A Message from Clint

Spring certainly has a special meaning for those involved in agriculture. Longer daylight, tree blossoms, greener pastures and preparing fields to plant are all things to look forward to. A lot of labor and worry lie in store for the summer and fall but it is always exciting to get started farming in the spring.

Several thoughts are on my mind to share in this message as we prepare for another year in local agriculture. First is... Thank You All! In the first week of May I will have completed 15 years of employment with the Cooperative Extension Service. I worked May through September 2002 as a Commercial Vegetable Crops Extension Associate with the College of Agriculture Department of Horticulture. Wayne Mattingly resigned to accept the position with the bank during that period and I was offered the job as Daviess County Extension Agent for Agriculture, starting that October. I have been blessed by the opportunity to work with so many great farmers, landowners and agribusinesses across Daviess County. I’ve made many friendships, visited every corner of the county, and worked with hundreds of great people in an effort to make our community a better place to live and work. I believe the Cooperative Extension Service is an asset for Daviess County and am proud of our entire office staff who strive to put forth quality educational resources and outreach in the community. You will always find news and happenings related to the other program areas covered by our office in this newsletter.

Our greatest strength in Extension is the leadership and volunteer involvement of many Daviess County citizens. These volunteers help to identify issues in the community and participate in the discussions, events, and activities centered on agriculture, youth, health, horticulture, and financial planning. People are what makes Daviess and the surrounding counties great. Yes, we’re fortunate with access to river markets, productive land, great schools, health care and ample off-farm employment opportunities for family members. Above all, the servant leadership style displayed by so many people involved in local agriculture is what makes them true role models. All of us know of a person we consider willing to sacrifice their time and opportunities and ready to say yes when asked to help or participation.
There are countless people in Daviess and surrounding counties who fit that definition and many we know who have passed on. Take time this year to seek opportunities to get involved and ask not what our community can do for you, but what you can do for our community. We’ve all been blessed, that’s not something to take for granted.

**Kentucky Grazing School**

The Kentucky Grazing School will be held at the Princeton Research and Education Center April 25 and 26. This program is ideal for anyone seeking to gain productivity from their grazing resources. Led by a mix of University of Kentucky employees, the full two day program covers all aspects of effective grazing management including fencing, fertility, management, animal health and performance. The program is limited to 45 participants and there is a $50 registration which includes training materials, snacks and meals. Call Jacob Brandenburg at 859-257-7512 or email jacob.brandenburg@uky.edu for more information or to register.

**Food Myths and Misconceptions - Genetic Engineering**

One issue received clearly from the individuals who council our Extension Office on programming needs and issues in our community pertains to the consumer and general public opinion of all things organic, genetically modified and marketed as safe because “it’s natural.” There are many food myths and misconceptions held by the public concerning the safety and security of the food we produce and consume in this country. This is why we have invited Dr. Paul Vincelli, a Provost Distinguished Service Professor in the College of Agriculture to Owensboro. Dr. Vincelli will be speaking at open public meetings April 25 6 p.m. and on April 26 12 p.m. at the Owensboro Community & Technical College Advanced Technology Center Building, Chandler Conference Room. The purpose is not to suggest GMO’s as good or bad, but simply to explain the myths and misconceptions of modern food technology as it relates to product development, production and processing. Dr. Vincelli is one of the fore most experts in the country on the topic relating to sustainability of food systems and in explaining the benefits and risks of genetically engineered crops. Our goal is for this to be an informal, informative meeting. If increasing your knowledge of the food produced and consumed is an important value for you and your family, please take time to attend. Please share this with family or people you know in the community who would find the topic interesting.

**Daviess County Agricultural Development Fund Update**

**KADF**

The Green River Area Beef Improvement Group met recently to approve payout of the 2016 Daviess County Agricultural Investment Program. Sixty two funding requests met all program requirements and were approved. Reimbursement checks will be mailed soon. The Daviess County Agricultural Development Council met recently to discuss four funding requests of 2017 funding allocation. Applications considered a high priority for Daviess County were from the Green River Area Beef Improvement Group for $100,000 to administer the Daviess County Agricultural Investment Program. Green River Area Beef Improvement Group for $20,000 to administer the Daviess County Agricultural Youth Cost Share program. $5,000 to Hayden Farms for construction of a Poultry Education Center at Hayden Farms.
Lillie has been one of my key mentors. She helped me gain understanding of Extension Service responsibility and was my resource for distinguishing the right path when difficult decisions arose. Many achievements I have enjoyed can be traced to her effort, advice and example of excellence in Extension.

