Wetzel 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 Wetzel 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

- A safe and successful Wetzel County 4-H camp for 125 campers was staffed by locally trained and vetted volunteers.
- Children from across the county participated in six weeks of summer learning with Energy Express, and eight young adults received excellent professional development and funding for their college educations.
- In partnership with the Wetzel County Farmers Market Association, both vendors and customers of the Wetzel County farmers market were significantly increased. At the end of the season, our local vendors had earned an estimated total of more than $18,000 in revenue.
- $15,000 in grant money was secured to support Wetzel County FARMacy for 25 qualifying patients to receive locally grown produce for 20 weeks.
- More than 500 Wetzel County children participated in 4-H STEM and computer science lessons.

4-H and Youth Development

Activities:

Camping

- 155 children participated in another safe and successful week of Wetzel County 4-H camp and Cloverbud Day.
- Classes were campers’ favorite part of camp again this year, including archery, outdoor cooking, kayaking, basic survival skills, STEM, fishing and sign language.
- More than 30 volunteers completed WVU vetting and trainings to staff the camp for the week.
- Eight Wetzel County 4-H members participated in state 4-H camps and events.
The WVU Extension Service agent in Wetzel County served as the assistant director for WVU 4-H STEM and agri-STEM camps along with one Wetzel County youth participant.

4-H School-Based Programs

- The focus of this year’s in-school lessons was STEM, computer coding and personal finance.
- 300 youths in Wetzel County participated in computer science lessons as part of the 4-H National Youth Science Day program.
- 80 elementary and 36 high school students completed personal budgeting and career lessons.

Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs

- Our county’s four community 4-H clubs boasted a growing enrollment of more than 75 members.
- Three new volunteer club leaders were added.
- The WVU Extension Service agent in Wetzel County was recognized for excellence in volunteer training with a state award from West Virginia Association of Extension 4-H Agents, a regional award from National Association of Extension 4-H Agents and a national award from Epsilon Sigma Phi.

Special Interest Programs

- The Wetzel County 4-H and FFA livestock clubs continue to grow.
- The livestock sale saw record breaking numbers in 2018, with sales totaling $114,247.14 and more than $10,000 of that money was directed to scholarships.

Energy Express

- Wetzel County Schools demonstrated their continued support of Energy Express and provided more than 40% of funding for the six-week summer literacy program.
- Youths at Long Drain School and Paden City Elementary School participated, and on average, showed positive changes in letter-word identification, reading fluency, passage comprehension and broad reading.
- 52 children were provided with more than 2,000 free meals during the summer.
- Parent support materials developed by the WVU Extension Service agent in Wetzel County were provided to all Energy Express sites in West Virginia.

2018 Highlights:

- Support from EQT provided a STEM ambassador in Wetzel County for two weeks.
- More than 200 Wetzel County children participated in summer STEM programming, including two week-long computer coding “camps.”
- We coordinated with New Martinsville Parks and Recreation, New Martinsville Public Library and Wetzel County Energy Express to include STEM education in their summer programming.

Agriculture and Natural Resources
• We promoted local foods and healthy eating at the Wetzel County farmers market.
• We coordinated with area farmers to support a group growing plan for the Wetzel County FARMacy.
• We partnered with area agricultural organizations to support area farmers and home gardeners. Many questions were answered throughout the year from county residents, providing them with research-based resources without any personal cost.

Family and Community Development

Health and Nutrition:
• We offered nutrition instruction at area elementary schools for children in second to fifth grades, more than 300 children participated in these lessons.
• We offered nutrition instruction at the local farmers market.
• One pop-up Kids Farmers Market was held at New Martinsville School. Children in five classes received free fruits and vegetables which supported local farms.

Economic Development:
• We continued work with the Wetzel County farmers market to increase customers and yearly revenue for local vendors.
• In 2018, we saw an 18% increase in customers at the market and a 9% increase in vendor revenue.
• We secured up to $15,000 grant funding to continue the SNAP matching program in 2019.
• We secured $15,000 in grant funding for Wetzel County FARMacy, which supported 25 low-income patients with free local produce over 20 weeks and employed a FARMacy manager.
• Five area farms worked collaboratively to plan a growing schedule; they reported increased production and income due to FARMacy.
• WVU Extension Service in Wetzel County continued a strong partnership with Wetzel County Center for Children and Families, leading to the successful purchase and remodel of a new building that houses both organizations.