

BL

BLUE LETTER

April 2021
No. 3828



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Ready for Spring!

I love spring. As a want-to-be gardener and weekend lawn warrior, I look forward to getting out all my toys and playing with them as the weather allows. It's my therapy. I also get the occasional bug to go hunt a wild turkey, although finding time for that is more and more difficult. I think this year spring feels even a bit better to me than normal as we are finally pulling back some of our COVID-19 restrictions, and the new normal is more in sight than ever!

We have moved into Stage III of our COVID management plan for the Division. The big changes for the Little Rock State Office are a modest call back to the office for those who are ready to return and those who are asked by their supervisor to return as a relaxation of some of our social distancing and travel restrictions. It has been very nice to see folks back in the building. There is an energy here that I have not felt since I started back in July. In the counties, we have eased travel restrictions some and hopefully made it easier for employees to ride and interact with each other. I am especially pleased that our agents can now ride with clientele based on their own vaccination status and comfort level.

It is great to see the number of approval requests I'm receiving for in-person meetings and events. Thank you all for your patience as this process continues. I hope that we will no longer need these approvals very soon. In the meantime, I want to wish everyone a productive spring season.

As we move through Stage III, let's all remember that we are a science-based organization, and we will continue to follow science-based recommendations. I firmly believe that science — through social distancing recommendations and most importantly the vaccine — is responsible for preventing further time away from work, illness, and sadly deaths that have occurred with this virus. We will continue to follow science-based guidelines in what we hope are the last few months of this pandemic. The last thing we want to see is a resurgence or outbreak of the new variants. So, I ask all my colleagues to continue to follow our guidelines and be an example in your given geography, community, or program area. Looking forward to Stage IV, which is currently set to begin June 1. I hope to see you all soon! ■

INSIDE SCOOP

2. Division of Agriculture Names SWREC Director
3. Docs Talkin' Stock
4. Leadership Lunch and Learn: Embracing Technology
5. Renewal Ranch
6. Animal Science Researchers Earn Grant
7. Tech Corner
8. Get Real. Here's the Deal Goes Virtual And much more!

Division of Agriculture Names SWREC Director

Daniel Rivera has been named director of the Southwest Research and Extension Center effective May 16.

Rivera comes to Arkansas from Mississippi State University, where he held research and extension appointments at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station at Poplarville. He had joint appointments with Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, Biloxi, and the department of animal and dairy science at Mississippi State University, Starkville. His research and



Daniel Rivera

extension specialties were in beef cattle production and nutrition.

“I love all agricultural sciences, and I want to learn more about all these programs,” Rivera said. “My biggest challenge in the first six months at the center will be to

learn the lay of the land with the goal of helping the faculty and staff at the center achieve their research goals.”

“We’re pleased to have Dr. Rivera as director of the Southwest Research and Extension Center,” said Mark Cochran, vice president-agriculture for the University of Arkansas System and head of the Division of Agriculture.

“Daniel brings a host of research and extension experience to the center,” Cochran said. “He will be carrying on his own research while directing the resources and personnel that help make sure our scientists can address the needs of southwest Arkansas farmers who provide food, fiber and bioenergy crops.”

Rivera also has a research appointment with the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station and will continue his research program at SWREC. He conducts applied research in the interactions of production, management and nutrition in growing beef cattle. His work will focus on the nutrition, growth and development of stocker cattle. ■

Animal Science Sponsors

Cattlemen’s Association Spring Conferences



Dr. Shane Gadberry

Faculty from the Department of Animal Science traveled more than 2,500 miles in March to attend the Arkansas Cattlemen’s area spring conference meetings.

