Preston County Annual Report 2019

Putting Knowledge to Work!

The West Virginia University Extension Service works to provide solutions in your community through key programs and resources, including agriculture and natural resources; 4-H and youth development; food and nutrition; health and wellness; financial planning; and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all Preston County residents thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners, including the Board of Education and County Commission.

Highlights

• Dr. Bill Shockey, WVU Extension agent was awarded a two-year SARE Research & Education grant -- “Obtaining Preventative Veterinary Services in Underserved Areas” to:
  1) educate producers on the value of having a vet-client-patient relationship to keep animals healthy
  2) provide producers tools to attract veterinarian services to underserved areas.

• David Hartley, Extension agent served on the design team for the second year that developed the National Youth Science Day (NYSD) challenge kit that was used by hundreds of thousands of 4-H participants across the nation, including more than 300 youths and educators here in Preston County. This program is in partnership with the National 4-H Council and Google.
• David Hartley serves as director of Older Members Conference (OMC), which serves 347 youths from 47 counties. Preston County had the most youths in attendance (43) out of all counties, statewide.
• Our Extension office works yearlong to assist with the Preston County Buckwheat Festival, including coordination of the 300+ livestock exhibits to the 2,000+ exhibits in Memorial North.

4-H/Youth Development

Increased success in STEM and other academic subjects, leads to positive outcomes for youths as well as a reduction in risky behaviors. Because of their involvement in 4-H activities in Preston County, youth are more likely to obtain well-paying jobs, create businesses and contribute to the health and well-being of their communities.

4-H Camping

• 159 youths attended county 4-H camp.
• 43 youths attended a state 4-H camp.
Preston County received the award for largest delegation at Older Members Conference (43).

**Highlights:**
- One member attended National 4-H Conference.
- One member attended National 4-H Archery Competition.
- More than 40 youths participated in Energy Express, a summer literacy and nutrition program for youths living in low-income and rural communities.
- 205 youths completed 4-H projects, which were exhibited at the Buckwheat Festival.
- 715 take-home science kits were given out during the Buckwheat Festival at the Clover Imagination Zone.

**Agriculture and Natural Resources**

Programs addressed high priority efforts related to youth agricultural education; livestock health; marketing our local food production and farm to table initiatives; educating and working with our Master Gardener volunteers; farm management; and grassland production.

- 173 junior exhibitors sold 293 heads of livestock at the Preston County Buckwheat Festival Youth Livestock Sale, totaling more than $385,545.
- Assisted with an educational program designed to improve access of rural, part-time livestock producers to quality preventative veterinary services. Funding ($67,000 during a 2-year period) has been awarded to conduct research and teaching programs to address the availability of local preventative veterinary services.
- Supported a farmer initiated marketing coalition designed to increase local food consumption of institutional customers. More than $25,000 worth of local food was purchased by local institutional customers such as Preston County Schools and West Virginia National Guard Mountaineer Challenge Academy.
- Master Gardeners reported more than 1,200 volunteer hours to county residents by providing civic organization education, public park design, school science education, public flower care and other activities.

**Families and Health**

Nutrition education encourages youths to try a variety of healthy foods. More than 800 youths were reached through programs such as:

- Over 700 students (pre-K to 8) participated in Rethink Your Drink programming held at West Preston School.
- More than 400 youths (grades pre-K to 8) participated in the Nutrition Education Popup Farmers Market at East Preston School.
- More than 50% of youths reported, in post-program evaluations, liking vegetables and fruits.
- 42 Community Education Outreach Service members provided more than 3,500 hours of service to Preston County communities.