**Meeting Our Mission**

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.

### Agriculture

- Provides unbiased information on producing, harvesting, and marketing livestock, aquaculture products, poultry, row crops, horticultural crops, forestry, and food products
- Promotes profitability, public health, food safety, and the environment with the ultimate task of feeding a growing world population and strengthening Alabama’s agroecosystem-based economy
- Responds quickly to weather disasters and crises, such as hurricanes, droughts, and the Gulf oil spill, with disaster mitigation, on-site analyses of losses, and effects on food supply and safety
- Through programs such as Alabama Smart Yards and Master Gardener, helps Alabamians save time, energy, and money while improving property values and preserving the environment
- Promotes farm profitability, environmental soundness, and food security through the nationally and internationally recognized precision agriculture efforts, which has a statewide impact of about $15,000,000 annually

### Economic and Community Development

- Has educated Alabama’s economic development community for 28 years through the AU Intensive Economic Development Training Course
- Directs the Alabama Community Leadership Network with training and assistance to more than 75 adult and youth leadership programs
- Funds and assists rural economic and community development projects ($1.25 million since 2007) through the Rural Alabama Initiative
- Provides strategic planning assistance for communities; facilitated a sustainable development plan for the city of Eufaula, the nation’s first Audubon Sustainable Community

### Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs

- Focuses on building and engaging the leadership and service skills of urban youth for personal growth, positive citizenship, and community development
- Provides computer-based resources and a virtual business center to support small business development and conserve time and resources for thousands of online customers
- Offers legal education through LegalEase, providing cost-saving resources in estate, financial, and health management to enhance the well-being of underserved families
- Supports farmers with small ruminant production system resources and education to enhance food security
Family and Consumer Sciences

- Trains and certifies thousands of food service workers each year through ServSafe, a training program aimed at ensuring safe food in Alabama restaurants.
- Tests homes for radon (almost 8,000 homes tested and found to have radon at or above EPA action level, 2,000 homes mitigated, and 4,000 new homes built with radon-resistant construction).
- Provides training and resources to help informal caregivers care for themselves and others, connect with state agencies and benefits, and develop support systems.
- Works with IRS in North Alabama, helping citizens file electronic returns (more than $680,000 in earned tax credit for 850 clients in 2009).
- Provides statewide training and workshops on prostate and colorectal cancer awareness.

4-H and Youth Development

- Reaches more than 92,000 youth, ages 5–18; serves as Alabama’s largest youth education organization.
- Provides hands-on teaching in agriculture and animal sciences, natural resources and the environment, science and technology, citizenship, and health.
- Develops and nurtures life, leadership, and communication skills, including the character and values needed to be productive citizens.
- Provides education and activities for youth with parents in the military through Operation Military Kids.

Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resources

- Forestry: Provides education and management tools to improve sustainable forest management practices as well as tools for recreational and multiple-use management for increased profitability.
- Wildlife and Fisheries: Provides education in managing wildlife and fish populations, enhancing wildlife habitats, and minimizing wildlife damage; provides angler and hunter education.
- Natural Resources: Implements successful natural resource programs that secure extramural funding including Alabama Water Watch, invasive species control, reef restoration, and oyster gardening.
- Community Forestry: Provides education and technology for managing, restoring, and conserving community trees and managing challenges to wild lands associated with urbanization.

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