

Alabama Cooperative Extension System

819 Cook Avenue ~ Huntsville, Alabama 35801

(256) 532-1578

Madison County Office

2006

Annual Report

Charles H. Stone
Agricultural Center
819 Cook



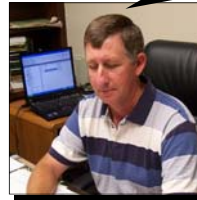
Administration and Restructuring

In the summer of 2004, The Alabama Cooperative Extension System underwent a restructuring that changed the organization from the traditional 'county agent' model to a Regional Extension Agent system. The reorganization changed the old concept to a new system of traveling regional agents highly specialized in one of 15 newly-defined priority program areas. These regional agents are able to network with peers across the state to share the latest and best information available. At the same time we remain committed to serving our clientele with high-quality information and be responsive to community directives. Madison County is fortunate to have agents serving the Traditional Rural areas as well as Urban Regional Agents specializing in New Non-Traditional Programs focusing on urban locales. This personnel adjustment has allowed Extension to be more responsive to clients' high-level questions and educational needs in fifteen high-priority programming areas. Under the new system, agents have multi-county responsibilities in one programming area. This allows them to focus at a more technical level in a narrower field, allowing clients to have higher-quality information. Furthermore, citizens of Madison County now have access to highly-specialized agents in other North Alabama Counties. All agents are accessible through their offices and through cell phones.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System in Madison County is housed at 819 Cook Avenue in the Charles T. Stone Agricultural Center. The Family Life Center is located at 228F Binford Court. We serve a high number of walk-in clients as well as thousands of telephone contacts each year. Additionally, the Madison County Extension System can be contacted through the statewide www.ACES.edu website.

Under the Cooperative Extension funding formula, all Regional and Urban Regional Extension agents serving Madison County are paid by funds either through Auburn University of Alabama A&M University. These two Universities handle all of the staff administrative costs, including benefits. While salaries are being directed through the Universities, the local part-time 4-H Agent Assistant is being funded by county appropriations. Also, a portion of the County Extension Coordinator's salary is paid through county funds. All travel and most supply expenses for the regional extension agents are paid by state funds; county funds support the local 4-H and administrative travel and supply costs.

Staff members of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System who serve Madison County are committed to proving up-to-date educational programs for the citizens of Madison County. We appreciate the fine support of our Madison County Commission and look forward to a continued positive partnership. We hope you enjoy reading a sampling of our activities from the past year.



Britnell, Ronald
Regional Extension Agent



Broman, Betty Ann
County Extension Coordinator



Brown, Shirley
Agent Assistant, UNEP



Campbell, Emily
Regional Extension Agent



Carter, Teresa
Regional Extension Agent



Chapman, Doug
Regional Extension Agent



Creel, Kenneth
Regional Extension Agent



Edmond, Judy
Regional Extension Agent



Gottler, Betty
Regional Extension Agent



Gullatte, Donna
Urban Regional Extension Agent



Hall, Mark
Regional Extension Agent



Harris, Walter
Regional Extension Agent



Havekost, Tanja
Admin. Secretary



King, Elaine
Admin. Secretary



Moore, Cynarra *Agent Assistant, New & Non-Traditional Programs*



Oakes, Sylvia *Urban Regional Extension Agent*



Rodgers, Walter *Urban Regional Extension Agent*



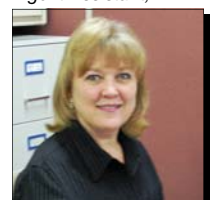
Sims, Katrinet
Agent Assistant, 4-H



Smith, Tyrone *Urban Regional Extension Agent*



Thompson, Gerald
Regional Extension Agent



Whitten, Shirley
Regional Extension Agent

The Priority Program Areas:

Agronomic Crops

Animal Science & Forages

Aquaculture and Recreational Pond Management

Poultry

Family & Child Development

Community Resource Development

Consumer Science and Personal Financial Management

Farm Management and Agricultural Enterprise Analysis

Food Safety, Preparation, and Preservation

Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resource Management

Commercial Horticulture

Home Grounds, Gardens, and Home Pests

Human Nutrition, Diet, and Health

4-H and Youth Development

Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program

Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources

The area of **Home Horticulture** receives more client calls and inquiries than any other area.

