

April, 2024

## 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, Field Crops 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.

### Taste of Montgomery Farm to Table Event

Montgomery County Cooperative Extension will once again host a **farm-to-table event** to highlight **local, direct-sale agricultural producers** within Montgomery County. This event, Taste of Montgomery, is to be held this year **on May 10th starting at 6 PM** at the **James Garner Center (210 Burnette St. Troy, NC)** and **will be a family friendly event this year.**

With this event, the importance of local agriculture and the necessity to support our local farmers will be emphasized. This year's dinner will be **buffet style and will feature local meat and produce from area farmers.**

Tickets can be purchased at the Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Office (203 W Main St., Troy, NC 27371) priced at \$40 per ticket for adults. Children 13 and under will be \$25 each and they will receive a different meat selection with their meal. Be sure to reserve your spot to help learn about and support our local farmers! Tickets are on a first-come, first served basis and are limited. Proceeds from the event will help our Extension staff to offer programs within our community.

We are still looking for signature sponsors! If you are a local business and would like to be featured as a sponsor for our event, please contact Chrissy Haynes, County Extension Director at (910) 576-6011.



The poster features a woodcut-style illustration of a farm with a windmill, a barn, and a silo. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical layout. At the top, the event title 'TASTE OF MONTGOMERY' is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, 'Farm-to-Table' is written in a cursive font, followed by the date 'MAY 10TH, 2024' and the location 'MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NC'. A detailed ticket description follows: 'TICKET PURCHASE OF \$40 (\$25 FOR CHILDREN 13 & UNDER) WILL INCLUDE A MEAL CONSISTING OF FRESH PRODUCE, LOCAL HERBS, LOCAL MEATS AND OTHER LOCAL DELICACY.' The event details are split into two columns: the left column shows 'MAY 10' and '6-10 PM', while the right column shows 'JAMES GARNER CENTER' and '210 BURNETTE ST. TROY, NC 27371'. At the bottom left is the NC Cooperative Extension logo, and at the bottom right is contact information: 'For tickets, call 910-576-6011 or visit the Montgomery County Extension Office at 203 W Main St, Troy, NC 27371'. A small disclaimer at the very bottom reads: '\*NORTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER.\*'

**TASTE OF MONTGOMERY**  
*Farm-to-Table*  
MAY 10TH, 2024  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NC

TICKET PURCHASE OF \$40 (\$25 FOR CHILDREN 13 & UNDER) WILL INCLUDE A MEAL CONSISTING OF FRESH PRODUCE, LOCAL HERBS, LOCAL MEATS AND OTHER LOCAL DELICACY.

**MAY 10**  
6-10 PM

**JAMES GARNER CENTER**  
210 BURNETTE ST.  
TROY, NC 27371

For tickets, call 910-576-6011 or visit the Montgomery County Extension Office at 203 W Main St, Troy, NC 27371

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## Agricultural Updates

### Owen Washam, Horticulture & Forestry

### Emi Briggs, Livestock & Field Crops

#### Ag Leadership Day

This month has been busy in the Ag department. On March 14th, we had Ag Leadership Montgomery Day. We toured 4 locations. We started at the Sandhills Research Station and viewed the peach fields, the blueberry fields, the wheat fields, and rode the tram around the property. We discussed the importance the Sandhills Research Station has had on the peach industry. From the research station, we then traveled to the Perdue feed mill in Candor. We discussed how Perdue is a company that does everything in house. They not only breed, hatch, and grow the chickens but they also make all their chicken feed. The feed meal produces several different types of feed based on the growth stage of the chickens. Our third stop was Parson's Farms. They discussed farmers markets, fresh produce, their different varieties of strawberries and deer pressure on their crops. Our last stop of the day was Montgomery Sheep Farm. The owner, Joel Olsen, discussed how they have a sustainable operation. They not only create clean energy but use the sheep and poultry waste on the farm to fertilize the soil and regenerate the ground to continue to feed the sheep. They sell the sheep for meat as well as breed Great Pyrenees puppies. Everyone left the day with a greater understanding of how important agriculture is and how diverse it is right here in their home community.

