



Alabama Cooperative Extension System  
**2015 Annual Report**

**We Grow Alabama**

[www.aces.edu/impact](http://www.aces.edu/impact)

# PLANTING THE SEED

One out of four Alabama residents received information and programming in 2015 from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). 1.2 million Alabamians attended an Extension educational program, received personal guidance, or participated in 4-H activities. Alabama Extension evolves to meet the changing needs of our state while focusing on its mission of improving Alabama's economy and quality of life through the delivery of impactful educational programs to all 67 counties. These programs are relevant to contemporary and local issues, research based, and provided through sustained personal and institutional relationships. Digital advances coupled with the personal touch of Extension educational professionals make ACES an asset to Alabama. ACES is the combined Extension effort of Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities.



**Natural Resources  
& Global Food  
Security and Hunger**  
**91,564 people**



**Community &  
Family Programs**  
**\$8.5 million**  
**annually to**  
**fight obesity crisis**  
**in Alabama**

Building community  
partnerships to improve  
healthy food choices  
and encourage  
physical activities



**Safe & Secure  
Food Supply**  
**35,982 people**

Entrepreneurs pass  
FDA inspections with  
ACES training

**ROI = Return on Investment**

## Volunteers Contribute To Communities and ACES

**15,990 4-H volunteers** (1,629 direct and 14,361 program volunteers) donated 99,563 hours to 4-H young people in their communities at a value of \$2.2 million. **ROI 1:19**

**1,699 ACES-trained** Master Gardener volunteers assisted ACES agents answering 9,208 calls while helping their community neighbors with home, yard, and garden questions; 119,769 households at a value of \$2.1 million. **ROI 1:19**

**102,896 residents** visited Master Gardener demonstration gardens in their communities.

**320 Water Watch** volunteers collected 3,315 water samples to manage the water quality of local lakes, streams, and rivers.

**96 oyster gardeners** donated 960 hours raising baby oysters to increase oyster populations at public reefs in Mobile Bay.

**1,506 Alabama A&M** students volunteered 40,000 hours to local agencies and NGOs at a savings of \$942,000 to those organizations. **ROI 1:388**

## Alabama Youth

**138,675 Alabama young people** are involved in 4-H club or enrichment programs. Approximately 30% of the state's young people ages 9 to 13 are involved in Alabama 4-H.

**Alabama 4-H** has a presence in school systems in every county.

**25,246 young people** developed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math skills through 4-H STEM projects.

**4-H teams** built 1,071 engineering design prototypes as they developed innovation and creativity skills.

**48,356 young people** gained leadership and personal development through 4-H.

**3,677 urban young people** disapproved of the use of tobacco with a potential out-of-pocket and health savings of \$7,394,447 per year.

**ROI 1:74**

**629 young people** enrolled in the ACES PROSPER program demonstrated a reduction in aggressive behavior.

**1,266 young people** increased financial management skills.

**3,963 young people** participated in bullying prevention and learned the cause and effects of bullying, strategies to help others being victimized, and pro-social skills that help foster healthy relationships with their peers.

## Alabama Families

**1,747 families** learned effective communication skills, techniques to resolve conflict, and improved spending habits through family advocacy programs.

**The divorce rate** in Alabama has dropped faster than in any other state, falling from 10th in 2003 to 21st in 2013. A contributing factor is Extension's divorce prevention programs. In Alabama, each divorce costs \$14,000 in family costs and \$18,000 in governmental costs. 6,354 fewer divorces mean \$202,328,000 not removed from the state economy. Extension invested \$720,000 in staff and programming. **ROI 1:271**

**166 senior citizens** improved their retirement financial planning skills through the Seniors Can program.

**127 senior citizens** completed estate planning documents saving their families extensive probate court costs. **ROI 1:127**

**464 farm families** explored multigeneration transfer plans to sustain family farms.

**145 Alabamians** reduced debt with ACES financial planning programs resulting in a total savings of \$83,375. **ROI 1:11**

**513 grandparents** who received ACES education kept grandchildren from entering the Alabama Foster Care System saving the state \$31,806,000 in foster care costs. **ROI 1:3447**

## Alabama's Food Supply

**\$150,000 worth** of fresh vegetables (25 tons) from Master Gardener-managed gardens donated to food banks and local food assistance programs to help reduce food insecurity.

