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BLUE LETTER

March 2021

No. 3827



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Forward Looking

I hope that everyone is hanging in there as we continue to make our way through evaluations, as well as program planning and delivery while still dealing with COVID-19 issues. This past year we managed to increase our total number of contacts as reported in AIMS. This included a large effort, that was done on top of regular programing, on COVID education and support. Our online efforts have yielded many new contacts and lit a creative spark in many of you that I suspect will continue to result in new ideas. Virtual field days and other online content that has been created since the pandemic hit will likely forever change the way we think about Extension outreach, programmatic efforts, and the way we do business. I hope as we move into 2021 that everyone is ready to make up lost ground in areas where we struggled and utilize what we learned to make this year a great one for Arkansas Extension.

I am extremely excited about the decrease in COVID related numbers of cases, quarantines, hospitalizations and sadly deaths that we have seen over the past 3 months. I am very excited as I am sure all of you are to think about having unlimited in-person meetings again soon. I also want to take another opportunity to thank all my extension colleagues for their efforts this past year. It is also worth mentioning, as you can see from this week's issue of Blue Letter, that we continue to develop outstanding online content and virtual events as we serve the people of Arkansas. We have begun to have meetings again in groups over 10 up to 100 with just my approval and a

COVID Plan. Just a reminder that although you may hear of changes coming from both national and state mandates and guidelines, we will continue to follow Division guidelines. I will do my part to try and keep these as practical as possible; however, as a science-based organization, we will follow science-based guidelines in our decision making.

I have heard a lot of you yell "calf rope" lately on the amount of change we have undergone the past year or so in Extension. Some of you may not know what that means, in this context it means "enough already". In March of 2019, Dr. Cartwright wrote "I say Division on purpose. The UA System Division of Agriculture is us, and how we are funded by the state. It is important that everybody understand the missions of the land grant university, and that the Division has responsibility for research (the Agricultural Experiment Station) and extension (the Cooperative Extension Service). We have an MOA with the Bumpers College for the teaching mission, and all of us work on the service mission for the state". This is still true today, in fact, we have taken another step towards being "one Division" with our email change and our impending domain change. This is important to the Division and our identity going forward. So, bear with me through this one last change, work with IT and Communications and please be patient. I feel like we are on the verge of breaking loose from COVID and being "change free" very soon. ■

INSIDE SCOOP

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with the Soybean Science Challenge

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Ranch Horse Team Competes in Ardmore

Students on the University of Arkansas Ranch Horse Team successfully competed at the JPH Stock Horse Show in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Students competed in several events, including Ranch Pleasure, Ranch Trail, Reining, and Working Cow Horse. Individual placings are as follows:



(L to R): Coach Jordan Shore, Team members Jesse Pratt, Elise Tremonti and Caitlyn Ferguson competing at a ranch horse show in Ardmore, OK.

LIMITED NON-PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

- **Brianna Keeling** — 7th overall,
1st in ranch pleasure, 4th in reining, 10th in trail and 11th in working cow horse.
- **Caitlyn Ferguson** — 8th overall,
10th in ranch pleasure, 2nd in reining, 7th in trail, 8th in working cow horse.

NOVICE DIVISION

- **Elise Tremonti** – 2nd overall,
4th in ranch pleasure, 2nd in reining, 3rd in trail, 4th in working cow horse.
- **Britnee Lynch** – 3rd overall,
2nd in ranch pleasure, 5th in reining, 1st in trail, 5th in working cow horse.
- **Jesse Pratt** – 5th overall, 6th in ranch pleasure, 4th in reining, 5th in trail, 7th in working cow horse.
- **Max King** – just shy of top 5 overall, 5th in ranch pleasure, 7th in trail. ■



Nov. 3-4, 2021 Support Staff Conference

Planning is underway for the 2021 Support Staff Conference! A 16-member, division wide, Support Staff Conference Program Planning Committee has been appointed to guide program development for the 2021 conference. This year's conference is scheduled during November to increase the division's ability to host a conference that can be attended either in-person or virtually.

The quality of the conference depends on evaluation and needs assessment data from participants. Support

staff employees will receive a needs assessment survey in the coming months to inform the planning process. The conference theme will be selected from employee suggestions submitted through this survey.

