

Introduction written by Pam Layfield: After two and a half years of separation and virtual meetings, things are slowly getting back to us physically being together. We missed seeing all of your faces and we are happy that many of you are returning to the office. As we prepare for your return, staff have been busy navigating the waters to structure and organize more in person opportunities. We have been steadily pivoting and doing what has been needed to jump start our programs. So much so we almost forgot our spring edition of Report to the People.

This edition is all about updates. What we have done and we are planning to do. Staff is busy planning summer programs and classes for everyone to be able to attend. While we are moving forward, we did learn some things during the pandemic that we will take with us. First, sanitizing is important. If you see us wiping down or spraying during class, we are just keeping germs, of all kinds, down. Second, hybrid learning works. Many are geared up and ready to sit in rooms with everyone; others not so much. We don't judge, we just improvise. Our office has a meeting owl that allows individuals to continue to participate in person meetings/trainings while being home or at their place of work. We continue to make strides to meet our clients where they feel most comfortable. Last but certainly not least, grace is always and forever will be extended. We are human and you are too. We are getting in the swing of things and trying to cover bases, but we tend to forget things also. Bear with us and please be patient.

Again, this year we have included NC Extension Impact Summary Sheet for you to view. As always, thank you for your continued support as we continue to learn, grow, share and lead. Enjoy the contents of our newsletter.

• Community Rural Development by Roshunda Terry, CED & FCS Agent Partnerships/Community Involvement: Getting back into the swing of things have brought on a few changes. I have been busy meeting with HOLLA! on the EFNEP program along with the Nutrition Dietician at Atrium Anson. We are also working on ways to work more together than separate on the same initiatives. Many conversations have been discussed on moving forward with a more unison approach to some food security issues in the county. Staff also worked with the Faith Community Health Nurse at Atrium Anson to speak on Mental Health to the Extension Community Association at their district meeting.

Staff organized and sent out a program needs assessment. Compiled results that were discussed at the fall advisory council meeting to obtain additional feedback. Staff participated at Read Across America at Wadesboro Primary, Ansonville and Morven Elementary Schools.



Pictured above: Read Across America at Wadesboro Primary School. Presentations were given to Rotary about Extension, staff programmatic roles and area specialized agents to give more knowledge about what areas they cover.

The County Director also served on NC AG Ventures Grant Review Committee.

• Visit NC Farms App Although we have 13 assets participating in this initiative, we have lacked in utilizing this app to its fullest potential. Partly because of the pandemic and many farms were not open to the public. Our goal is to start back up this summer with planning strategies to highlight those participating.

Download the Visit NC Farms App and explore your community today! Take a look at your own listing, and see who else around you is involved. If one of your agribusiness neighbors is not listed and could benefit from this tool, tell them about it!

The Visit NC Farms App is designed to connect the dots within each community across North Carolina. With maps, lists, and search functions, users can find farms, farmers markets, and local restaurants with foods and activities that interest them, all in their own backyard. The app is expanding statewide, with your community recently joining in.

• Family Consumer Science by Roshunda Terry, CED & FCS Agent Many in person classes were halted due to the pandemic, so getting back to trainings and learning has what kept this agent busy. I have worked collectively and individually to teach the Holiday Instant Pot Class, Parts of the Plants we eat and assisted in planning the District Extension Community Association Day that was held in Union County on May 12th. The Holiday Challenge consisted of weekly nutritional information along with educational videos were published during November and December to help combat overeating, stress and anxiety during the holiday season.

I just completed the two day safe plates training for retailers and good preservation. This is a training restaurant managers can take in place of ServeSafe that was created by NC Extension. I assisted in teaching the LIFT program for the District Extension Community Association and working on future planning with other county agents.

• Staff Professional Development Staff has been busy learning more about themselves and the personality of others to become better communicators and agents. Staff participated in DISC training with Dr. Rhonda Sutton and Union, Richmond, Scotland and Montgomery counties. We learned about the 4 subset behaviors, our natural styles (how we tend to be around family and close friends) and our adapted behaviors (how we tend to be in the workplace). Dr. Sutton went through each letter and challenges, strengths and limitations of each. She also gave helpful ways to communicate better with each behavior style.

After lunch the group worked with others in their programming areas and discussed successful programs and ways to partner and collaborate across county lines. Each group agreed to reconvene at a later date to further discuss. This was a great learning experience with positive feedback all around. We as a staff enjoy opportunities to learn together and gain a better understanding of ourselves as well as others. We plan to continue these professional development opportunities as a multi county group.

Staff have also participated in county level professional development opportunities of which were "Ready, Set, Change!", a program to create a framework for a simpler and faster approach to help individuals and organizations adopt new programs, technological platforms and systems easily and effectively. Other classes attended were Customer Engagement and Teamwork.

• Livestock and Row Crops by Kinsey Everhart, Livestock and Row Crops Agent Since the fall report, the livestock and field crops programs have started getting back to face to face meetings and training. The annual Tri-County Winter Grains Meeting was held in January, there were 30 in-person participants and 14 zoom participants. In February the annual Cotton Meeting had 55 participants. Last fall, a winter annual forage demonstration plot was planted. Six educational videos were developed following the plot's growth. Videos were posted on YouTube and Facebook; to date they have reached over a thousand views. A forage field day was held at the plot in the beginning of March. 40 participants learned about grazing management, soil fertility, and species selection. A Livestock Showmanship Clinic was held in May, there were 29 participants. Parents and children got to learn about showing sheep, goats, and cattle. Since the last report, there have been two Tri-County Newsletter Issues published. Each issue is averaging a reach of 400 people.

