

We Grow Union County

NC Cooperative Extension - Union County Center



Generally May is the beginning of our busy season. This year in addition to all the preparation for summer programming, we added another educational program for Union County Public School students. We hope you enjoy seeing May's programs in action.



We Grow Youth

Rock Rest Elementary 1st Grade Field Day

The entire staff participated in this event that was fun and educational for the students, teachers, staff and volunteers! Eighty five students visited the Agricultural Center where they were met by Extension Staff, Master Gardener Volunteers and the Soil & Water Education Specialist who led them through six stations covering plants from planting seeds, to seeds we eat, wildlife and the plants they eat, a guided trail walk with Union County's Urban Forester, a lesson on Tops & Bottoms - What parts of plants do we eat, and a hands on activity where students dissected large lima beans to identify their parts.



Master Gardener Volunteer Annie Howell led a lesson on planting seeds



Chelsea Sloggy, UC Soil & Water Conservation Senior Education Specialist - Wild About Plants!



Daija Sams 4-H Summer Intern and Crystal Starkes 4-H Youth & Development Agent lead a session on Tops & Bottoms - Identifying our foods as roots, leaves, and fruits.



Bill Smith, Urban Forester lead students on a guided trail walk.



Union County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers Marlene Williams and Vicky Matlock led a hands on seed dissection station teaching students about the parts of a seed.

Marcus McFarland - Nutrition & Wellness Agent

Marcus led a class for children and their families at the J Ray Shute Center. This class was a celebration of Cinco de Mayo and participants got hands on in making several recipes. Quesadillas were a big hit with children and parents alike!



Quesadilla

Crystal Starkes - 4-H Youth Development Agent



Chicks. Chicks & More Chicks!

May saw the final rounds of the Embryology Project. The culmination of this project saw some of the greatest hatch rates. Overall this unit study is an incredible opportunity for 2nd grade students throughout Union County to learn about the development from egg to chicks.



Kendall Kennedy, Ivy Baucom, Madeline Taylor, Nate Ladimir, Genesis Perez, Knight Perez & Micah Bomani. Not pictured Karlee Beach, Adriana Domato, Sydney Matthews, Hannah Spicer, Kailey Spicer and Lin Molnar.

Union County 4-H kicked off their summer program training their Counselor-in-Training (CIT). Ten teenagers were trained on the qualities of a great counselor while providing them with important life skills to further enhance their leadership experience. They learned about learning styles, what to expect from the different ages and stages of the campers, conflict resolution, and positive encouragement to younger youth. The two-part training wrapped up with a First Aid/CPR/AED certification class by Richard Yercheck.



We Grow Knowledge

Andrew Baucom - County Extension Director

Corn and Soybean Trials continued with seven corn trials ranging from variety selection and starter fertilizer's to weed management. Six soybean trials random, from variety selection to planting dates. 35 acres total have been planted for research trials and on farm demonstrations.



Dr. Angela Post - Small Grains Extension Specialist from NCSU

Thirty-eight Union County Agricultural Producers attended a Small Grains Field Day where Dr. Angela Post and Ryan Heiniger, NC OCT Director from NCSU presented. Dan Weathington from the NC Small Grain Growers Association welcomed the group and also spoke. Topics included variety selection, nitrogen management, plant growth, regulator usage & rates.



Wheat Harvest

Approximately 90% of the wheat grown in Union County has been harvested. Roughly 35,000 acres were planted this year with 19,000 acres of preventative plant. Overall the averages are slightly above average with above average grain quality.

State and National Yield Contest Plots - UC Extension is working with growers on submitted state and national yield contest entries for wheat. Union County won the North Carolina state wheat yield contest in 2018 and looks to continue that tradition for 2019.



Hurricane Eye

A one day climate workshop led by the State Climate Office of NC covered weather and climate topics relevant for Extension. Topics included climate patterns and outlooks, the 2019 hurricane season forecast, the CoCoRaHS precipitation network, and resources from the State Climate Office of North Carolina.

Debbie Dillion - Horticulture Agent



Ornamentals

Debbie Dillion co-facilitated a turf and ornamental pesticide training in May with Dustin Adcock of Stanly County. There were 21 professionals in attendance.



