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BLUE LETTER

March 2023

No. 3851



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Full Steam Ahead with Purpose

What a great month February was for Extension. If you have not seen the short [video](#) from the 4-H Day at the Capitol, you should watch it. What great support our legislators showed that day for 4-H, Extension, and the Division of Agriculture! It was a highlight of the year for me professionally to address the crowd along with folks like Lieutenant Governor Leslie Rutledge, Attorney General Tim Griffin, and our own Division Vice President Dr. Deacue Fields. Shout out to all those who made this day happen – what a great way to remind everyone of all the wonderful things 4-H does for Arkansas youth! A few days later, we followed this event with a legislative reception that was extremely well received and gave both county agents, some faculty, and administrators a chance to visit with legislators in a relaxed and casual environment. Shout out to Dr. Fields and his office for setting this up and to the agents who participated and made sure we had good overall attendance. Many of our legislators were in attendance! Many of them are new this year, and this was some good one-on-one time to tell them about who we are.

As we approach the end of the fiscal year, I know that many of you are thinking about salaries and merit-based programs. I hope to have some specifics to announce soon, but I can say that your administrative team has been working hard to address some nagging salary issues and some issues with salary discrepancies across the southern region of land grant institutions. I think there are some positive changes on the horizon, and I appreciate Dr. Fields' leadership on this. No program is or can be perfect, so I would ask for your patience as we continue to work on the details and eventually roll out this program.

The district directors have picked the 2023 members of our 2nd class of Extension interns, and I am again excited about this program. This educational/recruitment effort is one of the things that I am most proud of developing since becoming Director. This year's class has grown to 15, and I want to send out appreciation to all those who will be involved this summer. This is meant to

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INSIDE SCOOP

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3. 4-H Day at the Capitol
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6. Leadership Log
7. Tech Corner...And much more!

U of A
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

April 18-19

Support Staff Conference



Support Staff Conference registration is open. Registration will close on Thursday, April 6 at 4:30 p.m. so sign up today! Register [here](#) right away. The conference [website](#) has all the details.

Are you new to UADA or not familiar with this event?

The Support Staff Conference provides training and mentoring opportunities across a range of topics including financial management, human resource protocols, organizational policies and procedures, new technology applications and programs, communication skills, time management and customer service. In addition, conference attendees receive administrative updates, current benefits information, and key networking opportunities with peers from across the state.

The conference is open to any UADA employee working in a support function, including but not limited to administrative specialists, fiscal specialists/analysts and program assistants, as well as others working in support units such as Human Resources, Finance and Facilities.

Supervisors, faculty and staff are encouraged to mark these dates on your calendar and make arrangements to allow support staff in your county, research station/center, department or office to attend. ■

Other Upcoming Events

Just a snapshot of the events on the calendar. For more events and information, visit [UADA Internal Calendar](#).

April 10 – On the Job with Bob monthly webinar, Zoom

April 18-19 – Support Staff Conference, Arkansas 4-H Center, Ferndale

April 21 – iLEAD Applications Deadline. [Details here](#).

April 29 – Arkansas Small Ruminants Field Day, USDA-ARS

Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center, Booneville

May 12 – On the Job with Bob monthly webinar, Zoom

May 23 – Tree Workshop, White County Extension Office, Searcy

May 29 – HOLIDAY: Memorial Day observed

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be a fully immersive Extension experience and that can only happen with the help of our agents and specialists who work with this group.

Finally, I want to wish all our field workers who are getting started with spring planting a safe and productive year. Believe it or not, I still get a weird feeling that there are protocols and equipment that I should be working on right now. There are so many other great things going on right now in Extension, but I will stop here for now. ■

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Debbie Nistler will be joining the UA Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service on May 1, 2023 as Assistant Vice President – 4-H and Youth Development.



Dr. Debbie Nistler

Not only does Dr. Nistler have more than 25 years of experience in Extension work in Oregon, Washington, Florida and Iowa, but also she is a 4-H alumna.

I am excited for her to join our team. ■

4-H Day at the Capitol



Arkansas lawmakers were seeing green Tuesday, February 28 when Arkansas 4-H members showed up en masse at the Capitol for a day of learning about the state government and meeting their legislators.

Nearly 500 Arkansas 4-H members, agents, leaders and volunteers from 52 of the state's 75 counties participated. There was widespread applause after the reading of resolutions in the House and Senate, recognizing the positive impact of the Arkansas 4-H program on youth and proclaiming Feb. 28 as 4-H Day.