Kenneth W. Creel, Regional Extension Agent for Home Grounds, Gardens and Pests, is housed in Madison County and coordinates the horticulture program. The horticulture program includes community presentations, the Master Gardener Program, over 3000 annual client contacts, and numerous media contacts.

The goal of home horticulture, gardens, and pests is to teach private homeowners and gardeners how to apply research-generated information and knowledge to resolve problems that they encounter in their homes, lawns and gardens. This not only improves their individual enjoyment of the immediate environment in which they live, but also provides a safe environment for everyone through the wise and correct use of fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides and other chemicals. The subject areas covered in this area of specialization include soils and fertility, irrigation systems, variety and cultivar selection, harvesting and handling, pest management (to include insects, weeds, nematodes, and diseases, as well as integrated pest management). The primary educational program in this program area is the Master Gardener Program.

The Master Gardener program in Madison County is a 13-week program with classes on soil science, plant physiology, weed science, entomology, landscape design, ornamental plant selection and care, vegetable production, plant propagation, lawn care, home orchards, plant pathology, and annuals and perennials. The objective of the Master Gardener program is to train participants in horticulture not only for their personal use, but so that they can use



Our Master Gardeners are active volunteers for Extension and our community.

Cooperative Extension System mission. In order to become a certified Alabama Master Gardener, each student is required to perform at least 40 hours of volunteer work in horticulture related activities.

During the period from October 1, 2004 to July 1, 2005, 52 new Master Gardeners were trained in Madison County. In 2004, veteran Master Gardeners and interns performed over 16,000 hours of volunteer work on various community gardening projects and conducting educational programs for the citizens of Madison County.

Doug Chapman, housed in the Limestone County Extension office, provides the leadership for the **Commercial Horticulture** program in Madison County. He conducted special-interest meetings in North Alabama which included several Madison County growers. Among these were a Winter Fruit Tree Meeting and a Small Fruit Production Meeting. He also had several media contacts.

Chapman has worked with Madison County School Systems in several capacities: He worked with Madison County Technical School students on plant propagation, offering both demonstrations and lectures to the students enrolled in the horticulture program. He also consulted with Dr. Dave Han concerning athletic turf in the Madison County School System.

There have also been numerous grower contacts concerning turf, nursery, greenhouse, pecan propagation, orchard and farm problems. One situation of special interest involves a Madison County cotton producer who is diversifying into small fruit, pumpkins and nursery stock. Doug has worked with him closely over the past several years and in 2005, he had a record year for his strawberry crop. He will soon add blueberries to his operation

Field Crops & Biodiesel

Mark Hall serves Madison County farmers as the Regional Extension Agent for field crops.

He gives county farmers the information they need through farm and office visits, farm production workshops, newsletters and the internet.

Hall also has statewide responsibility for alternative fuels. One of the major projects he is involved with is a grant to fund biodiesel use. Biodiesel is made from soybean oil or other agricultural brown oils and is an alternative fuel for diesel engines. The City of Huntsville, Madison County, and some 15 North Alabama farmers are using biodiesel in a 20/80 percent mixture with diesel fuel. This non-toxic, clean-burning alternative fuel offers few environmental hazards, reduces dependence on foreign oil, and has the potential to add millions to Alabama's farm economy. The City of Huntsville recently participated in a pilot program involving alternative fuel in city vehicles. The Alabama Cooperative Extension Service and the Alabama Soybean Commission provided 1,000 gallons of a soybean-based "biodiesel" fuel to test in four city sanitation vehicles.

Although more expensive, the soybean-based product burns cleaner than petroleum or fossil-based diesel fuel.

Extension's biodiesel initiative is funded through grants from the Alabama Soybean Commission and the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs.



Mark Hall (right) discusses use of Biodiesel products with Madison Co. farmer Dennis Bragg & Russell Moore from AL. Dept. of Economic Affairs.

