



Pike County

Extension Newsletter

November/December 2011



Pike County Master Gardeners work to give the Extension office a facelift. The project is in its final stages. (read more on page 3)



Bridgette Brannon, Regional Extension Agent for food safety, discusses foodborne illness, especially prevalent during the fall season. (read more on page 2)



Wil Golden, Regional Extension Agent for Consumer Science and Personal Financial Mangement, talks about budgeting. (read more on page 3)

Dear Friends of Extension,

Happy Fall! Welcome to your Extension newsletter. This newsletter is designed to keep you aware of what's happening with the county Extension office. The Extension staff is here to serve you. Our main goal is to help improve the lives and economic well-being of the people and communities of Pike County. As we edge closer to the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, we would like to update you on some of the latest Extension happenings in the county. From 4-H expo's to rain barrel workshops there is plenty going on...and we want you to be aware and involved! Take a moment to read the newsletter and keep in mind that we want, and value, your feedback. If you have a concern or would like more information about a certain topic in this

newsletter, please feel free to contact us. Or, if you have a topic or interest you would like us to include, let us know!

I have met many good folks in Pike County and look forward to meeting many more in the weeks and months to come. Our office is open and I welcome you to stop by anytime to ask a question, meet our staff, or just say hello. In addition, our contact information is included in this newsletter. On behalf of the Pike County Extension Office and our staff, Happy Holidays!

Grant Lyons
Pike County Extension Coordinator
gpl0002@aces.edu
















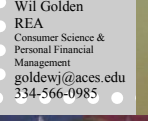
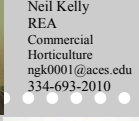





Extension PIT on display at Be Ready Day in Troy

The ACES Portable Internet Trailer (PIT) was on display at the recent Be Ready Day event held in Troy. Be Ready Day is part of National Preparedness Month, and this year Troy was the host site for the state of Alabama. Be Ready Day is a great opportunity for the citizens of Alabama to view emergency vehicles and equipment while also gaining a better understanding of the assets that can be deployed in times of disaster. Personnel from the Alabama Department of Public Health, Department of Public Safety, National Guard, local law enforcement, Extension, and many others were on site to answer questions and provide information.

“This was a great opportunity to showcase a tremendous asset that Extension has. The PIT was deployed this past spring after the tornadoes in North Alabama and it was a most helpful tool in providing communication and emergency information to not only first responders but also the general public,” said Grant Lyons, Pike County Extension Coordinator.

The PIT has a fully functional satellite that provides internet, both hardwire and wireless. Also included in the trailer are a laptop, LCD TV to view local news, cell phone/battery chargers, multiple charging ports, extension cords, satellite telephone, and much more. For more information, visit www.aces.edu or visit the Pike County Extension Office Facebook page.

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**MEET YOUR
PIKE COUNTY
EXTENSION
STAFF**

Extension Newsletter

“When in doubt, throw it out!”
Bridgette Brannon, Food Safety REA

Fall is the Season for Foodborne Illness

Bridgette Brannon, Regional Extension Agent

The changing season brings about many activities involving food. Church reunions and tailgating are especially risky because many times there are large amounts of food and it is difficult to maintain proper temperatures during these events. Fall is also the time when the little ones start back at school. Packing school lunches for small children is especially important since their immune systems are not fully developed and they may come down with food poisoning more easily than adults. Whether you are packing school lunches or cooking for a crowd of 200, remembering these four simple steps will help you keep food safe for those you care about.

First, make sure everything that touches food is CLEAN. Make sure cutting boards, utensils, and other food contact surfaces are clean and sanitary before you begin food preparation. Most importantly, wash hands before beginning food preparation and periodically during food preparation. As a general guideline, wash your hands anytime you change tasks during food preparation – that will cut down on the spread of bacteria from food to food.

