



Alabama Cooperative Extension System
St. Clair County Office

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Dear Friends of Extension,

I am so thankful that fall is right around the corner, how about you? Cooler temperatures will definitely be a welcome relief after such an extremely hot summer!

Speaking of fall, September is national Ovarian Cancer Awareness month. This cause has taken on a very special meaning to me. On October 6, 2009, my sister, Cynthia Lynn Moore Lewis, lost her battle with this deadly disease. She was only 40. In her memory I would like to do my part to raise awareness about ovarian cancer, something I admit to not knowing anything about prior to her diagnosis. Currently there is no screening test to detect this type of cancer so we must all educate ourselves, our mothers, sisters, and daughters about what is often referred to as the "silent symptoms" of ovarian cancer. *(please see article below)*

Until next time,

Lee Ann Clark

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

For more than a decade, September has been designated as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Teal is the ovarian cancer community's color and serves as a reminder that ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all the cancers of the reproductive system and the leading cause of cancer death among women. The following symptoms are much more likely to occur in women with ovarian cancer than women in the general population. These symptoms include:

- Bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
- Difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- Urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)

See your doctor, preferably a gynecologist, if you have these symptoms almost daily for more than one to two weeks. Unfortunately, these symptoms are often missed or dismissed by women and their healthcare providers leading to late diagnosis of the disease. Less than 20 percent of women are diagnosed in the early stages of ovarian cancer, when survival rates are highest.

Risk Factors Include:

- Increasing age
- Family history of ovarian, breast, colon, prostate, endometrial and/or pancreatic cancer (consider genetic counseling)
- Infertility/low number of children
- Personal cancer history

Remember, pap smears do NOT detect ovarian cancer. Be aware of symptoms and risk factors.

Source: <http://www.ovariancancer.org>



Living the American Dream: Are You Ready to Purchase a Home?



Owning a home is the American dream. However, that dream can be shattered if you are not prepared for the expense of being a homeowner. The following list will help you determine if you are financially ready for homeownership.

- Do you have a steady form of income and stable employment?
- Do you plan to stay in the same area for at least three to five years? This length of time may be required to recuperate the costs of getting into a home.
- Have you created a budget so you know how much money you realistically spend for housing?
- Do you save regularly?
- Is your current debt low enough to afford a mortgage payment?
- Have you established a credit record? If not, can you build a non-traditional credit record? Non-traditional credit is documentation of consistent payments to your landlord, utility company, or even savings account.
- Do you have favorable credit? Do you pay your bills on time?
- Do you have sufficient money saved for a down payment and closing costs?
- Have you been pre-qualified for a loan? This entails visiting with a lender to see if your income and debt would qualify you for a loan.
- Are you willing to make the necessary sacrifices it will take to be a homeowner? These sacrifices may include going without some luxuries to build up your savings for a down payment, future repairs, and even adequate savings to cover house payments in the event you lose your job.

How Much Income Should be Devoted to a House Payment?

Determining how much of a house you can afford is very important. Loan officers may not always act in your best interest. It will be to your advantage to already know how much of a house payment you can realistically afford when you visit with a loan officer. There are two main things that determine your ability to afford a home, income and debt.

Ratios are used to determine how much of a house payment you can afford. These ratios are known as front end and back end ratios. Concerning the front end ratio, experts recommend that no more than 30 percent of your monthly income be devoted to your monthly house payment. Concerning the

back end ratio, experts recommend that no more than 40 percent of your monthly income be devoted to your monthly house payment and your monthly debt payments. There are many different loans available and each loan has slightly different ratios. You may not qualify for a loan with the recommended front and back end ratios (30/40). If you only qualify for a loan with high front and back end ratios take the time to see if you will still be able to afford the necessities and some luxuries in life before making the decision to accept the loan. This will take sitting down and calculating a budget for once you are in your home. Remember to include items such as utilities and possible repairs if you are looking into an older home. This will be a 15 or 30 year commitment and there are serious consequences for not paying your house payment; you could lose your home.

How to Calculate How Much of a House You Can Afford

To calculate how much of a house you can afford, start by adding up your monthly debt payments. Then calculate the front end ratio. This will be done by taking your gross monthly income and multiplying it by .30. This is how much of a house payment you could comfortably afford with your income!