Drs. Kelly Vierck, Charles Looney, Shane Gadberry, Brittni Littlejohn and Michael Looper discussed

current research and hot topic issues regarding meat processing, animal health, and beef cattle production during the AR Cattlemen’s Area Spring Conference meetings. Approximately 2,500 cattle producers attended the nine meetings throughout the state. ■



Dr. Kelly Vierck

Animal Science Department Debuts

'Docs Talkin' Stock'

Animal science has a new monthly video series — “Docs Talking Stock” — to share recommendations and updates on animal issues important to Arkansas producers.

The series, which debuted this month, is hosted by faculty from the Animal Science department at the Cooperative Extension Service. Chelsey Kimbrough, extension specialty livestock/youth education specialist for the Division of Agriculture, moderates the program.

“Each month, we’ll have a guest speaker talk about a timely topic for the month,” Kimbrough said. “This is another way for us to get timely information to producers while

also helping our clients get to know us, the specialists.”



The first episode features Shane Gadberry, extension ruminant nutrition specialist for the Division of Agriculture, discussing beef cattle nutrition, reproduction and current research at the UA Livestock and Forestry Research Station in Batesville. That episode can be viewed at <https://fb.watch/52CKGBV7pU/>.

New episodes are posted on the first Monday of each month. ■

Wildlife Discovery Farm Hosts Free Virtual Field Trip

The Wildlife Discovery Farm hosted its first live, one-hour, free virtual field trip, on March 19 with the help of the Soil and Water Conservation Series Virtual Field Trip production team.

Combined, 255 participants from seven states participated.

Dr. Becky McPeake, professor and extension wildlife specialist was the host. Lee Riley, program associate for Environmental Science and Crop Management, shared the purpose of the Arkansas Discovery Farms Program. Dr. McPeake interviewed Mr. Gay Lacy, owner of Lacy Farms and the Wildlife Discovery farmer. Matt Davis, Jackson County extension agent and staff chair talked about cover crops; Jason Jackson, Wetlands Coordinator and Daniel Greenfield, private lands biologist both with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, discussed habitat and management plans; Ryan Diener, Quail Forever state coordinator, talked about quail habitat, and Dr. Wayne Miller,

professor and extension economist shared farm level economics of a wildlife enterprise.

Watch the recording at <https://youtu.be/2-Y3BnK-CYVs>. ■



(Left to right) Host & Speaker: Dr. Becky McPeake(UADA).
Speakers: Mr. Gay Lacy (Farmer), Lee Riley (UADA), Ryan Diener (Quail Forever)



(Left to right) Speakers: Matt Davis, Jason Jackson,
Daniel Greenfield (AGFC) and Dr. Wayne Miller (UADA)

Embracing Technology

The topic, Embracing Technology, was discussed in the Leadership Lunch & Learn held on March 31, 2021. Sam Boyster, UADA Cooperative Extension Service Chief



Sam Boyster

Operating Officer, shared that the iPhone didn't exist until 13 years ago and highlighted the profound effect it has had on behavior, social interaction, communications, and industries essentially replaced by this single device.

Next, he shared this [video](#) of robots dancing in real-time demonstrating how life-like they are and asked the question, "Have you used a robot or had a robot do something

for you?" If you have ever ordered from Amazon, robots are used in the warehouses to move inventory.

Technology makes things easier, faster, cheaper, safer, smaller, and more efficient. Where can you find information on what new technology is trending? Boyster cited three companies as sources for information: [Gartner](#), [Forrester](#), and [Deloitte](#). Read the [blog article](#) to learn about emerging technology trends or watch the Leadership Lunch and Learn [recording](#).

The next LLL session on Fostering Innovation in the Workplace presented by Jeff Amerine, founder and managing director of Startup Junking Consulting, was held on Wednesday, April 28. ■



At Last! LeadAR Class 19 Meets Face-to-Face

LeadAR Class 19 began their leadership development journey in October through virtual sessions and have waited patiently to meet one another face-to-face. They had their first seminar on March 25-26 at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center. View the [video](#) that captures their adventures. ■

Vaccine Clinics Coordinated in Four Counties

The Division of Agriculture partnered with ARcare to host COVID-19 vaccine clinics in Cross, Woodruff, Jackson and Prairie counties in April. These clinics were set up in Parkin, McCrory, Newport and Des Arc.