Commercial Pesticide Application

During the May Educational Meeting for Carolina Green Industry Network, Debbie provided a pesticide update pertinent to the Green Industry.

Crystal Starkes - 4-H Youth & Development Agent



Kaylyn Gise & Daija Sams

Crystal Starkes is proud to see two of her former 4-H students join the staff this summer as our 4-H Summer Interns. Kaylyn Gise is a student at Oklahoma State University majoring in Animal Science: Production Operations. Daija Sams will be attending Martin Community College pursuing equine training and equine business. We look forward to having them on the team and the opportunity to increase their understanding of Extension's role within Union County.

Aaron Moore - Small Farms Agent



Blackberry Trellis

Aaron worked on the production of a video targeting small farmers who are looking expand their crops with blackberries. This "how-to" video shares information on trellising blackberries creating the most efficient yields for this high profit margin crop.





We Grow Citizens

Union County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

Master Gardener Volunteers hosted several "Ask a Master Gardener" Sessions including one at the Union County Farmers Market. They shared their knowledge of local plants, gardening and upcoming programs.

Debbie Dillion - Horticulture Agent



Juniper Level Botanic Garden

Debbie organized a field trip for the Master Gardener Volunteers to Raleigh where they toured the Sarah P. Duke gardens, the Juniper Level Botanic Garden and Big Bloomers Flower Farm. This was an opportunity for continuing education for the volunteers who will be able to share with Union County residents.

Orientation was held for the 2019 Master Gardener Training Program. Eight new students are enrolled in this program that takes them through several weeks worth of instruction follow by volunteer hours before they take their final exam and graduate in early November. They will learn about Extension resources & research, soils & fertilizers, botany & plant identification, plant diseases, weeds & weed management and insects.



Erin Hostetler - The Patio Farmer

Debbie Dillion & the Extension Master Gardeners brought in Erin Hostetler to teach a class on successful container gardening. Erin provided tips for making the most of small space gardens. Thirty three participants

learned plant-specific needs relating to spacing, planting, watering, feeding and general maintenance.