To figure the back end ratio, take your gross monthly income and multiply it by .40, then subtract monthly debt payments. This is how much house payment you could comfortably afford considering your income and debt! Plan to use the lesser of the two figures.

Preparing for homeownership can be a lengthy process; especially if you need to reduce some of your debt. Finding a home can even be a difficult task. Remember to communicate well with your family needs and wants, and seek further education. HUD approves housing and financial counseling agencies to teach homebuyer education. They request 8-12 hours of education to be eligible for financial assistance programs. There are many different assistance programs (financial and educational) available to help families achieve the dream of homeownership. Contact HUD to find a housing counseling agency in your area that can give you more information on available programs, www.hud.gov or call 1-800-569-4287.

Source: Utah State University and U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

PRINCIPLES OF Parenting



Parenting! The biggest challenge in our lives! Parenting is also one of the most important roles we'll ever have. We are helping create the future!

What is effective parenting? What skills are necessary? Research tells us that some approaches to childrearing tend to result in healthier, happier families. We can't prescribe a formula for having children grow up to be caring, responsible adults. We can identify characteristics and practices, however, of families that nurture their members, instill the values we believe, and create caring communities. These are the principles of effective parenting.

The Principles of Parenting Series

The Principles of Parenting publications are designed to help parents and other caregivers apply research-based parenting practices to their families. The following are included in the series:

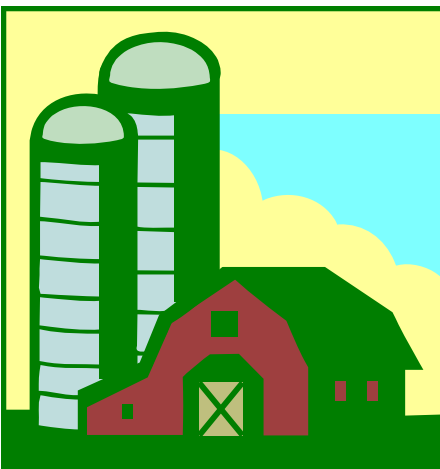
- Building Family Strengths
- The Challenges of Being a Parent
- Taking Care of the Parent: Replacing Stress with Peace

- Now That We're Divorced, How Can We Parent Together?
- Helping Your Children Succeed at Learning
- Strengthening Your Marriage
- Something Better Than Punishment
- Infant Crying: I'm Trying to Tell You Something
- Am I Spoiling My Child?
- Helping Young Children Behave
- Building a Positive Relationship With Your Child
- Talking So Young Children Understand
- Coping With Your Toddler and Toilet Training
- Getting Young Children Ready to Learn
- Communicating With Your Teen About Sex

All publications are available upon request by calling the Extension office at (205) 338-9416 or by downloading. Just visit www.aces.edu/StClair. Click on publications at the top of the web page and then search for the publication.

"You've achieved success in your field when you don't know whether what you're doing is work or play."

~Warren Beatty



Investing for Farm Families

An online course to help...

Secure your farm's future and protect your family's legacy

- Designed for farmers and ranchers, providing investment education in a farm context
- Provided by the Cooperative Extension Service, a partner you trust
- Offered on your schedule

It's worth the time. Invest in your future.

www.extension.org/pages/InvestingforFarmFamilies



The Gardening Corner

By: Tony Glover, Regional Extension Agent
Commercial Horticulture
Home Grounds, Gardens & Home Pests



Fall Planting

Question: I am planning on planting some trees and shrubs this fall and would appreciate some planting tips to insure success.

Answer: Most of the time I get questions after newly planted trees and shrubs start to die, but I much prefer offering pre-planting advice to avoid problems.

Fall is the best time to plant most perennial plants including trees and shrubs and even most herbaceous perennials. The keys to success start well before planting. It is always advisable to do a little research on the front end. There are some important questions you should answer before planting anything. One, are the plants I have in mind adapted to our climate? Plants that are well adapted to our cold is one thing but we also need to be concerned about plants being well adapted to our heat. Two, will the plants tolerate the drainage or lack of drainage within my soil? Poor drainage causes more plant death in heavy clay soils than drought does. Third, is the site chosen adequate for continued growth of the chosen plants? You should always think about the mature size when choosing the planting location and plant material.