Livestock

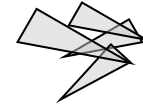
Gerald Thompson, Regional Extension Agent for Animal Science & Forages provides the leadership for the livestock program in Madison County.

The livestock producers in Madison County have had a very active year. The restructuring of Extension programs has proven to work very well in this area, and the livestock producers (mostly cattle producers) have had an abundance of educational opportunities made available to them. Examples of the educational programs that Madison County cattle producers have been involved in during the past year include: the Alabama Master Cattle Producers Training Program, the Alabama Beef Quality Assurance program, several "advanced" programs for Master Cattleman graduates (nutrition, feeding of by-products, and herd health), and a "One-day Grazing Management Workshop". Additionally, Extension has partnered with organizations such as the Madison County Cattlemen's Association on a series of quarterly educational workshops dealing with topics such as "The Economics of Hay Production", "The Effects of the Cattle Cycle on Cattle Producers in Madison County", and "Herd Bull Selection Techniques". Several cattle producers from Madison County attended the two-day "Beef Short Course" at Auburn University, and there are many Madison County producers involved in the various statewide programs available through the Alabama Beef Cattle Improvement Association. During the past year, cattle producers in Madison County have also hosted tour groups from North Carolina, South Carolina, and from the Black belt region of Alabama. The 4-H Youth Livestock Program in Madison County has also been very active, taking advantage of the Alabama A&M University Agribition Center for their county beef show, which has grown into one of the largest in the state. Many of the youth involved in this program have also been very successful with their projects at the District and State shows, as well as many county and regional fairs.

Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resource Management

Regional Extension Agent for Forestry and Wildlife, **Ronald Britnell**, is housed in the Morgan County Extension office, but regularly serves the citizens of Madison County. He receives numerous client inquiries on questions concerning farm and recreational ponds. He has consulted with personnel at Madison County Lake concerning both fish and aquatic plant issues. He also works with developers who are incorporating lakes into their residential developments. Very positive feedback has come back to the office as a result of these contacts. These contacts will have both an economic and environmental impact on Madison County.

Britnell is also interacting with the Forestry Commission with their local planning committees.



Family and Individual Well-Being

Food Safety & Preservation is a concern of commercial, educational, private, and consumer aspects of our communities. Whether one is preparing food for a family dinner, a football game tailgate party, meals in a school cafeteria, food in a nursing home, or dinner in a downtown restaurant, the safety of our food and drink is a top priority.

Emily Campbell, Regional Extension Agent for Food Safety and Food Preparation, along with **Betty Ann Broman**, County Extension Coordinator, are charged with providing education related to food safety and food preservation.

Among the major efforts in food safety this year was the project "Serv-Safe" training for food service workers, primarily in restaurant settings, through-out the state and the "Serving It Safe" training for child nutrition (school lunchroom) workers in the state. Personnel from all school systems participated in this training in the summer of 2005. Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) method of quality assurance training is also offered to child nutrition workers in the state. Food preparation and preservation assistance is offered through workshops and as needed for clientele through telephone, direct mail and electronic means.

Individual clients call the Extension office on a regular basis, especially in the summer months, on issues related to food preservation and safety. They receive assistance in methodology and techniques to insure that the food they preserve at home is as safe as possible using the most current United States Department of Agriculture guidelines. In June 2005, a joint effort with the Madison County Farmer's Market and the Madison Farmer's Market resulted in food safety, preservation, and nutrition information being disseminated to patrons of these facilities.

Media outlets are also used on a regular basis to disseminate information on food safety and food preservation.

Human Nutrition, Diet, and Health

Providing nutrition education has been a foundation of family programs in Cooperative Extension for decades. Current initiatives in childhood obesity, osteoporosis prevention, prevention of chronic health conditions such as high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, and maintaining healthy lifestyles are all implemented in numerous ways in Madison County. Community groups and individuals continually look to Extension for leadership in the arenas of Human Nutrition, Diet, and Health.

