



## 2015 Jackson County Program Impact Report

### I. Executive Summary

The Jackson County Cooperative Extension identified ten (10) major program areas to work in during 2015: Natural Resources Conservation and Environmental Sustainability; Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Risk Reduction; Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture Systems; Urban and Consumer Agriculture; Safety and Security of our Food and Farm Systems; School to Career (Youth and Adults); Volunteer Readiness; Family Financial Management Skills; Leadership Development and Community Development. Educational programs in these state objectives led to significant impacts for the citizens of Jackson County during 2015.

In 2015 The Jackson County Extension Advisory Council meet once (1) with an attendance four (4) members. This meeting occurred in November, 2015. These meetings provided an excellent time to allow the Jackson Extension staff to share with the community leaders our extension work within the county for the past six months and what lies ahead for the next 6 months in regards to programming. Staff listened to feedback from the leaders of how else Jackson Extension can help further with educational programming and technical assistance. The council members really liked the work that the Jackson Extension center is doing. They stated that we are meeting the demands of the public with our extension programming.

#### **AGRICULTURE and HORTICULTURE:**

Agriculture and Horticulture Extension Agent Christy Bredenkamp did an outstanding job in 2015 providing 36 major educational programs, while

also providing technical assistance in the areas of profitable and sustainable agriculture systems; local food systems; safety and security of our food and farm systems; and urban and consumer agriculture. Her programs in these areas impacted 1,478 (21,537 non face-face) individuals directly by increasing their working knowledge of best agricultural and horticulture production practices to increase net farm incomes and help build the local food systems for Jackson County, along with good horticulture practices. The numbers included 901 for profitable and sustainable agriculture systems (\$20,101) net income gains realized by the adoption of best management practices, including those practices related to nutrient management, conservation, production, cultivars, pest management (weeds, diseases, insects), business management, and marketing); 17 for local food systems; 126 for safety and security of food and farm systems; and 434 for urban and consumer agriculture (\$211,048) in value of produce grown for home consumption was estimated). Her programs ranged from Master Gardener (MG), Christmas Trees, blueberry and grapes beginner bee; home orchard, growing ginseng, pesticide certifications, pests of trees and shrubs; composting; soil testing; fall gardening and many other subjects related to agriculture and horticulture. Eighty (80) pesticide applicators were certified and 24 re-certified. Sixteen (16) MGs re-certified. CED Robert Hawk provided 8 livestock educational programs (Amazing Grazing/Pasture Management \$350 net income gains by producers adopting extension-recommended best management practices with the Amazing Grazing demonstration improved pastures; soil testing; Beef Quality Assurance (BQA); tree shelter belts and weed control in pasture) for cattle herd and health management through the Jackson, Macon and Swain (JMS) Cattlemen's Association, which he served as the Chair of the Education Committee in 2015. BQA training in January 2015 had 9 cattlemen certified with 4 of these new certifications. Christy had 16 MGs donate 379 hours for 337 clients valued at \$8,391. Individuals from Jackson County and surrounding communities participated in this disposal day in which 246 containers totaling 1,726 pounds of old pesticides were collected. The cost for pesticide disposal averages at \$7.50/pound, which makes the savings to the citizens of the county worth approximately \$12,945. In addition, over 300 empty pesticide containers were collected and recycled in a proper manner saving Jackson county in landfill disposal fees.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

In the area of Community Development 177 community leaders gained assistance from the Jackson Extension Center, which was included work through extension programs; extension clubs; working committees and technical assistance. In October 2015, Savannah, Balsam, Caney Fork and Pumpkintown Community Development Clubs (CDCs) participated in the Annual Jackson CDC Awards program. A total of \$2,025 Award Monies were granted to these 4 CDCs to help with their programming needs. First place was awarded to Caney Fork, 2-Pumpkingorwn; 3 - Balsam and 4 - Savannah. Jackson Extension still works closely with the CDCs to provide financial and educational support The Smoky Mountain Agriculture Development Station (SMADS-old Drexel plant) Steering Committee held a follow-up Community/Public Outreach meetings in March 2015 to report back to the public the SMADS Master Plan in the Fall from the Altamont Engineering, Inc. CED Robert J. Hawk provided much leadership with the SMADS initiative and helped facilitate the outreach meetings with the help of CED Doug Clement. Since August 2015, the SMADS Project died with the disapproval of the plan by the Jackson County Commissioners. However, some of the farmers are still seeking approval. The Cattle Facility that was planned at the Drexel site started to focus on a location in Swain County. The new NC Hospitality and Pride program was embraced by CED, who became certified and did 1 program in November 2015 with one (1) business participating.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES and CONSERVATION:**

