



ANNUAL REPORT

2010

1815 Cogswell Avenue, Suite 103, Pell City, AL 35125 • (205) 338-9416 • www.aces.edu/StClair

Extension Works for You

Extension is university-based knowledge delivered straight to the people where they live and work. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is the organization of educators who take cutting-edge research from our land-grant universities, Alabama A&M and Auburn, and turn it into practical uses that improve the lives of people all across our state.

2010 Program Highlights

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System collaborates with many partners to help people and communities improve their quality of life and economic well-being. We accomplish this mission by providing educational opportunities and information grounded in research-based science in six program areas.

Our legacy continues to be one of helping Alabamians improve their quality of life. From the early days of the home and farm demonstration agents who met the needs of rural farm families to today's regional and county agents, we remain committed to our mission by relying on highly specialized educators who are trained to meet the ever-changing needs of twenty-first century families, businesses and communities.

Here are some new programs or existing programs which gained extra emphasis this past year.

From Farm to Table: Virtual Poultry Farm Tour

The United States continues to become a more urbanized society and youth growing up today have little knowledge about farming or how food products are produced and processed. In Extension, we continually look for new and innovative ways to increase our youth's knowledge about agriculture. Farm tours are always a great educational tool; however, with time constraints, travel, liability, food safety and weather issues, these tours are just not an option. That is, unless it's a virtual farm tour.



Gracie Staples assists Kent with placing the chicks in the poultry house

One of the greatest areas for improving the quality and quantity of learning is through the use of technology. With this in mind, the St. Clair County Extension office teamed up with the Extension Communications Department at Auburn University and Extension Specialist, Kent Stanford, to develop a "Virtual Poultry Farm Tour." This unique tour, filmed in northeast St. Clair County, brings the farm to the children and allows them an up-close and personal experience at a working poultry farm. The tour introduces basic agricultural concepts while students witness the complete growing cycle of a bird and learn that farming actually puts food on their plate.

The virtual tour was first utilized as a part of St. Clair County's 5th annual 4-H Clover Classroom Advanced Kids Cooking Camp in July and then in 4-H school presentations across the county to promote Farm-City week in November. The success of the video project is demonstrated by its wide use across the state. The Alabama Farmers Federation used the video as a prelude to a general session at the annual meeting of 1,000 delegates. Alabama Ag in the Classroom has chosen to include the video in its library of resources for teachers across the state. The tour has been posted to the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) YouTube channel and the St. Clair County Extension office webpage,

www.aces.edu/StClair, which allows the tour the potential to not only educate youth across our state, but throughout the world.

This tour was made possible through sponsorships provided by the Alabama Contract Poultry Growers Association, St. Clair County Farmers Federation, and St. Clair County Poultry Growers Association.



The chick bus arrives at White Acres Poultry Farm

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Citizens of St. Clair County,

On behalf of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, St. Clair County office, I am pleased to present a summary of programs, events, and activities that have been conducted by Extension staff during 2010.

The St. Clair County Extension office has outstanding support from local and state governing bodies, volunteer leaders, related agencies, and community groups. Clientele are served through group meetings and individual consultation (phone, email, and in-person). The Extension Newsletter, a bi-monthly publication, and our website, www.aces.edu/StClair, both continue to serve as an outreach tool to a growing number of citizens in St. Clair County. We are also integrating the nationwide Extension information website, **eXtension**, (www.extension.org) into both programs and interactions with clients. This website offers a search tool which gives citizens access to resources and information from all land-grant universities and Extension organizations nationwide.

If you have questions, you may contact us at (205) 338-9416 or email me at clarkla@aces.edu. Our office is located on the lower level of the St. Clair County Courthouse in Pell City, Suite 103/BO4. We look forward to being of service to you!