Nutrition education for those that care for young children is a priority. **Shirley Whitten**, Regional Extension Agent for Health & Nutrition was involved in several programs for groups that are involved in children. Ninety-six daycare providers and a group of twenty-seven Preschool mothers were recipients of programs on "Nutrition for Young Children" in early 2005. Exhibits on nutritionally-related topics were also prepared for the Family Child Care Partnership Conference in June.

The Huntsville Youth Metropolitan Golf Foundation also requested and received assistance from Ms. Whitten on programs related to nutrition for their young athletes. Eight sessions were taught to this group and one session taught to an adult group.

The Madison County office of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System also partnered with Commissioner Bob Harrison's office in preparation of a grant proposal to assist local citizens in the production and preparation of fresh produce. There will be a strong involvement in assisting clients in selection, preparation, and preservation of fresh produce if this grant is funded.

Health-related programs are in high demand from community groups, schools, and agencies. Examples of other programs presented through the year include "Reducing the Risk of Skin Cancer", "Arthritis Self-Help", "Reducing the Risk of Stroke". The Madison County School System Child Nutrition Program has requested and received assistance for nutrition programs for system employees. Programs and food demonstrations have also been provided using local fruits and vegetables at both the Madison County and Madison City Farmers Markets. Publications and materials on nutrition-related topics were provided at both locations.

The arena of Nutrition, Diet, and Health also receives a high number of individual client inquiries. Both **Shirley Whitten** and **Sylvia Oakes** responded to hundreds of client calls on the numerous topics related to nutrition, food preparation, dietary guidelines and recommendations, and health.



Extension Staff members Betty Ann Broman and Shirley Whitten share information on nutrition and food preservation at the Madison Co. Farmers Market.

Consumer Sciences & Personal Financial Management

Consumer Sciences & Personal Financial Management programs address financial needs of Madison County citizens through programs in Personal Financial Management, Consumer Science, and Employment/Career Development. Leadership for these programs is provided by **Betty Ann Broman**, County Extension Coordinator and **Theresa-Ross Carter**, Regional Extension Agent for Consumer Sciences & Personal Financial Management.

Numerous programs were conducted throughout the past year by both of these staff members on topics ranging from credit use, basic budgeting, money and kids, and job skill development. Among the major programs this past year was a 5-week series in February and March 2005 called "Women's Money Management Institute", which provided clients (both women and men) a course on financial management topics. This course was promoted as a feature in the *Huntsville Times*, and will be repeated in the fall of 2005 due to high demand in the earlier session. Community professionals, including those from the banking, legal, insurance, and finance industry, shared the teaching responsibilities. Clients reported numerous behavioral changes as a result of the course and many stated "I wished I had had this course 20 years ago".



Graduates from the Feb/March 2005 Women's Money Management Institute.

Several programs were also conducted in Huntsville and Madison County Schoolrooms to teach young people about the importance of the wise use of money. Programs on various aspect of financial management are also a common request from local human service agencies. Employment and career development programs address the need for individuals to provide their financial needs through employment. This involves job search and career planning issues which are used to increase career awareness among both youth and adults.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension Publication, "Money Management Calendar" is probably the most popular publication offered. In 2005, approximately 3500 copies of the calendar were shared upon request to agencies, individuals, and through group

Family and Child Development

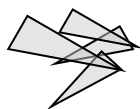
Family and Child Development programs address family and child development issues to advance families in the 21st century. Studies show families have become even more diverse since the 2000 census. Although family structure has changed, the general well-being of children and family has not changed. **Judy Edmond**, Regional Extension Agent for Family & Child Development provides the leadership for this program area.



Regional Extension Agent Judy Edmond teaches parenting class.

Many community groups and agencies turn to Cooperative Extension for programs and materials on issues related to family & child development. During the past year, Mrs. Edmond conducted monthly parenting classes for the Community Action Partnership's Head-Start program. Classes in youth development were conducted at community centers and churches' summer camp programs. Also, programs on Sun Safety were conducted for youth and camp workers at the beginning of summer camp.