The gathering is usually held every other year, when the Legislature is in session. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the 2021 event was canceled.

"This is the first time in four years that we've been able to bring 4-Hers to the Capitol, and we're excited our youth have this opportunity to meet with their legislators and learn more about state government," Bob Scott, director of the Cooperative Extension Service, said.

4-H members learned about the role of the state's constitutional officers and heard from many of them, including Lt. Gov. Leslie Rutledge, Attorney General Tim Griffin, Treasurer Mark Lowery, Secretary of State John Thurston and Commissioner of State Lands Tommy Land.

Rutledge praised the 4-H program for the values it instills in youth. She said she is often asked about being the first female lieutenant governor and said, "I tell people if a girl can get through junior high, she can do anything. To all you young ladies and men, you can do anything." Thurston praised the group for taking the initiative to learn about government and encouraged them to register to vote when they are old enough.

"When you turn 18, it is your responsibility to show up and

vote," he said. "No one will make you register. It is your right and privilege, but you have to exercise that right."

Attorney General Tim Griffin urged the group to get to know their elected officials.

"A lot of people get to know their elected officials only when they need something. That's the wrong way to do it," Griffin told the group. "Get to know your elected officials early in life. Learn the process. Develop meaningful relationships now, so that when you become a community leader — and you will be — you will know people. When leaders know other leaders, they can't be stopped."

Many youth took advantage of the day to do exactly that. Members of Newton County 4-H visited with Rep. Bryan King and discovered that they know a lot of the same people in Northwest Arkansas.

Rep. Harlan Breaux searched through the crowd of 4-H members on the second floor of the Capitol rotunda until he saw a Boone County 4-H sign. Boone County 4-H members Isaac Majano, Dominic Eddings and Jaycee Carter were eager to talk to him.

Throughout the day, the youth attended sessions in the House, Senate and Arkansas Supreme Court, where they saw government in action. They also visited the Treasurer's Office, where they posed for pictures while holding \$600,000 in cash inside the vault.

Vallie Yancey, 14, Ryker Shofner, 12, McKenna Cousins, 14, and Jade Emmitt, 13, all of Madison County, were also among the first-time visitors to the state Capitol. Yancey, who has an animal science project, said she was interested in being a state constitutional officer. "I wanted to know more about what they do," she said. ■



White County 4-H'ers Page at the Capitol

Five White County 4-H'ers experienced hands-on learning about the legislative process when they paged for Representatives Cameron Cooper and Wayne Long. On March 7, Caitlin C., Carleigh C., Madison W., Lynnlee M. and Madilyn J. started the day with a tour of the Treasurer's Office and the Capitol grounds. They also toured the Land Commissioner's Office and saw a display about Arkansas' agriculture industry. Then, they got a glance inside the climate-controlled vault that holds all the land deeds and documents

for the state of Arkansas. Inside the Senate Gallery, they learned how the Senate works differently from the House of Representatives.

They also met and took photos with Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders in the Governor's Conference Room. From there, they visited the House of Representatives' VIP Gallery and took photos with their representatives and Speaker of the House Matthew J. Shepherd. As the session started, the 4-H'ers split into two groups and each covered one half of the House Floor. They delivered messages to and from representatives during the session. At the end of the day, Lt. Governor Leslie Rutledge gave the youth a tour of her personal office, where they found a 4-H pin among her pin collection! ■



Front Row-Carleigh C., Back Row
L to R-Madilyn J., Madison W.,
Rep. Cameron Cooper, Caitlin C.
Lynnlee M.

4-H Leadership Train on the ExCEL Ropes Course

Many 4-H programs are in the process of building back up in the post-COVID era, and as a result, many counties have new members with limited experience going to district and state events and meeting 4-H members from other counties. Several members who are now teen leaders and county officers have not had many opportunities to connect with other 4-H members or gain leadership training on the county level.

To help solve this problem, Franklin County Agriculture and 4-H Agent Ethan Parker worked with Logan County

4-H Agent Sarah Enoch and Sebastian County 4-H Program Assistant AJ Russell to schedule a leadership training day on the ExCEL Ropes Course. On February 20, youth and adult participants from the three counties gathered for leadership training exercises, met fellow 4-H members and challenged themselves on the high ropes course. ■



Sebastian County 4-H members ready
to go on the ropes course.