Lee Ann Clark

Lee Ann Clark
County Extension Coordinator



Staff Housed in St. Clair County

(front row l to r): Synithia Williams, Lee Ann Clark, Tonya Tomlin; (back row l to r): Adrienne Bourland, Annie Tyree and Ponda Terry

Education for Living

Extension programming provides educational opportunities to help people, individually and collectively, make sound decisions about their lives, businesses, and communities and develop economically, socially, and culturally.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System offers specialists and programming in the following areas:

- Agriculture
- Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resources
- Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Economic and Community Development
- 4-H and Youth Development

The New Leaf Weight Loss Program

Overweight and obesity are on the rise like never before. In Alabama almost 7 out of every 10 persons is overweight or obese. Being overweight increases one's chances of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, sleep problems, and some forms of cancer.

Many people make the same resolution at the beginning of every year; to eat right, exercise more and lose weight. A few months into the year many have already become frustrated because they haven't seen a difference in their weight or physical fitness level.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System in conjunction with the Office of Women's Health Division of the Alabama Department of Public Health offered a program in September called "Choices for Healthy Living: A New Leaf." A New Leaf is a series of nutrition programs which promote healthy weight loss through healthy diet and physical activity. Jennifer Dutton, regional Extension agent and dietitian, taught classes which were held once a week for six consecutive weeks. Due to an overwhelming response to the program, Jennifer offered an additional class each day to accommodate everyone who had registered.

The classes were free and incentive gifts included exercise bands, measuring utensils, water bottles, etc. Participants were expected to come to the class ready to work hard to change eating and exercise habits to lose weight in a healthy way.

The program involved changing eating and physical activity habits to achieve healthy weight loss and modify behavior patterns. It promoted gradual changes—one step at a time, and promoted changes the whole family could adopt to become healthier. Topics covered included nutrition education, understanding food labels, healthy food preparation, and physical activity.

Weight and waist measurements were recorded at each session and most sessions included at least 30 minutes of exercise. Twenty-four hour dietary recalls were collected during the first class and in week three of the program. Participants set dietary and physical activity goals for themselves each week. Dietary analysis confirmed that 75% of participants decreased their caloric intake and consumed more fruits, vegetables, and low fat dairy products. Ninety percent of participants increased their physical activity level from baseline. On average, participants lost 3-7 pounds and 1-2 inches off the waist during the six week program.



Looking to the Future:

4-H Road Trip to AU

Campus tours, visits with state 4-H and Extension Staff, and pictures with furry, feathered friends were just a few of the highlights of St. Clair County 4-H's first road trip to the Auburn University campus.

As part of the 5th annual 4-H Clover Classroom summer workshop series, young people, ages 9-14, and adult volunteers took a road trip to Auburn University on July 20, 2010. The majority of participants had never been on a college campus, so this was quite an enlightening experience.

The day began at the Julie Collins Smith Museum with a ride onto campus via Tiger Transit. Next stop was Duncan Hall, home of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the state 4-H headquarters, for a tour and welcome from Extension Director, Dr. Gaines Smith, and everyone's favorite mascot, Aubie. After a tour of Duncan Hall guided by 4-H state staff members, Betty Gottler and Dr. Molly Gregg, the group headed to lunch at historic Toomer's Drugstore to sample their world famous lemonade.

While on the official campus tour, 4-H'ers learned about the history and legends of Auburn University. The student tour guide also informed them about the vast number of career opportunities available after earning a degree from the University and the benefits of higher education. The group ended the day with a stop at the Southeastern Raptor Rehabilitation Center where they toured the facility which housed different types of birds that had been rescued by the center. They also visited with Nova while learning about his official duties as War Eagle VII.



The road trip proved to be a success when all participants stated that they had enjoyed the trip and how the experience had heightened their interest in furthering their own education by attending college in the future. St. Clair County 4-H plans to make this a permanent part of their annual 4-H Clover Classroom activities.

Focusing Our Efforts

In 2010 the Alabama Cooperative Extension System engaged a broad range of Alabamians in a conversation about the significant issues facing the state at this point in our history and the opportunities for positive change.

The St. Clair County Extension office held their Grassroots meeting on August 19, 2010. Local stakeholders identified what they have seen as critical needs in their communities. After input from all 67 counties was received, six Strategic Program Initiatives were identified:

- **Health and Wellness Across the Lifespan**

Obesity is Alabama's number one health problem and is directly related to a number of chronic conditions. Reversing the trend of childhood obesity involves creating a health-conscious environment.