The pooling of creative ideas, resources and sweat equity invested in the Support Staff Conference never fails to produce a unique and valuable educational experience. Thanks to everyone in advance for the contributions you are making to ensure an amazing conference this year. ■

Hot Wheels for Kids Project Gets Rolling



Pope County 4-H recently partnered with the emergency room staff at Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center to provide "Hot Wheels for Kids."

The community service project program began after an ER employee contacted Pope County Staff Chair Phil Sims and requested help. ER employees recognized that putting something as simple as a 94-cent Hot Wheels toy in the hands of children being treated at the hospital could help calm their fears.

Pope County 4-H agent Kaitie Golden, program assistant Ebony Wallace-Morrow and Family and Consumer Science agent Pamela Luker reached out to Pope County 4-H youth, volunteer leaders, Master Gardeners and

Extension Homemakers through letters and social media posts to bring attention to the need. Once the need and opportunity were recognized, donations started coming in. To date, they have collected and delivered more than 433 Hot Wheels. The recipients know who donated the toys because each toy includes the division logo and a 4-H sticker.

The Pope County Assessor, who saw the pleas in newsletters, challenged her staff to collect Hot Wheels. The staff donated an additional 120 Hot Wheels toys for the project. ■



Now Open for Enrollment

Nematology and Sampling Course

Are you interested in learning about nematodes and how they affect Arkansas crops? The Nematology and Sampling course is a free self-paced online course available at <https://courses.uada.edu/>. This educational project was created by the Community, Professional, and Economic Development department in collaboration with Agricul-

ture and Natural Resources faculty. The online course was funded by the Arkansas Corn and Grain Sorghum Board and Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board to support farmers in studying the impact of plant-parasitic nematodes on agriculture and to provide methods of control.



Nematology and Sampling Online Course
Enroll Now in Courses!









<https://courses.uada.edu/>



The course is open for enrollment to anyone interested in learning more about how to define nematology and explain the importance of studying nematodes, discover the anatomy and field history of nematodes, recognize nematodes in crops such as corn and grain and sorghum, cotton, soybeans, and rice, understand the importance of soil sampling and recall the proper way to prepare and submit samples, and identify the economic concerns and control strategies for nematodes that can be applied to their crops and plants.

For more information about the course, contact Dr. Armenta Lockhart, alockhart@uada.edu or Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu. ■

It's Community Garden Time!

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with the Soybean Science Challenge!

The Soybean Science Challenge kicked off its Community Garden promotion in January and already has 26 community gardens signed up to grow vegetable-grade edamame soybeans in their plots.

The soybeans are donated by the Natural Soybean and Grain Alliance with seeds to be mailed from the state office in March. Soybeans are easy to grow, are a complete protein and are a welcome addition to any food dish. To receive free seeds, the garden must be educational/school related, 4-H-based or serve the food banks or other hunger-related projects in the area in which they are planted. Anyone whose garden fulfills the require-

ments and wants to plant edamame can go to www.uaex.uada.edu/soywhatsup and click on the 'grow your own protein' icon (not the seed store icon).

The icon opens directly into the fillable PDF site.

Download, complete and send to dyoung@uada.edu. ■



West Helena school district students planting a school garden.

The Soybean Science Challenge Participates at the Virtual ASMSA West Central Science Fair

The Soybean Science Challenge attended the Virtual West Central Arkansas Science Fair at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences & the Arts on Feb. 25. Claire Green won the Soybean Science Challenge

Award and received a \$300 cash award provided by the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board at the virtual awards ceremony on Feb. 26. Her teacher, Dr. Lindsey Waddell, won the Teacher Mentor Award and received \$200.



ASMSA WCARSF Soybean Science Challenge Winner (L to R) Claire G. and teacher Dr. Lindsey Waddell.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a farmer-funded, statewide high school education program that seeks to increase student knowledge about the value of Arkansas soybeans to the Arkansas economy, to the labor force, and ultimately to feed and fuel the world. It is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the U of A Cooperative Extension Service. For more information, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu or Diedre Young dyoung@uada.edu. ■

February 2021

Leadership Lunch and Learn Synopsis

As a leader, how do you motivate and engage others?

“Be willing to do anything you would ask others to do. Prove it. Practice it,” said J.J. Pitman, LeadAR Class 14 alumnus and director of the Arkansas 4-H Center.



