



Keeping you connected

extension cord

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'Share Grounds' rural kitchen incubators host informational booths at three county fairs in September

Food entrepreneurs who want to grow beyond their kitchens can learn more about Share Grounds, the kitchen incubator project from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, at three county fairs in September.

Share Grounds Certified Kitchen and Distribution Centers offer an innovative approach for rural communities, using existing facilities and infrastructure at three county fairgrounds. The project is establishing certified and inspected kitchen facilities and aggregation centers at Searcy County Fairgrounds in Marshall, Cleveland County Fairgrounds in Rison and Three County Fairgrounds in McCrory.

The Division of Agriculture's Food Safety and Food Systems team attended the Searcy County Fair on Sept. 6, the Cleveland County Fair on Sept. 14, and will be on hand from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. at the Three County Fair, in McCrory, on Sept. 28. Additionally, project associates will staff an informational booth at the Arkansas State Fair in Little Rock from Oct. 11-20.

"Fair attendees who would like to use the facility for food processing or post-harvest handling of produce should stop by to learn about the overall vision for the project and the steps for becoming a client," Program associate Angela Gardner said. "Even if they do not have a drive to use the facility, there are other ways they can be involved in the project, such as being a volunteer on the project Advisory Board and sharing information about the project to their community."



The Share Grounds will be open for production in 2020. The project is being developed through funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Arkansas Rural Services and the Arkansas Community Foundation. These sites are equipped for small scale produce aggregation and food manufacturing.

Gardner said the project has five goals. The first is to put the kitchens found at fairgrounds — which often have sizeable capacities but are unused much of the year — to work as aggregation centers for local produce, as well as distribution centers and places where value-added products can be developed, all with the intent of increasing access to local foods.

In pursuing this goal, the project administrators hope to support local farms, develop and expand opportunities

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Pursuant to 7 CFR § 15.3, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services (including employment) without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, sexual preference, pregnancy or any other legally protected status, and is an equal opportunity institution.

Share Grounds *(Cont. from page 1)*

for value-added food businesses, foster the growth of regional food economies, and improve access to food in underserved communities and institutions.

To learn about the Share Grounds Kitchen Incubator Project, contact Gardner at agardner@uaex.edu or visit www.uaex.edu/sharegrounds. 

U of A follows turf program research for new stadium grass selection

When the University of Arkansas Razorbacks took the field against Portland State in Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium Aug. 31, they hit the gridiron on new grass.

The athletics department chose a new Bermudagrass variety from Oklahoma that was tested in variety trials conducted by U of A System Division of Agriculture turfgrass scientists. The synthetic turf installed in 2014 was replaced this year a new variety of sports turf — real, live grass — within weeks of the Razorbacks' first game in the stadium. In early 2018, head football coach Chad Morris expressed his desire to go back to real grass.

In response, Pat Berger, director of sports turf operations, said he put together a brief on the pros and cons of going back to real grass. "Synthetic surfaces are harder on the players," Berger said. "Research has shown that playing football on live grass results in fewer injuries to hips and legs. For overall playability, live grass is better," he said.

When Doug Karcher, professor and turfgrass researcher for the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, heard Athletics was considering replacing the synthetic playing surface with real grass, he called Berger. "I said, 'as soon as you pull the trigger on that, let me know, because there's a Bermudagrass you should look at,'" Karcher said.

Karcher and colleague Mike Richardson, professor and turfgrass researcher, and some of their graduate assistants from Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences, conduct ongoing variety testing research for turfgrasses at the Division of Agriculture's Arkansas Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Fayetteville. In 2013, they evaluated about 30 mostly experimental Bermudagrass varieties from breeding programs all over the country.




The University of Arkansas Athletics Department chose a new bermudagrass variety to restore live grass to Razorback Stadium based on a recommendation from Division of Agriculture turfgrass researchers.




Graduate assistant Tyler Carr describes water management research related to turfgrass variety trials during the 2019 Turfgrass Field Day.

Cooperative Extension Retiree Scholarship Donations top \$2,900

I can't say "Thank You" enough to those who made a donation to the CES Retiree Scholarship Fund. This year's donations have surpassed \$2,900. Over the last ten plus years, many of you have faithfully supported this endowment. These donations pushed the endowment balance over \$40,000. The interest generated off of the endowment is used to annually fund the CES Retiree Scholarships awarded each spring. Due to the growth of the endowment, this will allow the opportunity to increase the value of the scholarships awarded each year. Twenty \$500 scholarships have now been awarded over the past ten years to employees pursuing a degree to help them be better UACES employee. I would guess that there are very few places where the retired employees give to a cause to support the employees of their former employer. I commend you for your life long support of the CES Mission! 