Bryan Mader, health specialist, and Heather Jackson coordinated the event with FCS agents in the following counties:

- Cross County – Millie Collins
- Woodruff County – Leigh Ann Bullington
- Jackson County – Joy West
- Prairie County – Shea Wilson ■

FCS Agents Teach Life Skills at Renewal Ranch

Faulkner County FCS Agent Mary Beth Groce and Perry County FCS agent Mary Jane Cody have partnered to teach weekly Life Skills programs at Renewal Ranch on topics such as financial management, resume writing, interview skills, and more professional topics.

Renewal Ranch is a rehab center for men, who are in the transitional phase of the program before they leave and get a job and housing on their own. Mary Beth and Mary Jane teach the same group of men for eight weeks, and after they move on, a new group starts the program. They hope that this is just the beginning for programming

opportunities for various FCS topics as well as Agriculture and Horticulture in the future. ■



(Left to right - back right) Mary Beth Groce and Mary Jane Cody with Renewal Ranch participants.

State Winners Recognized

The ACAA state meeting and awards program were held by Zoom on April 1. Agents and specialists were recognized for innovative and impactful programs and accomplishments during 2020, despite the challenging COVID pandemic. Congratulations to all!

COMMUNICATION AWARDS

- Audio Recording – Terrell Davis
- Computer Generated Presentation – Courtney Sisk
- Personal Column – Brad Runsick
- Feature Story – Sherri Sanders
- Newsletter, Individual – Amy Tallent
- Educational Video Recording – Colin Massey
- Fact Sheet – Chris Elkins
- Publication – Sherrie Smith
- Web Site – Rachel Bearden
- Published Photo – Jan Yingling
- Program Promotional Package – Sherri Sanders
- Bound Book – Jan Yingling



Rachel Bearden

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Brad Runsick

- 4-H & Youth Programming – Jesse Bocksnick, Creenna Bocksnick, Ashley Dingman, Brad Runsick, Cody Salmon, Billie Collins
- Crop Production – Kevin Lawson, Zack Gardner, Kevin Van Pelt

- Forestry & Natural Resources – Jennifer Caraway, Blair Griffin
- Consumer or Commercial Horticulture – Sherri Sanders
- Livestock Production – Rachel Bearden
- Young, Beginning or Small Farmer/Rancher – Allison Howell
- Sustainable Agriculture Recognition Program – Allison Howell
- Farm & Ranch Business Management – Rachel Bearden

AGRICULTURAL AWARENESS & APPRECIATION AWARD

Sherri Sanders

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Extension Education – Les Walz
- Applied Research – Allison Howell

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL'S AWARD

Olivia Foster

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- Jason Davis
- Bob Harper
- Amy Tallent

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

- Mike Hamilton
- Ples Spradley
- Les Walz ■



Allison Howell



Bob Harper

Collaborative Team Earns Grant to Continue Research for Pain Management Patch for Cattle

Three U of A researchers — two in chemical engineering and one in animal science — received a \$500,000 grant to continue research in pain management for cattle during routine procedures.

Jorge Almodovar, assistant professor of chemical engineering; Jeremy G. Powell, professor of animal science; and Lauren F. Greenlee, associate professor of chemical engineering, received the grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

“This is a tremendous achievement by the team,” Almodovar said, “because it shows how the initial investment by the Chancellor’s Innovation and Collaboration Fund can be leveraged to secure additional funding. So far, this project has resulted in a provisional patent application, a peer-reviewed publication, several presentations at national conferences and now a funded federal grant.”

The four-year grant will support continued research to evaluate a chitosan-based, biodegradable microneedle patch developed by the research team to deliver



(Left to right) Lauren F. Greenlee, Jorge Almodovar and Jeremy G. Powell.

meloxicam for pain relief to cattle undergoing routine procedures such as castration.

