

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Montgomery County



August, 2024

From the Director's Desk

I cannot believe that summer is winding down and that many of our local school systems have started back to school already or will begin within the next three weeks. I think back to March/April when my staff was deciding what summer programs we would offer this summer to children in our county to help ensure kids kept learning over the summer to help bridge the summer learning loss gap. I could not be more proud of my team for the wonderful summer they provided for kids across Montgomery County this summer. Their hard work, commitment to Extension and their love for what they do is evident throughout this newsletter!

I had the pleasure of taking 17 youth to a week-long overnight camping experience at Millstone 4-H Camp. 4-H Camp is a wonderful opportunity for youth to gain life skills and experience learning opportunities away from home that they would not get to experience without this opportunity. We are so thankful to all of our donors who helped make this week of camp possible for these 17 children. We hope that you enjoy our photo pictured here.



Peach Festival Cooking Contest

We enjoyed facilitating the **Peach Cooking Contest** as a part of the **NC Peach Festival**. There were so many tasty desserts entered in the **youth and adult divisions**. Thank you to everyone who made this year's contest a success and to the judges who volunteered their time to assist with decision making. Mark your calendars now for the third Saturday in July in 2024 and make plans to enter next year's competition. **Congratulations to our winners!**

The youth winners were:

First Place – Erin Johnson, Peach Trifle

Second Place – Aubrey LaBrot, Peaches and Cream Cookies

The Adult Winners were:

First Place – Kayla Machurin, Peach Cobbler Cheesecake

Second Place – Angela Johnson, Peaches and Cream Pie

Third Place – Cara Labrot, Peaches and Cream Danish



College Interns



We were super lucky to have 3 college interns working with us this We have highlighted one each month over the summer. This month, our intern highlighted is Ms. Emily Vuncannon.

Emily grew up here in Montgomery County and is from Star. She graduated from Montgomery County Early College in 2023. Emily is currently working towards a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture Education at NC State University. Emily's favorite part of her internship was going on 4-H adventures classes such as Farm to Fork and getting the overall experience of working in an Extension office.

Emily began her 10-week internship with us on May 15th and was with us through July 26th. Emily, thank you for all of your hard work this summer!



4-H Youth Development Anna Hamilton

Meet our New Agent



Welcome to Anna Hamilton, our new 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent who joined our team July 15, 2024.

Anna studied Public Health at UNCW with a concentration in Community Health Education. While in Wilmington, she

worked as a Resident Assistant at UNCW, did nutrition programming at Brigade Boys and Girls club, and volunteered for the Collaboration for Assault Response and Education. Since 2021, she has served as a 911 dispatcher, taking calls from citizens and dispatching first responders. In her free time, she enjoys reading, swimming, going on walks, playing with her dog, and cooking. We are so excited to have Anna join our team!

This year's motto was "Climb to greatness" and we are so proud of how our delegates embodied that spirit. We had one 4-H'er, Marla Medina, become



inducted as the Vice President for our South Central District. She will work this upcoming year to plan the Teen Retreat and other experiences for 4-Hers in our district. All the delegates who attended focused on

personal development and participated in activities, workshops, challenges, and tours.

As part of their Cultural Experience for 4-H Congress, we took the delegates on a guided tour through NC State's Campus and surrounding areas in Raleigh to visit historical landmarks in the area. 4-Hers were able to see the Memorial Bell Tower, Carter-Finley Stadium, and the North Carolina Legislative Building. The whole week was full of fun opportunities and personal growth!

NC 4-H Congress



This month we packed up and took 3 Montgomery County youth to Raleigh for the NC 4-H Congress. 4-H Congress is an annual educational event for 4-H'ers aged

13-18. 4-H Congress focuses on heightening leadership skills through specific programs and exercises, growing knowledge through workshops and educational experiences, letting delegates participate in the democratic process to elect state 4-H officers, and providing a safe recreational and social experience for delegates. Youth at 4-H Congress get to meet new friends, participate in a community service project, hear from engaging speakers, and participate in the Candle lighting Ceremony. We partnered with Moore County 4-H and all took the trip together!

During 4-H Congress week, state-level presentations are held for those who won District Gold or Silver. This year we had 4 Montgomery County 4-Hers present at the state level. They worked hard to win at the district level, and have been practicing for months. Congratulations to Teely Harris for winning gold in the Entomology Category for her presentation on cicadas, and to everyone who presented at the state level. Thank you to the parents of all these wonderful children who have supported them and helped them along the way!

Next year's district presentations will be coming up before you know it! If your youth is interested in presenting next year or would like more information about attending NC 4-H Congress, contact Anna Hamilton, 4-H Agent at (910) 576-6011.



Agricultural Updates

Owen Washam, Horticulture & Forestry

Emi Briggs, Livestock & Field Crops

Flora Fridays

Two new articles were published for July. In the July 12th edition, readers explored some drought tolerant plants for the garden. These selections are timely as the state experiences an ongoing dry spell. On July 26th, Flora Fridays explored native plants for pollinators. Planting species that support pollinator insects and animals supports ecology overall. To access all Flora Fridays, visit our website at <https://montgomery.ces.ncsu.edu/florafridays/>.



