce the risk of head injuries by at least 45%. Less than half of children under age 14, wear

a bike helmet. Cooperative Extension looks forward to holding more events like this one in the near future to help properly fit more children for helmets in our community.



Montgomery County Tree of Hope Christmas Assistance Program is co-sponsored by Montgomery County 4-H & NC Cooperative Extension along with Montgomery County Schools, Communities in Schools and the Montgomery County Partnership for Children. Over 400 children from Montgomery County have been identified to benefit from the program and distribution of gifts will occur on December 13th. Be on the lookout for photos in our next newsletter of this wonderful outreach. We would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who sponsored children this Holiday season by choosing a child to adopt, donating to our coat and toy drive or by donating money to the cause. We are so appreciative of the support of our community. Because of you, we can make a difference in our county one child at a time.



## Miranda Thompson, 4-H Youth Development

Last month Montgomery County 4-H shared that we are participating in the Adopt A Cow Program from Discover Dairy!

We wanted to share a little more about Sadie, the Jersey Cow from Dusty Road Farm in Statesville, North Carolina!

She is now a little over three months old and weighs one hundred and twenty pounds. She is now standing at about 34 inches tall! To achieve this growth Sadie has been well cared for and is drinking a gallon of milk a day! Over the next few weeks Sadie will transition from her calf hutch into the group pens to live with the other cows.

As Sadie grows she will stop drinking milk and then begin to drink water and eat solid foods. Did you know that cows on average drink about 40 gallons of water a day! That is about a bathtub full of water every single day!

Be sure to follow upcoming posts all about Sadie on the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Facebook page.



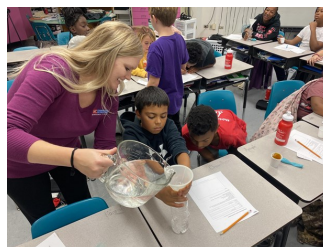
Christmas vacation is the perfect time to learn new skills while also helping others in our community. Montgomery County 4-H and FCS have partnered to offer a great program for youth ages 9-14 on Friday, December 22.

Youth will make a "gift from the kitchen" that they get to take home. They will also have fun making various crafts (some that they may take home, and some that they will give away as part of our community service activity). We will end our day by traveling to Autumn Care to play Christmas Bingo and spread holiday cheer with the residents.

Please click the link below to register your youth for this fun day.

Youth will have to be registered in 4-H Online and payment will have to be made by December 8 at 5pm. Space is limited to the first 12 registrants. Cost will be \$25 for each youth. Only youth ages 9 to 14 may participate.

<https://forms.gle/YFcN6SoU4CbFszVC7>



## Family & Consumer Sciences Updates Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent Elizabeth Thompson, Nutrition Educator

### Nutrition Programming with Preschoolers Underway

Our nutrition educator and FCS educator have been working hard to bring the Go, Glow, Grow program to Pre-K classrooms across the county. In November, we have worked with students at Candor Head Start, Green Ridge Elementary, Troy Elementary and Star Elementary. We plan to finish the program with all pre-k classrooms in the spring of 2024.

Heightened childhood obesity rates continue to be a concern across the nation and state of North Carolina. The situation is no different in rural Montgomery County. According to the 2020 Montgomery Community Health Assessment compiled by the Montgomery County Department of Public Health, 49% of public school students in the county are either overweight, obese, or extremely obese. High school and middle school rates are typically higher than elementary school rates. Mt. Gilead Elementary school has a 40% overweight and obese rate, Candor Elementary has a 51% overweight and obese rate and Green Ridge Elementary 46% overweight and obese rate. Research tells us that the early years are especially important for establishing habits that will last a lifetime.



Encouraging healthy eating and physical activity during the preschool years will have long-term benefits.



## Dollars and Sense

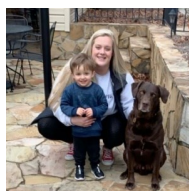
Research shows that students who have access to high-quality financial education have better financial outcomes as adults that result in less debt and a higher quality of life. Even from an early age, children need to develop the skills to help choose between different career and education options and manage any discretionary funds they may have, whether from allowances or part time jobs. These funds may entail the use of savings accounts or bank cards. In 2005, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development recommended that financial education start as early as possible and be taught in schools. Building it into curriculums from an early age allows children to acquire the knowledge and skills to build responsible financial behavior throughout each stage of their education. This is especially important as parents may be ill-equipped to teach their children about money: levels of financial literacy are generally low around the world.

In Montgomery County, the Family and Consumer Science Agent and the Nutrition Educator partnered with Communities In Schools Montgomery County to pilot the "Dollars and Sense" program with fifty-one fifth graders at Candor Elementary School. This program helped students learn the importance of budgeting, of distinguishing between needs and wants, and the importance of saving money for future needs and big wants.

Before the program started, more than half of the students (29) indicated that managing money was only a "little hard". However, by the end of the program, they had learned that a lot more goes into budgeting and stretching dollars than they had previously known. This eye-opening experience is vital to developing a healthy respect for the process of managing money, and not just expecting that money would always be available. At the end of the program, 75% of

students indicated that they would carefully think about the cost of an item before they made purchases in the future. In open-ended responses, students expressed learning that they have to "think smart" when it comes to spending money, that it is important to save and Not spend money, and that you need to make sure you have what you need before what you want. One student mentioned, "this isn't easy for our parents!" By the end of the program, students were able to identify specific ways they could personally save or earn money. One teacher stated, "this program was so important to the kids in my classroom. I wish someone had taught me these concepts at a young age - think about how much better off I'd be now!"