Pitman shared this and other insights on motivating and engaging others during the Leadership Lunch and Learn on Feb. 24. View the February recording [here](#).

and paying attention, and acting on it. Lastly, Pitman expressed one simple way to motivate others is to recognize their efforts. He said to brag on employees — it's free.

Leadership Lunch and Learn is a new professional development series for University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture employees and LeadAR alumni. The virtual Lunch & Learn sessions are primarily held on the last Wednesday of each month, 12:15 – 1 p.m. The next session will be March 31 on “Embracing Technology” and features Chief Operating Office Sam Boyster. [REGISTER NOW](#).

Other keys to successfully engaging employees include having an open dialogue about performance, listening

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu, or Lisa Davis, ldavis@uada.edu. ■

How Great Leaders Inspire Action and Key Trends in Our Community

LeadAR's recent virtual session included a discussion of ethical leadership by Dr. Karen Ballard, CPED professor who specializes in program evaluation and staff development. Ballard said the following are traits of ethical leaders:

- Leads by example
- Listens/Is willing to evolve
- Respects everyone equally
- Communicates openly
- Manages stress effectively
- Mediates fairly

Ballard provided examples of how ethics serve as an economic driver through the power of influence. Watch or listen to Simon Sinek's TedTalk [video](#) on how great leaders inspire action.

Dr. Wayne Miller and Ellie Wheeler from the CPED unit also shared information about the 2021 Rural Profile

of Arkansas publication they just released. The publication analyzes the trends of key indicators for communities in Arkansas. [Download a free copy](#).

An interactive [Rural Profile Dashboard](#) is available to see Arkansas data compiled for the following categories: economy, education, health, infrastructure, government, population, and social/economic stress. Data ranges from 2007-2020. All 75 Arkansas counties are represented.

For more information about LeadAR, visit the [website](#) or contact Dr. Julie Robinson at jrobinson@uada.edu, or Lisa Davis at ldavis@uada.edu. ■



Shade Trees for Sheep

In much of the United States, zoning laws are changing to allow grazing or farming with small ruminants in urban and suburban settings. Sheep are popular with small-scale, sustainable farming. They can be raised for meat, milk and wool in areas of rough forage, browse, and silvopastoral systems. The Department of Animal Science is excited to help pave the way for these newly emerging practices through research into more sustainable, environmentally conscious, and community

friendly methods of farming at the urban-rural interface.



Farm Foreman Robert Rhein plants young trees at the North Farm.

Last fall, Dr. Dirk Philipp, Sarah Shelby, and Robert Rhein planted 80 shade trees in two of the pastures where the Dorper sheep research flock is maintained. The

tree species included Red Mulberry, Swamp Oak, Cypress, Sycamore and Red Maple. For the first few years, the trees must be protected from grazing and damage by animals. The trees were also mulched with raw, discarded wool from the farm's show sheep flock. Wool is a known insulator and, placed around the trees, helps to control soil erosion, control weeds, and conserve water. Sarah Shelby, who takes care of the ANSC sheep herd full-time, was instrumental in making use of the wool as a tree insulator, thereby highlighting the use of this renewable resource for purposes other than knitting, since not all wool is of a desirable quality for spinners.

After 3 to 5 years, Dr. Philipp hopes to begin observing behaviors related to shade seeking and shelter, especially as it relates to time of year, temperature, humidity, and even reproductive status. Funding for the tree project came through a cooperative agreement with the USDA-ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, Ames IA. ■

4-H State Qualifying and State Shows are Just Around the Corner

With the arrival of spring each year, youth in Arkansas begin to prepare for state qualifying 4-H Horse Shows and the State 4-H Show. In all, there are three state qualifiers before the State 4-H Horse Show in July. To be eligible to show at the State 4-H Horse Show in July, exhibitors must show at one of the state qualifying shows. Unfortunately, these shows were canceled last year because of the pandemic. We are hopeful these events will take place this year.

The 4-H Horse Shows have an impressive array of classes, including speed, halter, English, western and ranch horse classes. The State 4-H Show offers both traditional and western dressage as well. Class winners receive a buckle, and saddles are awarded to division all-around winners at the State Show.

From the state show, exhibitors will be eligible to

represent Arkansas at the Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show in Perry, GA.