NC STATE

 EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Montgomery County

The EMGVs did not officially meet in July, but will meet again on August 5th at 5:30pm. On July 8th, the group dedicated the garden area between the library and Extension building to Master Gardener Emeritus Myra Taylor. In addition, the EMGVs signed a portrait of Myra for the family. Myra was a critical, enthusiastic supporter of EMGV activities for over 15 years. She recently passed away, and her family and several EMGVs gathered at the Extension center for the ceremony.



Mount Gilead Parks and Recreation

On July 24th, the Horticulture and Forestry Agent led a nature discovery program for 32 Mount Gilead youth. The day started with a story about a family pecan farm, My Grandpa, My Tree, and Me by Roxanne Troup and Kendra Binney. The book is the 2024 American Farm Bureau book of the year. Next, the youth enjoyed a guided hike where they learned about different types of plants and how to identify them. Finally, the kids enjoyed making nature bracelets and chalking their favorite plants of the day.



The Love Academy

On July 10th, Agriculture Agents Owen and Emi traveled to The Love Academy in Biscoe to teach youth about ancient agricultural practices. By the end of the class, all the kids knew what plants need to thrive - sun, water, and soil. The session started off with an old Cherokee legend about the first strawberry plants. This was followed by a presentation comparing Native American agriculture to modern practices. Finally, the kids got to plant their very own Three Sisters garden of corn, beans, and squash.



Montgomery County Beekeeper Association



The Beekeepers did not have a July meeting. They will meet next on August 15th at 6:00pm at Montgomery Community College.

Mt. Gilead - Mooving Milk

During July, our livestock agent, Emi Briggs, had the opportunity to speak to one summer program about how milk goes from the farm to the consumer's fridge. The summer camp group was the Mount Gilead Park Program. Each youth participant learned about the 7 different types of dairy breeds in cattle, the different feed substances to make a Total Mix Ration (TMR) for the dairy cattle, how milk is collected and processed for consumption, and completed several fun activities. Many people will never have the opportunity to milk a cow. All the youth participants had the opportunity to participate in a milk activity. They then completed a matching activity to build a large picture of all the equipment needed to get milk from farm to fridge; followed by making buttermilk. Many of the youth tasted the milk and expressed they preferred regular milk over buttermilk. The youth also got a cup of locally made strawberry ice cream.

Morrow Mountain Trip

Our Livestock and Field crops agent, Emi Briggs and our Horticulture Agent, Owen Washam, took a group of youth to Morrow Mountain State Park for the opportunity to learn how to canoe. The canoe trip was guided by a park ranger and several seasonal staff. The participants learned about native fish, the history of the river and how to safely canoe. Post canoeing, on the hottest day we have had this summer, we decide to complete a guided hike as well. The youth learned about native and invasive plants species, wildlife, history of the hiking trails and had the opportunity to walk through the museum. Several participants last month went to Town Creek Indian

Mound with both agricultural agents and had follow up conversations on the three sisters and Native American history crops.

College Tour Day

Both Agricultural Agents, Emi Briggs and Owen Washam, took a group of youth to NC State Campus for a college tour. The tour started at the plant sciences greenhouse. The youth had the chance to participate in a wonderful planting activity and were able to take home several greenhouse plant clippings to attempt to propagate their own plants. After the greenhouse, the students got to see one of the student unions, take a trip into the bookstore, and see many restaurants on campus. The youth had the chance to feel like a real college student by eating in the dining hall. The tour concluded at the Ranleigh Dairy Museum. The youth toured the museum, the farm, and the milking parlor. The tour guides spoke on cattle breeding, the safety required for milk production, and protecting the milk and consumer all the way to your refrigerator at home. The tour guide spoke on how commercial dairies complete the milk and safety procedures during this process as well. At the end of the tour, the youth got to end the day with the best part, enjoying a serving of Howling Cow ice cream before the journey back home. Many youth said they were, "ready to move in" and "can't wait for college."

VAD Board meeting

On July 22nd, the Agricultural Advisory Board met to discuss the Voluntary Agricultural districts (VAD). The board voted on the expense required to create new advertising and the production of posters for the VAD. The board voted on using the Department of Corrections for the creation and purchase of new signs for the VAD including a new sign design. The board also discussed the addition of a GIS layer for awareness of the VAD. The board will meet again in the coming months to discuss the ordering of the new signs. If you are interested in enrolling your farm in the VAD, please give us a call at 910-576-6011 or email Emi_Briggs@ncsu.edu.

Cattlemen's Board Meeting



On July 24th, the Cattlemen's Associations shared a nice spaghetti dinner and discussed the meeting year of 2024-2025 for the association. The topics covered included speaker requests, membership dues, meals for the meeting year, and advertisement for the association. If you are interested in joining the association please contact [Emi Briggs@ncsu.edu](mailto:Emi_Briggs@ncsu.edu) or call 910-576-6011. The next meeting will be the first meeting of the season on September 10th, 2024 at the Ag center at 200 Glen Road, Troy, NC 27371.