- **Workforce Development**

Technological advances and global competition require a knowledgeable, skilled, and adaptable workforce. Economic survival depends on continuous training, life-long learning, technology skills and transferable skills.

- **Safe and Secure Food Supply**

Communities need adequate food supplies that are safe from foodborne illnesses. Food insecurity is not just an issue of money to buy food but a lack of availability. Large processors and budding entrepreneurs need food sanitation and processing standards.

- **Financial Literacy Across the Lifespan**

The decline of the overall median income, high unemployment, community disasters, the mortgage foreclosure crisis, and other financial challenges have caused Alabamians to take a closer look at their financial resources and their need to better understand financial matters.

- **Sustainable Agricultural and Forestry Systems**

Global food production is expected to fall short of population growth over the next 25 years. As national and global food demand increases, improvements in technology and the adaption of production systems will be essential to sustain Alabama's economy, communities and environment. The need to meet the nation's demand for forest products and fuel as well as for clean water, recreation, and wildlife habitat will require profitable, sustainable production systems.

- **Environmental Stewardship**

The State of Alabama has some of the most diverse landscapes in the United States that provide habitat for the nation's highest number of aquatic species and among the highest number of land species. Forest and agricultural products; outdoor tourism and recreation; and access to ample, clean water drive a significant sector of the state's economy. For the future, Alabama has the potential to become a leader in growing biomass for biofuels and other bio-renewables.

These initiatives will guide Extension's issue-based educational programs that acknowledge and address the current changes in the way citizens think, live, and function in their daily lives, families, communities, and businesses.

Connect. Learn. Share.

The St. Clair County Extension office now uses popular social networking Web sites to provide even more opportunities for you to connect, learn, and share with your local Extension office.



Facebook Both the St. Clair County Extension Office and 4-H Club have pages on Facebook which are continuously updated.



Extension has their own **YouTube** channel! Numerous videos are available, including our Virtual Poultry Farm Tour. It can be accessed from the ACES homepage, www.aces.edu.

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PROSPER Pilot Program

In 2010, St. Clair County was chosen as a PROSPER pilot county. The acronym stands for Promoting School-community-university Partnership to Enhance Resilience.

What is PROSPER?

Many programs try to reduce risky teen behavior or strengthen families. However, very few show scientific evidence that they work. In the end, youth, their families and society pay a price for programs that don't do the job.

PROSPER is scientifically-proven. It's built on partnerships between Cooperative Extension and public schools. Long-term success requires that families, schools, and community groups work together to support the program. PROSPER includes technical assistance which supports the partnerships; helps build the abilities to start and continue quality programs; and evaluates how effective the programs are. The combination of partnerships, expertise, and programming is necessary for community success.

The PROSPER Partnership Model has a record of accomplishment, based on 20 years of research funded by the National Institutes of Health. PROSPER can bring high-quality prevention programs to any community. This approach uses community teams and provides them with the knowledge and resources to effectively introduce programs and to develop ongoing financial support, so that the programs can continue long term.

Why PROSPER?

The PROSPER Partnership Model isn't just for starting prevention programs. It helps build relationships among four groups: university scientists who are trying to prevent problems, the Cooperative Extension System, public schools, and local people who want healthy youth and families. PROSPER networks are unique and important, since they allow scientific expertise to flow from the university to local communities. This long-term effort has an impact on the whole community.

Participating Schools

Two schools in St. Clair county were chosen to participate in this statewide pilot program. Ashville Middle school was selected as a control school and Springville Middle school was selected as an implementation school. A community team comprised of Extension professionals, school faculty, youth, and community members was formed to manage the St. Clair county partnership. Extension staff assisting with this effort in St. Clair county include Synithia Williams, regional Extension agent, who serves as Prevention Coordinator and Tonya Tomlin, 4-H agent assistant, who serves as the Community Team Leader.

What Can Be Proven About PROSPER's Success?