Franklin County 4-H members and agents ready to go on the ropes course.



Logan County 4-H members ready to go on the ropes course.

ASMSA West Central Science Fair

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On February 23, the Soybean Science Challenge attended the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts' (ASMSA) West Central Arkansas Science Fair. The team of Amanda Navarro and Charis Xiong won the Soybean Science Challenge Award at the 2023 science fair. At the Awards Ceremony on February 24, the team received a \$300 cash award provided by the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board. Their teacher Nicholas Steward won the Teacher Mentor Award and received \$200.

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.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu or Diedre Young at dyoung@uada.edu. ■



ASMSA-WCARSF Soybean Science Challenge Winners Amanda Navarro and Charis Xiong, and teacher Nicholas Steward.

Awards Presented at Four Regional Science Fairs

The Soybean Science Challenge recently presented four regional science fair awards to dedicated Arkansas students. Siddharth Sridharan won the Senior Division Soybean Science Challenge \$300 cash award at the Central Arkansas Regional Science and Engineering Fair on March 3. His teacher Patrick Foley won the \$200 Teacher Mentor Award. The \$200 Junior Division Award went to Sanjay Iyer, and his teacher Stephanie James received the \$100 Teacher Mentor Award.

At the Southeast Arkansas Regional Science Fair on March 9, Sydney Fuller won the Senior Soybean Science Challenge \$300 cash award. Her teacher Katherine Yancy won the \$200 Teacher-Mentor Award. Lane Smith won the \$200 Junior Division Award, and his teacher Preslee Carter won the \$100 Teacher-Mentor Award.

On March 10, Sydney Wolf won the \$300 Soybean Science Challenge cash award at the Northeast Arkansas Regional Science and Engineering Fair. Her teacher Allyson Goodin received the \$200 Teacher Mentor Award. Levi Foster won the \$200 Junior Division Award, and his teacher Katie Southard received the \$100 Teacher Mentor Award.

Jack Snell and Mason Collins won the \$300 Soybean Science Challenge cash award at the Northeast Arkansas Regional Science Fair on March 10. Their teacher Zachary Thomas received the \$200 Teacher Mentor Award. The \$200 Junior award went to Keila and Michelle Salinas, and their teacher Kiersten Deen received the \$100 Teacher-Mentor Award. ■



Left photo: Central AR Regional Science and Engineering Fair Soybean Science Challenge SR Winner Siddharth Sridharan (left) and teacher Patrick Foley (right). Right photo: NE Arkansas Regional Science Fair Soybean Science Challenge SR Winner Sydney Wolf (left) and teacher mentor Allyson Goodin (right).



iLEAD



iLEAD Cohort II toured the Rice Research and Extension Center in Stuttgart and the Lonoke Extension Center in Lonoke, plus participated in 4-H shooting sport activities.

Dee Henderson, Administrative Support Supervisor for the Rice Research and Extension Center, writes about her experience in the February iLEAD seminar. Read details [here](#). ■

Leadership Lunch and Learn

The February 2023 Leadership Lunch and Learn book review featured **Start with Why** written by Simon Sinek. Cheryl Newberry, program and personnel development specialist at Oklahoma State University, reviewed the book. Read details [here](#). Watch [recording](#). ■

LeadAR

Interviews are underway for LeadAR Class 20. The class roster will be announced next month. The first seminar on Team Building and Goal Setting is scheduled for May 24-26, 2023, at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center. ■

EHC Hosts Spring Workshop



Extension Homemakers Council (EHC) held their Spring Workshop at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock on March 8, with over 200 participants attending the leadership meeting. Mississippi County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Pam Pruett was the keynote speaker and gave a presentation on agent roles with EHC and how EHC agents and members can work together and mutually benefit each other. The meeting focused on the roles of EHC officers and other leadership skills, including public speaking, parliamentary procedure and club organization. ■



Dr. Bob Scott welcomes attendees.

FCS Holds Fair Judging School for EHC Members

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) hosted a Fair Judging School at the Little Rock State Office for Extension Homemakers Council (EHC) members on March 7. Nearly 150 participants attended nine different class options, including Household Arts and Crafts, Quilting, Needlework, Food Preservation, Baked Goods, Fine Arts, Photography, Clothing and Educational Booths. County agents Anna Goff, Millie Collins, Brenda Cox, Jean Ince, Michelle Carter, Terrie James, Alison Crane, Shaw Nee Tichenor, Tamyie Allen, former county agent Marsha Horton, and Design Specialist and Print Shop Manager Chris Meux taught all sessions. The event proved successful and informational for EHC members, who said they had a good time and hope to have more Fair Judging Schools offered in the future. ■



Garland Co. FCS Agent Alison Crane teaching a Household Arts and Crafts Breakout Session.

