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Nov. 1, 2021

**Cooperative Extension Service breaks ground on new Jackson County center**

By Tracy Courage

U of A System Division of Agriculture

**Fast facts**

* Center renamed Jackson County Extension Center
* Center slated to open in late summer 2022

(443 words) *–* (Newsrooms, with art at: [<https://www.flickr.com/photos/uacescomm/albums/72157720137456840/with/51639497523/>])

NEWPORT, Ark. — Construction of the long-awaited Jackson County Extension Center is finally beginning.

Officials with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and Jackson County broke ground Oct. 28 at the site just southeast of Newport where the 4,800-square-foot center will be built. Construction is expected to be complete by late summer or fall 2022. Tom Barber, who has worked with Extension since 2007 as a weed scientist in Crop, Soil and Environmental Science, has served as the center’s director sine 2018.

“This project has been a long time in the making,” said Dr. Bob Scott, director of the Cooperative Extension Service. “It’s a big deal for us to have this center in Jackson County, and it’s an important project for Jackson County.”

Once complete, the center will provide office space for Jackson County extension staff including agents who work in agriculture, family and consumer sciences and 4-H. The center will also have a 120-by-40-foot multiuse room that can accommodate groups of about 60 people.

Planning for the center has been underway for some time but was significantly delayed during the pandemic.

“We have a 245-day plan that allows us a little room should we have supply chain issues,” said Graham Peterson, extension’s director of facilities management. “That’s a real issue that everyone is having right now.”

About 60 people attended the groundbreaking, including University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture personnel, state Rep. Dwight Tosh, Jackson County Judge Jeff Phillips, Jackson County Quorum Court member Tommy Young, Newport Mayor David Stewart and Amagon Mayor Daniel Riley.

The new building, being built at 649 Jackson Road 917, just off U.S. 67/167 near Newport, will be adjacent to the existing building, which will remain in use. The site has been referred to it as simply the “Newport center” based on its location but has been officially renamed the Jackson County Extension Center to more accurately reflect its mission to serve residents countywide.

SCM Architects designed the $1.4 million center, which is a pre-engineered metal building that will have a façade of local stone. Site work will begin soon.

“This is exciting news for us because the work that will be done here is important for our farmers,” County Judge Jeff Phillips said. “We’re blessed to have it here.”

To learn about extension programs in Arkansas, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service agent or visit [www.uaex.uada.edu](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.uaex.uada.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ctcourage%40uada.edu%7C170545727fd44acc98d908d99b073c73%7C174d954f585e40c3ae1c01ada5f26723%7C0%7C0%7C637711277640586371%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=Pp1u7Q2qwimIhqyT9rCK9vQpgF0I1e2y71wye6ejVWQ%3D&reserved=0). Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @AR\_Extension. To learn more about Division of Agriculture research, visit the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station website: [https://aaes.uark.edu](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faaes.uark.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ctcourage%40uada.edu%7C170545727fd44acc98d908d99b073c73%7C174d954f585e40c3ae1c01ada5f26723%7C0%7C0%7C637711277640596327%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=oyUox4ehSFZq5sD4Ahd%2FDHo5yYpDtEuANT2hxkKBEIE%3D&reserved=0). Follow on Twitter at @ArkAgResearch. To learn more about the Division of Agriculture, visit [https://uada.edu/](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fuada.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ctcourage%40uada.edu%7C170545727fd44acc98d908d99b073c73%7C174d954f585e40c3ae1c01ada5f26723%7C0%7C0%7C637711277640596327%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=0mQsrgos%2F3by5AijdIcB2cgQrm6qBfIAMhHtKzMTGPE%3D&reserved=0). Follow us on Twitter at @AgInArk.

**About the Division of Agriculture**

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture’s mission is to strengthen agriculture, communities, and families by connecting trusted research to the adoption of best practices. Through the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service, the Division of Agriculture conducts research and extension work within the nation’s historic land grant education system.

The Division of Agriculture is one of 20 entities within the University of Arkansas System. It has offices in all 75 counties in Arkansas and faculty on five system campuses.

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

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