

Madison County Extension Office

December 2014



PHOTO CAPTION: Master Gardeners Carolyn Wade, left, Max Campbell and Debbie Severn tour the Madison County Extension Office Demonstration Vegetable Garden with two Harvest for Health participants (not shown), on Sept. 17th.

Madison County Master Gardeners Debbie Severn, Carolyn Wade and Andria Cummings are encouraging two cancer survivors in our area to eat more vegetables by growing them in their backyards. This is part of **Harvest for Health**, which is a collaboration between the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB) Hospital, and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. It is funded by the National Cancer Institute/National Institute on Aging and the American Institute for Cancer Research.

A pilot study with 12 cancer survivors showed, among other things, that they improved their physical capabilities and increased their vegetable intake. Survivors put together their own raised beds or container gardens, with supplies, soil and plants funded by the study. They were required to care for their own gardens with fall, spring and summer plantings. They received gardening advice from the Master Gardeners.

Harvest for Health is now in sixteen Alabama counties. “Our UAB partner is very energetic about the concept and thinks the data results are encouraging,” according to Alabama Master Gardener Program Coordinator Kerry Smith. Debbie, Carolyn and Andria will be spending time with their survivor partners and advising them on vegetables they can grow and harvest during the different seasons. The Master Gardeners have been asked to keep the survivors’ identities confidential. The one-year program started in September and both survivors said they had vegetable gardens in their youth and look forward to getting back into it.

Article Submitted by :Andria Cummings, North Alabama Master Gardener Association



Twenty-one students from the Fall 2013 Tri-County Master Gardener Class graduated on Nov. 11, 2014. Five were unable to attend.

Also shown are Regional Extension Agent Ken Creel, who oversees the Tri-County Master Gardener Program, and Master Gardener Alice Lawler, who is the Tri-County class coordinator.

Photo by: Meredith Kilby

A Message from the County Coordinator

The Madison County Extension Office has been very busy. Our mission is to bring research based information to the people of Madison County. I have compiled some data for the 18 months preceding July 2014.

Number agents

housed in Madison County = 11

Other Agents serving Madison County = 6

County population = 346,892

No. Programs Conducted = 318

Residents who attended

face-to-face meetings = 67,838 (20%)

Others reached via

non-face-to-face contact = 19,398 (6%)

Non-traceable contacts

reached = 178,595 (52%)

The result of these numbers are an enormous impact on Madison County. Whether it's a program that shows you how to protect your estate, a meeting of farmers, or a 4-H club meeting, Cooperative Extension is concerned with improving the lives of Madison County citizens.

We are in the process of forming our 2015 plan of work. If you are concerned about an issue in Madison County give us a call. We would love to hear from you. With tentacles that reach across many programming disciplines there is the possibility that we can work toward resolving most issues through our educational process.

Cooperative Extension is fortunate to have a life long partnership with local government. The generosity of the Madison County Commission makes it possible for us to impact the county with the success we have had.

Our office has a wealth of free information and assistance to help you, from personal financial planning to growing your own garden, we are available for you. Oh yes ... by the way, did I mention our services are FREE!!!

Walter Harris,

County Extension Coordinator

THE COUNTY OFFICE
WELCOMES OUR NEW
EMPLOYEE!

Shavita Wood, UNEP Agent
Assistant



As one of the newest members of the ACES team I look forward to serving the Madison/ Limestone County areas and sharing my knowledge of nutrition. I am originally from Phoenix City, AL, born and raised but Huntsville has been my home for the past 12 years. I am excited to have the opportunity to work with an amazing group of people dedicated to serving others. I started with Extension on September 15th, 2014 and have spent the last 12 years here in Huntsville working in the medical field. I am accustomed to being in a clinical setting but I am excited to be in a position through the Snap-Ed program which focuses on eating healthy to maintain a healthy lifestyle. I have always had a passion for helping people in any way that I can and I am committed to becoming a valuable asset to the Urban Nutrition Education Program and to the Alabama Cooperative Extension Program.



Alabama Pesticide Information

Alabama Private Applicator Permit

What is a private applicator?

A private applicator uses or supervises the use of any restricted use pesticide for producing any agricultural commodity on property owned or rented or on the property of another person if applied without compensation.

Who needs a private applicator permit?

- farmers
- nursery owners
- pond owners
- forested land owners

Materials & Qualifications

The private applicator study materials can be picked up at your local county Extension office, downloaded or ordered at the ACES Store website.

Must be able to read and comprehend the subject matter in English—no tests are given orally

Must obtain a passing grade of 70 percent or higher on the test

Must successfully complete training and testing, then submit an application for a permit.