Second, keep raw meats, poultry, and seafood SEPARATE from foods that will not be cooked like lettuce and fruit. Also, make sure you store raw meats on the bottom of the refrigerator so that juices do not fall onto foods that are ready to eat. If you are packing raw meats in a cooler, consider taking two coolers – one for raw meats, and one for foods that will not be cooked before eating.

Third, COOK meat, poultry, and seafood to minimum safe temperatures. Poultry should be cooked to at least 165 degrees, hamburger 160 degrees, steak 145 degrees, and fish 145 degrees. Measuring the temperature with a food thermometer is the easiest way to make sure food is cooked to an adequate temperature, without overcooking.

Finally, be sure to CHILL food that is meant to be kept cold. This includes foods like potato salad and lunch meat, as well as, leftover hot foods that will be chilled and then eaten the next day. Cold food should be kept 40 degrees or below to prevent bacterial growth. Leaving food out at room temperature for as little as two hours (less on a hot day) is enough time for bacteria to grow. If you are packing cold foods, such as potato salad, for travel or for school, make sure that you thoroughly chill the food before putting it in a cooler or lunch box and include ice or an icepack to keep it chilled for hours at a time.

Your local County Extension office is here to help with any food safety questions you may have. If your church, school, or community organization is interested in a class to find out more about how to keep food safe, please give us a call. Remember: WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

Money Management 101: Budgets

Budgeting is the foundation for all financial planning. The definition of budget varies and if you ask ten people you will get five different answers. Here is my definition. A budget is a calculated plan for meeting expense in a given time period. I like to call a budget a spending plan because you are planning to spend your money. And I believe that without a sound budget, you cannot effectively manage your money!

However, the first step in creating a budget is to keep track of your expenses. Before you sit down to actually write out a budget or spending plan, it is best that you have a good idea of how you are spending your money month to month. Most of us just starting to budget do not do that. Here's what happens, you get excited by something you hear or read; or you just get tired of living paycheck to paycheck; or it's the first of the year or new month and we decide that we want to be better stewards of our

money, so we start to make a budget or spending plan. And we get a piece of paper and a pencil or use a spread sheet and we write down or type in our income and then we start subtracting expense from it. With no history of how we spent our money last month we just guess at some of the numbers. So let's say you decide that you will spend \$300 at the grocery store. Three weeks into the month you see that you have spent \$400 at the grocery store. So now what do you do? You are missing \$100 from your budget. You get frustrated and quit saying, "This budgeting stuff does not work for me." But you missed the first step in budgeting, tracking expenses. Because you did not track your expenses first, you do not know how much you will spend at the grocery store or anywhere else. So now what?

Again, a budget is a plan for how you will spend your money, taking that a step further, it is an estimate of how you will spend your money. Without tracking your spending, your estimate of how you will spend your money, your monthly budget, is not as good as it would be if you would have kept track of how you spent your money say last month.

Once you track your expenses for a month, preferably three, you will have a much better idea of how you will spend your monthly income. You can make a better estimate, educated guess, of how you will spend your monthly income. Now you can get out your paper and pencil and plan to spend your money.

Without a sound budget you cannot manage your finances effectively. To estimate your monthly expenses, track your spending for a couple months so that you will have a better guess, estimate, of how you are spending your money. Then you can make your budget and start winning with money. Budgeting is the foundation for all financial management.

Wil Golden serves as Regional Extension Agent for Consumer Science and Personal Financial Management. Contact him at goldewj@aces.edu. Listen to his Financial Minute on WTBF, FM 94.7 weekdays beginning this December.

He Said What?

"We are operating two quarterbacks in what appears to be the best possible scenarios."

LSU Head Coach Les Miles



Master Gardeners work at Extension Office

The Pike County Master Gardeners have spent over ten hours volunteering to help give the Extension office a "facelift." The area outside and directly in front of the Extension office is being redesigned and landscaped with the help of Rachel Dykes, REA for Horticulture. Rachel and the PCMG worked together on a design and, once all approved, the work began. The PCMG began working on the project near the end of September and the project will be completed by Thanksgiving.