Meloxicam is a pain medication used in veterinary applications. However, in the U.S. it has limited uses in cattle mainly due to short duration formulations, Powell said. “Our team has engineered a microneedle patch using the biodegradable polymer chitosan, or crustacean shells, which is capable of delivering meloxicam when applied transdermally, through the skin. This project will further explore the capacity of these patches to manage pain.”

According to the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, “the microneedles dissolve within minutes after insertion into skin to release encapsulated drug or vaccine.” ■

Thank You!

UADA.EDU MIGRATION

IT

Diana Morian
Karen Watts
DiCicco
Steve Hall
Ryan Hood
Gretchen Skinner
Michael DiCicco
Amy Cole

Becky Bridges
Melissa Johnson
Kristena Merritt
Mary Poling
Samantha Barker
Russell Wilson
Larry Dicus
Patricia Doss

Hong Kang
Bob Hilton
Bruce Knox
Buff McCree
Norman Duquette
Susan James
Andy Plunkett

COMMUNICATIONS

Mary Hightower
Tracy Courage
Nick Kordsmeier
Oliver Williams

Chris Meux
Julie Thompson
Kerry Rodtnick
Ryan McGeeny

ARKANSAS State Spelling Bee

SPONSORED BY THE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF ARKANSAS



March 13 • Vines Center



Competitor at the 2021 Arkansas State Spelling Bee held at the Arkansas 4-H Center.



(Left to right) Two of the three judges, Priscella Thomas-Scott and Tracy Courage of the Cooperative Extension Service.



BIG NEWS with Google!

Starting in March, Google's algorithm now ranks your web pages based primarily on how mobile-friendly and usable your content is. Our mobile website traffic has steadily increased over time and is now consistently the #1-way people interact with our website. Page speed is also a critical ranking factor for ensuring our website appears as a reputable and usable source in search results.

What Should you do?

Check your pages on mobile screens, not the desktop, to ensure the content fits on a smaller screen and, primarily, downloads quickly.

If you want a handy tool to evaluate your page for mobile-friendliness, try this <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly> or check with Amy Cole to help evaluate your web content and assess its performance.

Accessibility Awareness Day

Thursday, May 20, 2021 is Global Accessibility Awareness Day. During the month of May, we challenge you to do view a [PDF](#) with audio. Are you up to the challenge? Let us know how you did!

UPCOMING TECH TUESDAY WEBINARS

Tuesday, May 11: Tech Tuesday, Excel Reporting - What to do with all that data? Register [here](#).

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



#SocialMedia is a monthly newsletter about curated for UADA social media admins designed to give ideas for content, strategy, accessibility, and more. Look for it in your inbox at the beginning of each month or check out our [Social Media E-news Archive](#).

Zoom Pro Tip - Present like a Rock Star!

1. Follow our [PowerPoint set-up tips](#).
2. Review "[Sharing Screen using a Single Monitor](#)" or "[Sharing Screen using Multiple Monitors](#)".
3. Practice, practice, and practice again! ■

BACKYARD POULTRY

ONLINE COURSE SERIES



Free Online Backyard Poultry Course Offered

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers a free online course in backyard poultry for anyone interested in raising chickens. The course teaches how to select, raise, and maintain a healthy flock of chickens with expertise provided by extension veterinarian Dr. Dustan Clark.

The course also introduces participants to various poultry breeds and covers the basics of poultry husbandry and care. Participants will also develop an understanding of diseases and biosecurity principles and learn about the basics of egg incubation, hatching eggs, and care of baby chicks. The course is accessible at <http://courses.uada.edu/>. ■

Jennings Wins USDA Service Award

Dr. John Jennings, extension forage specialist, won a 2020 Arkansas State Conservationist's Partnership Award, which was presented to him during the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) virtual annual meeting in March.