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#### Montgomery County Cattlemen Association



This past month the Cattlemen's hosted Dr. Kirkman for a wonderful presentation on Beef Bio-Economics. Dr. Kirkman discussed how bull selection can affect your

profit for several generations and how other countries' imports and exports of beef affect our prices. Beef is seeing an all-time high of sell cost for all beef sales and consumers are seeing this reflection in the stores.

The Cattlemen's Association fundraiser was fantastic. Chrissy Haynes and I assisted with packaging meals. They sold all 450 plates and raised enough to cover their scholarship for a graduating student interested in furthering their education in agriculture.

The next cattlemen's meeting will be April 9th, 2024 from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm. If you are inter-

ested in becoming a cattlemen's member, please reach out to our office at 910-576-6011 or email [Emi\\_Briggs@ncsu.edu](mailto:Emi_Briggs@ncsu.edu).

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#### Swarm Season

The swarm season is starting. If you see a cluster of bees hanging on a limb (or other object), you need a beekeeper, NOT an exterminator. Please call the Cooperative Extension office to be put in contact with a Montgomery County Beekeeper. The primary swarm season is between March and May. When honey bees are swarming, they are not nearly as defensive as they are around their hive because they are not protecting brood (developing young bees) or honey stores. They are more concerned with scouting for a new home and staying in protective clusters around the queen. If disturbed or agitated, they will defend the cluster; therefore, it is advisable for people to keep their distance from a swarm of bees to avoid being stung. When in doubt, call a beekeeper!

Are you a beekeeper? Do you want to connect to others that have bees? The Montgomery County Beekeepers Association might be a great place to start. The Montgomery County Beekeepers will meet this month on April 18th from 6-8 pm at MCC in building 200. Please reach out to our office at 910-576-6011 if you're interested in joining this association.

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#### Soil Samples

April is here. Soil Samples are available for free starting April 1st. Soil Samples are an important tool for maintaining crop health. Whether the crop is your grass in your front yard or over 100 acres of wheat, a soil sample can make sure your plants are growing in optimum conditions.

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#### Upcoming Events:

Emi Briggs, the livestock and field crops agent will be hosting a Soil Sampling and Soil health seminar on April 5th from 9am - 12 pm. It will cover how to take a soil sample, how to maintain soil fertility,

how to read a soil sample report and more!. Please email [Emi\\_Briggs@ncsu.edu](mailto:Emi_Briggs@ncsu.edu) to RSVP for the free event or call our office at 910-576-6011 for more information.

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### 4-H Chicken Project Update

Our 4-Her's are hard at work raising their chickens and getting prepared for their show at White Lake FFA center on April 30th. They had their show training on March 26th from 5:30-7:30 in Hoke County. They discussed how to show their birds, project records books, and how the show will be judged. Everyone left filling ready to show and excited for what was to come.

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### Small Farms Week

We celebrated Small Farms Week at our 4-H Livestock Club meeting on March 18th, 2024. We had a potluck dinner and invited all the local small farms to the dinner. We had a few come and speak about their operations. Small farms are vital to our food chain and support many local grocery stores, especially in the meat industry.

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### AgSouth Farm Credit Grant

Each year, AgSouth Farm Credit supports non-profit organizations and farmers markets with grants of up to \$5,000 to help in their endeavors and to further the future of agriculture in our region of Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The application cycle for 2025 will open April 1st, 2024.

<https://www.agsouthfc.com/outreach/community-support/growing-our-communities-grant>

Montgomery County will have two farmer's markets this year. For information on how to join the markets or to get a grower's certificate, please contact Cooperative Extension at 910-576-6011. Troy Farmers Market (Town Stage Parking Lot): April 11, 7am-1pm Biscoe Farmer's Market (Biscoe Park): Will return in May.

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### High Path Avian Influenza Update (HPAI):

There is a lot going on with HPAI in the U.S. currently. Strict biosecurity is always recommended for your farms whether you have poultry or not. Biosecurity should always be taken seriously even if you only have a few animals in your flock, herd, or on your farm. If you have questions about HPAI, please give our office a call at 910-576-6011.