2021 State Qualifying 4-H Horse Shows:

- Southwest Qualifying Show —
June 4 at Saline County Fairgrounds
- Central/Delta Qualifying Show —
June 5 at White County Fairgrounds
- Northwest Qualifying Show —
June 8 at Pauline Whitaker Arena in Fayetteville

2021 State 4-H Horse Show —

June 13-16, White County Fairgrounds in Searcy



Special events will include a ride-the-pattern clinic, horse judging contest, hippology contest and speaking competitions. For more information, contact Mark Russell at 501-671-2190 or email mrrussell@uada.edu. Updates are posted at www.uaex.ua.edu/horses. ■



Our Domain has Changed!

What does this mean?

- E-mail addresses have changed to username@uada.edu
 - Don't worry, your old username@uaex.edu email still works, but only till the end of April (see note).
- Our SSO logins (Workday, Email, and other Office 365 apps, Box, Zoom, Qualtrics, etc) have changed to username@uada.edu.
- Our web addresses have changed:
 - Division – www.uada.edu
 - CES – www.uaex.uada.edu
 - Web applications – <https://subdomain.uada.edu>
- Don't worry, the old web addresses still work, but only till the end of April (see note).

Note: Our old domain will stop working on April 27th unless we are granted an extension. We are not eligible to apply for the extension till March 27th. This is why we must work towards our goals as if we will not be granted the extension.

Items you need to be working on:

- Change your email signature to display your new email address.
- Put a note in your signature to draw attention to the fact that your email address has changed.
- Contact any of your regular external contacts and let them know your email address has changed.
- DO NOT set up an autoreply that your email address is changing.
- Change your email address, and login name if applicable, on all online vendor and services sites.
- You may want to have your business cards reprinted, be patient as the influx of orders come into communications/print shop.
- Don't forget about your websites/webpages. You will want to contact any external entities that have linked to you that your URL has changed. You can ask Amy Cole accocole@uada.edu for a full list of backlinked sites.
- You will need to edit all documents (xlsx, pdf, docx, etc.) that you have posted on the website and change email addresses and links. Then you will need to reupload the new version to the website.

- Lastly, any printed materials you may have will need to be modified and reprinted.

For more information: <https://uada.edu/domain> and <https://uaex.uada.edu/domain>.

Accessibility Awareness - Issue 5 – Inline Images

Are you puzzled about adding images to your documents? The March Accessibility Awareness tip provides more information on [inline images](#) and how to use images properly so that they are accessible and add value to your document.

Ordering Pubs Online

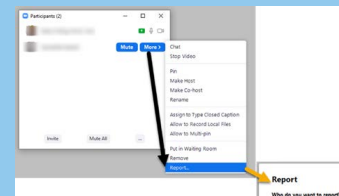
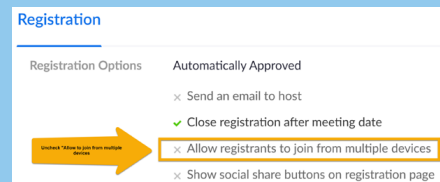
Need a refresher on how to place an order within our online Publications ordering system? Check out our [publications order system video tutorial](#). If you have any questions, please contact Becky Bridges. Look for additional video tutorials coming soon for ordering supplies.

Zoom Pro Tip

Preventing & Reporting “Bad Actors” aka Zoom Bombers

Prevent – edit the registration section of a scheduled meeting and disable “allow attendees to join from multiple devices.” This will give a “bad actor” only one chance to join your meeting.

Report and Remove – if by chance a “bad actor” gets past your waiting room and into your meeting, first “Report” them. In the meeting Participant list, next to the bad actor’s name, select “More” and then select “Report”. Complete the Report and Submit it. Then “Remove” the bad actor. Either a host or co-host in the meeting may report and remove participants. ■



UPCOMING TECH TUESDAY WEBINARS

Tuesday, April 13: What's Your Meeting Style? Hybrid or Not? Register [here](#).

Check out previous Tech Tuesdays webinars. Visit the blog <https://employees.uada.edu/techtuesdays> to view recordings.



Hogskin Forestry Contest Goes Virtual

The Calhoun County Extension Office held its annual forestry contest virtually for the first time in the 12-year history of the program to comply with COVID-19 protocols.