Jennings was recognized for providing support to NRCS technical leadership. Some of his contributions include a peer review of over 19 forage fact sheets and a sub-committee recommendation that ultimately resulted in NRCS field offices being able to apply herbicide for up to three years.

This change enabled NRCS to better treat weed and brush resource concerns in Arkansas. ■

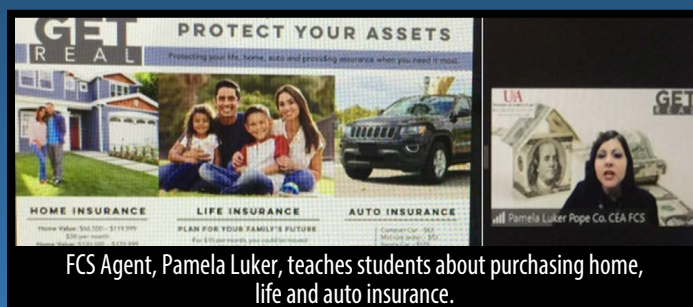


Dr. John Jennings (left) is presented the 2020 Arkansas State Conservationist's Partnership Award.

Get Real. Here's the Deal Goes Virtual!

Pope County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Pamela Luker, joined approximately 350 students and four teachers from Russellville High School in a reality personal finance simulation on March 17-18. The program "Get Real, Here's the Deal" teaches youth about understanding a pay stub, managing a checking account, managing a credit card, and takes the participant through 13 stations in which they are required to make real-life financial decisions based on their income and family size all while staying within their budget. The stations include purchasing items such as transportation, housing, insurance, childcare, and personal care items.

The program has always been offered face-to-face until now. After being contacted by Russellville High School about how the program could still reach their students with the current face-to-face restrictions and deliver it to their virtual students, Luker converted the program to make "Get Real, Here's the Deal" accessible to all students virtually. Not only were the students able to participate, but many students also learned invaluable lessons during the simulation. Many students stated that they learned how expensive children can be. Students provided



FCS Agent, Pamela Luker, teaches students about purchasing home, life and auto insurance.

the following comments after the program:

- "I learned not everything has to be high-end."
- "It showed me that keeping track of my finances is important."
- "Kids are expensive."
- "I now understand what my parents go through and what they mean when they say that it's not as easy as it looks."
- "I had no idea it would be this difficult to manage finances."
- "I am going to manage my needs before my wants."
- "Before this, I didn't think much about it (financial management) and didn't think it was very important, but now I realize how important it is and how it can affect my life after high school." ■

Soybean Science Challenge Presents

Cash Awards at Six Virtual Regional Science Fairs

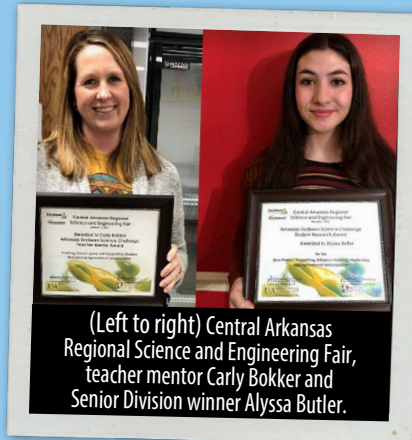
The 2021 Soybean Science Challenge recently presented six regional science fair awards to students with the top soybean research projects. Regional student Senior Division winners received a \$300 cash award; their teacher mentors received \$200. Junior Division winners win \$200, and their teacher mentors received \$100. Student winners and their teacher mentors were:

- **Virtual Central Arkansas Regional Science & Engineering Fair:** Senior Division winner, **Alyssa Butler**; teacher mentor, **Carly Bokker**. Junior Division winner, **Aakash Bhattacharyya**; teacher mentor, **Amber Butte**.
- **Virtual Ouachita Mountains Regional Science and Engineering Fair:** Senior Division winner, **Joseph Young**; teacher mentor, **Bobby Young**.
- **Virtual Southeast Arkansas Region:** Senior Division winner, **Joshua Tolbert**; teacher mentor, **Whitney Maggard**.
- **Virtual Southwest Arkansas Regional Science Fair:** Senior Division winner, **Jack Hoyle**; teacher mentor, **Christy Hoyle**. Junior Division winner, **Ayana Patel**; teacher mentor **Ryland Ochs**.