How to obtain your Private Applicator License

Option #1

Cost: \$20

Contact your county Extension office to register for the next training course available.

Statewide training/testing dates will be January 1–September 30 of each year

No training courses will be offered October 1st–December 31 of any year.

* An additional \$25 fee must be forwarded by the applicant to the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries (ADAI) to receive the permit.

For a list of available training/testing courses in the state, go to: <http://www.aces.edu/anr/pesticidemgt/courses.php>

Locate the nearest available training course to your county from the drop down list.

Option #2

Cost: \$10

If unable to attend a training session, applicants shall secure the appropriate training manual, permit application, and schedule a testing date with the nearest Cooperative Extension System office.

* An additional \$25 fee must be forwarded by the applicant to the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries (ADAI) to receive the permit.

Option #3

Cost: \$60

(\$25 Permit Fee Included)

Take the training course online (<https://alpsep.aces.edu/>)

A certificate and application can be printed and mailed or emailed to the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) at the end of the course with a grade of 70 or above.

The New 4-H



4-H has been around for generations. Most people know the term “4-H” when it’s mentioned and relate it to agriculture and livestock clubs. But, what most people don’t realize is that 4-H has changed with the times.

We still offer all of the agricultural goodness of late, but we’ve kept up with technology and the twenty-first century also.

What is new?

As education has emerged into a new generation focused on technology and new ways of learning, 4-H has kept up with the times to offer programs that relate to the youth of today.

Robotics

4-H Robotics clubs are a new way of helping youth experiment with technology and hands-on learning, while involving teachers and engineers in the community to help “coach” these youth. The Madison County Robotics Team has won many awards in the past couple of years, and hope to keep up their record of success in the future. Last year’s team, with the guidance of their coaches, built robots equipped for hostage situations. These robots could hear, see, and speak. The robotics team controlled their robots with game controllers, and did all of the programming on their own. Impressive group of young people!



4-H Innovators

4-Hinnovators is a STEM-based curriculum that ties in agriculture and problem-based inquiry learning. During these lessons, youth get to “build” projects to solve real-world problems that farmers and other people face when working. For example, one project involves transporting goods across water, which is a major segment of our global commerce trade. The project required youth to build a carrier which could transport beans across water without sinking or getting them wet. Another Innovators project required the students to discover how farmers get their machinery and crops across water, such as a creek or river. They had to build a bridge which could support the weight of a cup of beans. If it was not successful, the youth had to redesign their bridge to solve the problem.

For more information contact Nikki Cornelison, Regional Extension Agent, 4-H & Youth Development; at 256-585-5137 or tnc0012@aces.edu.



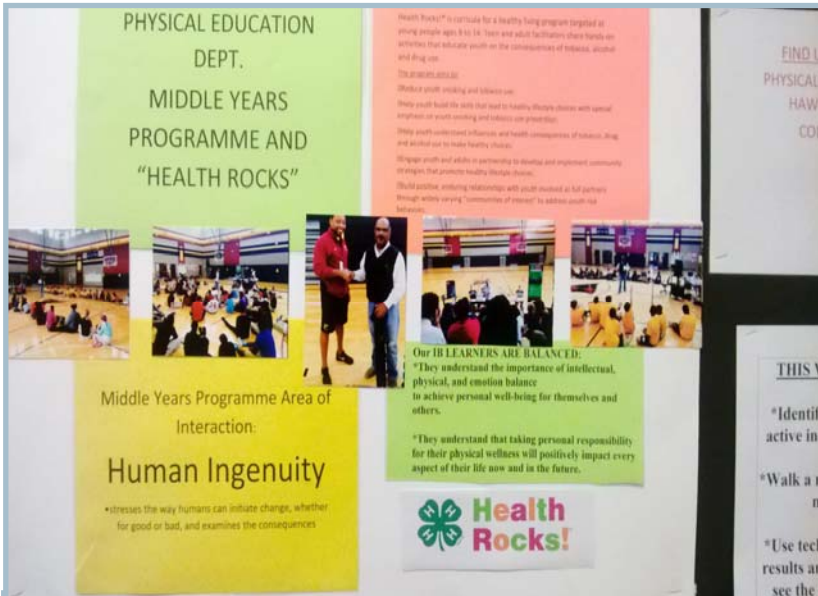
TEN KEYS FOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS



1. **Prepare for Unexpected Events.** Having an emergency fund is ideal to take care of any unexpected events or emergencies such as a job loss, illness, or loss of a spouse.
2. **Always Know Your Interest Rates.** Never exceed 13% interest on loans and know what you pay on interest and fees. Know how your interest is being calculated.
3. **Keep a Healthy Credit Report.** It is important to pay your bills on time to protect and build your credit score. Receive a free annual credit report at www.annualcreditreport.com.
4. **Avoid Waste.** Eat at home, clip coupons, and return purchases you don't use.
5. **Benefit from Tax Breaks.** Take advantage of claiming Earned Income Credit on your taxes. Utilize the Volunteer Income Tax Assistant program (VITA) to save money rather than going to a for profit tax business to file taxes. There are several sites here in Madison County.
6. **Fill in Financial Gaps.** If you notice that you are giving out of money before your next pay check, try increasing your income by having a garage sale, working part-time, bartering, recycling, selling baked goods, or arts and crafts.
7. **Give Back to Your Community.** It is up to you. Donate to any organization of your choice such as Salvation Army, Food Banks, United Way, etc.
8. **Plan to be Financially Successful.**
 - Using a spending plan will help you identify where your money is going.
 - Save for specific needs.
 - Write down immediate, short term, intermediate and long term goals.
 - Create a spending plan that works for you and always track what you spend.
9. **Start Saving Now to be Prepared Later.**
 - Save lump sum payments from windfalls like tax refunds, gifts, or inheritance.
 - Be prepared for sudden illness, divorce, death, theft, natural disasters or the loss of your job.
 - Have adequate health, car, home, and life insurance.
10. **Improve Your Credit Score.**

Your Credit Score is a number that indicates if you have good credit history. You can improve your Credit Score by paying your bills on time. Don't apply for credit (cards) frequently. Pay off your balances each month.

Source: Information adapted from Utah Saves and America Saves
For more information contact Dr. Theresa Jones, Regional Extension Agent at rosscth@aces.edu or 256-509-5908 or visit <http://www.AmericaSaves.org>.



Schools are back in full force for the fall school year and I am excited to have been invited back for the 2014-2015 school year; to continue gardening classes with kindergarten through second grade students. This marks my third year, forming gardening clubs at the (Academy for Science & Foreign Language (ASFL) and First Baptist Academy schools.

The Kindergarten students get a chance to broadcast their seeds, while the First and Second graders raise their plants in a bio-degradable cup inside the classroom. After the plants reach a growth of two inches, they are ready to plant! This achievement fosters much excitement among the children. Each class gets a chance to build their own garden bed by using compost. Students and teachers are asked to save newspaper, gather tree leaves from their yard, and save grass clippings, in order to make the compost. I provide the last ingredient to the compost, which is goat manure.

Last year, the cold weather brought much damage to the children's greens, lettuce, and radish plants. We are hoping for a better growth outcome this year.

Other programs offered to the middle school students are **Health Rocks!** Which is a series of leader's curricula for a healthy living program aimed at 8- to 15-year-olds with the goal of bringing youth, families and communities across the United States together to reduce tobacco, alcohol and drug use by youth; and **Teens Making Impact (TMI)** which is a curriculum created to empower youth ages 15-18 in group settings with the skills they need to make wise decisions and to help them become productive citizens. Both programs are offered through the Urban Affairs New and Nontraditional Programs of the Alabama Cooperative Extension



For more information contact Prince Preyer II, Urban Regional Extension Agent, at 256-929-3434 or pap0009@aces.edu .

Health Rocks A Drug Free Summer

Volunteer Teen Leaders from across the County were eager to begin the summer sharing their knowledge with youth throughout Madison County and surrounding areas. Health Rocks a Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Prevention Educational Program is implemented throughout communities spreading the word about the facts, consequences and health issues that may arise due to abusing or misusing the substance. The program is a Grant Project from the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland and is designed to be taught by teens to 4th-9th grade students.



The Madison County Volunteer Teen Leaders began the summer with an intense Health Rocks Training on how to work with young people and how to conduct the Health Rocks Sessions. In addition to learning how to implement the programs, during the Teen Leader Training Sessions, the teens also learn about team building, how to work as a team, and leadership building. This year we were very fortunate to have as our Guest Trainer-Ms. Janette R. Smith, the Visionary for- ubeempowered.com a site that is a labor of love created by Janette. The vision for this "positivity hub" was birthed from her dream to build an internet "retreat" where people could stop by and get their spiritual, physical and mental 'empowerment pill' for the day. Janette lead the teens in powerful discussions and activities that enhanced their team work/building values. Janette is also the founder, lead coach / consultant at Inner Mirror Empowerment Coaching and founder of Mirror Media Solutions, LLC. She left the youth with many challenging questions and solutions that they can use during their teaching segments throughout the summer and in life.