More than 50 participants preregistered and competed Feb. 12 in the areas of map interpretation and identifying trees, forest pests and diseases, chainsaw parts, and forest equipment. Eight different 4-H/FFA organizations were represented.

Evan B. (Calhoun County 4-H member and Hampton FFA member) placed as high point individual, while Hermitage FFA took first-place team accolades.

Individual runners up were Braden H. (2nd) and Alan M. (3rd) (both from Hermitage FFA). Team placements rounded out with Hampton FFA finishing a close second and Greenbrier FFA coming in third. ■

Agricultural Sustainability VFT Series: From the Farm to Retail

Four more installments of a five-part Virtual Field Trip webinar series about agricultural sustainability have been scheduled. Register to learn what our researchers, producers and retail industry experts have to say about sustainability protocols for now and the future.

This VFT series began with An Introduction to Agricultural Sustainability on Nov. 17, 2020. The recording can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/KRDWFmhXUS4>.

For more information about the Soil and Water Conservation Virtual Field Trip series, visit <https://bit.ly/NRCS-AR-Soil-and-Water-VFT-Webpage>, or contact series coordinator Rita Watson, virtual education specialist in Community, Professional and Economic Development, at rwatson@uada.edu.

The Soil and Water Conservation Virtual Field Trip series is funded by USDA-NRCS. ■

TOPIC	DATE AND TIME	REGISTRATION LINK:
COTTON	April 2, 2021, 10 a.m. CST	http://bit.ly/Register_Cotton_Sustain_VFT
SOYBEAN	June 22, 2021, 10 a.m. CST	http://bit.ly/Register_Soybean_Sustain_VFT
RICE	June 29, 2021, 10 a.m. CST	http://bit.ly/Register_Rice_Sustain_VFT
POULTRY	July 15, 2021, 10 a.m. CST	http://bit.ly/Register_Poultry_Sustain_VFT

UADA Adapt Popular Feed Additive Calculator

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture has adapted its popular Medicated Feed Additive Calculator for the 21st century. Ranchers and livestock producers can access the calculator, available for the first time as a web-based tool, at <https://medfeedcalc.uada.edu/>. A user guide is available at <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/farm-ranch/animals-forages/beef-cattle/nutrition-feeding.aspx>.

The tool helps help veterinarians, industry professionals, feed blending facilities, and ranchers calculate medicated feed additive inclusion rates while mixing feed. Dr. Shane Gadberry originally created the feed additive

calculator in response to a recurring challenge for Arkansas beef producers. Read more at <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/media-resources/news/2021/January2021/01-29-2021-Ark-online-feed-additive-calculator.aspx>. ■

Chicken Chatter

Know any 4-H or FFA members interested in poultry judging or poultry in general? Send them to the Arkansas 4-H Poultry and Rabbits Facebook page. There you will find challenges, contests, and poultry education. Scharidi Barber, instructor-poultry youth programs, will also be posting the YouTube links for judging practice. ■



Examples of poultry judging products: Bone-In, Boneless, Exterior Eggs, Ready-To-Cook Carcasses

Crawford Co. Cooperative Extension 4-H Program Receives Grant



Brandi Davis, a Crawford County 4-H program assistant, has been awarded a \$4,500 grant from Arkansas Rural Services and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to set up 12 aquaponic aquariums in classrooms across Crawford County.

Davis plans to use the funds and aquariums to educate youth on sustainability and conservation using the aquaponics technology. Classroom lessons will cover topics

such as water quality, natural wildlife conservation, soil health and growing your own health foods.

The overall goal of the project and lessons is to educate students about conservation and sustainability through new and innovative ways. The 12 aquaponic aquariums will be set up in classes spanning all five school districts in Crawford County. ■

Tune in to the EvaluationView

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You may have heard once or twice that every comprehensive program plan should include an evaluation strategy complete with a way to collect data during and after your program. If you are already doing this, great! If this isn't you, don't worry.

