



2022-2023

# Report to the People

## GREEN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

*We're part of the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University off-campus information network.*

*Let us connect you to UK, KSU and the world.*

*We deliver information, education, and solutions.*

*And we grow ideas into better communities, stronger local economies, and healthier lives.*

### YOUTH LEARN CONNECTIONS TO NATURE, PRESERVING THEIR COMMUNITIES

One of Green County's greatest resources is our natural resources which are used for sources of income for families, production of food, recreation, and aesthetic enjoyment. These resources are gifts from previous generations and instilling the appreciation and conservation of them for future generations is an important goal for developing youth into productive citizens.

Green County 4-H provides educational programming connecting youth and their families to our natural habitats. Youth discover their connection to food webs through interactive, hands-on activities and see the potential for abuse when humans make bad decisions. 221 youths completed a special interest project studying an owl's food chain. Through scientific methods and studying owl pellets, the youth collected bones from the pellet and used charts to identify the owl's previous meals. For our area, the youth discovered that owls love moles, voles, mice, and sparrows. Owls can consume 3-5 per day typically of these prey. The youth were able to identify why controlling these rodents was important as it reduced the loss of agricultural resources and limited the spread of diseases. The youth then rationalized why owls are protected and have no hunting seasons. The youth were asked to draw similarities between the owl's food chain and that of snakes. Snakes are not protected animals and also love many of the same prey. Killing snakes, one child said, would cause the mice population to go "crazy."

**Cooperative Extension Service**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
Community and Economic Development

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

LEXINGTON, KY 40546



*When youth realize how our natural resources are connected, they are less likely to make decisions that place these valuable assets in peril. Through a dissection of an owl pellet, youth use bone charts to discover the items connected to the owl's food chain including mice, moles, voles and sparrows.*



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

## LEAP-LITERACY EATING AND ACTIVITY FOR PRIMARY

According to, The Partnership for a Fit Kentucky "16.3% of children between the ages of pre-school and kindergarten are considered overweight" because of this statistic Green County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension partnered with Green County Head Start and Little Lambs Preschool to offer a maximum of forty-nine preschool aged children the LEAP curriculum each month. This program consists of learning about Literacy, Nutrition, and Physical activities. Each month since September I attend Green County Head Start and Little Lambs preschool presenting a book followed along with a nutritious snack and some variation of physical activity.

In December, I read the book "You are Healthy" by Todd Snow which spoke about all the different ways in which we are healthy from brushing our teeth to being happy. I gave the students a chance to tell me in what ways they are healthy, and their answers varied from "I eat good foods" to "I play outside with brother". Both examples are different components of what LEAP is about, Nutrition and Physical activity. Since beginning LEAP in September, I have 134 participants with 108 of them reporting that they would eat my fruits & vegetables, be more physically active, try new foods, and drink more healthy beverages.



*Katelyn Squires, Green County FCS agent, reads **Dinosaurs Diner** to Green County Head Start preschool students.*

Those statistics are reported from a survey that is asked to the children at the beginning of each lesson of the month. They raise their hands on each of the questions such as "Who went and played outside with someone this month" which is considered physical activity. When you put something into understanding for the kids, they have a higher percentage of answering it rather than just asking who was physically active this month.



*LEAP introduces nutritious snacks to all students. This student is being offered apples, cubed cheese and crackers.*

## PHASE I FUNDING

Phase I funding continues to play an integral part of the agriculture of Green County. The Green County Agricultural Development Board helped to administer over \$300,000 to the agriculture and reaching an average of 65 producers each year in Green County.

The council funded producers with the County Agricultural Investment Program (C.A.I.P.) that included: Genetics, Fencing & On-Farm Water Development, Cattle Handling, Hay Storage, Ag Diversification, Technology, Dairy Diversification, and Forage Improvement.

Several different educational trainings were offered as part of the participation in these programs.



Although the initial savings created by cost share can significantly enhance a producer's bottom line, adding new and improved practices to a farm operation yields long term



*One of the many fields that have benefited from Green County's CAIP cost share program.*

results that add to overall farm profitability. Follow up visits and surveys with producers that have participated in the different programs indicate that those who have improved facilities have better herd health, less labor costs, better variety

selection, increased paddocks, etc. As a result, these individuals have been able to show an economic gain to their operation.