The actual planting process will determine in large part the future growth and possibly whether or not a plant survives at all. There are at least two myths about planting woody plants that may reduce your chance of success.

The first myth is that you should amend the planting hole with loose organic matter. If you have a lot of clay in your soil you should not use any organic soil amendments. There are several potential problems with

adding organic matter and they all revolve around water. If organic matter is added to a hole surrounded by heavy clay soil, the water movement is drastically altered. You will have one of two problems. Either the water will not move out of the hole after rainfall, causing a bathtub effect, or the organic matter will dry and not re-wet well. Both of these scenarios will lead to root death. Plant wilting is not a good indicator of whether the soil is too wet or too dry because drought and excessive water both cause wilt.

The second myth is that you should not disturb the root ball coming out of the container. This myth relates to the previous myth, but needs some further explanation. Most plants are grown in containers at the nursery in a very light ground pine bark mix. This mix is great for growing shrubs and trees in the nursery but can present terrible problems in the landscape. If this loose bark is allowed to remain intact, the water movement issues described above still apply, with the added problem of air pocket development around the roots as the bark decomposes. Therefore, it is best to gently wash most of the loose bark material off the plant until it is, for all practical purposes, a bare root plant. This may involve pulling the roots out if they have started winding around the root ball. If necessary you can prune or slice these roots to help make this job easier, but try to leave as many roots intact as possible.

The planting hole should be shallow and wide. The depth only needs to be as deep as the root ball, but the hole should be two to three times the width of the longest lateral roots. Look for the uppermost lateral root to determine the planting depth. This lateral root should be at grade or slightly above the surrounding soil grade. Make a small ring of raised soil to hold water near

Continued on page 7 →

Now is the Time to Plant Spring Bulbs

If nothing says spring to you more than drifts of daffodils and other bulbs, remember that late October is the time to plant here in Alabama. Dr. Dave Williams, a horticulturist with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, says the best display of flowers starts with buying and planting good quality bulbs.

“The first big step is deciding which ones to plant,” says Williams, who is also the head of Auburn University’s Department of Horticulture. “Daffodils or narcissus are favorites in the South because they thrive even in our warmer winters. There are literally hundreds to choose from.”

He points out that people who plant tulips in Alabama should be prepared to treat them as an annual and replant them every fall. “Tulips are not perennial here. Our winters are not cold enough, and our wet springs can lead to bulb rot.”

Other good choices include grape hyacinths and crocuses. Scillas and galanthus are two of the minor spring flowering bulbs that do well in Alabama. Williams adds that you may have options other than buying bulbs.

“Bulbs are one of the easiest plants to share. Next spring, you may want to ask a friend or neighbor who is dividing

their bulbs, especially daffodils, for one or two. Many multiply fairly quickly.”

When buying bulbs, check their firmness. Buy early to get the best selections available. Another consideration is bulb size. Generally, the bigger the bulb is (for the species), the bigger the flower is. After you purchase bulbs, keep them cool until planting. Store them around 50—65 degrees F.

The best planting times are late October to late December for most Alabama. He says that good drainage is crucial to bulbs. You may need to add organic matter if you have a heavy clay soil. Even if you have well-draining sandy soil, you may need to add additional organic material to increase the soil’s ability to hold water and nutrients.

Plant small bulbs 4 to 5 inches deep in most Alabama soils. Space small bulbs 1 to 2 inches apart. Large bulbs that are 2 or more inches in height should be planted 6 to 8 inches deep. Space larger bulbs 3 to 6 inches apart. A general rule of thumb is that you plant slightly shallower in a clay soil and slightly deeper in sandy soil. Cover the bed with 2 to 3 inches of mulch.



Bats and Bat Houses

Bats are among the most misunderstood animals in Alabama. Because they are secretive and active only at night, bats are often feared and needlessly killed. Contrary to common myths, bats are neither blind nor dirty. They do not get caught in people’s hair or infest homes with bedbugs.