The EvaluationView Webinar Series offers a "real-world" in-service training series for University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture employees addressing how to plan, implement and use program evaluation data to improve programs and communicate impact. Join Dr. Karen Ballard, Dr. Julie Robinson, Diane Mashburn, and Emily Smith for future EvaluationView Webinar dates:

- March 18,—Evaluation Roadmap: "How to" Get Started & Save Time
- April 1— Measurement & Methods: Creating Great Surveys
- April 15— Measurement & Methods: Qualitative Evaluation Tools
- April 29 — Generating & Using Meaningful Data: What Matters Most?
- May 13 — Evaluation Coffee Shop: Open Office Hour

Register for one or all four of the March-April one-hour sessions. <https://uada.zoom.us/j/9123456789>

Find more evaluation resources at: <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/.../program-evaluation/default.aspx>. ■



Columbia Co.

4-H Serves Up Favorites at Foods O'Rama

A great time and food was had by all during the Columbia County 4-H 2021 Foods O'Rama. Thanks to the help of Marlar's Cafeteria in Magnolia the judges were able to try the dishes the contestants presented. Marlar's tested all the recipes prior to the event and prepared and plated each specialty for the judges. The contestants were given the option to present live (in a time slot) or virtually through Zoom. All participants chose to Zoom in.

Categories include beef, breads, dairy, egg, rice, main and party dishes. Entries were presented in each commodity category. The overall fan favorite seemed to be the homemade Sloppy Joe recipe by Autumn H. Ivie Jo S's Dirty Yogurt surprised one judge who claimed

he has never liked yogurt in his life, but that he would eat it on a regular basis.

Ray Lindsey, owner of Marlar's Cafeteria, liked one of the three meatball recipes so much he said the restaurant may put it on the menu. Chyna N. was excited to hear her recipe might become a new Magnolia lunch favorite! ■



Process Authority Certification for Canned Foods

Dr. Ruben Morawicki, an associate professor in the Food Science Department with a 25% extension appointment, offers process authority certification service for canned foods. To ensure the product's safety, food processors must have their canned products and processes examined by a "process authority."

Per FDA's definition, a process authority "is a person who has expert knowledge of thermal processing requirements for low-acid foods packaged in hermetically sealed containers, or has expert knowledge in the acidification and processing of acidified foods."

After examining the product, the process authority writes a letter that the food processor then uses to file the product with the FDA, a requirement to introduce the canned product into commerce. If the process is found

unfit, the process authority makes recommendations to improve the process.



Dr. Ruben Morawicki

In collaboration with the Arkansas Food Innovation Center, Dr. Morawicki started offering this service in 2017 and has reviewed hundreds of products for food companies of all sizes so they can comply with federal regulations.

Dr. Morawicki offers workshops on FSMA Preventive Controls and Better Process Control School and helps with the shared-ground project. Dr. Morawicki's expertise is in food processing and safety.

For more information, contact Dr. Ruben Morawicki, rmorawic@uada.edu. ■

4-Hers Donates to Local School Backpack Program

Greene County 4-H members worked in February to provide plenty of snacks for the Greene County Tech & Paragould School backpack programs. For their community service challenge, the 4-Hers collect and donated applesauce and granola bars. They donated a total of 1,394 items!

Greene County has three community clubs and two project clubs participating in the activity – the first year for this service project.

"In one of my Leadership Paragould sessions, we got to listen to the local school backpack program

coordinators, and I knew it was the perfect opportunity for 4-H to give back," said Harlee Haney, 4-H agent in Greene County. "Our kids and volunteers have loved that this service project directly helps our community." ■



Members of Greene County 4-H Teen Leaders Club delivering items to the Greene County Tech School.

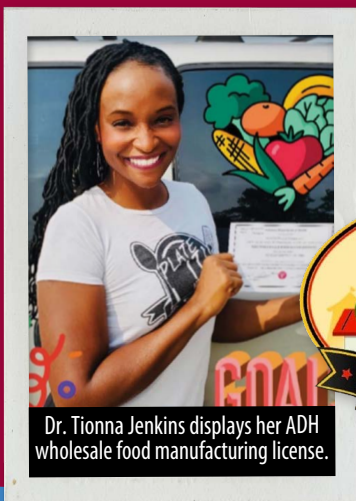


(L to R): Wil E., Macy H., Hunter H., Emma K. and Greene County 4-H Agent Harlee Haney.

