

Tucker 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 Tucker County thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners – the Board of Education and County Commission.

Highlights

Ireland Exchange

The theme for 4-H camp in 2014 was “Around the World.” One of the assemblies during camp was about 4-H Around the World with Doug Hovatter. During his visit to our camp he lit a fire in several members about traveling with 4-H internationally. Shortly after camp I was in contact with Denis Scott asking about the opportunities that would be available for the eager kids. There were four girls interested in traveling with 4-H and once I had solid information I talked with all of the members and their families. They all decided that this would be an opportunity of a lifetime for the girls.

One of the items of concern for the parents involved funding. The parents and I quickly started planning fundraisers in hopes to raise as much money for the girls as possible. Our office was the “home” for most of the fundraisers. In hopes of sending the girls to Ireland there was a “Leaping Leprechaun,” cookie dough fundraiser, That’s My Pan and a Spaghetti Dinner to name a few. Helping those four young women achieve their goal of going to Ireland and listening to their stories when they returned were truly worthwhile.

School Involvement

Since 2014 the Tucker County Office has had a more active role in the school system. We have been in the school at least five or six times a year doing lessons. Lessons range from Dental Health programs to Ag. In the Classroom activities. We are very fortunate to have cooperative teachers and eager students to interact with.

At the beginning of the school year we had the chance to engage the students creatively and scientifically with an Egg Drop Challenge. Students had to develop a materials list, create a blue print for a contraption and assemble their design that would protect their egg from cracking. This lesson took place over five days. Students had the option to work in groups or to work alone. They tested their contraptions in the classroom, but for “D” day their egg would drop from about 70ft. in the air.

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During the month of December students get anxious and are ready for their break to start. This was a perfect time to come into the schools and do a fun activity with the students before the holidays. We created a lesson on Christmas Trees and tied in a hands on activity for the students to do along with it. This year over 200 students created Christmas wreaths to take home to their families. Before creating the wreaths they learned the difference between deciduous and coniferous, how to identify different evergreens and what all Christmas trees can be used for.

Forage Testing

Every year the Tygart's Valley Conservation District offers two free forage tests to producers. In the past not very many producers from Tucker County have taken advantage of this. This year an agent visited ten producers and took several forage samples for each. Many of the producers did not fully understand the process or the benefit of testing their forages.

Over the course of two days this agent demonstrated and walked 10 producers through how to successfully take forage samples. Samples were taken on wrapped hay, dry round bales, and square bales. Each stop proved to show that each individual wanted to better their hay quality and by learning how to take a forage sample they were heading in the right direction.

Once their results were received information was sent to them about how to read their results. Several stopped in the office or called to discuss their results. Most have committed to carrying out the recommendations made. Next year they will again take some samples and see if their hay quality has improved.

4-H/Youth Development

In 2015, we celebrated 100 years of 4-H camping!

- 70 youth attended county 4-H camp.
- Four attended a state 4-H camp.
- 97 were active members of a community 4-H club.
- Six youth received their charting pin.
- Five leaders and one youth were inducted into the 4-H All Stars.
- Four youth traveled abroad to Ireland with WVU Extension.
- A new after school 4-H club was started – Clover Bears.
- A new special interest club was started – Shooting Sports.
- 22 volunteers in the 4-H program.
- 31 4-Hers gained citizenship and leadership skills through officer training school.
- 70 4-Hers gained healthy living skills and participated in Re-think Your Drink.

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In the school system:

- Over 250 students ages 5-12, learned about Christmas tree production and created Christmas wreaths.
- 83 students learned the basic anatomy of an egg and participated in hands on activities.
- 24 students participated in a hands on lesson about soil sampling.
- 131 students partook in a STEM activity using pumpkins.
- 55 students developed a contraption to protect an egg for an Egg Drop Challenge.

Public Value Message:

Due to 4-H activities in Tucker County, youth are more likely to demonstrate successful problem solving skills and leadership abilities and contribute to the health and well-being of their communities. Youth of all backgrounds and social economic status are welcomed in the Tucker County 4-H program. As a result, our youths are open and accepting of individuals with a wide range of differences.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Over 20 soil tests performed.
- 11 producers participated and learned how to take a forage sample, resulting in modified hay production practices.
- 21 farmers/vendors were involved in the Taste of Tucker Farmers Market.
- 12 farmers were involved in the Pesticide Recertification.
- 20 farmers attended the Balage Educational Dinner in March of 2015.
- Five women attended the Women in Agriculture Conference in Canaan Valley.
- 35 youth participated in the Youth Livestock Quality Assurance Program.

Public Value Message:

Farmers and producers participating in the Taste of Tucker Farmers Market encourage consumers to buy fresh produce. They educate their patrons about the benefits of healthy eating along with encouraging food dollars to stay in the county.

Community, Economic and Workforce Development

- Our office helped the 4-H Leaders receive a grant totaling \$4,000 to enhance the camping experience for Tucker County.
- Our office helped the Fair Board receive a grant totaling \$2,000 to create an additional livestock

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wash bay to alleviate traffic for exhibitors.

Public Value Message:

Farmer's market vendors continue to receive trainings, networking opportunities, and technical assistance which allows residence in the county to have access to fresh foods.

Families and Health

- 35 in CEOS.
- 35 adults participating in a family nutrition program.
- 35 participants in healthy lifestyle programs such as obesity preventions.
- 70 youths participated in healthy lifestyle programs.
- 20 youths received their food handlers card.

Public Value Message:

Adults and youth were exposed to healthy relationships and positive reinforcement facilitated through our programs.

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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 the state's four-year