Studies of the PROSPER Approach Show That It:

- Helps teams deliver family and school programs that can prove their effectiveness
- Helps communities carry out high-quality programs
- Brings changes to families that should improve adolescent behavior
- Improves youth competencies
- Reduces bad behavior in youth
- Improves the community's perception of public schools

Benefits to Youth, Families, Communities, & Schools

PROSPER programs are properly implemented, have community support, and sustained over time. That has a positive impact on youth, families, communities, and schools. Potential benefits for schools include:



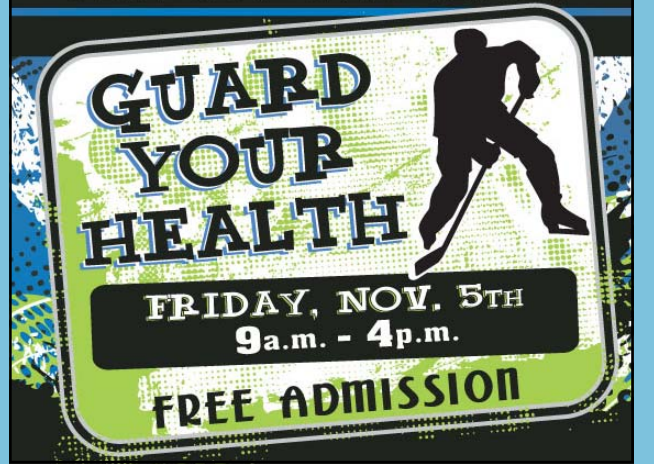
St. Clair County Community Team Members

- Reduced youth problem behaviors, such as substance abuse, and improved youth life skills
- Improved youth academic performance
- Improved school-parent-community communication
- Increased parental involvement with the school
- Better parenting skills & increased family well-being
- Better community perceptions of school leadership
- Closer links between Cooperative Extension and schools

- Complements USDE's commitment to scientifically-tested practices
- Training and technical assistance to sustain programming
- Addresses needs identified in comprehensive school plans



ST. CLAIR CO. HEALTH FAIR PELL CITY CIVIC CENTER



2010 Annual Health Fair

The St. Clair County Extension Resource Health Council held their annual health fair on Friday, November 5th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Pell City Civic Center. The health fair was FREE and open to the public with over 400 in attendance.

The fair was designed to increase awareness and promote healthy lifestyles throughout the community. Organizations from across the St. Clair County area provided educational information in an effort to help residents become better acquainted with the health care resources in their area.

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) was on hand to administer flu shots for only \$5 or free for Medicaid/Medicare recipients. They also had their Mobile Medical Tent set-up for tours.

The following FREE screenings were offered: cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, hearing, vision, and body mass index (BMI). Entertainment was provided throughout the day and door prizes were given away.



St. Vincent's Health Systems provided over 200 free cholesterol screenings

Master Gardener Class



Twenty-four participants completed an intensive 12-week course to become certified Master Gardeners in 2010. Charles Pinkston, regional Extension agent, was in charge of the class. Instructors for the sessions were knowledgeable professionals from throughout the state including Auburn University professors, Extension System specialists and other horticulture experts. After the course work was complete in December, participants begin working on completing the required 40 hours of approved volunteer service needed to become a Master Gardener.

One of the main purposes of the Master Gardener Program is to work on community betterment projects, including volunteering at the Extension office.

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4-H Club Program Reached 1,200 Youth in St. Clair County



The Alabama Cooperative Extension System-St. Clair County office 4-H youth development program is open to all youth ages 5-19. Emphasis is on teaching practical skills and developing life skills through learning-by-doing. In 2010, 4-H reached approximately **1200 youth** in St. Clair County.

Tonya Tomlin, 4-H agent assistant, is responsible for the overall 4-H program in St. Clair County and regional Extension agent, Nancy Graves, recruits and trains volunteers to manage community, volunteer-led clubs. Youth can participate in a variety of ways:

- **In-School Clubs**-St. Clair County has **fifty-four** 4-H clubs which meet during school times
- **Volunteer-Led Clubs**- St. Clair County has **six** volunteer-led clubs: Jr. Home School club, Steele Rockin' Raiders, Animal Science, Equine, Shooting Sports and Archery Club
- **4-H Clover Classroom**-4-H and non 4-H youth ages 9-14 can participate in this activity during the summer

St. Clair County 4-H continues to update their website which is utilized by both 4-H'ers and their parents. The site contains information about club schedules, contest guidelines, due dates, upcoming events, and pictures. Teacher training opportunities are also posted. It can be accessed by going to our website at www.aces.edu/St.Clair.