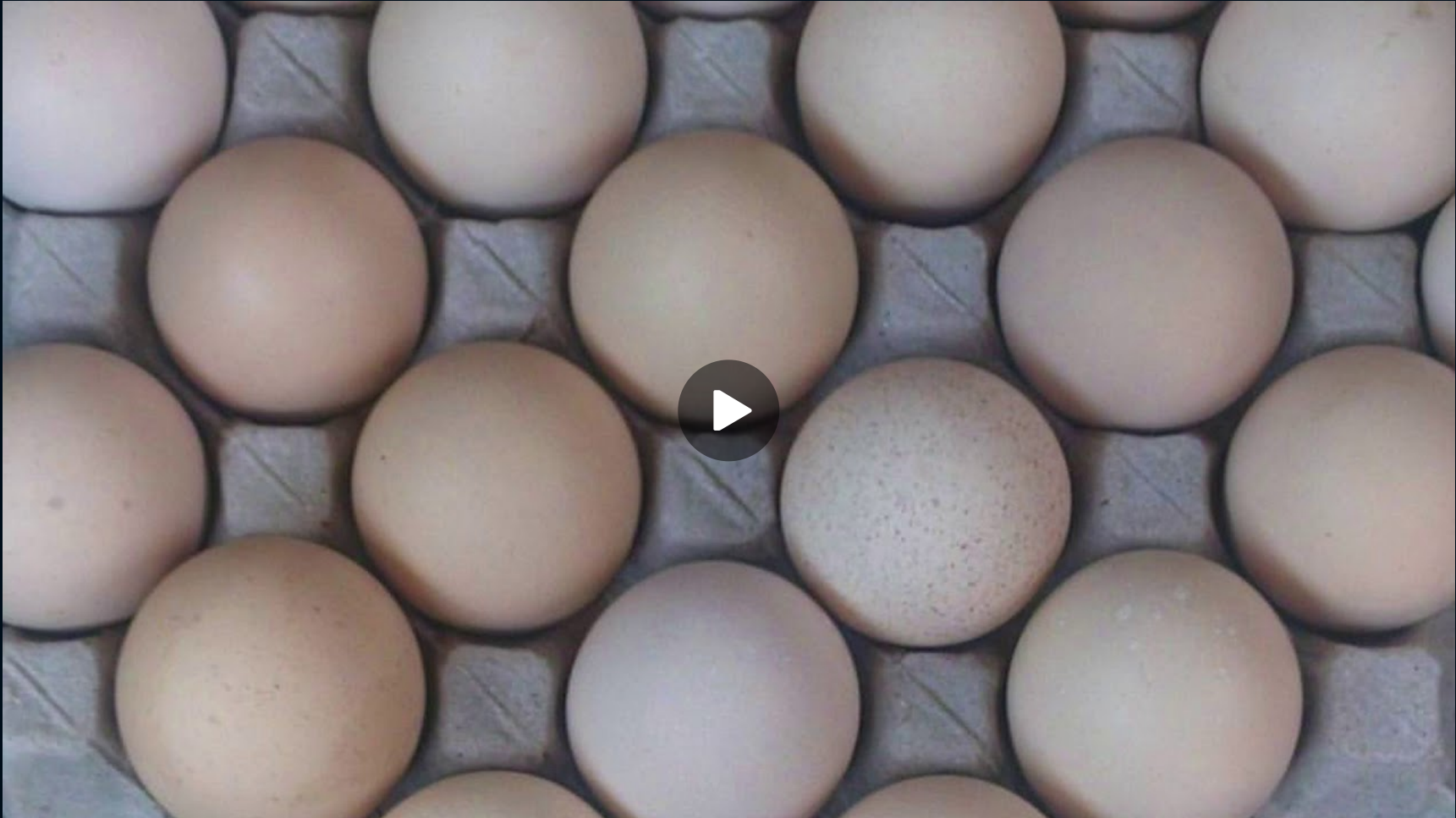


Mary Roberts Windcrest Farms

On May 16th, 50 residents learned the Top 10 Tips for Terrific Tomatoes from Mary Roberts of Windcrest Farms. This Master Gardener Educational meeting discussed proper feeding, suckering, pest control, the different varieties of tomatoes from cherry to slicer and so much more!

Leadership Union Agriculture Tour

Our staff hosted the Leadership Union Agriculture Tour on May 16th. The following video shares one participant's perspective of this event.



<https://youtu.be/1eR0jy0j754>





We Grow Economy

The Union County Farmers Market continued to gear up with more produce arriving and eager customers searching for the first tomatoes of the season.



Marcus McFarland - Nutrition & Wellness Agent

Farmers Market Taste Tests kicked off in May with Marcus regularly attending Saturday markets and preparing recipes from fresh, in-season ingredients. Customers were able to sample his recipes, learn new methods of preparing locally grown foods and sign up for his upcoming food preservation workshop series.



Staff Highlights

Extension staff has continued to take advantage of the incredible opportunity NC State Extension has provided. Every member of our staff, including our summer interns has now been through a professional three day video production workshop where they learned the keys of producing quality short instructional

videos. From frame rates, to light balance, sound quality and post production editing. We look forward to produce more videos that highlight our programs and offer educational tips.



Dr. Richard Bonanno - Director NC Cooperative Extension, Cheri Bennett Union County EFNEP Educator & Dr. Claudette L. Smith - Family Resource Management Specialist.

Cheri Bennett was presented with two awards during the 50th Anniversary Celebration. The Minnie Miller Brown award for her work in developing strong partnerships with Union County, obtaining sponsorships to enhance EFNEP programs and reaching underserved audiences. She was also recognized as a Circle of Excellence recipient. Cheri consistently performs above her target workload and consistently meets her impact goals. She is a master of outreach and meeting the needs of her participants. We congratulate Cheri on her accomplishments and are proud of the work she does in Union County.



Dr. Richard Bonanno - Director of NC Cooperative Extension, Dana Braswell - Administrative Assistant Union County Cooperative Extension & Dr. Claudette L. Smith - Family Resource Management Specialist.

Dana was recognized as an EFNEP Champion. EFNEP Champion Awards recognize individuals who although not employed by EFNEP are a constant driving force in the success of the program. She has been a close partner in the promoting the program, accessing resource for the program and advocating the mission of the program to key stakeholders. Congratulations Dana!

Credits:

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