Family & Consumer Sciences Updates

Rhonda Peters, FCS Agent

Elizabeth Callicutt, Nutrition Educator

Family Canning Nights



Canning is an important, safe method of food preservation IF practiced properly. The canning process involves placing food in jars and heating them to a temperature that destroys microorganisms that could be a health hazard or cause

the food to spoil. Canning also inactivates enzymes that could cause the food to spoil. In July, we held two Family Canning Nights as part of our 4-H Summer Adventures program. The first night, geared toward families with younger children, explored the science and process of preserving grape jelly. A sticky, yummy time was had by all! The second night, we worked with older youth and their families to safely preserve salsa! It was also delicious, and families all learned the importance of following trusted recipes and using the science to ensure safe preservation. Due to the overwhelming interest of these classes, the FCS Agent and Horticulture Agent are hoping to conduct a food preservation series in the fall – to possibly include freezing, water bath canning.

Teen Team Building Day

One of our FCS Agent's favorite summer adventures programs is Teen Team Building Day – a day where we get to learn about so many facets of adulthood, including communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Effective communication within a team will build a common purpose among team members that will allow them to reach their goals. Frequent friendly communication can help team members develop a sense of belonging and strengthen relationships. During the Teen Team Building workshop, youth practiced their listening and guiding skills by creating pretzel pictures with a partner.

Sometimes we get so focused on a particular aspect of a problem that we can't see other perspectives or extenuating circumstances that affect the conflict. Learning to take a step back and re-evaluate a situation is an important skill for youth and adults alike. For example, sometimes we get so caught up in the "hurt" of a situation that we fail to see the other factors and anyone else's point of view. When we take a step back, our feelings may not necessarily change immediately, but we can see other pieces that we didn't always notice.

Conflict simply cannot be avoided 100% of the time. When we teach youth to run away from issues, we fail to give them the skills needed for life. Instead, we should teach them how to be proactive and positive when dealing with situations. As part of our Teen Team Building Day, our 4-H Agent (Anna Hamilton) led teens through an exercise to help them identify issues, identify positive responses, and ask trusted adults for help when needed.



OrganWise Guys



Did you know that it is VERY important for us to watch what we eat and be sure we are not eating junk 24/7? Kids learning all of these wonderful things about eating healthy from the 5 different food groups on My-

Plate, drinking plenty of water and moving our bodies will grow with them as they grow older and improve their life!

Eating from the 5 different food groups every-day not only helps our bodies on the outside but helps the inside of our bodies too! As part of our Summer Adventures here at the office, kids aging from 5-9 learned all about their internal organs through our curriculum OrganWise Guys and what we should be eating to help take care of our friends inside of us!

Outreach with the Love Academy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture created MyPlate, an easy-to-follow food guide, to help parents to figure out how to feed their kids nutritious, balanced meals. The colorful divided plate includes sections for vegetables, fruits, grains, and protein foods. In July, FCS Agent (Rhonda Peters) and Nutrition Educator (Elizabeth Callicutt) got the pleasure of teaching MyPlate and three ways to live a healthy lifestyle at The LOVE Academy! 1. Drink plenty of water. 2. Make sure you are eating from the five different food groups on MyPlate. 3. Make sure to keep your body moving! We ended this lesson by making a yummy trail mix that included food from the "Grains" group on MyPlate!



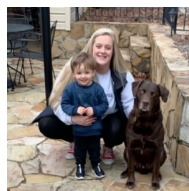
Safe Plates at Blake's Restaurant



NC Safe Plates is an evidence-based training program for national food protection manager certification.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension offers NC Safe Plates for all those who work in the food service industry. The twelve-hour instructional course helps food establishments meet the North Carolina requirement of having at least one supervisor certified as a food protection manager, per the FDA Food Code 2013. NC Safe Plates includes instruction on personal hygiene and employee health; purchasing and storage; eliminating cross contamination; handling allergens; pest control and facility design cleaning and sanitizing and correct temperatures for storing, preparing and holding foods.

During the month of July, the FCS Agent taught the Safe Plates program at Blake's Restaurant in Candor, NC. Seven employees from Blake's and one employee from the Troy-Montgomery Senior Center participated in the class, and five employees elected to take the certification exam. We are waiting on results for these participants, but are pleased that everyone in attendance were exposed to important food safety information and all exhibited knowledge growth throughout the course.



Elizabeth's Healthy Recipe Corner

California Avocado Super Summer Wrap

Ingredients

- 1 ripe avocado (seeded, peeled, and cut into chunks)
- 1/2 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon lime juice
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup carrots (grated)
- 1/4 cup red onion (chopped)
- 2 cups fresh arugula (chopped)
- 12 ounces cooked chicken breast (cubed)
- 4 8-inch whole wheat tortillas

Staff Directory

Directions

1. Mash half the avocado chunks with yogurt and lime juice in a medium bowl.
 2. Add remaining filling ingredients, including the rest of the avocado chunks; mix gently.
 3. Top each tortilla with 1/4 of filling mixture.
- Roll tuck in ends. Slice in half diagonally, securing with toothpicks, if needed.



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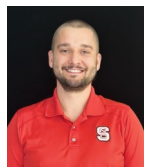
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Ask Extension

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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