Lillie is the model of a servant leader. Meeting staff and client needs in creative, thoughtful ways is contagious to each person on our team. Join us in celebrating her service to Daviess County at a reception held in her honor June 6 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Extension office.

Horticulture Update

A Grafting Apple Trees Workshop will be held on Thursday, April 27, 6:00 p.m. at the Extension Office. Extension Associate for Vegetables/Fruit at the UK Research & Education Center in Princeton, KY will be the guest presenter. Each participant will graft 4 apple trees with disease resistant varieties. Class size is limited to 20. Pre-registration of $10 is due to the Daviess County Extension Office by April 25, a check payable to “Daviess County Program Fund” can be mailed to 4800A New Hartford Rd, Owensboro, KY 42303.

Family & Consumer Sciences Update

Kick-off to a Healthy and Safe Summer, one of the Extension office signature events will be held Friday, June 9 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Friday after Five Street Fair at the River park Center. Designed simply as a fun, family friendly atmosphere, the event is held to share information related to summer safety, nutrition, physical activity and community events. Various community partners and agencies will be providing fun kids games, activities, and prizes during the event.

Owensboro Regional Farmers Market

The market will be located at the corner of Parrish Avenue and Triplett Street, 1205 Triplett. The market does have new hours this year! On Saturdays starting April 22 and ending October 28 and on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting June 1 and ending October 26 the market will be open from 8 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

A satellite market will be located at Owensboro Health Regional Hospital at 1201 Pleasant Valley Rd, and will operate on Wednesdays from 1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. from May 17 - August 30.

If you are interested in becoming a vendor, applications are available online at www.owensbororegionalfarmersmarket.org or at the Extension Office.

Midwestern Beef Summit

Much more detail will follow in my summer newsletter but mark your calendars for the Midwestern Beef Summit! The Green River Area Extension offices are hosting an all-day conference focusing on adding longevity to your beef cows. The event will be during the day of August 31 at the Owensboro Convention Center. Speakers from Nebraska, Illinois, Purdue and UK are confirmed for the day and planning to discuss the steps involved in adding years of productive life to your beef herds. Stay Tuned!!

Lillie Thompson Retiring

Lillie Thompson will be retiring June 16, accomplishing 20 years of service for staff and clientele of the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service. Lillie has been one of my key mentors. She helped me gain understanding of Extension Service responsibility and was my resource for distinguishing the right path when difficult decisions arose. Many achievements I have enjoyed can be traced to her effort, advice and example of excellence in Extension.

Lillie is the model of a servant leader. Meeting staff and client needs in creative, thoughtful ways is contagious to each person on our team. Join us in celebrating her service to Daviess County at a reception held in her honor June 6 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Extension office.
There are drawings for giveaways and the first 200 children to attend will receive a summer “goody bag” filled with fun items and information. For more information contact Daviess County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent Mary Higginbotham at 270-685-8480 or by email, mary.higginbotham@uky.edu.

**4-H Youth Development Update**

Summer will be here before you know it and so will 4-H Camp! We are well on our way to filling spaces for campers and adult volunteers to join us June 27-30 at West Kentucky 4-H Camp. If your child is interested in experiencing a camp like no other, we would love to have them come along for a fun-filled week they will never forget! 4-H Camp is open to youth ages 9-15. The cost is $195 or $185 if paid in full by May 1. The fee includes meals, lodging, transportation, and a t-shirt. Keep in mind that the number of campers we can take will depend on the number of adults we have to attend so please consider serving as a camp volunteer! This is the perfect opportunity for you and your child to spend some time together enjoying all the things West Kentucky 4-H Camp has to offer. Contact Stacey or Lindsey at the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Office today!

**Nutrition Education Program Update**

Our Daviess County Extension Nutrition Education Program is dedicated to improving health and wellness in our community. We provide hands-on nutrition education to limited-resource audiences focusing on: buying and preparing healthy foods, developing new meal planning and cooking skills, adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors, and managing grocery dollars. In 2016, 92% of the adult participants made a positive change in their food group choices and 78% showing improvements in food safety practices. Over 80% started planning meals in advance and 88% started using the “Nutrition Facts” labels to make healthier choices. The youth participants in Daviess County also experienced behavior changes, with 88% improving their ability to choose healthy foods. See the enclosed flyer for more information.