The Pike County Extension Office would like to extend a special thanks to the PCMG and the members who have helped in this project. We appreciate your efforts!

For more information and pictures of the transformation, visit our Facebook page by searching "Pike County Extension Office."

"Without a sound budget, you cannot manage your finances effectively."

**Wil Golden,
Consumer Science and
Personal Financial
Management REA**

We need your help! If you would like to have several copies of this newsletter delivered to your place of business, place of worship, etc., please contact Grant at the Extension office. We would like to get the newsletter into the hand of as many Pike County residents as possible! If you would like to be removed from this list, please contact the Extension office. Thank you!

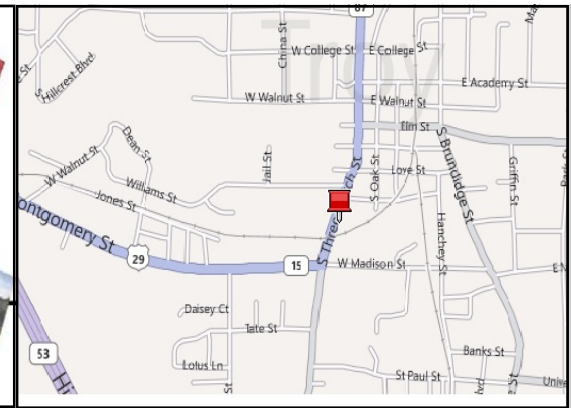




HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING

- The Auburn Cookbook - \$15
- Home Food Preservation - \$12
- Cooking Alabama's Wild Game - \$8

All can be purchased at the Pike County Extension Office



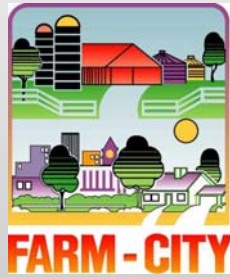
4-H Seeks Volunteers

The Pike County 4-H program is seeking volunteers to assist with numerous clubs, camps, events and more throughout the year. If you are interested in volunteering contact the Extension office. Current active clubs offered include horse, livestock and archery. Interest has also been expressed for fishing. Volunteering is FUN and benefits our youth, so come join us today!



Money Management calendars available FREE at Extension office

Do you know where the Extension office is? If not, check out the map above. We're right off Hwy. 231...on South Three Notch St. As you come towards the Troy square, we're right past the railroad tracks on the right



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2011 FARM-CITY AWARD WINNERS!

- | | |
|---|---|
| Mike Dubose: Row Crop | Don Paul: Conservation |
| Frank & Nedetria Talbot: Poultry | Johnny Garrett: Beef Producer |
| Chuck Agar: Specialty Crop | Cliff Eubanks: Timber |
| Jake Dubose: Young Farmer | Randy Hale: Service to Agriculture |
| Morgan Graham: Female Youth | Noah Sanders: Male Youth |
| Special Recognition: Jerold Brantley | |
| Jacob Helms (Covenant Christian School): Poster Winner (Grades K-3) | |
| Jaylen Deverage (Troy Elementary School): Poster Winner (Grades 4-6) | |
| Sidney Armstrong: Essay Winner (Grades 6-9) | |
| Brittney Tyson (Homeschool): Essay Winner (Grades 10-12) | |

4-H Underway for 2011 Academic Year

Kristie Freeman, Pike County 4-H Leader, has been in numerous schools and the youth involved in 4-H this year are doing great (and very active!). See the schedule above for a list of activities and school visits that Kristie will be making in November. If you have any questions, or want to get involved, give us a call!

ACES.edu is for You!

Did you know Extension offers hundreds of publications online at www.aces.edu? If you are interested in a topic or have a question, simply type it in the "Search" box on the ACES website. For example, if you are interested in growing pumpkins, type "pumpkins." We hope this will be a helpful resource and tool for you. Can't find what you need? Give the Extension office a call and we will be glad to assist you.