New Employee ID/ Access Badges Update

All the new ID/Access badges have been printed. All old access badges will be disabled in the system starting March 15th. Make sure you start using your new card now and shred your old one.



If you didn't receive a new badge, you didn't have an ID/ Access badge in our access system. Never fear, you can request one, see below for more information.

Information for requesting an ID Badge:

- Those who didn't receive a new badge are welcome to request one. Visit our website for more information: [ID Badge Info](http://uada.edu) (uada.edu).
- If you are wanting a new photo, make sure you get with Communications to get that taken before you request the new badge.
- If you plan to upload a new picture of your own with your request, make sure you follow the instructions on the web site for taking the photo.

As a reminder, we are printing new badges for a couple of reasons:

- The new card format will be double-sided.
- The new cards will work with the new Verkada access door readers.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the help desk for [assistance](#).

April Security Feature



Well, we got through the March security feature that was turned on. This feature requires you to have now a Personal Identification Number (PIN) or biometric to open Office Apps on mobile devices.

Now that we have gotten through that change, we are ready to activate our next security feature as recommended by Systems. This feature has to do with saving passwords in your browsers. May 1, we will turn off the option to save passwords in Edge, Chrome, and Firefox on your work computers. This action will be painless for those that don't use the feature. However, for those that use it, you have some action items that you need to take care of BEFORE we disable it on May 1.

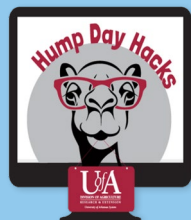
For those that store their passwords in browsers, you must export them before May 1.

You shouldn't store your passwords in a browser because browser-based password managers lack the security and features of dedicated password manager software. Storing passwords in your browser leaves you incredibly vulnerable to hackers.

Zoom Pro Tip – Zoom Web Portal

The Zoom Web Portal contains many handy features you just can't get through the Zoom client on your desktop. Try logging into your Zoom Web Portal to look at your account settings for meetings, or if you are a Zoom Phone user, settings for your Zoom Phone. You can even schedule meetings, including recurring meetings, or access your Whiteboards. Take a few minutes to explore what's available to you through your [Zoom Web Portal](#).

Hacks from Hump Day



- [Using SUMIFS in Excel.](#)
- [Microsoft Word Templates.](#)
- [Cloud Storage Spring Cleaning and Classification for Box and Microsoft OneDrive.](#)
- [Auto-Update Date & Time in Microsoft Word.](#)
- [Remove Backgrounds from Images.](#) ■

2023 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

Have you missed any past Tech Tuesday webinars or want to join future webinars? Check out the recordings and other resources on the [Tech Tuesday Blog page](#). More Tech Tuesday topics coming soon! Did you miss February's [Sweet New Zoom Features](#) Tech Tuesday? Check out the recording and resources.



4-H'ers Win Junior Bass Tournament



Post-frontal windy conditions did not stop Calhoun County junior 4-H members Jayden R. and Cy A. from catching fish at the third stop of the Arkansas Youth Bass Nation Southern Region event on Lake Greeson. Jayden and Cy started slowly but found themselves within the five-bass limit once it got closer to weigh-in time. "They fought hard," said Jaret Rushing, the boys' coach and Calhoun County extension staff chair. "Once we figured the bite out, it was just a matter of time before they found that fifth bass to fill out a tournament limit."



Jayden in foreground and Cy in back having fun fishing.

Cy started the day off by catching the team's largest bass at 1.29 pounds. They both alternated fish catches and Jayden finished off the limit at 2:15 p.m. with a bass that weighed around 1.20 pounds, giving the boys around 5 pounds total. Time was on their side, as Jayden was able to catch one last fish to cull out a smaller fish and increase their total weight to 5.24 pounds, securing their win against several other junior teams from across Arkansas. Their next tournament to qualify for the State Championship in May is scheduled for April 2 at Lake Millwood. ■

Arkansas Discovery Farms Conference

Arkansas Discovery Farms hosted their inaugural "Collaborative Conservation Conference" at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in February. One hundred and forty people participated in the two-day conference. Highlights of the event included engaging, informative discussion panels from farmers and conservation partners, presentations from staff and colleagues, a student research poster contest, and a keynote from Evan Teague, Arkansas Farm Bureau's Vice President of Environmental Issues. The passion and talent for conservation in Arkansas present at the conference was impressive.