– Brian Helms

Tom Mertens, retired Horticulture Program Assistant passes away

Tom Mertens, 76, of Carlisle, passed away suddenly on September 1, 2019. He was preceded in death by his parents, brother and two sisters. Survived by his wife of 54 years, Sara Seidenschwarz Mertens. Tom was a graduate of Stuttgart High School and a member of Carlisle United Methodist Church. At his request, Tom will be cremated and no service will be held. Memorials may made to the Arkansas Museum of the Grand Prairie in Stuttgart or Carlisle United Methodist Church. 


To Our Extension Retirees

I guess I just thought it was hot in August, since September so far is teaching us new meanings for summer heat hanging on. Every year is a new adventure, it seems.

As evidenced by the subject articles in this issue, the Division of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension continue to work to help everybody using research-based information and best management practices, from local communities through the innovative Share Grounds program to turfgrass stakeholders including our own Razorback stadium. We truly are a statewide campus and our folks continue to honor that legacy all of you laid down during your careers. Thank you for the foundation.

And I add my thanks to Brian for the donations to the scholarship fund. I am personally aware of the difference these scholarships have made in the lives of our employees, this is critically important.


I add my condolences for the passing forward of Tom Mertens and send our best thoughts to the family. Please keep this family and all those with recent losses in your thoughts and prayers.

We hope all of you have a great autumn and enjoy the cool fall conditions if they ever come. 



Turf Program *(Cont. from page 2)*

The variety Karcher had in mind for the Razorbacks was OKC1131, a sports turf entry from Oklahoma State University. It was released for commercial use in early 2017 as Tahoma 31. "Tahoma is a Native American word that means 'frozen water,'" Karcher said. "It's a reference to the variety's cold tolerance." From their research, Karcher knew it was well adapted to growing in Arkansas.

The new turf was tested on game day, August 31. After two team practices followed by the game, no divots were found. For now, Tahoma 31 has received a green thumbs up of approval. 

October Birthdays

Mrs. Charlotte Trent, Oct. 1	Mr. Glen Ford, Oct. 10	Ms. Gail B. Torok, Oct. 17
Mrs. Portia Short, Oct. 1	Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts, Oct. 10	Mrs. Mary K. Parker, Oct. 18
Mrs. Pat C. Hayden, Oct. 2	Mrs. Billie Coleman, Oct. 10	Mr. Hugh W. Plumlee, Oct. 19
Mr. Larry Pryor, Oct. 2	Ms. Lorene McGuire, Oct. 10	Ms. Mable Tate, Oct. 19
Mr. Bobby Hall, Oct. 2	Dr. Judith R. Urich, Oct. 11	Mrs. Mary W. Shaver, Oct. 20
Dr. Gerald Klingaman, Oct. 3	Mrs. Armenthia J. Willis, Oct. 12	Mrs. Pam Cannada, Oct. 20
Dr. Frank T. Jones, Oct. 3	Ms. Sue Coates, Oct. 13	Ms. Renee E. Myers, Oct. 20
Mr. Stanley D. Carter, Oct. 3	Mr. Jack Carr Boles Jr., Oct. 13	Mr. James A. Clower, Oct. 21
Dr. Craig Andersen, Oct. 4	Mr. James J. Hood Jr., Oct. 14	Mr. Tommy Riley Jr., Oct. 22
Mr. Jimmie Bowling, Oct. 5	Dr. Richard Poling, Oct. 14	Mr. Mark B. Bryles, Oct. 23
Mrs. Judy M. Riley, Oct. 5	Mr. Carroll R. Prewett, Oct. 15	Ms. Wanda Snyder, Oct. 23
Mr. Lazaro English, Oct. 5	Dr. Tom Troxel, Oct. 16	Mrs. Janice B. Gooch, Oct. 27
Lt. Colonel James R. Lipsey, Oct. 7	Mr. Frank A. Roth II, Oct. 16	Mrs. Janella B. Pugh, Oct. 31
Mrs. Suzanne Wiley, Oct. 8	Mrs. Carolyn A. Meeks, Oct. 17	

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Yes, I want to support the fundraising initiative in support of the Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____. My gift is in honor / in memory of _____.

Name/Address for notification of honorary and memorial gifts:

Please make check payable to the **UA Foundation** and mail to Brian Helms, Development Office, 2301 South University Avenue, Little Rock AR 72204-4940.

Scholarship Donations

The following gifts were received after the August Extension Cord was completed. These gifts will be used to support professional development opportunities for faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service.


Mark Bryles

In Memory of Keith Bilbrey and D.V. Maloch

Beverly Hines

Charlie Parsons

Barbara Singleton

Honorary or memorial donations should be forwarded to the Development Office, ATTN: Brian Helms, Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 South University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204. If joint recognition is desired, please indicate. To ensure that proper notification is sent, please also include in whose honor or memory the gift is made and the mailing address of the person to receive the notification. 

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