Body Quest: Food of the Warrior Teaching Good Nutrition to Alabama's Third-Graders

Body Quest: Food for the Warrior is a unique, cutting edge, comprehensive, partnership program in Alabama. Funded by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the childhood obesity prevention program is a high priority for Alabama's youth.

This fall, Body Quest classes are being taught to third-graders in schools with 50 percent or more students receiving free or reduced-price lunches. That is about 65 percent of Alabama schools, according to Dr. Barbara Struempfer, an Extension specialist and professor with the Nutrition Education Program.

Body Quest is technology-driven. One teaching method is through iPad education, with more than 500 iPads teaching Body Quest to youth in rural Alabama. Each team of Extension educators has a mobile iPad laboratory that they take into the classroom to teach Body Quest.

Characters such as Shining Rainbow and Body Doctor help elementary students demonstrate bravery by trying new fruits and vegetables. Students also train for the quest of becoming more physically fit and improving sleep habits. Body Quest warriors view health as a personal choice, requiring good decision-making skills and critical thinking. It is an exciting adventure, developed as an interactive application for iPads and supported by an array of engaging activities and resources.

Evaluation data are collected every week for 17 weeks via clickers. Clicker data are uploaded and sent to Auburn University immediately following a Body Quest class.

Body Quest can supplement elementary curricula or be incorporated into after-school programs. It can be used by SNAP-Ed educators, 4-H educators or volunteers, teachers, after-school program leaders, or through other youth-serving organizations.



USDA Replaces MyPyramid with MyPlate. For more information, visit www.choosemyplate.gov



Be sure to find us on Facebook!

Gardening Tips

(taken from AL Gardener's Calendar)

November

FRUITS AND NUTS--Select sites for plantings. Start mulching strawberries, blackberries, and grapes.

SHRUBS--Plant shrubs, trees, and vines.

LAWNS--Some homeowners like lawn paints. Have you thought about having a green lawn this winter? 'use proper herbicide to kill germinating winter weeds.

ROSES--Get rose planting underway. Use a soil test as a basis for fertilization. Look for new varieties.

ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS--Plant hardy annuals such as larkspur, poppies, pansies, anchusa, and candytuft. Get sweet peas into the ground.

BULBS--Continue spring bulb planting. Put lilies of the valley in a shady place.

MISCELLANEOUS--Plant screen plantings for privacy on the patio.

VEGETABLE SEED--Plant cabbage and lettuce in the cold-frame.

December

FRUITS AND NUTS--Plant young pecan and other deciduous fruit trees and grapes. Select budwood. Start dormant pruning of established fruits. Protect all young trees from rabbit damage by placing wire around the base of the tree. Put on dormant oil sprays for scale.

SHRUBS--Planting is still the main activity but delay in case of freezing weather.

LAWNS--control wild garlic, chickweed, Poa annua, dandelion, and other weeds.

Read label on each can of weed killer used.

ROSES--Add plants to rose garden. Mulch all plantings.

ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS--Plant hardy annual seed without delay Have you tried violas?

BULBS--Continue spring bulb planting.

MISCELLANEOUS--Shrubs trees, and indoor plants make excellent gifts.



Are you interested in sharpening your gardening and landscaping skills? If so, the Houston County Extension Office will be hosting a Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course on Wednesday's from 8:00-noon, beginning January 11, 2012 and going through March 28, 2012. The purpose of the program is to train volunteers to be community educators by providing science-based information on growing and caring for plants in their landscapes and gardens. For more information or to register, contact the Pike County Extension Office. The deadline for applications is December 2, 2011.

Extension Newsletter



alcoopextensionvideo

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH
www.bamabeef.org



Coffee/Dale/Pike Counties
take first place for 4-H booth
at 2011 National Peanut
Festival!



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Mobile? Visit www.aces.edu/m/



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