



Report to the People

MCDOWELL
county center

North Carolina Cooperative Extension

In McDowell County, we strive to make a difference in your life, family, and OUR community. We have a dedicated staff of trained professionals delivering educational programs in agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H and youth development. The McDowell County Center is your gateway to NC State University, NC A&T State University, and beyond.

You'll see some key numbers and successes in this report, but the numbers don't always show the people or the full impact of our work. We hope that this report will enlighten you on some of our impacts.

Family & Consumer Sciences

Vacant

Safety & Security of our Food & Farm Systems

Difficult economic times and a focus on local foods has increased interest in home food preservation in recent years. Home food preservation-linked botulism may arise due to increased consumption of food not processed using safe canning procedures.

In response to the increased need for safe food handling programs for consumers in McDowell County, Cooperative Extension provided a 2-hour, hands-on workshop on canning tomatoes. There were 10 participants who received current, research-based recommendations for canning tomatoes using a pressure canner. Through verbal and written feedback, all of the participants reported increased knowledge of safe canning procedures and plan to adopt the recommended practices, if not doing so already.



Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Risk Reduction

In McDowell County, 34% of adults are obese, compared to the national benchmark of 25%.

Contributing to this epidemic is poor nutrition and lack of physical activity.

McDowell Cooperative Extension and the local YMCA teamed up to provide the first combined Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less and ZUMBA program in McDowell County. Each of the one-hour lessons informed, empowered and motivated participants to live mindfully as they made choices about eating and physical activity. In addition to the lessons, ZUMBA instructors led 45 minutes of group fitness each week. There were 8 participants who attended at least 10 of the 12 classes. These participants lost a combined total of 60 pounds and many were able to decrease their BMI. Research has shown that losing as little as 5-10% of your excess weight and keeping it off will benefit your health and reduce risks for chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

NC State University
A&T State University
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People • Providing Solutions

4-H Youth Development

Chad Ray



School to Career

Youth work their entire 4-H career developing their volunteering, citizenship, and leadership skills through a variety of programs. These programs not only positively affect the lives of the 4-H'er but also the lives of the hundreds of people whom the 4-H member works with.

The highest honor a NC 4-H member can receive is acceptance into the North Carolina 4-H Honor Club. 4-H members apply to this program and only ½ of 1% of the total 4-H members are selected in North Carolina. In 2012, McDowell County 4-H had this honor bestowed on one of its members. Maggie Gouge has been a member of McDowell 4-H for 10 years. She has grown as a person and a 4-H'er serving as a volunteer and leader, even serving as West District 4-H President.

Glossophobia, or fear of public speaking affects almost 75% of all people according to C. Hamilton's book "Communicating for Results, a Guide for Business and the Professions". Public speaking is one of the most important life skills for youth to learn. This skill is not only needed while in school, but in any career they choose to follow.

McDowell County Cooperative Extension provided several opportunities for youth to become more confident and comfortable communicating in front of groups and high pressure situations. Through 4-H presentations and livestock judging, 22 youth had the opportunity to hone these skills. Not only did they participate and learn, they were very successful. One 4-H member was awarded the opportunity to present at Southern Regionals Horse Show in Perry, Georgia representing North Carolina.



Agriculture & Natural Resources

*Craig Adkins, Greg Anderson,
Molly Sandfoss*

Production & Sustainable Agriculture

Nursery growers in the foothills are growing over 300 species of ornamental plants. Each year new species and cultivars are added to nursery inventories. This practice increases the potential that new and emerging pests may be introduced into the foothills.

580 growers and employees attended IPM seminars and on-farm scouting programs to learn techniques for scouting nursery fields and greenhouses for existing and emerging pest problems.



102 growers participating in the 2012 program realized a savings of \$867,000 on chemical, labor and equipment costs by adopting and implementing IPM on 4,795 acres planted in ornamental plants. Those participating in the 2012 program have indicated that implementing IPM helped them to produce quality plants by staying on top of potential pest problems.

Extension partners with the McDowell Agriculture Youth Foundation every year to host the McDowell Junior Livestock Show. Fifty-seven youth participated in this year's show, a 27% increase from 2011. In addition, these youth exhibited 248 entries which was a 20% increase from 2011.



Local Food Systems

Making an income from farming can be a challenge. Producing your own wine is by far the most lucrative means of deriving income from grape production.

With a \$6,000 grant that is managed by the Cooperative Extension Service and with Extension expertise, DeMariano Vineyards purchased equipment needed to bottle wine. Income from this venture is expected to be approximately \$30,000 per year.



With the average age of a farmer in McDowell County being 56 years old and the number of farms declining, it is imperative that we encourage youth to get involved in agriculture.

Youth livestock projects teach children agricultural education, life skills, goal setting, responsibility, and financial management. Cooperative



Urban & Consumer Agriculture

During our current economic downturn with more individuals and families interested in supplementing their diet with homegrown vegetables and enjoying a relatively inexpensive hobby, Cooperative Extension with the Extension Master Gardener volunteers and McDowell Early College constructed a community garden with funds from the Nourishing North Carolina grant.

Thirteen plots were constructed to be rented by community members. Volunteers contributed 90 hours of labor at \$20.25 per hour which totals \$1822.50. The community garden provided county citizens an area to garden which will save these individuals money, get exercise, and eat well.



Empowering People, Providing Solutions to McDowell County

2012 Report

Educational Program

Total Participants 37,356

Total Non-face Contacts 24,761

- Telephone calls
- Email
- Newsletters

Volunteer Development

Volunteers 150
Hours 2,680
Value \$54,270

Total Face to Face Contacts 12,595

- Office
- Field
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Demonstrations

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

NCCES-McDowell County Center

For more information, you may contact us at:



60 East Court Street
Marion, NC 28752
828-652-8104
828-652-7874
go.ncsu.edu/mcdowellces