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BLUE LETTER

February 2023

No. 3850



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Spring Anticipation

I will start by expressing my gratitude for all the hard work our county agents and specialists are doing in the spring months. The calendar is full of Extension events, and I never tire of hearing positive things about our contributions out there in the counties, state and region. I am glad to see that attendance is good at our events! I have enjoyed dropping in on several county offices and meetings this month and appreciate you all putting up with me for a visit. I appreciate the positive and constructive feedback I have gotten. The only way we or things can get better is through communications.

We have important positions open right now in upper administration, and I am excited about some of our recent interviews and hope that we have some announcements to make soon. I look forward to hiring an Assistant VP for 4-H soon and following that our search will focus on Family and Consumer Sciences. This has been something that I have wanted to do since the retirement of Dr. Martha Ray Sartor who was leader over both program areas. I think it gives each of these programs representation and undivided leadership attention going forward. My team also was sad to see the departure of Mr. Brian Helms in stakeholder relations. This position is one that Dr. Fields and I have discussed in-depth and

want to see grow into an even more integral part of our fundraising, legislative and stakeholder team. There are numerous questions about what happens next in these areas, but we will take it one step at a time.

I am excited to report that our new Extension Center office in Jackson County is now mostly complete and has been used for a few meetings already including hosting its first county meeting. This is another step in something that began a long time ago for me personally and for Extension in development of this Center. In addition, a milestone was reached in the funding and construction process for the new Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center. This too will be a valuable resource for the Division and has been a long-desired facility for rice research on the soils in NE Arkansas. For Extension, there has been an express direction given by the Rice Promotion Board to use this facility for agriculture educational purposes. I think this facility and our educational efforts will fit in nicely with the Governor's and the legislature's current efforts focused on or proposed in this exact area. Finally, a Blue Letter "shout out" to Greene County who recently learned of county approval for a budget that will include new Extension offices. This is a much needed and overdue addition for them. I look forward to seeing the positive impacts that these new facilities will bring to the Delta District. ■

INSIDE SCOOP

2. Tri-County Row Crop Production Meeting
3. EHC Members Craft to Provide Comfort
4. Leadership Log
5. Soybean Science
6. 2022 Arkansas Ballot Issue Stats
7. Tech Corner...And much more!

Southwest Arkansas Tri-County Row Crop Production Meeting

Extension agents from Lafayette, Little River and Miller counties teamed up to host the Southwest Arkansas Tri-County Row Crop Production Meeting on Jan. 24, where the latest Division of Agriculture research results in row crop farming were available to attendees.

The event traditionally rotates among the three, row crop producing counties in extreme Southwest Arkansas. This year's event was held at the River Bend Volunteer Fire Department in the Bradley bottoms.

Jason Kelley, extension wheat and feed grains agronomist, along with Jeremy Ross, extension soybean agronomist, and Jarrod Hardke, extension rice agronomist, provided updates in their respective crops. Bill Robertson, retired extension cotton agronomist, provided a

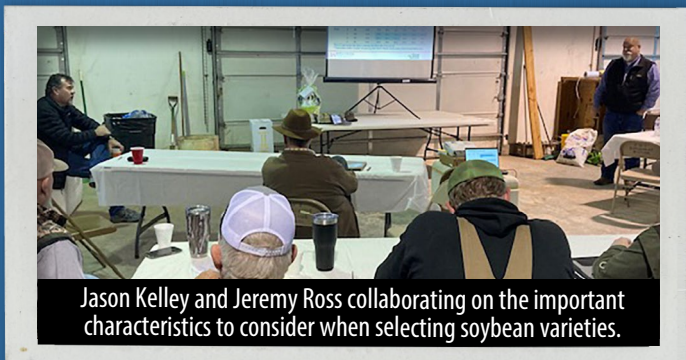
cotton update. Travis Faske, extension plant pathologist, spoke on "How to Spot Nematode Issues in Field Crops."

The meal of C&C BBQ Beef was sponsored by William Greer with Nutrien Ag Solutions. More than \$800 in door prizes were awarded from sponsors including Nutrien Ag Solutions, The Tool Store, KZHE Radio, Steve's Outdoor Sports, Gin City Parts & Café, Bodcaw Bank and Helena Chemical.