Those involved in caring for children also receive training through Alabama Cooperative Extension. Training for childcare providers is offered through the *Better Kid Care* Program. In this program, classes are conducted five times a year through a satellite presentation through Penn State University and facilitated by Extension personnel. This is part of child-care licensing requirements. Training was provided for youth seeking employment as babysitters through a workshop at an area school. Child care basics and basic first-aid was a part of training. Workshop for youth ages 12-15.



4-H and Youth Development

4-H is the largest youth organization in the world. It has been active for over 100 years. In Madison County, the 4-H program caters to youth age 9-19 to provide leadership training and assistance with basic life skills and serves approximately 1500 youth in traditional clubs.

Each traditional 4-H club meets once a month for six months during the school year. During each club meeting, a leader or the 4-H agent assistant is responsible for implementing programs that are based on leadership, character, learning by doing and basic life skills.

Community 4-H clubs also meet throughout Madison County on a regular basis. They are similar in structure to the traditional clubs, but may have special areas of interest or have community-service priorities. They have the opportunity to compete in the same events as the school clubs.

The volunteer leaders in both the school and community clubs have a responsibility to provide logistics and program implementation to the club members. The volunteers are an integral part of the 4-H program.

For many years, 4-H has used competitive events as a tool to promote leadership and skill development. Many of our 4-Hers' extended their learning by doing skills by participating in various competitive events locally at county, regional and state levels. Among the competitive events are: Baked Foods and Breads, Bicycle Safety, Chicken-Que, Tractor Driving, Dairy/Egg Food Demonstrations, Public Speaking, and Woodworking Exhibits/Demonstrations. Local competitive events are held throughout the school year. The county competitions are typically conducted in April. The 2005 Roundup, which featured 24 competitive events, was held on April 27, 2005 on the campus of Alabama A&M University. 4-H'ers, leaders, families, and volunteers participated in this event which identified the 4-H'ers which would represent Madison County at the June Regional Roundup. On June 14, 2005, thirteen 4-Hers represented Madison County at the Regional Roundup.

Several Extension staff members collaborate to insure that a successful 4-H program is maintained in Madison County. Agent Assistant for 4-H **Katrinet Sims** meets with school clubs on a regular basis and facilitates competitive events. Regional 4-H/ Youth Extension Agents **Walter Harris** and **Betty Gottler** are important staff members who work primarily in coordinating volunteer efforts and doing volunteer training. In the summer of 2005, these agents will provide the leadership in doing screenings and training for 4-H volunteers.



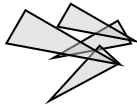
Madison Co. 4-Hers learn leadership skills by competing in local events.

4-H Youth Livestock Show

Madison County has the second largest 4-H Livestock Show in the state of Alabama. In February, 2005, 22 Madison County youth showed a total of 41 animals. The event was a joint effort of volunteers from the livestock industry, the Madison County Cattlemen's, Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, and hundreds of local donors. Parents and volunteers raised premium funds to help the youth offset the costs of feeding and transporting their calves. This show is looked at as one of the statewide models for a collaborative effort between volunteers, Agribusiness, and Extension.



Scenes from the 2005 Madison County 4-H Livestock Show.



New & Non-Traditional Programs

Relatives and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (RAPP) is one of many programs led through *Alabama Cooperative Extension System's New & Non-Traditional Programs*. Working closely with volunteers, this program works with grandparents and other relatives who find themselves raising young people. The RAPP program offers instructional, emotional and resource support for the adults. This is a new program, and already approximately sixty families are participating. Other community agencies are playing active roles in this program. Extension staff who are involved in this program include **Sylvia Oakes, Donna Gullatte, Judy Edmond, and Dr. Wilma Ruffin**.

Another program area that Mrs. Sylvia Oakes focuses on is a Successful Aging Initiative. This involves a conference in the City of Huntsville that provides valuable information for senior citizens on issues ranging from financial to health to community services. More than three hundred people attend this annual conference.