- **Virtual Northeast Arkansas Regional Science Fair:** Senior level student winner, **Cameron Holder**; teacher mentor, **Bryant Fong**. Junior Division winner, **Blake Smith**; teacher mentor winner **Amanda Smith**.
- **Virtual Northwest Arkansas Regional Science & Engineering Fair:** Senior Division winner, **Jon Gonzales**; teacher mentor, **Alicia Deavens**. Junior Division winner, **Neely Nuessner**; teacher mentor **Stacy Williams**. ■



(Left to right) Northeast Arkansas Regional Science Fair, Senior Division winner Cameron Holder and teacher mentor Bryant Fong.



(Left to right) Central Arkansas Regional Science and Engineering Fair, teacher mentor Carly Bokker and Senior Division winner Alyssa Butler.



(Left to right) Northwest Arkansas Regional Science and Engineering Fair Senior Division winner Jon Gonzales and teacher mentor Alicia Deavens. Junior Division winner Neely Nuessner and teacher mentor Stacy Williams.



Alicia Dorn

Fisheries and Human Sciences

Alicia Dorn Joins UAPB's School of Agriculture

Alicia Dorn has been appointed as extension specialist and project/program manager-communications for the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff's School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences (SAFHS). ■

Fruit Production and Produce Safety Inspection Training

The Local, Regional & Safe Foods (LRSF) team, led by Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez, joined the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Produce Safety team at the Fruit Research Station in Clarksville for fruit production and produce safety inspection training on March 29-30.

Dr. Jackie Lee, resident director at the Fruit Research Station, gave tours while the LRSF and Department of Agriculture teams conducted a mock produce safety inspection.

Arkansas Game & Fish Commission wardens also discussed wildlife issues that farmers might encounter.

Produce growers shared information on their production and produce safety practices. The LRSF and ADA teams also joined a virtual in-service training on drip irrigation provided by Extension Specialist Dr. Amanda McWhirt and county agents Ryan Neal and Clyde Fenton. ■

**ARKANSAS
PRODUCE
SAFETY**



(Left to right) LRSF team members Rip Weaver and Angela Gardner ride with ADA Inspector Tammy Winsor during the FRS farm tour.



(Left to right) Dr. Jackie Lee (UADA) plays the role of produce grower during a mock produce safety inspection while Tammy Winsor (ADA) and Julia Fryer (LRSF) play the role of inspectors.



ADA Produce Safety team members (left) Tammy Winsor, Mark Stoll, and John Lansdale (foreground) and LRSF team member Rip Weaver (background) tour the FRS greenhouse.

It's All About The Bass



Monroe and Craighead counties co-hosted a bass fishing series that drew 24 participants from Monroe, Craighead, Greene and Poinsett Counties who showed up to learn what it takes to catch bass!

Monroe County agent Valerie Turner developed a program to teach youth the basics of bass fishing, fish habitat and fishing ethics. Shane Moore, professional bass fisherman and Monroe Co. 4-H fishing group leader, plays a big role in this unique program by

teaching youth about rigging, knot tying and casting techniques.

For the first session, held at Arkansas State University's pavilion and pond, Moore taught participants how to use a screw-lock hook with waterdog bait. Craighead County 4-H provided the hooks, and BFO Baits donated all the baits the group used. Each member gets to keep all tackle received in the session for future bass endeavors. ■



A few participants of the bass fishing series put on by Monroe and Craighead counties.