Like other mammals, a few (less than 0.5 percent) contract rabies. But even rabid bats rarely become aggressive or transmit the disease to animals. When people are harmed by bats, it is usually because they have foolishly picked up a sick bat that bites in self-defense. Records show that pet dogs are far more dangerous.

One bat may eat 3,000 or more insects, including many mosquitoes, in a single night. Large bat colonies can consume billions. The Blowing Wind colony of gray bats in northern Alabama, numbering roughly 300,000 individuals, eats up to a billion insects nightly!

Bats, like human beings, are mammals. They have hair and give birth to young that feed on milk produced by the mother bats. Forty species of bats occur in the United States, and sixteen of those occur in Alabama.

Bats are the only mammals that truly fly, and they make their living by capturing insects. Most of their feeding is done at night although they may fly in the early evening and during daylight hours on warm winter days.



Although they have good eyesight, they use echolocation (sonar) to navigate and capture insects. Bats emit high-frequency sound pulses (human beings cannot hear them) at a rate of 3 to 500 per second. By listening to the echoes, they can “see with their ears.”

To learn more about bats, their habitat, those that are endangered, what can be done to help bats and the construction and placement of bat houses, please call the St. Clair County Extension office and request publication ANR-075: *Bats and Bat Houses*. This publication can also be accessed by visiting www.aces.edu/StClair. Just click on publications at the top and then search for the publication.

Source: ANR-075: *Bats and Bat Houses*

Walking Off the Midway Munchies

Fairs involve a lot of walking, so we'll probably burn off those extra fair food calories—right?

Well...

Maybe...If we walk up to 1.5 miles for a bag of cotton candy and three miles for a funnel cake!

Big portions with lots of sugar and fat calories characterize many of the foods we traditionally associate with fairs. For many of us, attending the fair wouldn't be nearly as much fun without these tasty treats. Some may be once-a-year foods for us, and we look forward to them at the fair.

So...How much exercise does it take to walk off our favorite fair foods?

We know on average, we have to walk about one mile to burn 100 calories. To visualize how far that is, think approximately 12 city blocks to the mile. While calories per our favorite fair food can vary depending on the portion size, recipe, and more, burning off the calories of that cotton candy mentioned above could be an 18-block walk.

Following are the approximate distances we likely need to walk to burn off the calories of some popular midway foods:

- Caramel apple: 3 miles
- Corn dog, large: 4.5 miles
- Cotton candy: 1.5 miles
- Fried candy bar on a stick: 4.5 miles
- Funnel cake, 6-inch diameter: 3 miles
- Soft drink, 32 oz.: 2.5 miles
- Sno-cone: 2.5 miles
- Soft pretzel: 3 miles

Does this mean we need to load a picnic basket with carrot and celery sticks before heading to the fair? No. With a

little planning, it's possible to fit in many favorite fair foods. Here's how:

- Quench your thirst with a small soft drink instead of larger sizes. Better yet, buy or bring along bottled water. Save your fair-day calories for something else.
- Split foods among several people. For example, share a large funnel cake with friends. Everyone gets a taste, and no one gets overloaded!
- Plan times when you'll sit down and eat, rather than graze your way from one end of the fair to the other. It's hard to keep a handle on how much we're eating when we're walking, talking, and eating at the same time.
- Limit yourself to one treat. Choose reasonable serving sizes of lower sugar and lower fat items for the rest of your foods.
- Dress in comfortable shoes so you're more likely to walk off some calories. Wear a pedometer and see how many steps you can take at the fair. One mile equals about 2,000 steps, or around one third of the calories in a typical caramel apple.
- Check out all the food booths before making your selections. Imagine you have a "calorie salary." Enjoy the foods you like the most for your "salary."
- Finally, if you do indulge a little too much, remember to return to a more balanced way of eating the next day. A day or two of overeating won't affect your weight that much—weeks of it will! Eating 100 extra calories daily can result in a 10 pound weight gain yearly.



Source: Alice Henneman, MS, RD, University of Nebraska—Lincoln, Lancaster County Extension Educator



Mark Your Calendars!