### Flora Friday

In March, Flora Fridays returned to two articles per month. Welcome, spring! In the March 8th edition, forest wildflowers that bud out in late winter and early spring were highlighted to readers. These plants are called spring ephemerals, meaning their flowers are only present for a short period of time at the beginning of the year. Readers were treated to two magnolia species in the March 22nd edition. Both are common accent plants around Montgomery county. To access all Flora Fridays, visit our website at <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/florafridays/>.




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## NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Montgomery County

Extension Master Gardener Initial Training continued in March. Students were instructed in the areas of insects, native plants, lawns, small fruits, and botany. In addition, the students were led by Owen Washam on their first class field trip. The group visited the community gardens managed by the Certified Extension Master Gardener Volunteers of Montgomery County, and toured Sandhills Horticultural Gardens on Saturday March 16th. The field trip exposed students to local volunteer opportunities, as well as provided them experiences in applied horticulture. The students will take one more field trip in April and continue class until their final exam in May. Upon passing their exams, students will graduate to intern status and begin their volunteer internship guided by Certified Extension Master Gardener Volunteers.





The Extension Master Gardener Volunteers met on March 4th for their monthly business meeting. There were numerous updates shared on community gardens managed by the group. The next meeting will be April 8th from 5:30 - 7:30 pm. The volunteers have been working hard rearing plants for their May sale in partnership with Montgomery Community College Sustainable Agriculture program. This year's plant sale will be May 3rd and 4th at the Extension Office, 203 W Main St. in Troy. For complete details visit

<https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/2024/03/plantsale/>

### Montgomery County Beekeepers Association



The Beekeepers meet the third Thursday each month from 6-8pm in the multipurpose room at MCC, with no December or July meetings. On March 21, the group met for a covered dish meal and presentations.

The meal was followed by a presentation from Kirk Kern of Bearding Bees Farm, also the group's Vice President. He discussed and demonstrated his methods for attracting and capturing swarms. Kirk recently presented this as a workshop at the NC State Beekeepers Association spring meeting on March 9th in New Bern. The next meeting will be on April 18th - please bring a dish to share.

### GAP Certification

Are you an agricultural producer interested in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification? For some farmers who sell to grocery stores, this certification is a requirement. If you need GAP certification, you must complete the following: a food safety plan, Extension provided training and paperwork, and an audit. The process from start to finish can take about a month. If you are interested in becoming GAP certified, contact Horticulture Agent Owen Washam at 910 576 6011 to learn more and plan for certification.

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

### GO GLOW GROW



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. In fact, 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. Research tells us that the early years are especially important for establishing habits that will last a lifetime. Encouraging healthy eating and ample physical activity during the preschool years will have long-term benefits.

The FCS Agent implemented the Go, Glow, Grow nutrition curriculum at Family Worship Ministries Learning Center, reaching a total of 14 preschoolers and one teacher. Based on the USDA's MyPlate, Go, Glow, Grow simplifies MyPlate for preschoolers. It is divided into just three sections labeled Go, Glow, and Grow. Each of these sections corresponds to the effects these food groups have on the body. Go foods contain the grains group foods that provide the body with energy. Glow foods contain the vegetable and fruit group foods that supply the body with vitamins and minerals to keep the body healthy and functioning properly. Grow foods contain protein and dairy foods that help the body grow and develop strong bones and muscles.



Through this curriculum, preschoolers learned to make the connection between eating healthy foods and beginning to live healthier lives. All six lessons were delivered to all students. The classroom teacher indicated that they believe the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development standards were fully met through the Go, Glow, Grow curriculum. The teacher reported that students looked forward to the lessons and that as a result of participation, students: try new foods; are

more willing to try more fruits and vegetables; are more willing to try whole grain foods; and know what foods are Go, Glow, and Grow. She shared the following, "One little girl would always turn her nose up at foods that looked "nasty" to her. Now, because of Ms. Rhonda, she will try one polite bite. The other children remind the ones who don't want to eat something to try one polite bite."