Helping Entrepreneurs Create Value-added Foods

Much has been happening at the Share Grounds Certified Kitchens and Distribution Centers since they officially opened for clients in June 2020. Despite some setbacks due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Share Grounds program, led by Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez, has helped many clients develop and test recipes at all three locations. Some highlights include:

- Dr. Tionna Jenkins refined her health-conscious granola recipe at the Woodruff County Share Grounds in McCrory and received her wholesale food manufacturing license from the Arkansas Department of Health last fall.
- Ms. Kaye Berjot, owner of Ready Made Remedies, recently produced a test batch of her lemon-flavored simple syrup at the Cleveland County Share Grounds in Rison. Delicious and soothing, the syrup is a great addition to tea or other hot beverages.
- Mr. Linwood Polk is the latest client to receive his food manufacturing license from the Health Department for his apple-sauce. He is now ready to work toward commercial production for his product at the kitchen in Woodruff County.



The Share Grounds Kitchens are modeled after the Arkansas Food Innovation Center in Fayetteville, which helps entrepreneurs and farmers prepare value-added food products for sale in local and regional commercial markets.

The Center offers analytical and consulting services to facilitate the creation of food manufacturing businesses in Arkansas and offers clients access to a manufacturing facility located on the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station in Fayetteville. Last year, 80 commercial food products were manufactured at the center, with 600 production runs made by 19 different food companies. The retail value of products manufactured in AFIC's facility was approximately \$1.3 million.

For more information on the Share Grounds, visit www.uaex.uada.edu/sharegrounds or e-mail sharegrounds@uada.edu. For more info about the Arkansas Food Center, visit <https://afic.uark.edu/>. ■



Grants and Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Assessing Pest Management Strategies in Blackberries Produced on a Rotating Cross Arm Trellis	\$5,000	Aaron Cato	Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium
Increasing Profitability by Reducing Input Costs Facilitated by Improving Soil Health	\$30,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton, Inc.
Pilot Program to Demonstrate Implementation and Benefits of the US Cotton Trust Protocol and Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) Cotton Programs	\$45,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton, Inc.
Determining the Effectiveness and Economics of Dual Gene vs. Three Gene Bt Cotton and fit for Conventional Cotton for Arkansas Cotton Growers	\$20,000	Gus Lorenz	Cotton, Inc.
TOTAL AWARDS FOR FEBRUARY 2021: \$100,000			

Benefits Corner

Your Benefits: Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

FMLA is a federal law intended to promote a healthy balance between work and family responsibilities. The University provides up to 12 weeks (480 hours) per 12-month period measured forward from the date of your first FMLA leave usage of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons.

Employees are required to use accrued sick and/or vacation/annual leave concurrently with approved FMLA which counts against the 12 weeks (480 hours) of allowed FMLA leave. Employees on maternity leave may elect to take leave without pay without exhausting accumulated sick and annual leave.

Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA, employees must have been employed by a campus of the University of Arkansas

System for at least 12 months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period prior to the beginning of FMLA. Employees who cannot report to work due to a personal or family illness for greater than three consecutive working days may be eligible for FMLA.

Employee Procedure

A completed Request for Consideration form should be submitted to Human Resources for eligibility determination and designation 30 days in advance when the need is foreseeable. Please submit request forms to yourbenefits@uada.edu or fax to 501-671-2251.

Supervisor Procedure

When an employee has been away from work more than three consecutive working days, the supervisor should contact Human Resources (501-671-2219 or yourbenefits@uada.edu) on the employee's behalf to start the FMLA process. ■

Personnel Changes

Welcome Aboard:

Vickie Parke - Administrative Specialist III, Crawford County

Lindsay Sutton - Administrative Specialist I, Clay County

Allison Kilsby - Administrative Specialist III, Polk County

Avanlea Chaney - Administrative Specialist II, 4-H & Youth Development, Little Rock

Vertina Banks - Administrative Specialist II, 4-H & Youth Development, Little Rock

Brandi Sanderson - Administrative Specialist I, Logan County

Jace Clark - Program Technician - Soils Specialist, Crop Soils & Environmental Science, Craighead County

Farewell to:

Beth Phelps - District Director - Ouachita, Ouachita District

Debie Head - Associate Dept Head - Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock

Kim Anne Summerford - Administrative Specialist II, 4-H & Youth Development, Little Rock

Lindsey Rucker - County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Science, Garland County

Nathan Joe Reinhart - County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Independence County