**Upcoming Events & Activities:**

**April 22:** Opening Day of Owensboro Regional Farmers Market

**April 25 & 26:** Food Myths & Misconceptions Program

**April 25 & 26:** Kentucky Grazing School - Princeton Research & Education Center

**April 25 & 26:** Wheat Field School, Pre-heading Topics - Princeton Research & Education Center

**April 26:** Green River CPH45 Sale - Kentuckiana Livestock Market

**April 27:** Grafting Apple Trees - Extension Office

**June 3:** Take a Kid Fishing - Panther Creek Park

**June 27-30:** Daviess County 4-H Camp - Dawson Springs

**July 19-22:** Daviess County Lions Club Fair - Philpot

**August 17-27:** Kentucky State Fair - Louisville

**August 26:** Take a Kid Outdoors - Daviess County Gun Club

**August 31:** Midwestern Beef Summit - Owensboro

For more information please contact:

[Signature]

Clint Hardy
Daviess County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources Education Email: chardy@uky.edu
Our Focus

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program works in all 120 counties to improve the lives of limited-resource Kentuckians through education and changes in behavior and in community. Through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service has agents and nutrition assistants across the state who are dedicated to improving lives in their communities.

Our Challenge

Poverty

In Kentucky, household median income is $45,215, which is much lower than the U.S. median of $55,775. Kentucky has high rates of poverty and food insecurity when compared to the United States as a whole.¹

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<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Poverty</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Poverty</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Insecurity</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very Low Food Secure</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
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In 2014, an estimated 14,370 Daviess County residents lived in poverty, and 4,980 of them were children. This is a 2.5% increase in total poverty and -2.4% decrease in child poverty since 2007.²

SNAP benefits

Participation in the SNAP program among those who are eligible for its benefits is higher in Kentucky than in the U.S. as a whole.³

In 2015, 13,123 Daviess County residents received SNAP benefits, a 41.0% increase since 2007.³

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<th>Kentucky</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNAP Participation</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>83%</td>
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</table>

Obesity

Nearly half of all American adults experience one or more preventable, diet-related chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.⁴ Kentucky has a high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity, ranking in the top 10 when compared to other states.⁵ A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.⁶

In 2013, 21,871 Daviess County residents were considered obese, representing 30.4% (33.7%-27.3%) of the county’s population.⁶
OUR SOLUTION

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2016, 26,206 Daviess County residents with limited resources participated in nutrition education lessons.

OUR RESULTS

IN DAVIESS COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2016, 92% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 78% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 81% began to plan meals in advance more often and 88% used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices more often. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 88% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

OUR SUCCESS

Families applaud Snack Strong/Better Bites program

According to the Healthy Communities Institute, over 15% of limited-resource preschool students (age 2-4) in Daviess County were classified as obese. Further data from the Healthy Communities Institute shows that 62% of adults in Daviess County are overweight and only 11% of adults report eating five or more fruits and vegetables per day.

In an effort to address these issues in the Owensboro/Daviess County community, the Snack Strong/Better Bites program was launched in 2015. The program brings healthier snack and drink options to locations where families and children congregate such as pools, ball fields, parks, and community centers. Better Bites snack and drink items are chosen based on the USDA nutritional guidelines and requirements for the public school food service centers. The Daviess County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences along with fellow Cooperative Extension Service agents, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Education Program assistants, the Healthy Horizons group (Owensboro/Daviess County Health Coalition), and the Obesity Action Team partnered to launch and implement Snack Strong/Better Bites. The program was promoted with written materials, presentations, and marketing, resulting in nine Snack Strong/Better Bites locations. Better Bites menu boards replaced concession stand menu boards at two local public pools and one city park/softball complex as of May 2016.

Feedback and comments from pool and park patrons as well as community members indicate the success of the Snack Strong/Better Bites program. Both pool locations and the city park have reported increased sales for the 2016 season and positive comments from individuals regarding the healthier options for their families.

Sources:
2. U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
4. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
5. Stateofobesity.org, accessed September 2016
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), County Data Indicators, Obesity Prevalence

University of Kentucky Nutrition Education Program Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

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Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.