### Organ Wise Guys



Rhonda (FCS Agent) and Elizabeth (Nutrition Educator) wrapped up the new program at Troy Elementary with two of the five 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes. Organ Wise Guys

teaches young children about the importance of making healthy choices in their lives through learning about their internal organs. The goal of Organ Wise Guys programming is to educate children and adults about nutrition and healthy living, and to prevent childhood obesity. The key messages rely on the theme of empowerment, encouraging children to understand the importance of their health at a young age. The main "rules" of the OWG Club are to: eat a low fat and high fiber diet, drink lots of water, and get plenty of exercise. The program reached 19 youth through six one-hour lessons.

TryHealthy pre and post surveys were administered as part of this program. The average score between both classes on the pretest was 84%, but that score climbed to 94.5% at the post test - indicating knowledge growth in the areas of identification of fruits, dairy, vegetables, healthy snacks and physical activity. A follow up survey with the teachers involved in the program indicated that they noticed the following changes in her class as a result of the OWG program: students try new foods, the teacher talks more about health food options with her class; teacher incorporated more physical activity into her class; students are more willing to try more fruits and vegetables; students are more willing to try whole grain foods; students



drink more water; and students know what foods help keep their bodies strong and healthy. Additionally, one teacher shared the following "We tried whole-wheat muffins in class as part of the program, and a student asked what some of the ingredients were in the muffin. She went home and told her mom about it, and the mother made them at home."

Both Rhonda and Elizabeth are very excited to start this wonderful program up again with the rest of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes at Troy Elementary starting in April!

### Bingocize at Brutonville Community Center

Rhonda (FCS Agent) and Elizabeth (Nutrition Educator) also are piloting a BRAND NEW program at the Brutonville Community Center. It is called Bingocize and the goal of this program is to maintain or gain

improved mobility and independence, learn and use health information focused on falls reduction, improved nutrition and other self-care, all while engaging in a fun, social setting.



So far, we have completed six sessions of the program, with 14 remaining. Every session, participants are engaged in active education about nutrition and physical activity. We also get to taste test some healthy recipes along the way, and earn prizes for completing physical activity and nutrition challenges at home. We currently have an average attendance of around ten faithful ladies, and visitors are encouraged to attend. We hope to expand this program into other parts of the county as well. Any interested group should contact Elizabeth Callicutt or Rhonda Peters at (910) 576-6011 to schedule a session.

To find out more about FCS programs in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu](http://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 [rteters@ncat.edu](mailto:rteters@ncat.edu) or [eathompson@ncat.edu](mailto:eathompson@ncat.edu)

## Dollars and Sense at Green Ridge Elementary School

The CEO of the National Financial Educators Council states, "Many financial problems people face today started when they were young and making their first few financial decisions. Taking on too much debt, not investing early and failing to plan can take decades to recover from, and puts their long-term financial security at risk." Lower education levels have been associated with lower earning potential. According to the US Census, only 15% of Montgomery County residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Sixteen percent of Montgomery County residents are classified as living in poverty, as compared to the statewide average of 7%.



The FCS Agent and Nutrition Educator partnered with Communities In Schools to provide the Dollars and Sense program to fifth grade students at Green Ridge Elementary School in Montgomery County. The program discussed the basics of financial literacy, the determination of needs and wants, the importance of building savings from a young age, and making wise spending choices. As part of the program,



students participated in a hands-on spending simulation where they had to budget their "allowance" while making spending choices at booths relevant to their age. Students were assigned a certain number of pets, and pet

food and pet care were also part of their responsibility. Additionally, students had to pay "taxes" as well as make a charitable contribution and tuck money away as savings.