St. Clair County Health Fair

"Guard Your Health"

Friday, November 5, 2010

Pell City Civic Center

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Sodium: The Stealth Ingredient

Dietary sodium could rightfully be described as the stealth ingredient in food. Indeed, as one Wall Street article related recently, few Americans are aware of how much sodium is consumed in the course of the day.

This lack of awareness is expressed in an especially sobering statistic: Some 90 percent of Americans consume sodium levels exceeding those of U.S. dietary guidelines. Too much sodium, a key component of salt, can contribute to high blood pressure, which, among older Americans, is a major factor behind heart disease and other health problems.

Still, most Americans are scarcely aware of how much dietary sodium they consume in the course of the day, even from foods that don't taste especially salty, including packaged bread and chicken dishes. Food items promoted as especially healthy often aren't in terms of their sodium content. For example, that article reports that two teaspoons of a popular low-calorie salad dressing was chock-full of sodium. While only 15 calories, the portion contained 480 mg of sodium.

Current U.S. dietary guidelines recommend a limit of 1,500 mg for people with hypertension, anyone more than 40 years old and African-Americans, who are at greater risk of developing hypertension. These groups combined represent some 70 percent of the U.S. population, the article reports.

However, U.S. adults consume more than 3,400 mg of sodium on average. That's not even including the salt they use in cooking or sprinklings from a shaker.

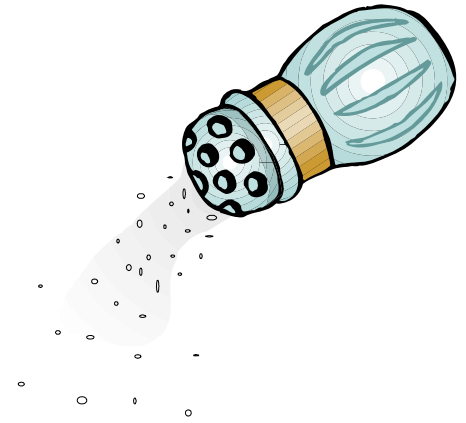
Earlier this year, Dr. Robert Keith, an Extension nutrition and health specialist and Auburn University professor of nutrition and food science, suggested several ways we can reduce our sodium intake.

By some estimates, for example, reducing sodium in processed foods and home cooking as well as table use could result in a 5 to 10 percent reduction in systolic pressure.

However, salt reduction is only part of the picture, says Keith. There are a series of proactive steps consumers can take too.

He cites potassium, widely available in fresh fruits and vegetables, as a major player in blood pressure reduction. "If we can get people to eat fresh fruits and vegetables at least 5 times a day, we're getting less sodium and more potassium," Keith says.

"We've discovered that people with more potassium and relatively less sodium in their diets tend to have lower blood pressure, while people with high blood pressure tend to consume foods higher in sodium and lower in potassium."



Indeed, studies have shown that people who do not reduce their sodium intake can still reap significant benefits with blood pressure merely by increasing their intake of potassium to levels greater than that of sodium.

One important rule of thumb for people trying to increase their potassium intake is to concentrate on fresh and frozen vegetables and to avoid canned vegetables, which tend to be high in sodium and low in potassium.

"A cup of fresh peas amounts to several hundred milligrams of potassium and almost no sodium at all," Keith says. "On the other hand, if you use canned peas, you'll get just the opposite: several hundred milligrams of sodium and very little potassium."

All in all, the recommendation for reducing sodium in the diet could be summed up this way: Light on the table salt, heavy on the fruits and vegetables, especially fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables.

~Gardening Corner Continued~

where the outermost roots extend. Keep this area moist at all times for the first several weeks and then gradually decrease watering frequency and increase watering depth to encourage deeper rooting. Mulching the root area can give you a false sense of security about whether the plant has adequate water. It is very important to check the root area frequently to avoid drying. Do not apply mulch more than a couple of inches thick.

A couple other post plant care tips are to keep the area around trees and shrubs weed and grass free, widening the weed free area as the plant grows. Also, avoid using weed whackers or mowers near the plant base.

Cast Iron Cookware: Methods of Seasoning

Cast iron just keeps getting better. Americans have found, however, that cast iron is not only an inexpensive thick gauged cookware, but it also does not wear out. Unlike coated cookware, cast iron can be seasoned, its cooking surface restored.