Recent Discovery Farms employee Michael Freyaldenhoven, Program Technician, and retirees Dr. Bill Robertson, Cotton Agronomist and Dr. Andrew Sharpley, Arkansas Discovery Farms Co-Director, were presented with plaques in honor of their service to the program. To all the farmers, colleagues, team members and attendees, we thank you for the time and effort you put into making this a reality — we hope we can do it again! ■



Poster Winners (l to r): Ethan Majors, Jacob Major, Dr. Kishan Mahmud, Divya Kandanoool and Torri Holder.

Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame Inducts Two Arkansas Discover Farms' Farmers

Two of Arkansas Discovery Farms' farmers, Ellis Bell of Forrest City and Steve Stevens of Tillar, were inducted into Class 35 of the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame. Ellis has allowed us to conduct research on his corn, soybean and winter wheat cover crop operation. Steve was one of the very first farmers in the program, and several UADA colleagues have worked with him and his pioneering efforts in water conservation, stale seed bed cotton pest management, and early adoption of cereal rye cover crop in his cotton, soybean and corn production, even before his involvement with Arkansas Discovery Farms.

In his own words, Ellis has "always wanted to be a farmer" and channels this passion for agricultural advocacy through his programs Bell Tech and Bell Agriscience, which help steer minority youth towards careers in agriculture.

The Arkansas Discovery Farms Program wouldn't be what it is today without Steve's dedication to conservation. His creed is to "leave the land better than I found it." Steve has spoken at several state, regional and national meetings on behalf of Arkansas Discovery Farms about the research on his farm. It's a privilege to get to work with all our Discovery Farmers. Congratulations Ellis and Steve! ■



American Soybean Association Conservation Legacy Award

Terry Dabbs, Arkansas Discovery Farms' farmer, has won the Regional American Soybean Association Conservation Legacy Award and is in the running for the national award. Along with his wife Lori and son Trent, Terry operates LTD Farms near Stuttgart. Terry was instrumental in the foundation of the Arkansas Discovery Farms Program. Not only was LTD Farms one of the first farms in the program, Terry was also part of the delegation that visited Wisconsin Discovery Farms to evaluate its usefulness in Arkansas.



Terry Dabbs new reservoir.

"Water is the most important thing to our farm," Terry says. The Dabbs farm is in the critical groundwater region of the Grand Prairie in east central Arkansas. The Alluvial aquifer, which so much of the Arkansas Delta region relies on for ground water, is inaccessible to them. Instead, they irrigate their rice, corn and soybean production with surface water.

The Dabbs are able to produce their crops using zero groundwater through innovative and necessary conservation efforts focusing on water management, such as zero grade and precision leveling, tailwater recovery ditches, surface water storage reservoirs, soil moisture sensors and computerized irrigation planning and pump control.

Congratulations to Terry and family for this recognition of their conservation efforts! Conservation Legacy is an appropriate title. ■

Teen Cuisine Offered to Health Classes

Crawford County FCS agent Tristin Bolton recently completed the Teen Cuisine program with the seventh-grade health classes at Alma Middle School. Two-hundred and forty students completed the six-session program. Teen Cuisine uses relevant approaches and strategies to enhance learning and behavior changes among teenagers.

Each lesson presented a variety of activities focused on nutrition, food safety and food preparation. Reflecting on their experience, one student said, "I think a lot of the food was delicious, and it made me try a lot of new things." Another student commented, "it will change my health over time."

Pre- and post-survey data indicates that 47% of students

increased their vegetable intake and 33% increased their vigorous physical activity. Student input surveys show that 80% of students reported changing their eating habits because of Teen Cuisine.