Fifty-three students and two teachers participated in the event. Prior to the program, 58% of students indicated that they believed managing money was "a little hard". After learning various financial concepts and the responsibilities that go along with it, 75% answered that managing money was pretty hard or extremely

hard at the conclusion of the program. Additionally, prior to the program, 69% of students said that they "never" or "sometimes" thought about the cost of an item before they made a purchase. However, at the conclusion of the program, 94% of students said that they would "sometimes" or "always" think about the cost first. Additionally, 100% of students were able to identify at least one reason why saving money was important, and 89% were able to name at least one way they could personally earn and/or save money at this stage in their life. All teachers were pleased with the program, and 100% said the program highly correlated to the fifth grade standard course of study. All teachers indicated a desire to repeat the program in future years.



### Coming Up in FCS.....

- Bingocize continues at Brutonville Community Center (every Monday and Wednesday at noon until May 29th)
- Go, Glow, Grow starts at Wescare with Pre-K classes and will meet on Mondays beginning on April 8th.
- OrganWise Guys resumes with second graders at Troy Elementary on April 19 and continues through May 24th.
- The FCS Agent and Nutrition Educator will attend professional development conference in Greensboro from April 16th-April 18th.
- Gardening Week will be celebrated with Pre-K students at Troy Elementary on April 26th.
- The FCS Agent, Nutrition Educator and CED will participate in the mental health fairs at MCC on April 30th and May 2nd.
- A new 4-H Spin club called Babysitter's Backpack will be held on Tuesdays from 4-6 pm from May 7th through June 4th. This program is open to youth aged 11-14 and will help them learn basic skills to care for children, including safety and positive discipline. They will also learn skills to market themselves to help start an effective babysitting business. The cost for the series is \$15 per participant. Register at [www.go.ncsu.edu/babysittersbackpack](http://www.go.ncsu.edu/babysittersbackpack)



## Elizabeth's Healthy Recipe Corner

### Quinoa Strawberry Salad

(Shared from medinsteadofmeds.com)

Serves 4

Serving Size: 1 cup

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

#### Ingredients

##### Dressing:

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

##### Salad:

- ½ cup dry quinoa
- 2 cups baby spinach leaves, chiffonade
- 2 cups arugula
- ⅔ cup sliced strawberries
- 2 tablespoons sliced almonds, toasted
- 1 handful of fresh basil leaves, chiffonade

#### Directions

- Place quinoa in medium saucepan along with 1 ¾ cups water. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce heat to simmer for 15 minutes or until cooked.
- Remove lid and cook until all water is evaporated. Remove from heat.
- Make the dressing by combining all ingredients in a bowl or jar.
- Place the quinoa, spinach, arugula, strawberries, toasted almonds, and basil in bowl and combine.
- Add and toss in dressing just prior to serving.



## 4-H Youth Development

### Youth Enrollment

Parents, it's time to re-enroll your child in Montgomery County 4-H for 2024, if you have not already. Visit [4HOnline](#) to access your family profile. All 4-H members and volunteers MUST renew their membership early in the year in order to maintain active status in this organization. Remember, your child must be enrolled before you can participate in any 4-H activities including summer adventures programs.

### 4-H Presentations

County, District and State level 4-H presentations season is upon us. Montgomery County 4-H will share more information with families in the coming weeks, so check your emails from 4-H Online. We are looking forward to all of the wonderful presentations our youth are working on.



### Summer Programming Opportunities for Youth

This year, our staff has lots of great opportunities for youth ages 5 – 18 that will promote summer learning, providing high quality and trusted content in the areas of agriculture, family and consumer sciences and life skill development for your children to learn in a safe environment with trusted adults. This is the perfect formula to prevent summer learning loss! Join Montgomery County 4-H for a FUN summer program. You will find programs on civic engagement, STEM, family and consumer science, plant science, personal development, animal science, environmental science, and healthy living. Be on the lookout for the release of our summer programming flyer at the end of April with registration occurring in May.



For more information regarding 4-H programming in Montgomery County, please contact Chrissy Haynes at (910) 576-6011 or by email at [chrissy\\_haynes@ncsu.edu](mailto:chrissy_haynes@ncsu.edu)

### 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](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)

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)



Check out our current videos by visiting

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOIPmzMobAJoawefJK\\_ldzA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOIPmzMobAJoawefJK_ldzA)

## Staff Directory



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