Alabama ranks number two nationally per capita in the occurrences of diabetes. To address this issue, Urban Regional Extension Agent **Sylvia Oakes** has prepared a comprehensive program addressing many aspects of **diabetes education**. She provides programs related to diabetes and health to community groups through Madison and Limestone Counties. Part of the diabetes education program includes cooking schools, participating in health fairs, individual consultation, and distribution of written materials.

In addition to the highly-regarded diabetes education program, Mrs. Oakes provides educational outreach programs addressing the needs of metropolitan health, including high risk diseases (Diabetes, Cancer, and Cardiovascular).

Childhood obesity has become a worldwide health challenge. Children are acquiring too much body weight through a combination of eating too many high-calorie foods and getting too little physical activity. To help confront the growing problem of childhood obesity, teaching nutrition education to young children has become a priority.

Among the successful programs addressing childhood obesity, was a 4-week series taught to First graders called "The ABC's of Eating Smart" with **Sylvia Oakes**. The program gave children information about good nutrition, while teaching them how to use the Food Guide Pyramid and encouraging them to take responsibility for making the best food choice for both meals and snacks. Program results showed that 75% of families purchased more whole wheat bread and teachers reported that there was an increase of 35% in children eating more fruits and vegetables during lunch time.



Sylvia Oakes shares information about detection of breast cancer.

Urban Youth Farm Day

Tyrone D. Smith is an Urban Regional Extension Agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System currently serving Madison & Limestone Metro Area.

He is responsible for working with urban youth and adults in the area of youth development, community service learning, and animal science. He provides information and programs through hands on workshops, trainings, day camps, seminars, and animal shows.

Urban Youth Farm Day is a program with a two fold concept. First, it is designed to showcase the different agricultural commodities in Madison County and to teach elementary and middle school youth the importance of agriculture. An Ag in the classroom approach is used in some schools.

Urban Youth Farm Day is an annual agricultural learning experience held at the Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station. In 2005, over 600 youth enrolled in city, county, and private schools participated in the event for first-hand observations of farm operations.

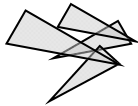
The youth, teachers, parents and volunteers participate in educational, agricultural and social learning experiences in an outdoor classroom setting. This event allows individuals to get a glimpse of the latest in agriculture technology as well as how agriculture products are harvested.

The program allows youth to participate in hands-on activities which give them the opportunity to see how agriculture works and where food originates.



At the 2005 Urban Youth Farm Day, youth and adults learn about agriculture and its influence on our world.

Educational workshops are provided by Extension personnel, local farmers, environmentalists and community leaders. Approximately 100 volunteers participated in this year's event. Local churches, farm business and community groups provided financial and time support. The bulk of the expenses are paid by the Urban New Non-traditional Program Unit of the Alabama cooperative Extension System. Urban Regional Extension Agents **Tyrone Smith** and **Sylvia Oakes** along with volunteer **Wanda Pharris** coordinate the event.



Family Life Center

228-F Binford Dr., Huntsville, AL 35805

The Mission of the **Family Life Center** is to help build strong families by strengthening coping and survival skills. The Family Life Center was established in the Spring of 1999 through a partnership between Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit, Alabama A & M University's Family and Consumer Sciences Unit and the Huntsville Housing Authority (HHA) and is located in the L.R. Patton Apartments, a HHA-owned facility.

The Center programs are coordinated by **Dr. Wilma J. Ruffin**, Extension Family and Human Development Specialist and Family Center Director. **Mrs. Donna Gullatte**, Urban Extension Agent, manages the Center's daily operations and conducts on-site programs and activities with the assistance of **Mrs. Cynarra Fuller**, Extension Family and Community Program Assistant and **Ms. Shirley Brown**, Urban Nutrition Education Program Assistant. Other County Extension Agents, Specialists and Family and Consumer Sciences faculty (AAMU) support the Center's programs and activities.

Parenting, Including Teen Parenting

- This program teaches and educates clients on the importance of the parent's self-esteem, the values, methods, and skills needed to provide a secure environment for children from infancy and beyond. It also instructs the client on how to hold, bathe/clothe and breastfeed their babies; how to discipline, provide encouragement and methods of bonding with their child/children. For the teen parent segment, 47 females have gone through the program with only 3 having repeat pregnancies and 2 of the 3 having additional pregnancies after the 2nd pregnancy.



