

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

## Highlights

Pocahontas County has a small cooperative Livestock Market started in the 1940s with the help of West Virginia University Extension Service. In 2015 the market served over 243 customers and marketed over \$1.59 million in livestock. With this number of contacts, the market reaches over 74% of agriculture producers in the county. Additionally, the market and the West Virginia University Extension Service collaborated with veterinary services to provide opportunities for producers to pregnancy check cattle and complete breeding soundness exams with their bulls.

More than 150 youth were involved in the 4-H program in Pocahontas County and participated in educational projects, community service, county & state camps, shooting sports, visual presentations, public speaking, poster & photography exhibitions, leadership training, project fairs, livestock shows & sales, and the Ham, Bacon, & Egg Show/Sale.

Promoting healthy lifestyles has been a major programming effort in Pocahontas County with initiatives such as the “Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days”, Dining with Diabetes, Love Your Heart, food preservation, and educational presentations on nutrition, food safety and physical activity.

## 4-H and Youth Development

- In 2015, West Virginia celebrated 100 years of 4-H camping! A total of 96 youth and 33 adult counselors/instructors participated in Pocahontas County 4-H Camp, which was 64% of the total county enrollment. 21 county youth participated in 2015 State Camps.
- Numerous camp repairs and improvements were completed through the efforts of the Pocahontas County 4-H Foundation. The Pocahontas County 4-H Camp facility has hosted the National Youth Science Camp since 1963, as well as many state and local groups.
- A total of 151 youth were involved in the 4-H program in Pocahontas County and participated in educational projects, community service, county & state camps, visual presentations, public speaking,

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poster and photography exhibitions, leadership training, project fairs, livestock shows & sales, and the Ham, Bacon, and Egg Show/Sale.

- The Energy Express reading and nutrition program served a total of 39 county youth and provided a quality summer service opportunity for 6 AmeriCorps members. Statewide, 74% of children improved or maintained their scores on reading achievement during the program. A total of 46 county volunteers performed 946 hours of volunteer service at the county site.
- A total of 51 youth completed 88 animal science projects. Twenty-eight youth showed their animals in livestock shows, and the total sales volume of the Pocahontas County 4-H/FFA Livestock Sale was \$26,455. Twenty-nine youth participated in the Ham/Bacon and poultry projects and sold their products for a total of \$19,181.
- Twenty youth were selected to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Spring Farm Tour where they were exposed to multiple aspects of agriculture by visiting 5 farms in the county.
- Extension professionals worked with Green Bank School staff to secure three different grants to promote school gardening and education with a total value over \$16,000.
- A total of 80 youth participated in the county's Shooting Sports program. The Extension Agents secured two grants to support the county shooting sports program and the county purchased four shotguns and five muzzleloaders. Value of equipment received as a result of grants was over \$4000. Pocahontas County's first 4-H shotgun team competed in the state contest in the fall of 2015.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources/Community, Economic and Workforce Development

- 243 customers were able to market 2254 head of livestock through the Pocahontas Producers Cooperative Stockyards with total value over \$1.59 million, reaching over 74% of farmers in Pocahontas County.
- In 2015, over 200 soil tests involving over 4,000 acres of agriculture land were performed.
- County farmers participated with the state grassland team that produced national publications on haylage fermentation research in 2014 and 2015.
- Currently the team is working on a statewide research project to investigate production on winter livestock feeding areas. In a 2015 research trial, WVU Extension and a cooperative farmer in the county were able to produce 16.2 tons/acre of livestock forages at a cost of \$119/acre. These results were used in a grant application which helped to secure funding to expand the project state-wide in 2016.
- Held three educational dinner meetings for over 150 producers where they earned over 300

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hours of continuing education for pesticide licenses.

- Wool producers marketed over 10,000 lbs. of wool as part of the state-wide wool pool program.
- Pocahontas County Farmers Market has three market locations where 20 producers market their produce, meat and eggs throughout the county and region.
- Office has collaborated with Pocahontas County Water Resource Network to offer three water well-testing clinics where over 50 residents got their water tested for quality.
- WVU Extension County staff administered the Dramas, Fairs and Festivals program for the County Commission, which distributes funding to multiple organizations in the county. County residents are exposed to numerous opportunities in cultural enrichment that would not be possible without this funding.

## Families and Health

- The “Walk 100 Miles in 100 Days” challenge resulted in 291 county participants walking 25,172 miles. The program helped raise awareness of the benefits of walking and created healthier habits for participants throughout the county.
- Fifteen people attended the series of “Dining with Diabetes” classes and learned about food selection, meal planning, food preparation and exercise, resulting in improved diabetes self-management.
- Approximately 65 adults learned about heart health at the “Love Your Heart” luncheon and through distribution of heart health materials throughout the county.
- Educational sessions on the benefits of exercise helped 80 adults start a comprehensive physical activity routine and set short and long term goals for becoming more active.
- Approximately 100 people learned the proper techniques in food preservation through numerous workshops and canner testing clinics, including collaborative projects with the Grow Appalachia program in the county.
- The 45 Community Educational Outreach Service members in four clubs worked to improve their skills in leadership, personal development, nutrition, food safety, family life and community service.

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