"Through the Teen Cuisine program, I can teach students how and why we should look at the nutrition facts label," Bolton said. "I hope that this program is the foundation of their nutrition knowledge. It always is exciting for me when they come back to class and share that they made one of the recipes for their family." ■



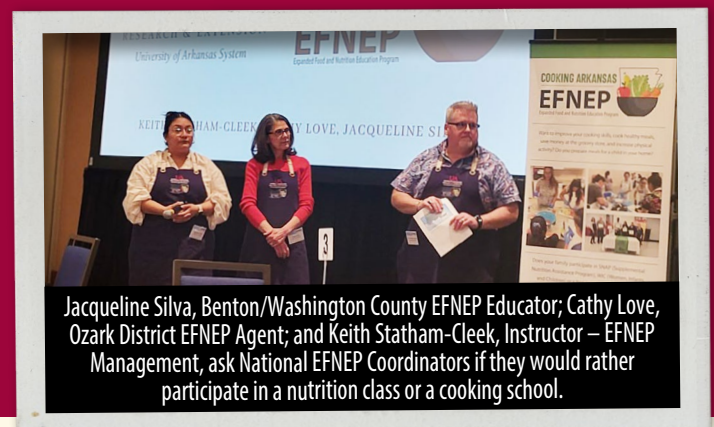
Alma Middle School students working in a group.

Cooking Arkansas Presents General Session

The Cooking Arkansas-EFNEP team presented a general session highlighting the successful revamping of Arkansas' Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. Cooking Arkansas-EFNEP was piloted as a four-session, hands-on cooking school with eight lessons focusing on improving participants' nutrition behaviors and cooking skills. Using Colorado State University's Eating Smart Being Active curriculum, the cooking school format emphasized interactive, participant-focused activities.

During lesson delivery, EFNEP Educators modeled cooking techniques, and participants then worked in groups to practice these techniques and prepare recipes from start to finish. EFNEP staff mingled with participants throughout the cooking stations, answering questions and reinforcing skills. Participants shared their cooking experience and recipe with the class. Cooking Arkansas-EFNEP was conducted in Crawford County in English and in Benton County in Spanish, where recruiting adult participants to extension-formed nutrition education classes had been difficult.

With rebranding and additional recruitment efforts, adult participation increased by 90% and program completion increased by 85%. One hundred percent of participants improved food resource management practices, 87% improved diet quality indicators and 69% improved food safety practices. This format has been adopted by Texas A&M University and is in the adoption phase with the University of Guam and the University of Maine's Cooperative Extension Services. ■



Jacqueline Silva, Benton/Washington County EFNEP Educator; Cathy Love, Ozark District EFNEP Agent; and Keith Statham-Cleek, Instructor – EFNEP Management, ask National EFNEP Coordinators if they would rather participate in a nutrition class or a cooking school.

Beef Quiz Bowl Success

Arkansas 4-H and FFA teams put their cattle knowledge to the test in the Beef Quiz Bowl at the Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Center in Fayetteville on February 24. The Beef Quiz Bowl encourages youth to demonstrate communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking and decision-making in a double-elimination competition format. Sponsored by the Arkansas Beef Council, the competition allows students to gain further knowledge of beef cattle management, nutrition and health, with an emphasis on beef products and food safety. The questions for the contest are written by Animal Science faculty at the University

of Arkansas. In total, 23 teams competed, representing ten counties across Arkansas.



The winning Beef Quiz Bowl team from Madison County 4-H. Left to right: Ashlyn D., Cadence A., Caramie Edwards, Coach, Levi H., Vallie Y.

This year, the winning team was Madison County 4-H's Ashlyn D., Cadence A., Levi H., and Vallie Y., with coach Caramie Edwards, Madison County 4-H and FCS Agent. The second-place team was from Carroll County 4-H, with Duncan P., Carson P., Kaitlyn A. and Jesse W. coached by Lisa Patterson. The third-place team was from Washington County 4-H, coached by Ronnie Horn, and included Lauren H., Sicily B., Hannah A. and Lydia A. Congratulations to all! ■

FMLA Leave: What To Do's

Supervisor Procedures:

- Notify HR Benefits of employee who is out 3 consecutive days on sick leave.
- You will be notified of employee's approval/denial of FMLA.
- You must request a Release to Return to Work from the employee before employee is allowed to return to work. Send release to HR-Benefits.