Teen moms learn parenting skills through the Family Life Center

Urban Nutrition Education - UNEP is a nutrition education program that is implemented through the Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs at Alabama A&M University. The UNEP is to empower limited-resource families to make wise food choices, to select and prepare foods, and to consume a nutrient dense diet of healthy foods. Classes are taught in after-school programs at public schools, at senior centers, and participants at public housing facilities. In 2004-2005 15 series of classes have been shared with over 1700 low income clientele. Classes last for a 10-week session.

Family Health, Nutrition, and Life Skills - Provides nutrition and health information to all ages to educate clients on how to make healthy choices and prepare food using healthy ingredients and how to follow the food guide pyramid. Among the programs provided during the year are: Nutrition Education for youth, adults and seniors; Baked Foods Workshop; Food Safety; Germ City-(proper hand washing exercise); Breast Cancer Awareness; Diabetes Awareness (provides clients methods and ways to get tested for

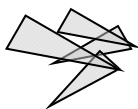


Youth involved in "Health Rocks" learn to stay drug and tobacco free.

diabetes and show ways to make and prepare healthy food choices); Diabetes Cooking School; All About Me (Youth program on self-esteem, drugs and self awareness; Community Gardening; Money Management & Budgeting; Job Readiness Skills; Welcome to the Real World (assimilate money management program for youth - gives youth an opportunity to make a career choice and make financial and household choices to experience being out on their own in the real world); Health Rocks! (youth) Drug & Tobacco Free Program-Youth 4-H Program that provides education to clients about making healthy choices, self-esteem and how to manage stress and how to say no to Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco; Basic Sewing; Holidays on a Budget; Housekeeping (provides instruction on methods and ways to clean house using low cost recipes and techniques); and Leadership Development (provided for resident council officers demonstrating methods of leadership).



One of the most popular programs is the renowned *Bucks for Books*, which is a summer reading program for youth. This program is designed to encourage youth to read more and enjoy reading. Grades and Reading levels of the 30 participants have increased and/or moved to level reading.



Community and Economic Development

Radon Education Program

The radon education program in Madison County is the largest radon education program in the state of Alabama. Funded through the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Environmental Protection Agency, the purpose of the program is to provide education about the risks of radon and provide information about on-site radon testing. The EPA and the Surgeon General recommend testing all homes below the third floor for Radon.

Within the past year, approximately 1800 short-term radon test kits have been sold through the Madison County Extension office. These tests measure the level of radon over a 3-day period. Additionally, approximately 100 long-term test kits which measure radon occurrences over a 9-month period were sold.

The banking community assisted in radon education by providing exhibit space in their facilities for radon education exhibits. Contacts were also made in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health with governmental leaders to help educate them about the risks of radon.

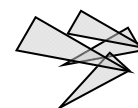
Several media pieces on radon education were done through the *Huntsville Times* and WHNT-TV, which resulted in many inquires at the Extension Office.

The largest event of the year was participation in the Annual Huntsville/Madison County Home Building & Remodeling Show. At this event, members of the Madison County Extension Staff worked with members of the Statewide Radon Program to present an informational exhibit on radon awareness. Over 470 short-term radon test kits were sold during this 3-day March event. Over 3000 people viewed the exhibit and received materials.

Approximately 17,000 direct contacts were made in the past year through the radon education awareness. This does not count clients reached through mass media outlets. **Walter Rodgers, Betty Ann Broman, and Shirley Whitten** have radon education responsibilities in Madison County, along with **Pat Smith**, Regional Extension Agent for Radon.



Over 3000 citizens viewed the Extension Exhibit on Radon Detection at the 2005 Huntsville/Madison County Home Builders and Remodeling Show. Urban Regional Extension Agent Walter Rodgers greets a client at the



The staff members of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System who serve Madison County stand ready to provide high-quality unbiased educational information. Please contact us at the office either in person or via phone or e-mail.

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