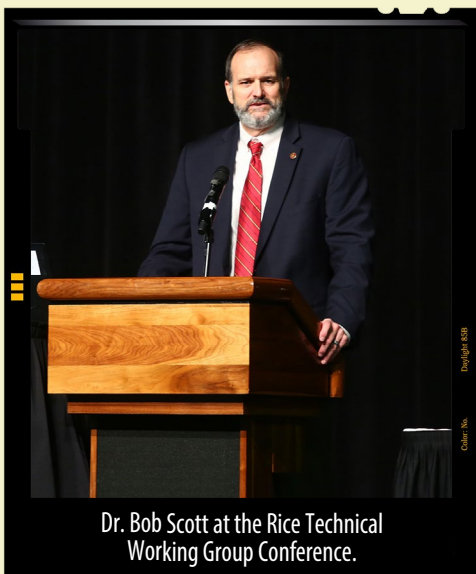
Agents involved include Jerri Dew, Lafayette County; Jennifer Sansom, Little River County; Jennifer Caraway, Miller County; and Shaney Hill, Union County. ■



Travis Faske discusses the importance of fungicide timing in row crops.



Jason Kelley and Jeremy Ross collaborating on the important characteristics to consider when selecting soybean varieties.



Dr. Bob Scott at the Rice Technical Working Group Conference.

Distinguished Service

Dr. Bob Scott, Senior Associate Vice President for Extension, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Rice Technical Working Group during the group's biannual conference in Hot Springs. Jarrod Hardke, extension rice agronomist for the Division of Agriculture presented the award to Scott after Scott delivered the opening address to the conference on Feb. 21. Click [here](#) to read the full article and [here](#) to see video. ■

Volunteers Make 4-H/FFA Career Development Event A Success



More than 700 students from 42 schools participated in the 2nd annual Career Development Events hosted Feb. 6 by Nevada County 4-H clubs and FFA chapters at the Nevada County Fairgrounds.

This contest is quickly developing a reputation for being the top preparatory event for the upcoming District and State FFA and State 4-H Contests. Students from nine counties attended events in livestock judging, forestry, land, poultry, vet science, agriculture business, wildlife, and agronomy.

Many volunteers and staff assisted from organizations including Nevada County 4-H, Prescott FFA, Nevada FFA, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Southern Arkansas University Agriculture Department and the University of Arkansas Livestock Judging team. Specialists from University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture prepared the contests.

The City of Prescott and the Nevada County Road Department provided the groundwork and maintenance for the land judging pits. The Nevada County Economic

Development Council helped with the hospitality room, and Farm Credit Services provided lunch. 4-H members and leaders served as group leaders at the contest sites. ■



Forestry contestants participate in 2nd annual Career Development event.

EHC Members Craft to Provide Comfort

Miller County's Extension Homemakers Club has been busy crafting — not for aesthetic purposes, but to provide comfort to others. The club, which has 40 active members, knitted and crocheted red caps for babies born in February. EHC members from Miller and Polk counties worked together to create these caps, which were delivered to local hospitals.



Bettie Huntley and Valerie Pilgrees delivered toboggans to Wadley Regional Medical Center.

A long-term project that Miller County EHC has undertaken is making breast cancer pillows. They've made and donated more than 100 pillows to two local hospitals, a cancer center, and other care facilities. ■



EHC members love to volunteer and are engaged in many projects and community events.



Leadership Lunch and Learn kicks off Leadership Book Review Series

The 2023 series kicked off Jan. 25 with “Good to Great” reviewed by Dr. Julie Robinson, associate professor-leadership. Read the blog post [here](#). Watch the recording [here](#). View the schedule for future LLL webinars [here](#). ■

LeadAR Class 19 Graduates

Twenty leaders from across the state completed their LeadAR journey in January. LeadAR Class 19 celebrated their graduation at the Urban Cellar Winery on Jan. 27 in Fayetteville. Participants shared in a wine bottling experience

and a ceremony recognizing their accomplishments over the past two years. Read full details [here](#). ■

iLEAD: Clarity in Communication Creates Creative and Committed Teams and Builds a Culture to Celebrate

This past month, iLEAD covered ground in different areas, including discussion of goals, leadership projects, leadership communication in the workplace, and reactions to previous interactions. Mary Savin, professor in crop, soil, and environmental science, shares details about the January 2023 virtual iLEAD session. Read full details [here](#). ■

Forward Train the Trainer

In January, Dr. Hunter Phillips Goodman and Tabatha Duvall from Extension’s Community, Professional and Economic Development unit hosted 20 extension professionals from throughout the Mid-South to workshop the Future Opportunities in Rural Workforce and Rural Development curriculum. The FORWARD curriculum aims to equip Extension professionals to become an effective part of the workforce development conversation within their communities.