Employee Procedures:

- Complete "Request for Consideration" form & provide to HR Benefits to determine eligibility.
- Employee is notified of eligibility status, if eligible, FMLA forms will be sent for physician to complete.
- Notification will be sent with approval/denial status of FMLA after receipt of physician form. ■



Lafayette Co. Extension Hosts Forage Meeting

The Lafayette County Extension Office hosted a Forage Production Meeting at the Agri-Plex on February 21. Bronc Finch, Soil Fertility Specialist for the Division of Agriculture, presented "Managing Soil Fertility in Forage and Pastures." Kenny Simon, Animal Science Instructor for the Division of

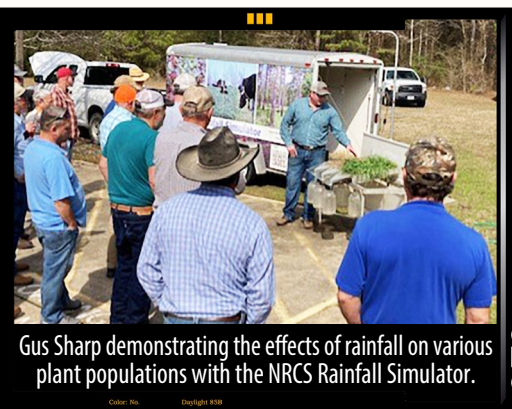
Agriculture, gave a presentation on "Early Spring Grazing Options." Buddy Pitman, a researcher and professor with Louisiana State University's AgCenter, talked to the group about "Opportunities to Increase Efficiency and Income from

Pastures." Gus Sharp, South Area Grassland Specialist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service, brought the NRCS Rainfall Simulator and demonstrated the effects of poor plant populations on water utilization of pastures.

Ricky Chastain, Private Lands Biologist for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, also facilitated discussion and

fielded several questions about wildlife conservation on and around pastures and hayfields. There were a many interesting questions and lively discussion throughout the meeting. The Agri-Plex Conference Room had a sizable crowd of producers from all points of Lafayette County in attendance.

Terrell Moreau with Helena Chemical in Bradley sponsored the meal from Get & Go Fish Market. Door prize sponsors for the program included Helena Chemical, The Tool Store, Cadence Bank, People's Drug, Bumper to Bumper, Stamps, Tim's Food Store, Burge's and Nix Home Center. There were also "freebies" provided by the Arkansas Beef Council, the Arkansas Grazing Coalition and the Cooperative Extension Service, part of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. ■



Gus Sharp demonstrating the effects of rainfall on various plant populations with the NRCS Rainfall Simulator.



Animal Science Instructor Kenny Simon going over Spring grazing options.

Grants & Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
State and Regional Farm Financial Analysis	49,610	Hunter Biram	Board of Curators of the University of Missouri
Wheat Verification	13,000	Jason Kelley	Wheat Promotion Board
Pest Management in Wheat Varieties	4,466	Jason Kelley	Wheat Promotion Board
SNAP-ED FY24	2,150,558	Josh Phelps	Arkansas Department of Human Services
Arkansas Renewable Resources Extension Act Program FFY23	17,055	Michael Blazier	National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)
Pest Management in Wheat Varieties	2,000	Nick Bateman	Wheat Promotion Board
Pest Management in Wheat Varieties	8,534	Terry Spurlock	Wheat Promotion Board
Development of Disease Management Strategies	30,330	Travis Faske	Arkansas Peanut Growers Association
TOTAL AWARDS FOR FEBRUARY 2023: 2,275,533			

Personnel Changes

Welcome Aboard:

Taely Dedmon – County Extension Agent - 4-H, Sebastian County
David Baty – Administrative Specialist I, Clay County
Faye M. Scott – Administrative Specialist III, Horticulture, Little Rock
Karen Phillips – Program Assistant - 4-H, Madison County
SeRena Hill – Navigator Project Director, Agriculture Economics and Agriculture Business, Little Rock
Rachel Richardson – 4-H Program Assistant, Yell County
Monty Rexwinkle – County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Carroll County
Eric Sims – Navigator Project Specialist, Agriculture Economics Agriculture Business, Washington County

Farewell to:

Rick Wimberley – County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Cross County
Andy Martin Vangilder – Agriculture & Natural Resources, Instructor, Greene County
Lacy B Wheelless – 4-H Program Assistant, Randolph County
Danielle Dickson – County Ext. Agent - Agriculture, Prairie County
Steve Campbell – Office of Sponsored Programs, Project/Program Specialist, Little Rock
Cora Hicks – 4-H Program Assistant, Montgomery County
Marshall Dickey – 4-H & Youth Development - Program Facilitator, Vines Center
Denise Brown – Business Office, Procurement Card and Tax Compliance Manager, Little Rock
Mary George – Accounts Payable - Fiscal Support Analyst, Fayetteville