Future planning and program development are under way. A corn variety trial and a non-Bt corn trial were planted in May. A Corn Field Day is being planned for later this summer. Final edits are currently being made on 4-H summer camps. The Farm Credit Circuit (Livestock Show Series) will be starting up soon. More forage demonstration plot planning is under way.

Pictured at the bottom of the page is Winter Annual Forage Field Day.

• Horticulture and Forestry by Aimee Colf, Horticulture and Forestry Agent Gardening is an activity that feeds the mind and body, and continues to be one of the most popular hobbies in NC. For those willing to explore gardening outside the box, in March we had 15 participants inoculating shiitake mushrooms in logs. Second only to the button mushroom, shiitake's rich, earthy flavor and meaty texture adds a gourmet flair to every meal. Additional forms of program outreach include collaborating with the Hampton B Allen library to host an organic gardening presentation, visiting Anson High School's Sustainable Ag class, Wadesboro Rotary, and distributing 2,000 articles of Covid-related personal protective equipment to agricultural workers. Anson Extension held a local Market Scale Certification day with NC Department of Agriculture, and provided horticulture and forestry technical assistance and site visits to private forest landowners, beginning farmers, GAP certified farms, pond owners, gardeners, and hosted farm tours for 47 Leadership Anson and Extension professionals.

Looking ahead this summer, programs continue with Cloverbud and Junior 4H Camps, supporting youth at 4-H District Activities Day in Lee County, association meetings, and continued on-site, in-person, and virtual education and technical assistance.

Finally, stay tuned for the 2023 NC Farm School announcement this Fall, intended to foster agricultural entrepreneurship, preserve farm profitability, land resources, and instill a better understanding of sound farm management decisions for new and transitioning farmers. Learn more about NC Farm School at: ncfarmschool.ces.ncsu.edu/about-ncfarmschool.

Pictured above: Workshop participant Dakota Lincoln inoculates a log substrate with shiitake spores.



• 4-H Youth Development by Sam Cole, 4-H Youth Development Agent Programming for Anson County 4-H continues to provide educational opportunities for the youth and adults of Anson County. For the last six months, we have been doing some hybrid programming and easing back into in-person.

In January, Cabarrus County hosted the 2022 South Central District's annual Winter Enrichment at the Gem Theatre. The Gem Theatre is a first run, single screen historic movie theater located in downtown Kannapolis, NC. While downtown, youth ate lunch and were encouraged to talk with business owners and participate in a local Martin Luther King celebration taking place.

On Saturday, January 8th, the Anson County 4-H Robotics Club kicked off their robotics season after a one-year hiatus due to the pandemic. The last time the Robowolves competed was two years ago at the FIRST Robotics district competition at UNC-Pembroke and they placed first. Update, on April 2nd the Robowolves placed first at the district competition this year. Ms. Labree continues to do a great job with them.

The 4-H Fundraiser & Auction was to raise \$10,000 dollars. As of today \$9,310 was raised in sponsorships and \$410 was raised from the auction for a total of \$9,720. We have a few other donations that we are expecting and are confident that we will surpass our goal of \$10,000. It has been over two years since we've had our Clover Crawl event in person but the community continues to support Anson County 4-H and we greatly appreciate that.

Anson Youth Leadership Forums have been the majority of the 4-H programming for the last seven months. The forums consisted of a discussion panel with special guests and questions from the youth. This was a great learning opportunity for everyone involved but it was also a good leadership experience for the youth involved since the discussions were primarily youth led. Topics included: local government, the county-wide zoning ordinance, small businesses, black history, nonprofit organizations, and lastly Anson Cooperative Extension. If you missed any of the forums you can go and watch the recordings on the Anson Extension YouTube page.

June, July, August - Summer will be busy with local, district, and state 4-H programs: District Activity Day; 4-H Citizenship Focus; 4-H Congress; Youth Voice; 4-H Summer Camp; and 4-H Livestock Show.

• 4-H Youth Promise by Raven Spencer, 4-H Youth Promise Case Manager Community Service/Restitution youth focused on paying a debt back to the community and accepting responsibility for their actions. Staff and youth were able to transition safely into serving the community face-to-face again. Community Service youth participated in Backpack Buddies, trash-pick up, van detail, and office clean-up. After School youth participated in learning topics surrounding Black History Month, National Healthy Eating Month, Drug Awareness, and Career Readiness.

During this fiscal year, our community service program served 44 youth. In total, those youth competed 513 hours and counting. Our Anson Connecting Families (ACF) program was offered virtually this year as well. Although our family involvement wasn't its greatest, we believe our Anson Connecting Families program is sufficient to bring families together for the better. ACF covers a variety of topics such as communication skills and learning how to effectively express emotions.

The COVID-19 virus has greatly changed our program structure with not being able to provide face-to-face, but we have found new innovative ways to continue to provide quality service to the community of Anson County.

The N.C. Cooperative Extension Anson County Center Website is: anson.ces.ncsu.edu. You can also find them on Facebook. Read more N.C. Cooperative Extension news at: ces.ncsu.edu