Citizenship Washington Focus

In June, St. Clair County 4-H'er, Rebecca Parker, was selected to be a part of the Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) Alabama delegation. CWF is a week-long 4-H citizenship program for youth ages 14-19.

Thousands of young people across America stay at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center, near Washington, D.C., every summer to participate in the program, which provides opportunities for young people to :

- Broaden appreciation and practice respect for themselves and others;
- Increase individual commitment to citizen involvement;
- Understand the importance of civic and social responsibilities;
- Practice fitness and have fun!

Rebecca was also chosen to serve on the State 4-H Council.



CWF Delegate
Rebecca Parker



GPS Scavenger Hunt

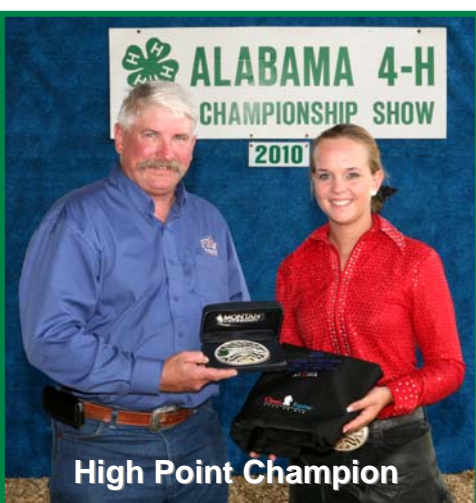
4-H Clover Classroom

In its fifth year, St. Clair County's 4-H Clover Classroom offered youth, ages 9-14, six different hands-on workshops throughout the month of July. Workshops conducted in 2010 included: Archery, Beginner & Advanced Kids Cooking Camp, and Sportfishing, GPS Scavenger Hunt and the Auburn University Road Trip. Numerous volunteers and teachers kindly donated their time and energy to make the program a success. Also, the program would not have been possible without the following sponsors: City of Springville; Metro Bank of Pell City; Royal Foods; and the St. Clair County Farmers Federation.

State 4-H Winners Two St. Clair County 4-H'ers competed at the state level competition held at the 4-H Center in Columbiana on August 3, 2010. Kameron Crenshaw of Pell City won 1st Place in the 4-H Freestyle Demonstration. Rebecca Parker of Odenville won 3rd place in the 4-H Freestyle Showcase competition. In the Freestyle Demonstration, participants are asked to demonstrate a skill or talent. Kameron demonstrated her skills by giving a presentation about tennis. In the Freestyle Showcase, participants are asked to prepare a display about a topic of their choice. Rebecca chose to showcase her robotics work with a local elementary school and was interviewed by the judges. Both categories have a community service component that the participant must complete.



State 4-H Winners



High Point Champion

St. Clair County 4-H'er Named High Point Champion at State 4-H Horse Show

Kelsey Davis of St. Clair County competed at the 38th annual Alabama State 4-H Horse Show that was held July 12th—16th at the Garrett Coliseum Complex in Montgomery. Kelsey was the High Point Champion in the Senior Western Division. She and her horse, Zippos Goin Slow, won the Hunt Seat Trail Senior Division Class, the Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat Senior Division Class, and Western Trail Senior Division Class. The High Points Awards are sponsored by the Alabama Horse Council.

County Winners St. Clair County 4-H'ers participated in the 4-H County Competition on Thursday, April 22, 2010, at Springville Middle School. Pictured (l-r): Tonya Tomlin, 4-H Agent Assistant; Alex Booker—1st place, AL Quilters Next Generation and 2nd place The World I See Photography; Rebecca Parker—1st place, Freestyle Showcase; Victoria Booker—1st place, The World I See Photography and 2nd place, AL Quilters Next Generation; Jacob West—1st place, Blocks Rock Lego Design; and Paul Wirth—1st place, Project Green Thumb and 2nd place, Blocks Rock Lego Design.



County Winners