**23 commercial food entrepreneurs** with \$2.1 million of sales passed FDA inspection as a result of ACES training. **ROI 1:350**

**766 home food entrepreneurs** completed the Cottage Food Law certification exam allowing each person to produce and sell up to \$20,000/year for a potential total of \$15.3 million of new economic activity. **ROI 1:61**

**85 food entrepreneurs** received product testing and labeling advice through the ACES Food Entrepreneur Laboratory.

## Alabama's Health and Wellness

### Fresh fruit, vegetable, and water

purchases in 3 family-owned grocery stores in a declining rural African American (96%) community with 29% poverty and an extremely high obesity rate (53.9% female and 39.9% male) adopted product placement, signage, and product option strategies provided by ACES to stimulate healthier food and beverage purchases while increasing profitability. One store now sells 10 cases of fresh fruit cups per week after adding them as an impulse item near the checkout register.

**Better health** is associated with reduced health care costs, less work absenteeism, and less dependence on emergency food assistance. EFNEP offers programs to improve the health and well-being of limited-resource families. National studies confirm that \$1 spent on adult EFNEP programs produces a benefit of \$10.96.

**ROI 1:11**

**Alabama urban households** discard \$640 worth of food per year. 949 SNAP-Ed urban participants reduced food waste by a total of \$607,360 per year. **ROI 1:19**

**436 urban residents** involved in the ACES CHAMPION program reduced annual health costs by \$550 a year with improved food choices and increased activity.

**ROI 1:114**

## Alabama Agriculture and Forestry

**Extension** and the National Poultry Technology Center created a rainwater harvesting system for poultry houses. A demonstration system collects 100,000 gallons of rainwater from four 40' x 500' houses. A one-inch rain event collects \$500 in water with annual savings per house of \$4,000. The project demonstrates payback of investment in 5.2 years while reducing the pressure on public water systems for infrastructure expansion and livestock production.

**ACES** and Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station scientists created LED-lighting systems for the rigorous conditions of a poultry facility. The new lighting system offers savings of \$1,250 per poultry house or \$15 million for Alabama poultry producers.

**ROI 1:175**

**Grazing Management Clinics** helped northern Alabama beef producers more intensively manage 19,635 acres. At \$51.42 per acre, attendees earned an additional \$946,017. **ROI 1:135**

**A volunteer** trained by ACES assisted 7 farms in developing an artificial insemination breeding program resulting in increased profits of \$14,049 (\$669/head).

**ROI 1:6**

**Alabama Beef Improvement** Association members with ACES guidance marketed 5,149 feeder calves, 503 bulls, 333 bred heifers, and 63 open heifers realizing \$9,126,950 in income. **ROI 1:61**

**\$426 per acre** increased profits resulted from improved pest scouting and management practices on demonstration cotton fields resulting in a statewide potential of \$127.8 million across Alabama's 300,000 cotton acres. **ROI 1:319**

**72% of conventional vegetable** producers report using IPM tactics resulting in the prevention of 40% direct crop losses.