The teen leaders: Mariah Gullatte, Josiah Gullatte, Xavier Hopkins, Leyton Owens, Abby McAlister, Ravyn Lane, Amyriah Stewart, Tiara Edwards, Ashai Fuller, Ashley Lewis and **graduate assistants:** Justin Wright and Michelle Thompson visited The James Lane Boys & Girls Club, Fellowship of Faith, Madison City Library and The Oscar Mason Center and delivered the hands-on Health Rocks Programs to over 150 youth. The students had a great learning experience through playing games, competing and interactive discussions that enhanced their knowledge about the facts and consequences that can occur if you partake in irresponsible behavior when it comes to alcohol, tobacco, dugs/ illegal substances.

For more information contact Donna Gullatte, Urban Regional Extension Agent, Family & Child Development at (256) 541- 3580 or jonesdl@aces.edu.

Serving as Your Urban Regional Horticultural Agent:

Community gardens workshops will resume this coming spring, we will have speakers from



Auburn University, Mississippi State University, and Alabama A&M University. We were fortunate to receive a SARE grant to install community gardens in 3 North Alabama counties, Madison, Morgan, and Lawrence. The specific locations of the community gardens will be at the East Lawrence Middle School, Chestnut Grove School in Morgan County, and Bob Harrison Senior Center located here in Madison County. Some gardens are already installed. During this spring workshops we will be promoting water conservation, recycling, and pest management. I will also be teaching citizens how to grow fresh produce in their own back yards.

The workshops and trainings will provide educational information on the following topics: **1)** Improved access to

healthier food sources for inner-city and limited resource families; **2)** Increased knowledge of fresh food sources and benefits; **3)** Increased physical activity through gardening maintenance and harvesting activities; **4)** Enhanced community interactions through community gardening partnerships; **5)** A cleaner, safer, and sustainable environment resulting from the adoption of more efficient best management practices (BMPs) and the conservation of natural resources; **6)** Improved knowledge related to health and nutrition benefits of urban gardening and **7)** Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in urban communities.

Serving as your Urban Regional CRD Agent:

Here in Madison County we will be conducting Career countdown and other CRD programs at schools, churches, youth leadership camps or with any urban audience that request this program. The most recent and upcoming workshop is the AKA Dubutes training session on Money Management and Financial Planning. This workshop will take place at The Alabama A&M University (Agriculture Research Center Auditorium). We are here to serve the public needs and also to provide researched based information. Some of the immediate goals are to 1) simulate economic deterioration through a hands on interactive model (2) educate participants on the causes of economic deterioration (3) provide direction and training on career planning and exploration techniques (4) provide direction and training on education planning.



For more information contact Marcus Garner, Urban Regional Extension Agent, Community Resource Development & Home Grounds, Gardens and Pest; at 256-532-1578 or mlg0005@aces.edu.

Holiday Cooking – Safety Reminders

The holiday season has begun and with that comes thoughts of family gatherings and holiday meals! Let's be careful not to spoil the good times with sickness brought on by negligence in the kitchen. Even if you don't enjoy the family gatherings, food poisoning is not the way to get out of it early. I've compiled a few holiday food safety tips from the USDA, FDA, CDC and AU Food Systems Institute's Thanksgiving iBook. The iBook is on its second year of publication and has so much information like holiday history and traditions, planning the menu, and recipes, of course. My husband really likes the videos. I tell him he's a product of YouTube University because he learns so much from video. There are videos in the iBook on the Secrets of Cranberry Harvest, turkey stuffing and Holiday Food Safety Tips. So with that, here are some of the tips I'd like to share.

Foodsafety.gov has a great food safety campaign with four main concepts: CLEAN, SEPARATE, COOK and CHILL. The commercials are funny and can be found on the website. My favorite is the "Recipes for Disaster" series. I posted these on my Facebook page (ChristyMendoza ACES.) Back to the list...

- Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill
- Refrigerate perishables and leftovers within 2 hours. The faster you can get them to 40F, the safer.
- To chill leftovers faster, put them in smaller containers.
- Check your refrigerator temperature – make this a new holiday tradition. Refrigerator should be between 32 and 40F and your freezer should be below 0.
- Don't crowd the refrigerator. It needs to circulate the air to keep everything cool.
- Don't thaw on the counter (or outside!) Thaw in the refrigerator or in cold water, changing the water out every 30 minutes.
- Remember it takes THREE days to thaw a frozen 12 pound turkey in the refrigerator.
- Cook your turkey to 165F at the thickest part of the bird. If you stuff it, the stuffing must reach 165F also. This can overcook the turkey, so think about skipping that extra step of stuffing the bird and cook your stuffing in a casserole dish. Ham should be cooked to 140F IF it is marked as from a USDA inspected plant and is labeled as fully cooked. If it's smoked or fresh, cook it to 145F. If you have no USDA inspection, cook it to 165.
- Storing leftovers: Meats & poultry, soups & stews, cold salads like chicken, tuna and macaroni will be ok about 4 days in the refrigerator. So, if you can't eat it all by Sunday, freeze it before then!
- Reheat leftovers to 165F.
- Pecan Pie does not have to be refrigerated – of course, there's never any leftovers anyway!