UADA Agents work together to create questions for local employers to help determine needed career pathways for their communities.

to be involved with the project and implement portions of the curriculum was beneficial for Hempstead County and myself. I learned from doing the pilot and the training, and I greatly appreciate being asked to be a part of the grant.”

UADA agents attending were James; Amy Monk and Randy Black, Montgomery County; Ashley Cuzzort, Lee County; Pamela S. Pruet, Mississippi County; LeeAnn Blevins, Baxter County; Hazelene McCray, Drew County; and Danielle Watson, Cleveland County. Other attendees included representatives from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Oklahoma State University, University of Kentucky, Prairie View A & M, Tuskegee University, West Virginia State University and North Carolina A&T State University.



Terrie James, Hempstead County Staff Chair, shares her experience in the FORWARD Pilot Program.

Hempstead County Staff Chair Terrie James shared, “The recent FORWARD workshop was a major goal accomplished for the pilot team. Having had the opportunity

Partners and speakers were Heartland Forward, Rural LISC, Purdue Extension, Oregon State Extension, Illinois Extension, APLU and Ascendium. ■

Free Seeds for Community Gardens

The Soybean Science Challenge kicked off its Community Garden promotion for 2023! The non-GMO Escomame soybeans for your community garden are donated by B&B Legacy Farms out of Beedeville, Ark. Soybeans are easy to grow, a complete protein, and are a welcome addition to any food dish.

To receive soybean seeds, the garden must be educational or school-related, 4-H based or planted to serve the food banks or other hunger-related projects in the area where they are grown. Anyone whose garden fulfills at least one of these requirements and wants to plant edamame



Student Kahlan Higgins (Kristin Netterstrom Higgins' daughter) watering soybean plants in the Bryant Science Masters 4H Club Plot at the Bryant Community Garden.

can go to www.uaex.uada.edu/soy-whatsup and click on the 'school and community garden project' icon (not the seed store icon). The icon opens directly into the fillable PDF site. Complete the form and send to dyoung@uada.edu. If you have any problems with the registration form, contact Diedre Young.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the Cooperative Extension Service. For more info, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu or

Diedre Young, dyoung@uada.edu. ■

Arkansas Soybean Association Meeting

Soybean Science Challenge coordinator Diedre Young promoted the Soybean Science Challenge at an educational booth at the Arkansas Soybean Association Meeting in Brinkley on Jan. 25. Young handed out soybean promotional items, lesson plans, resource guides and educational brochures to more than 100 participants. She encouraged attendees to tell teachers to use soybeans in classroom research by accessing the free resources available on Extensions' soywhatsup website.

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. ■



SSC Coordinator Diedre Young at the Arkansas Soybean Association meeting in Brinkley.

Education Program Racks Up Impressive Stats

The Public Policy Center published a 2022 wrap-up report about the ballot issue education program. Data from last year's wrap up shows the extent to which our resources were utilized.

- County agents delivered nearly 40,000 voter guides to voters in their communities.
- Ballot issue education web pages attracted 346,972 unique visitors who recorded 432,615 page views between Sept. 1-Nov. 11, 2022. This represents a 59% increase in unique visitors over 2020 web traffic. (Election Day was our most popular day, with 61,086 page views.)
- Videos about the ballot issues attracted 19,094 views combined on YouTube between Oct. 6 and Nov. 14, 2022.



Want to know more? Contact Kristin Higgins at khiggins@uada.edu for a copy of the report.

Voter Education Updates

The Public Policy Center launched a new voter education webpage focused on local offices on the ballot. Visitors can learn about the qualifications, responsibilities, and duties of elected county officials. The website breaks up information about the various positions into administration, quorum court, courthouse and law enforcement.

The information found on the website corresponds to a series of 13 blog posts published last year ahead of the primary and general election to help voters better understand the duties of the offices listed on their sample ballots. ■



AACES Kicks Off Membership Drive

About AACES

The Arkansas Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists (AACES) is recruiting members! AACES is a professional organization of Extension personnel. All non-classified professional personnel are eligible to join. This includes faculty, program associates, program technicians and non-support staff.

Opportunity for Development

Opportunities for community service, networking, professional development, scholarships, awards, and free lunch are just a few ways you can participate in AACES. More information can be found at uaex.uada.edu/AACES.