In addition to the program at Candor Elementary, we have also implemented the program at Star Elementary and Mt. Gilead Elementary. We are hoping to schedule with Page Street and Green Ridge in the near future.



## Elizabeth's Healthy Recipe Corner

### Featured Monthly Recipe – Winter Crisp

<https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/winter-crisp>



### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons margarine
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons flour (all purpose)
- 1 teaspoon lemon peel (grated)
- 5 cups apple (unpeeled, sliced)
- 1 cup cranberries (fresh)
- 2/3 cup rolled oats
- 1/3 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1/4 cup whole wheat flour

## Directions

Wash Hands with soap and water.

## Filling:

1. Combine sugar, flour, and lemon peel in a medium bowl and mix well.
2. Stir in apples and cranberries.
3. Spoon into a 6-cup baking dish.

## Topping:

1. Combine oats, brown sugar, flour, and cinnamon in a small bowl.
2. Stir in melted margarine.
3. Sprinkle topping over filling.
4. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes or until filling is bubbly and top is brown.
5. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## Agricultural Updates Owen Washam, Horticulture & Forestry

### Flora Fridays:

Flora Friday articles are uploaded regularly to our website. Check often for articles on plants and trees of interest in Montgomery County. In the most recent editions features included Uwharrie native oak trees, and late fall color in the woods and landscape. Read more by clicking here: [Flora Fridays](#)



*Fagus grandifolia*, the American beech tree in its full fall color glory

### Baby, Its Dry Outside:

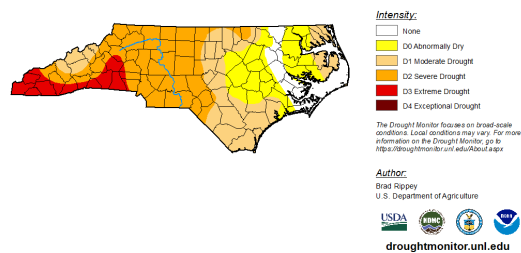
According to the National Drought Monitor, all of Montgomery County is under severe drought conditions. Besides this fact, folks that watch the weather know that rain has been sparse here and across the state in the past few months. During recent harvest and field management practices, growers can perceive the effects of drought in crop moisture content or the dust kick ups. Foresters and landowners are particularly affected

due to the increased risk of fire. While there are no current burn bans, the entire community is advised to remain vigilant and practice safe burning. The lack of rain, combined with low humidity and high wind can be disastrous combined with fire. **Think twice. Adhere to local restrictions, obtain a permit, watch the weather and never leave fires unattended.** For more information, you can access our Forest Land Owner Info Center at:

[montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/2023/11/forest-info-center](http://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/2023/11/forest-info-center).

U.S. Drought Monitor  
North Carolina

November 21, 2023  
(Released Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2023)  
Valid 7 a.m. EST



**NC STATE** EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Montgomery County

The Extension Master Gardener Volunteers (EMGs) of Montgomery County met on November 6, 2023. The group discussed updating County bylaws in line with State bylaws, the end of year party, and plans for 2024 including proposed officers. The EMGs will elect officers at their Dec. 4 party, and resume their regular monthly meetings on Jan. 8th 2024. Both the Bylaw Committee and Plant Sale Committee met in November to plan for the group's future.

A cohort of 10 applicants were accepted for 2024 EMG Initial Training. These students will obtain educational and field experience weekly from January to May through N.C. Cooperative Extension Montgomery County. After Training and passing the final exam, students will continue on their path to EMG Certification by working as Interns with current Certified members. We are excited for Initial Training, and are developing engaging and fun ways to meet education goals. If you would like to join the list of community members interested in future Initial Trainings and Certification, please contact Owen Washam at [owen\\_washam@ncsu.edu](mailto:owen_washam@ncsu.edu) or (910) 576-6011.

## Community Connections

Owen Washam, Horticulture and Forestry Agent, has been busy making connections in Montgomery County. The goal is to promote courteous relationships between Cooperative Extension and local farmers, educators, and organizations within our service areas. In October, he met with leaders in the forestry and sustainable agriculture programs at Montgomery Community College. This past month, State Agronomist and former Extension employee Brad Thompson introduced Owen to many local farmers and crop producers. Finally, Owen and 4-H Agent Miranda Thompson visited Brutonville School to meet with students and educators to assess educational needs Extension can deliver. They have also been in contact with local Scouting organizations for future program delivery.

N.C. Cooperative Extension, Montgomery County is here to serve. Stop by our office, or call us if you'd like to connect with our Agents and learn more about all that we offer!

### Needs Assessment:

Owen Washam, Horticulture and Forestry Extension Agent, is enthusiastic about delivering quality programs to Montgomery County residents. He requests your response to the survey below to learn more about your needs and interests in his subject area:

<https://forms.gle/cNsuiR8HTb7kJZSa7>



SCAN ME



### 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](http://www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu). If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email [Kim\\_Gibson@ncsu.edu](mailto:Kim_Gibson@ncsu.edu)



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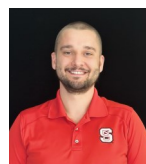
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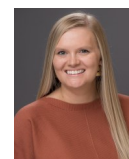
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### Ask Extension

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/>.



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