Once washed and dried, there are several ways to season cast iron. Remember, that seasoning takes time and repeated use before a pan gets the coal black surface one sees in pictures.

One simple way to season iron is to fry bacon in the pan over a period of a month or so. A second method is to pour enough oil into the pan to coat the interior, bottom and sides with a light film. Over low heat, allow the oil to burn onto the pan, swirling it occasionally to distribute oil evenly. It is very important to use a pure vegetable oil or other light oil. Corn, olive, sunflower and peanut oils are too glutinous to be

absorbed into the pan and will also impart undesirable flavors. The third, and perhaps most effective way to season cast iron is to rub vegetable shortening into the pan, being sure to coat the sides. Put in a 180°—200°F oven for 10-15 minutes. Remove from oven and drain excess shortening onto paper towels. Use excess to wipe outside bottom and sides of utensil. Turn utensil upside down on cookie sheet and return to oven for one full hour. With the second and third method of seasoning, the final step is to let the pan cool down and wipe out any remaining oil. The pan is now ready to use.

One cast iron piece almost always overlooked in seasoning is the lid. To season a lid, turn it upside down on a cookie sheet or jelly roll pan, brush heavily with oil and proceed with seasoning method three. If the lid is not seasoned it will impart a metallic taste to the contents regardless of how well

the pan itself is seasoned.

It is important to remember that seasoning is a continual process. The more you use cast iron, the better it becomes. It is easier to clean cast iron when it is hot because the pores in the iron are still open from the heat. Immediately after cooking, remove food. Run hot water in the pan whisking any debris out with a nylon or natural bristle brush. Salt also makes a good natural abrasive for cleaning utensil. Dry well with a towel. Do not dry over stove element or in oven as this too will ruin seasoning. As soon as utensil is cool enough to handle, spray with a no-stick cooking spray. Rub in with a paper towel. This will give your cookware extra protection as well as helping it to look great.

Source: Georgia P. Aycock, retired AL Cooperative Extension System Resource Management Specialist

Quilting for a Cause



Ms. Nola Traweek, former St. Clair County Extension office records clerk, recently returned to Pell City from her new home in Boise, Idaho to solicit help from friends to finish a quilt that she started embroidering over four years ago. The quilt kit was a gift from her friend, Catherine Lewis, who sadly passed away before the quilt could be completed. The king-sized quilt, pillow shams and dust ruffle, Ms. Traweek kindly refers to as the Catherine Lewis memorial quilt, will be sold on eBay after it is completed. She plans to donate a portion of the proceeds to the St. Clair County Sheriff's Boys Ranch.

Those who assisted in the quilting project are pictured (l to r): Florence Kerr, Nola Traweek, Peggy Williams, Sandy Richardson and Sally Day.

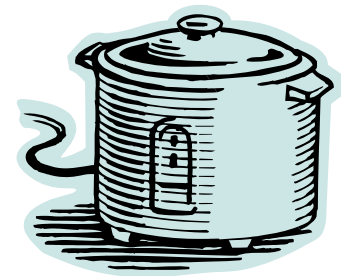
Safe Cooking With Slow Cookers

Life can be so hectic that many people look for shortcuts to make things easier, including how to put dinner on the table faster and simpler. One way to do that is to use a slow cooker or crock pot.

However, because slow cookers don't reach the high temperatures we associate with killing bacteria, how safe are they to use? Slow cookers are safe because they kill illness-causing pathogens with steam.

Use your slow cooker according to manufacturers' instructions, and you shouldn't have any food-safety concerns. There are, however, some things to keep in mind when using your slow cooker.

Do not use the slow cooker to defrost frozen foods or cook frozen foods. Frozen products should be defrosted first, either in the microwave or in the refrigerator.



Cut meat or poultry into bite-size pieces. Brown meat before adding to the pot. This will help kill bacteria as well. Don't overfill the pot. Fill the pot to between one-half and two-thirds full. Use plenty of liquid so the pot can generate sufficient steam to kill any pathogens. Resist the urge to take the lid off and sample. By keeping the lid on, you keep steam in the pot where it's needed.

