

Upshur County Annual Report | 2016

Putting Knowledge to Work!

West Virginia University Extension works to provide “solutions in your community” through key program areas including agriculture, environment and natural resources, 4-H youth development, food and nutrition, health and wellness, financial planning and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all residents of Upshur County thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners – the Board of Education and County Commission.

Highlights

In her first year on the job, Tasha Harris, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension agent, helped organize and plan the *West Virginia Women in Agriculture* conference and was named Assistant Superintendent of the Market Hog Show at the WV State Fair.

Craig Presar, 4-H Youth Development Extension agent, presented workshops at the National Camping Institute, hosted by the University of Georgia.

Mindy Mall, Nutrition Outreach instructor, reached 308 Upshur County youth with lessons about diet quality, physical activity and food safety.

4-H and Youth Development

Studies show that increased participation in 4-H, especially STEM activities and related programming, leads to positive outcomes for youth as well as a reduction in risky behaviors. Because of their involvement in 4-H activities in Upshur County, youth are more likely to obtain well-paying jobs, create their own businesses, and contribute to the health and well-being of their communities.

WVU Upshur County Extension, in collaboration with nine local organizations, presented “Ag in the Schools” at two elementary schools. 459 Upshur County youth gained knowledge in a variety of agriculture-related subjects.

To celebrate National 4-H Week, more than 150 youth and their families participated in the Upshur County 4-H Fun Fair. Educational activities included project skill-a-thons, agricultural exhibits, nutrition education (Rethink Your Drink), and archery.

In 2015:

- 196 youth ages 8-18 were active members of a community or school 4-H club.
- 176 youth participated in 4-H Shooting Sports (Archery and Air Rifle).

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- 146 youth attended county 4-H camp.
- 26 K-2nd grade youth attended Cloverbud Day Camp.
- 29 attended a state 4-H camp.
- 37 adults were fully vetted as Upshur County 4-H Program Volunteers.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

ANR Agent Tasha Harris is involved in a statewide research project aimed at improved management of winter feeding areas for beef cattle. Successful management will increase nutrient value in winter feed and reduce sediment transfer to surface water. This will in turn protect the environment, provide supplemental summer forage, and save producer dollars.

45 youth exhibitors (completing 92 animal projects) participated in the Upshur Youth Livestock Show and Sale. The 2015 Show and Sale produced a total of \$65,513.35 in sales.

- More than 150 soil tests were performed.
- Eight farmers gained credits toward Private Pesticide Recertification.
- 19 youth and 19 adults participated in a hands-on Piglet Care workshop, gaining knowledge regarding decreasing piglet mortality rates and increasing producer profit.
- 17 adults and nine youth were involved in Quality Assurance training in Beef, Sheep, Goats, Swine and Biosecurity.
- nine West Virginia strawberry producers sold berries at the WV Strawberry Festival Berry Auction, with sales totaling \$8,440.

Community, Economic and Workforce Development

As 23 Upshur County producers compete in local Farmer's Market, more of the food dollar stays in the county. In addition, buying local, fresh produce has benefits related to healthy eating and nutrition.

WVU Extension Agent Craig Presar serves as a Board Member for the Upshur County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Families and Health

The West Virginia Community Educational Outreach Service (WVCEOS) has a strong tradition of education, service, and community development, dating back to 1914 when the first club (Brushy Fork Women's Club in Upshur County) was established. Program areas of emphasis include: preserving the environment, building family strengths, and increasing awareness of our global interdependence.

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- In 2015, there were 225 CEOS members in 11 clubs throughout Upshur County.
- Upshur County CEOS members provided a combined total of 81,000 volunteer community service hours to Upshur County communities and organizations.
- Over 100 people attended the Upshur CEOS Breast Cancer Awareness program, held in collaboration with local health care providers and organizations.

According to a report by the West Virginia Governor's office in 2013, if West Virginia is to successfully reverse high health care costs and poor outcomes, it is going to require specific changes in the healthcare system that address high-cost health conditions and improves the overall health and healthcare of West Virginia families. Our county's Family Nutrition Program plays an important part in improving overall health by training youth to make healthy food and activity choices early in their lives which will lead to better health outcomes over time for them and their families.

Nutrition education was presented in 14 elementary classrooms across Upshur County. 308 youth have been reached since the spring semester of 2015.

- 82% of children and youth reported improved abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations.
- 26 % of children and youth improved their physical activity practices.
- 36% of children and youth use safe food handling practices more often.

Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Extension Service are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, and marital or family status. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Director, Cooperative Extension Service.

The WVU Board of Governors is the governing body of WVU. The Higher Education Policy Commission in West Virginia is responsible for developing, establishing, and overseeing the implementation of a public policy agenda for