**Improved on-farm** and processing plant poultry footpad management resulted in a \$687,500 payback for one poultry operation. **ROI 1:286**



**Alabama 4-H**  
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

**37,591 kids**  
in 1,863 4-H Clubs

101,084 kids in 4-H events and activities

138,675 reached through 4-H

\$2.2 million value added by volunteers



**Financial Literacy**  
**381,385 people**



**Workforce Development**  
**330,742 people**

\$584,650 savings to state in unemployment benefits

### How We Are Funded Based on FY16 Budget Data

54.93% (\$36,766,573) State	3.36% (\$2,246,204) Local Appropriations
17.11% (\$11,454,842) Federal	4.12% (\$2,758,100) Other
20.48% (\$13,709,951) Contracts & Grants	<b>TOTAL: \$66,935,670</b>

### How We Use Funds

#### By Category

75.43% (\$50,492,097) Personnel Costs	24.57% (\$16,443,573) Operating Costs
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#### By Planned Program Areas

4.93% Economic & Community Development	28.76% Family & Consumer Sciences
20.30% 4-H & Youth Development	30.63% Agriculture, Forestry & Natural Resources
15.38% Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs	

# WATCHING ALABAMA GROW



## Sustainable Ag & Forestry

**\$10,300,000**  
for horticulture  
industry

\$2,594,301 increase  
in farm community  
income by plant  
diagnostic analysis



## Environmental Stewardship

**17,950 pounds**

e-waste saved  
nonrenewable  
natural resources

43,500 stoker  
oysters planted

**\$10,300,000 saved** by the Alabama horticulture industry with AU Plant Diagnostic Lab and Extension recommendations to address biotic disease, insect, and abiotic disorders. **ROI 1:50**

**964 small-scale** and limited-resource sheep and goat producers increased profitability 5% to 20% with improved parasite management saving \$988,100. **ROI 1:35**

## Alabama Environmental Stewardship

**80 pounds of nitrogen**, 30 pounds of phosphorous, and 42 tons of sediment were reduced in the Mill Creek watershed in Lee and Russell Counties based on recommendations developed by ACES and Water Watch volunteers.

**43,500 stoker oysters** planted in the spring of 2016 added millions of additional larvae to the Mobile Bay estuarine system. **ROI 1:33**

**4,000 feet** of urban streams were enhanced or restored through collaborative efforts between city officials and the ACES storm water management program.

**5 million outdoor** enthusiasts received natural resource management information through the ACES/Buckmasters educational partnership.

**3,912 pounds** of printer cartridges were recycled as a result of ACES-community collaborative efforts.

**3,734 pounds** of prescription drugs and personal health care products diverted from community water and solid waste streams through collaborative training and collection efforts with Alabama communities.

**160 rain barrels** were installed by home gardeners saving approximately 10,000 gallons of city water. **ROI 1:2**

**17,950 pounds** of e-waste saved nonrenewable natural resources and offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equivalent to 4,342 gallons of gasoline and 991 trees. 37,269 plastic bottles

and 171,437 aluminum cans recycled; and 1,347 pounds of nylon, plastic, steel, copper, and aluminum reclaimed. **ROI 1:2**

## Alabama Workforce Development

**When the International Paper mill** closed in Courtland, economic shock waves washed across six counties with a loss of 4,954 jobs and \$313 million in labor income. 70% of participants in Extension-sponsored employability training obtained jobs in the region. 85 were hired at one job fair, saving the state \$585,650 in unemployment benefits. **ROI 1:27**

**73 Alabamians** completed entrepreneurship certificate program designed to improve business startup success with a value of \$58,400. **ROI 1:5**

## New Ways To Deliver Information

**762 people** downloaded *Emergency Handbook, Preparation, and Recovery; Planning for Storm Water; High Tunnel Greenhouse Production; Beef Basics*; and four volumes of the *Gardening in the South* series eBooks.

**9,669 people** downloaded the mobile apps SOW, Smart Yards, and Alabama Crops to help them manage their crops, yards, and gardens, respectively.

**1.5 million people** reached by Alabama Extension social media. 8,000 people have liked the ACES Facebook page and follow daily postings leading to more than 80,000 topic-driven conversations. With a 69% increase in likes the past 12 months, ACES is the most engaged Extension site in the South.

**913 Extension news stories** were placed in media across Alabama as well as in regional and national media. If Extension were to buy comparable advertising space, it would cost more than \$57 million.



## ACES LEADERSHIP TEAM

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