Also if your pot has variable cooking settings, cook on the highest setting for the first hour and then reduce the heat to finish cooking your dish.

Source: Dr. Jean Weese, Extension food scientist, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Recipe Corner

Crock Pot Macaroni & Cheese

1 (8 oz.) box elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
1 ½ cups milk
3 eggs
¼ cup margarine, melted

3 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 teaspoon pepper, or to taste
Paprika

Spray crock pot with no-stick spray. Combine 2 cups of the cheese with all other ingredients except paprika. Pour into crock pot. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Sprinkle with paprika for color.

Cook on low for 3-4 hours. Recipe can be doubled when using a larger crock pot.

~Carolyn Sides, Springville, St. Clair County Farmers Federation, Women's Division



Congratulations Graduates!

Congratulations to two of our St. Clair County Extension office staff members. Both Synthia Williams, Regional Extension Agent—Family & Child Development and Tonya Tomlin, 4-H Agent Assistant, earned their Masters of Adult Education from Auburn University on August 9th, 2010. **CONGRATULATIONS ladies! We're so proud of you!**





Lots of Hands-On Fun & Learning

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. More photos are available online at www.aces.edu/StClair.

Workshops this year included: Archery, Beginner & Advanced Kids Cooking Camp, Sportfishing, GPS Scavenger Hunt and the Auburn University Road Trip. Thanks so much to all the volunteers, teachers, and Extension educators who came out to conduct classes and help. Also, thanks to everyone who supported our program by allowing us to use their facilities. We couldn't have done it without you— **THANKS!!**



A special thanks to our Sponsors!
City of Springville
Metro Bank of Pell City
Royal Foods
St. Clair County Farmers Federation



4-H Happenings

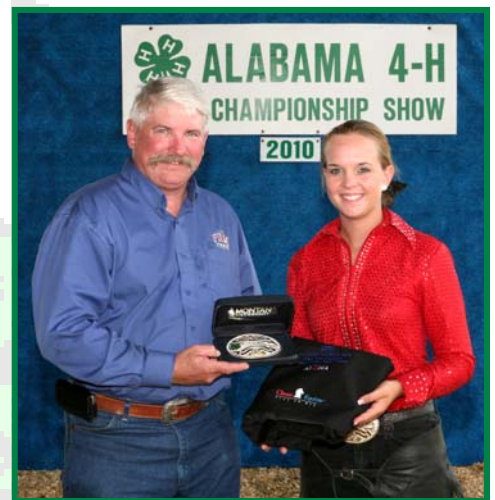


State 4-H Winners

Two St. Clair County 4-H'ers competed at the state level competition held at the 4-H Center in Columbiana on August 3rd. 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.

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 Go in 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.



Citizenship Washington Focus

Delegations of Alabama youth, including St. Clair County 4-H'er Rebecca Parker of Odenville, attended Citizenship Washington Focus in June. Rebecca enjoyed her trip and met other youth from across America.

Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), a summer educational conference offered at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland (just one mile outside of Washington, D.C.) gives 4-H youth the opportunity to explore, develop, and refine the civic engagement skills they need to be outstanding leaders in their home communities and at the national level. Through sightseeing tours in the living classroom of Washington, D.C. and hands-on educational workshops, youth learn about the history of our nation, the leaders who have shaped it, and how they can apply the leadership and citizenship skills they have learned at CWF when they return home.





Understanding Home Ownership Workshop

Saturday, October 9th

10:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Pell City Civic Center

\$5.00/per person

(covers lunch & resources)

This workshop is geared towards prospective homeowners who want to learn more about the potential problems and pitfalls involved in the home buying process and how to maintain a home after the purchase. Topics to be covered include: shopping wisely for a home; budgeting for unexpected household expenses; importance of a good credit score and how to raise one's score; available lenders and interest rates; calculating how much home one can afford; saving on homeowner's insurance; down payments and PMI; importance of home inspections; and the healthy home environment. There will be a realtor and home inspector available to answer questions. To register, please call the St. Clair County Extension office at (205) 338-9416 or download a registration form at www.aces.edu/StClair. Registration deadline is Monday, October 4th.



Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

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