For more information contact Christy Mendoza, Regional Extension Agent, Food Safety, Preparation & Preservation; at 256-547-7936 or cnm0012@aces.edu

HOLIDAY HOSTING TIPS FOR DIABETICS ...

It's that time of year already... IT'S THE HOLIDAYS! It's time to celebrate (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's) and enjoy friends and family...Attend Festivities... Holiday Parties... And even host your events, here's a few tips for diabetics who are planning to host or attend an event...

Plan your menu ahead of time so that it includes healthy food choices such as fruits, vegetables and lean meats.

Avoid frying or adding extra fat during cooking your turkey or ham. Instead try these healthy methods for cooking: baking, broiling and barbequing.

Even though it may be hard especially when you're the cook try your best to avoid sampling the foods more than necessary. These calories add up and can affect your blood sugar.

If you're the host of the dinner, clear the table and put unused food away to help guests avoid grazing.

Provide plenty of water!! Spice it up by adding orange, lemon, or lime slices to the water pitcher before guests arrive. This will not only keep your guests hydrated but it's simply a healthy and better option than alcohol.

Before your guests arrive make sure to eat a small balanced meal or snack ...it's easy to forget to eat when you're hosting.

Enjoy The Holiday Season!

For more information on diabetes contact **Shonda A. Miller, Regional Extension Agent at 256-426-8444 or sam0059@aces.edu**

The Importance of Family Time during the Holidays

Life is busy and it seems to be getting busier. The holidays are a time meant for family and friends. In the hustle and bustle of life, it is easy for everyone to go separate ways and for families to become distant. Taking time during the holiday season to enjoy family and friends can provide some benefits to the family.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that family relationships provide children with a critical sense of being valued and with a vital network of historical linkages and social support. The family unit is vital to helping children develop positive interpersonal relationships and instills discipline and internalized codes of conduct. (Caring for Your School-Age Child, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2004).

Bonding is the process of developing close interpersonal relationships. Bonding is a mutual and interactive process. From the very moment of birth, the bonding process begins with a family. If these bonds are not developed, there can be serious health and development complications. A lot of research has been done on the attachment that develops (or doesn't develop) between a mother and a new child. These bonds can affect the growth and development of a child for a lifetime. Abraham Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that every human has in life. Maslow's hierarchy highlights the importance of bonding at a variety of levels. At its most basic level, we need to have our physical needs met (food, housing, etc). Next, we need to feel safe. Then, we need a sense of love and belonging. These three lowest points on the hierarchy are met through our families in basic ways. If these needs are met, then we are able to have healthier esteem for ourselves. (Abraham Maslow, A Theory of Human Motivation, 1943)

The holidays are about time together as a family. The importance is spending time together with each other, not on spending a lot of money doing things. Holiday traditions are a great way for families to connect and spend time together. Here are some examples—

- Singing holiday songs
- Decorating the Christmas tree together.
- Reading a holiday book
- Volunteering together at a soup kitchen or a nursing home.
- Watch a holiday movie together
- Bake and decorate cookies together.
- Attend a holiday church service together
- Create an Advent Calendar together.
- Make homemade holiday decorations.
- Make homemade gifts

These are just some basic ideas. Find something your family enjoys doing together and make it a tradition. For more ideas about holiday activities or similar, please feel free to contact **Shannon Kish** at skish@aces.edu or 256-270-6493.

Up-Coming Events & Workshops

The Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers annual Conference and Trade Show will be February 6-7, 2015 at the Marriott Grand National Hotel in Opelika, AL. This conference will provide an excellent learning opportunity for new, beginning and seasoned commercial fruit and vegetable producers. On-line registration is now available at <http://www.aces.edu/department/associations/afvga/>.

A variety of topics will be discussed including vegetable IPM, fruit production, irrigation management and specialty crops. **For more information contact Doug Chapman, Regional Extension Agent, Commercial Horticulture at 256-262-2703 or chapmld@aces.edu.**