How You can get Involved

AACES is looking for motivated employees with great ideas. Dues are \$10 for new members and \$20 for returning members. Dues can be paid in cash, check (payable to AACES), credit union transfer, or CES indirect account. Scan the QR code or visit uada.formstack.com/forms/aaces_membership_form. ■

AACES holds an annual costume contest.



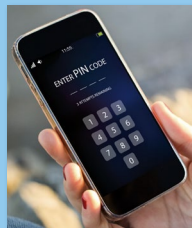


Tech Corner

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Another Security Feature is on the way!

In our ongoing effort to improve our information security posture, Systems has recommended implementing another change for mobile devices. Beginning March 1, a Personal Identification Number (PIN) or biometric will be required to open Office Apps on mobile devices.



The PIN is a passcode used to verify that the correct user is accessing the organization's data in an application. Users will be prompted to enter the PIN they created in apps such as OneDrive, Outlook, Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. Users will also be prompted for their PIN when they open an "organizational" document or file. We already require a PIN when accessing Box on a mobile device.

The PIN will be a 4-digit code, and users will be allowed to opt-in to use Face ID or fingerprint.

TikTok Banned

This is a reminder that TikTok has been banned from use in the UA System. The decision came after Gov. Sanders signed an executive order.

What does this mean?

1. TikTok may no longer be installed or used on any university-issued technology device, including all computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.
2. TikTok is to be blocked from use on all campus, division and unit internet networks.

What is TikTok?

TikTok is a popular social media app owned by ByteDance, a Chinese technology company. The app allows users to create, watch, and share 15-second videos shot on mobile devices or webcams.

Why is it being banned?

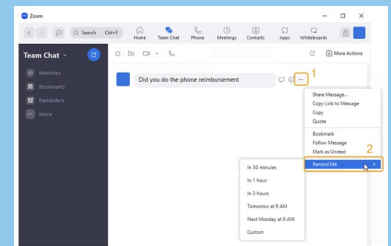
Commissioner Brendan Carr with the FCC says it best - "It is not just an app for sharing funny videos or memes. That's the sheep's clothing. At its core, TikTok functions as a sophisticated surveillance tool that harvests extensive amounts of personal and sensitive data."

What do you need to do?

Stop using TikTok. Steps have been taken to block access to the application in our network firewalls, Microsoft policies, and mobile device management applications.

Zoom Pro Tip – Remind Me?

Get a lot of Zoom chat messages and can't remember which ones you wanted to follow up on? You can set a reminder for messages you don't want to forget. Zoom will send a notification at the time you specify. Zoom will also let you edit that time, cancel the reminder, or mark the reminder as "Done", all from the Reminders tab on the left sidebar.



Hacks from Hump Day



- Working with the Canvas in Camtasia 2022.
- Using Panopto to Auto-Generate Transcripts.
- Excel Keyboard Shortcuts.
- Auto-Update Date & Time in Microsoft Word.
- Zoom's New Meeting Chat Experience. ■

2023 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

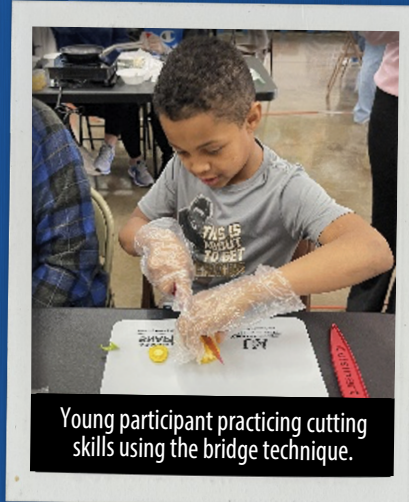
Have you missed any past Tech Tuesday webinars or want to join future webinars? Check out the recordings and other resources on the [Tech Tuesday Blog page](#). More Tech Tuesday topics coming soon! Did you miss January's [Introduction to Camtasia Tech Tuesday](#)? Check out the recording and resources.



‘Eggs-cellent’ Omelets

Pope County Extension partnered with River Valley Food 4 Kids to deliver SNAP education lessons focused on eggs. Family and Consumer Science Agent Pamela Luker taught an Arkansas Foods lesson about eggs to 84 youth in a morning and evening session on Jan. 21. The participants learned where eggs come from, how eggs get to the store, proper storage and egg nutrition.