You Can Grow Them Anywhere



Howard County youth learned no matter whether you live in an apartment or on a 100-acre farm, you can grow your own vegetables and flowers.

Last week, 30 Mineral Springs third graders, 18 Nashville Primary first graders, and 32 traditional 4-H members from across the county participated in the March 4-H Kit You Can Grow Them Anywhere.

The kit contained the basic materials needed to start a garden including soil, seeds, starter trays, and grafting clips. It also had a do-it-yourself greenhouse for the youth to experiment with. Curriculum covered germination, soil testing, aeration, transplanting, grafting tomatoes, and the care and benefits of plants.



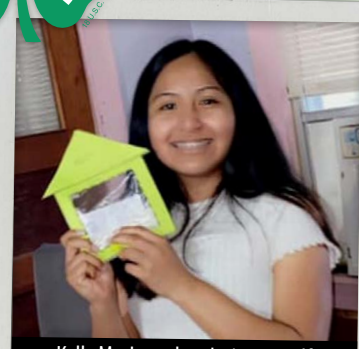
Samantha Horn teaches students at Nashville Primary and Mineral Springs Elementary about gardening.

At Mineral Springs, the youth learned about entrepreneurship and how raising a garden or having a farm could help them start a small business.

At Nashville Primary, the program became an in-class project that will stay at the school. The youth will chart from the plant date to the date the seedlings need to be transplanted. They learned about aeration and how worms play an important part in it. “Herman the 4-H Worm” taught the youth that his amazing tunnels underground help increase the amount of air and water that gets into the soil.

These classes will continue to have monthly programs provided by the Extension Service and conducted by Samantha Horn.

Traditional 4-H members watched a Facebook Live video that featured a local 4-H member covering the curriculum and demonstrating how to start the seeds and greenhouse. ■



Kelly M. shows her do-it-yourself greenhouse.



Drs. Wray and Kimbrough Start Internal Parasite Project

Dr. Eva Wray and Dr. Chelsey Kimbrough are investigating the internal parasites of Arkansas small ruminants. The duo will be visiting various small ruminant operations across the state to collect

fecal samples, administer dewormers and consult with producers.

The aim of the project is to determine the effectiveness of commonly used dewormers and provide guidelines to both producers and extension agents for testing efficacies of drugs against intestinal parasites. The data obtained will provide useful information to producers for their control of economically devastating parasites. ■



Virtual Field Trip Highlights Cotton Sustainability Programs

Thirty-seven people in ten states participated in the most recent Soil and Water Conservation virtual field trip event to learn about cotton sustainability accountability programs available to U.S. cotton producers.

Dr. Bill Robertson, extension cotton agronomist moderated a panel with two Arkansas producers — Nathan Reed from Marianna and Jesse Flye from Jonesboro — as they discussed their cotton sustainability protocols on their farms.



(Left to right) Host & speaker, Dr. Bill Robertson(UADA); speakers Dr. Jesse Daystar & Karen Wynne; producers Nathan Reed & Jesse Flye.

The VFT recording can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/H3TyA5C8kP0>.

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

Master Gardener Plant Sale Sets New Record

The Hot Spring County Master Gardeners hosted an in-person, socially distanced plant sale April 3 at the Hot Spring County Fairgrounds with more than \$6,100 in sales, which set a new record for the sale.

The club sold hostas, vegetables, herbs, trees, shrubs, bedding plants, hanging baskets and more. The sale was limited in the number of shoppers at a time, and plants were spread between the horticulture building and cattle barn to allow more space for people to shop.

During the sale, the club also recognized the 2021 \$1,000 scholarship recipients and \$500 community beautification grant recipients. These awards are both made possible due to the success of the virtual plant sale conducted in 2020, and the club is looking forward to further expanding these opportunities in 2021. ■



Community member Melyvn Stewart shopping at the Plant Sale.



