Putnam County Annual Report 2018

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 Putnam 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

- 130 youths attended the annual all-age 4-H camp with 30 adults serving as mentors, chaperones and instructors during the five-day residential camping experience. Kids learn life skills from cooking, fishing, riflery and candle making, as well as team building exercises.
- With the addition of Winfield Elementary (starting in January 2019), we will be annually introducing more than 2,200 Putnam County students to garden-based learning (GBL) and good nutrition.
- The Putnam County Family and Community Development program reached 3,423 participants in 2018 with 69 classes on literacy, child welfare, cooking skills and safety, Dining with Diabetes, food preservation, and healthy relationships.
- Completed two, nine-week classes titled, “Eating Smart Being Active,” with 17 adult participants graduating, and two, six-week "Teen Cuisine" cooking classes for the Putnam Youth Report, which reached 17 teenagers (10 who graduated from the program). Also provided cooking classes for 18 youths during Putnam County 4-H camp.

4-H and/or Youth Development

- More than 800 youths experienced STEM programming this year. These experiences vary from the simple physics of a stomp rocket to making butter and ice cream by shaking the ingredients (then eating their food of labor).
- 30 youths participated in this year’s Haunted Barn fundraiser, which generated more than $2,000. Kids are learning entrepreneurial skills, teamwork, and simple life skills that are not being taught in school or at home. Things like tying knots, sewing, using a hammer properly, plant identification, proper lifting techniques and more. Some youths
experienced hands-on construction in building the haunt, while others enjoyed the thrill of scaring paying customers. There were others who preferred to collect money and manage crowd control.

- A new approach was offered to early education professionals in Putnam County.
  - 50 pre-K through first grade teachers participated in a train-the-trainer hands-on STEM curriculum.
  - 90% placed high value on the training and wished to have continued trainings like this.
  - 5 subject areas were taught and everyone attending received a copy of the curriculum to be taught to students.

**Agriculture and Natural Resources**

- Collectively, garden-based learning (GBL) schools have received more than $4,000 from the Farm to School program for produce they have sold (and eaten) since 2014 to present.
- 71 principals and teachers from seven schools filled out our teacher GBL evaluation survey. Teachers responded that GBL curriculum supports STEM and FOSS “hands-on” learning objectives. Responses included:
  - “Students are excited about tending the garden, and take ownership over their responsibilities in the high tunnel.”
  - “Trying new foods, understanding how fresh foods are healthier choices.”
- WVU Extension Agent Chuck Talbott presented the “Pest Detective” program at the National Youth and Children’s Garden Symposium at Cornell University.
- 9 new master gardeners received training in 2018. Collectively, Putnam County master gardener volunteered 868 hours for community projects.
- Southern Bull Test producers sold 41 bulls for $127,000 ($3,097 average) and 39 heifers for $58,150 ($2054 average).

**Family and Community Development**

- Family and Health agents and staff trained more than 52 community members in chronic disease prevention and healthy eating through our Dining with Diabetes program, as well as general diabetic education and cooking classes.
- More than 200 elementary students from Hometown, Rock Branch, Confidence and George Washington Elementary schools were “introduced” to kale (both raw and cooked) in a JMG taste test. The results showed a positive reaction to a new food that many of them had never tried.
- A plate waste analysis from eight Putnam County schools (618 students) was conducted. The preliminary results show that 14% of the students in GBL schools increased their consumption of kale (>75% consumed), compared to the pre-test survey.
- Eight adults completed the Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS) third semester training. This is a collaboration with the Department of Labor, River Valley Child Care and WVU Extension Service.
Work was completed on a chapter for *Relatives Raising Children* (formally called Grandparenting) on adverse childhood experiences. It will be reviewed and piloted in 2019.