The class also learned cutting and cooking skills by preparing their own omelets. Each participant left with a bag of ingredients needed to prepare the meal again for their families. Of the participants, 90% said they tried a new vegetable and 100% reported having improved their cooking skills. ■



Young participant practicing cutting skills using the bridge technique.



Teenage participant cooking omelet.

Arkansas Small Ruminant Industry Assessment

Dr. Dan Quadros, extension’s new small ruminant specialist, is collaborating with county agents and producers on a Sheep & Goat Industry Assessment to collect and analyze data about the small ruminant value chains. The data will include herd inventory, producers and production profiles, marketing, processing, products and consumption.

The goal is to raise awareness of the main challenges that producers and other segments of small ruminant value chains face. The results will serve as the cornerstone of a multi-agency research and education program to advance the small ruminant industry in Arkansas. The small ruminant industry assessment will count on county agents and producers to collect and analyze data to take an “x-ray” of sheep & goat value chains in Arkansas. ■



From left to right: Dr. Quadros, Stacey Stone (CEA – Staff Chair, Nevada County), his daughter Kaylie and the special appearance of Bitta, the baby goat.

Benefits Corner

**Have Questions or Concerns?
We are here to Assist.**

Contact Us

For general inquiries, email humanresources@uada.edu.
For benefits information, retirement, or medical leave email yourbenefits@uada.edu.

For tuition discount information, email tuition@uada.edu or visit our Tuition Discount page. Looking for information regarding various policies, visit [here](#). ■



Walk Across Arkansas Starts March 13

Keep up your New Year's Resolution by participating in the Walk Across Arkansas this spring!

Registration opened on Feb. 27 with competition starting March 13 and ending May 14. The benefits of walking include improving sleep, improving mental health, improving cognitive function, and so much more. Start getting your teams together (up to 30 participants per team) and we hope to see you walking with us this spring! Register at <https://walk.uada.edu/walk/>. ■



Front Page News You Can Use

Looking for a news story to use in your local paper? Look no further than the front page of uada.edu. And if you click on view all news, you'll see all of our archived news stories back to 2014.

If you want to be on the email list to receive our news stories, email Mary Hightower at mhightower@uada.edu and Communications will add you to the distribution list. ■



Grants & Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network - Addl funding	10,000	Brittney Schrick	National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)
FORWARD: Future Opportunities for Rural Workforce and Rural Development - Addl funding	6,000	Hunter Goodman	Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
Education & Youth Development	6,100	Scott A Hayes	Weyerhaeuser Corporation
Phase II Storm Water Project renewal	27,396	Stacey McCullough	City of White Hall, Arkansas
Phase II Storm Water Project renewal	310,515	Stacey McCullough	City of Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Technology Transfer	25,000	Tom Barber	Jackson County Quorum Court
TOTAL AWARDS FOR JANUARY 2023: 385,011			

Personnel Changes



Welcome Aboard:

- Keilah Barney – Program Technician - Horticulture, Little Rock
- Celeste Chmura – Administrative Specialist II, Garland County
- Jamie Corker – County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences, Calhoun County
- Kimberly George – Administrative Specialist II, Washington County
- Allison Harman – Instructor – 4-H Youth Livestock Animal Science, Little Rock
- Tori Luker – County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Science, Miller County
- Katelyn Kirkham – County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Science, Nevada County
- Charlette Moore – Budget & Reporting Director, Finance, Little Rock
- Morgan Neal – County Ext. Agent - Family & Consumer Science, Crittenden County
- Dan Quadros – Assistant Professor - Small Ruminant Specialist, Animal Science - LRSO
- Derek Reed – County Extension Agent - Agriculture/Horticulture, Pulaski County
- Amy Shepherd – County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences, Lincoln County
- Landon Smith – Program Technician - Weed Science, Crop Soil & Environmental Science, Little Rock

Farewell to:

- John Jennings – Professor & Forage Specialist - Animal Science, Little Rock
- Yeshi Andenow Wamishe – Associate Professor - Plant Pathology, Entomology and Plant Pathology, RREC Stuttgart
- Valerie T. Seefeld – 4-H Youth Program Associate, 4-H & Youth Development, Little Rock
- Allison Kilsby – Administrative Specialist III, Polk County
- Randy Black – County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Montgomery County
- Taylor Ibbotson – Program Associate - Entomology, Lonoke Agricultural Center
- Madison Ellis – Accessibility Specialist, Office of Communications, Little Rock
- Kathleen Holt – Administrative Specialist I, Yell County