## THE PASSPORT TO THE WORLD BEGINS AT THE FAMILY TABLE

The Kentucky 4-H Passport Kitchen program provided 426 young people from Kentucky the opportunity to experience the food cultures of different countries in a self-paced experience. As part of the 4-H Passport Kitchen program, young people received six country kits in the mail during a six-week window. These kits provided all the needed instructions to complete a recipe, a video explaining the recipe, one ingredient for the recipe, information about the country, and a worksheet to help them explore beyond the kit. The self-driven and on-your-own design of the program allowed young people and their families to engage in it as part of their mealtime experience. The materials in the kits also gave young people and their families the opportunity to explore cultures that are oftentimes not their own.

The exploration of other cultures and views is a critical part of a young person's development and helps them form a prosocial orientation as well as a growth mindset. Exploring cultures different from their own helps young people understand there are many ways of doing a

single thing, and while these ways are different, one is not necessarily better than the other. 100% of youth who participated reported learning about another culture. Exploring through food provided an opportunity for young people to experience this exploration using the shared experience of eating. The combination of a food-driven cultural exploration along with the ability to participate in the program as a family unit doubled impact. Young people were able to explore cultures outside their own as well as receive the benefit of regular family mealtimes.

Research tells us that having regular meals with caring adults provides a host of benefits to the development of young people. Of the 426 young people who participated in the program, 57% reported an increase in meals eaten together as a family unit. This increase is important because studies show regular family meals foster a sense of security and togetherness and help nurture the development of young people into healthy, well-rounded adults. When family meals are frequent an increase in motivation, personal identity, and self-esteem in young people occurs. Family mealtime also helps decrease high-risk behaviors and makes young people more likely to understand, acknowledge, and follow the boundaries set by their guardians. These social benefits are also matched by the health benefits of family mealtime. Eating studies show family dinners increase the intake of fruits and vegetables; families who eat dinner together tend to eat fewer fried foods and drink less soda; and family meal frequency is linked to the intake of protein, calcium, and some vitamins.

One final outcome of the Passport Kitchen program is the increase in kitchen confidence among youth in the program. 88% of young people reported preparing meals together as a family and 79% reported an increase in confidence in the kitchen. Of the 426 young people who participated in the Passport Kitchen Program in Kentucky, eight were from Green County.



*4-H offers a variety of projects in food preparation, food preservation and nutrition.*

## FREEDOM FEST

A few years ago, the Green County Cooperative Extension Service put together a program for its community leaders over the struggles of our small town. This program gave statistics and brought truth to our leaders about the ageing population of Green County, the minimum amount of jobs, our low tax base, and our low-income families. No one wants to talk about these issues, but they are real concerns for Green County.

Shortly after this meeting, the Green County Cooperative Extension Service and the Green County Cattlemen's Association sat down one night during a board meeting and discussed this program and the facing issues of Green County. The Cattlemen's realized there is nothing they can do about the ageing population, there is no short-term fix for jobs or the tax base, but there is something they could do for Green County. By the end of the night the ideas and goals had come together. This is how Freedom Fest was born.

As Freedom Fest was developed, we had two missions to go by: Freedom Fest was to be free for all to attend and it was to be fun and a family-oriented event for all Green County to enjoy. We envisioned family and friends gathering in groups laughing, smiling, and enjoying each other's company while their kids were running, playing, and enjoying the entertainment at the same time. Using local bands for entertainment and within five years possibly having bouncy houses for the kids, pony rides, maybe even some sort of race.

On July 1st, 2016, the very first Freedom Fest began. Six bands performed and approximately 350 in attendance that night to enjoy the

entertainment by the bands, the National Anthem sang by Kloe Jewell, and the awesome fireworks show shot off by our local fire fighters.

This past year was another great year. This year the vision that the Green County Cattlemen's once had, has almost come full circle. With 76 community sponsors and over 3,000 in attendance, there were family and friends laughing and enjoying each other's company while children ran and played. Great entertainment was provided by Little David & Bad Country, Raymond "Dick" Stillwell, Ronnie McDowell, and Little Texas.

For our small town, this is more than just a concert with fireworks. Our sponsors see the need, not only for the people but also for the economic growth in our community. Our gas stations, Dollar Markets, and restaurants express to us how much extra business they have because of this event. Our sponsors always tell us they receive new business because of their sponsorship.

While I may not know the exact impact this has on our community, I know it is a positive impact that Green County needs.



*Ronnie McDowell entertains the crowd with one of his top 40 hit songs.*

## GREEN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

*It starts with us*



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