Natural Resources Conservation and Environmental Sustainability programs through the Jackson Extension impacted 431 residents, which was primarily through educational programming during the Annual Soil and Water Conservation (SWCD) Conservation Field Days (April 2015); Leopold Education Program Training-(LEP) (August 2015); Conservation Christmas Tree (November 2015) and the Beaver Management Assistance program (BMAP)-6 helped in county, along with technical assistance on ponds, wildlife nuisance questions and nature based school programs. These

two programs taught youth and teachers about conservation stewardship and how to appreciate and enjoy their natural environment. Provided 3 major educational programs in this area of natural resource conservation, which included the School Conservation Field Days; LEP and Conservation Christmas Tree. \$350 was awarded from Jackson Paper Manufacturing to purchase tree seedlings for the SWCD Conservation Field Days.

#### **4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:**

4-H Agent Heather Gordon provided many diverse programs (138+) under the "Leadership" philosophy of building youth to become effective citizens of the community for the future. Her programs directly provided leadership to 1,696 youth in Jackson County in 2015. The 4-H program in 2015 included 4-H Cloverbuds; Science 4- Life Club; Explorers Club; Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM) program; Youth Leadership Council; Sewing Bee; 4-H Summer Camp and day Camp and Homeschooler and Scotts Creek Presentations. In 2015, Heather Gordon secured several purposeful and significant grants for her programs and they were \$7,500 from the NC Arts Council Traditional Arts; \$1,200 from the Jackson County Arts Council for the Jackson County Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM) program JAM, which is an after-school program that provides young people instruction and performance opportunities in Mountain Heritage Music on traditional Appalachian instruments. Grants totaled \$8,600 for her JAM program. Heather had 306 volunteers donate 1,039 hours for 732 clients valued at \$23,003, which are outstanding figures for the 4-H program.

#### **FAMILY and CONSUMER SCIENCE:**

Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Agent Sherrie Peeler has worked with 1,273 individuals, which benefited from programs on healthy eating, physical activity and chronic disease risk reduction); family financial management (3); 4 under school to career and 14 for volunteer readiness/ECA (241) during 2015. Sherrie has held 59 programs ranging from quilting; NC Safe Plates; 4-H sewing bee; cleaning/laundry; cooking; sewing; ECA Clubs; food preservation; nutrition; recipes; family financial management and volunteer readiness. 58 ECA Volunteers donated 392 hours for 337 clients for a total value of \$8,391, which is a major increase from 2014. Twenty-one (21) food industry workers became NC SafePlates (Serve Safe type program) and 75 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HAACP) under Sherrie's program. Twelve (12) 4-H youth participated in two sessions of day camp. STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math skills were applied to our three day sewing camp. Twenty six (26) youth increased their fruit and vegetable consumption their physical activity with the "Glow, Grow, Go" program. FCS and 4-H integrated some programs in 2015 as the reports indicate.

#### **OVERALL SUMMARY:**

Jackson County Cooperative Extension made 47,920 total educational contacts in 2015, which included 5,806 face-to-face contacts and 42,117 non-face-to-face contacts. Give or take a few, about 356 extension educational programs came from the Jackson Extension Staff in 2015. Mass Media (newspaper; radio and social media) is a large part of the Jackson Extension educational process, in which ninety - seven (97) newspaper articles had a circulation of 1,271,350; sixty - five (65) radio programs reached 1,171,000 people; thirteen (13) county website articles were written with over 22,000 website hits in 2015. Jackson Extension Center received \$35,400 in grants, gifts and donations to help the citizens of Jackson County with educational programs to enhance their lives greatly. All these accomplishments listed give the real impact of the Jackson County work in 2015. All the small to large impacts total the overall impact. Please see agent's Success Stories for detail of their greatest accomplishments.

Volunteer activity in 2015 included 396 volunteers with 1,855 volunteer hours benefiting 1,429 individuals totally a dollar value of \$41,070, which are increases from 2014.

The Jackson County Extension held two all day Staff Retreats for 2015. The first was a "Team Building" exercise in May when the entire extension staff of Jackson and Swain pitched in to help one of the staff with much needed landscaping and exterior home repairs. This retreat developed staff cohesion and camaraderie ship. The other retreat was a Christmas time gathering on December 2nd when the entire staff again pulled together from both extension centers developed craft decorations for the Swain 4-H Christmas parade Float, which won 1st Place in the Swain County Christmas Parade Float Contest!