(Left to right) Mother Daughter Duo and Master Gardener Volunteers Stephanie Fowler and Sandy Hathcock ready to assist shoppers at the sale.



Business Office Review of P-Card Activity

Beginning with transactions dated Jan. 1, 2021, and going forward, the Business Office will perform a preliminary review of p-card activity to verify basic transaction details and then will mark the transaction approved in Workday. This will allow p-card activity to post to departmental budgets more timely; however, this is not the final review of a p-card transaction's compliance with UADA policy. The Business Office will continue to audit p-card activity and may request additional information and/or actions related to specific transactions.

Any transactions found to be non-compliant with UADA policy will be the responsibility of the cardholder and subject to the requirement to reimburse UADA for the non-compliant charges. Non-compliance with the p-card holder agreement and UADA policy could also result in temporary suspension or permanent termination of a cardholder's privileges.

Please direct any questions on this matter to:
pcard@uada.edu. ■

Credit Card Transaction Information

As a result of recent UA System internal audit findings regarding credit card activity, the following measures have been implemented. Failure to take the actions outlined below will result in suspension of cardholder privileges until the appropriate actions are taken.

- Action must be taken in Workday on all credit card transactions (including p-cards, t-cards, and fuel)

no later than the fifth business day of the month following the charge without exception.

- Any past transactions dated March 31, 2021, or earlier that have not been appropriately verified or attached to an expense report in Workday should be worked immediately, but no later than April 30, 2021. ■

Grants and Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Enhanced Pest Control Systems for Mid-South Soybean Production - Amendment #1	\$12,422	Terry N Spurlock	LSU Agricultural Center
Impact of Water Quality on Insecticide Applications to Cotton	\$10,000	Ben Thrash	Cotton, Inc,
Seed Quality Protocol - An Extension Cotton Specialists Project	\$2,500	Bill Robertson	Cotton, Inc,
Cotton Lygus Open Field Efficacy Trial - Service Order #124	\$20,000	Gus M Lorenz	Monsanto Company
Cotton Lygus Open Field Efficacy Trial - Service Order #125	\$20,000	Gus M Lorenz	Monsanto Company
Field Trial of a new class of insecticides for control of H. zea, corn earworm.	\$10,080	Gus M Lorenz	Nichino America, Inc.
Outreach Mini-Grant: Needs Assessment for the UADA-CES Farm Stress Management Program	\$8,867	Brittney Schrick	University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler
TOTAL AWARDS FOR MARCH 2021: \$83,869			

Benefits Corner

Your employee benefits package is an important part of your employment. Your Benefits Team is available to assist you in understanding your overall benefit elections. Do you have general questions about your benefits? Do you know how to make eligible benefit changes in Workday? Do you know what steps to take if you need to apply for Family Medical Leave? Contact Your Benefits Team at yourbenefits@uada.edu and one of the Team will respond to your question(s).

If you have specific coverage questions, we may need to refer you directly to a benefit vendor or you may contact any benefit vendor directly. You can find the vendors' contact numbers on the back of your ID card(s).

Benefits Team

Del Johnson, Benefits Manager

Sandra Baker, Benefits Analyst

Nytalya Salter, FMLA and Wellness Coordinator

Your Benefits Team is here to assist! ■



Personnel Changes



Welcome Aboard:

Ariel Little - Administrative Specialist III, Ag Economics and Ag Business, Little Rock

Jamie Cousins - Communications Manager, Ag Economics and Ag Business, Little Rock

Farewell to:

Raven Randolph - 4-H Program Assistant, Lawrence County

Whitney Lynn Howerton - 4-H Program Assistant, Carroll County

Sydney Dillion - Administrative Specialist I, Arkansas County

Andrew Gibbons - Horticulture, Extension IPM Specialist, Little Rock

Amy Williams - Administrative Specialist III, Van Buren County

Kenneth Hale - Crop Soil & Environmental Science, Rice Extension Agronomist, Arkansas County