Calhoun 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 Calhoun 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

- Participation in 4-H programming continues to rise. In 2018, camp participation increased by 13 youths (+19%) with 27 first time campers. Club participation increases are requiring the recruitment and vetting of additional 4-H volunteers. Additionally, project completion remained consistent in 2018, but youth enrollment for 2019 suggests this figure will rise even more.

- Calhoun County is considered a Food Desert due to the limited number of outlets from which to access/purchase food within the community. WVU Extension Calhoun County played a large role in obtaining more than $12,000 in grant funding to provide supplemental food to youth and adult populations in the county.

- Extension related programs positively affected the Calhoun County economy in 2018. Energy Express assured summer service positions for seven college-age young adults. These members received living stipends for their service. Additionally, CSA efforts resulted in approximately $350 in additional local produce being purchased for six straight weeks this summer. That is $2,100 going into the economy during that time period.

4-H and Youth Development Activities:

Camping

- Calhoun County hosted a week long residential 4-H Camp for 81 Calhoun County 4-H youths from June 10-15, 2018. The theme for the week was, “The Magical World of 4-H Camp.”

- Additionally, six Calhoun youths attended five different statewide weekend or weeklong camps during the 2018 program year. This included participation in Dance Weekend, Teen
Leader Weekend, Shooting Sports Weekend, Alpha I and Alpha II. As a result, additional youths have mentioned interest in attending a statewide event in 2019 with two additional youths already signed up for the Spring 2019 Dance Weekend.

Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs

- Calhoun maintained all three traditional 4-H Club programs in 2018. This includes clubs on the two edges of the county – Pleasant Hill and West Fork – and a club in Arnoldsburg.
- Youths participants completed 62 total 4-H projects in 2018. This included 24 non-livestock projects completed by 20 different youths.

Special Interest Programs

- Calhoun County has one single special interest program – the Kids and Kritters 4-H Club. This club, which meets January through October, provides programming directly of interest to the 4-H Youth Livestock participants in Calhoun County.

4-H Highlights:

- Camp participation increased by 19% with 13 more campers than the 2017 camping season.
- After being challenged to recruit 20 first-year campers to Calhoun County 4-H Camp for the summer, Calhoun County 4-H program exceeded that goal with 27 first-year campers in attendance.
- Club participation continues to increase in Calhoun County. The West Fork Trailblazers Club had more than 30 members register in October 2018 for the new 4-H year.

Energy Express

- Calhoun County Energy Express enrolled 30 youths (based on 50% attendance) in the six-week reading and nutrition program. An additional 18 youths were served by the program over the course of the summer.
- Energy Express participants and youth volunteers were served 1,722 meals (healthy breakfasts and lunches) during the summer program.
- Thirty-three volunteers provided more than 986 hours of service to the Energy Express program in 2018. The majority of these service hours were provided through direct reading and writing, office responsibility and meal responsibility.

Energy Express Highlights:

- Energy Express resulted in seven college students serving as AmeriCorps Mentors/Community Coordinator. These members received a living stipend and an educational award for their service. In a community with few summer employment opportunities, this service is a highlight!
- Calhoun County Energy Express provided 390 more hours of service than recorded as the statewide site average (593 hours).

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Youth Livestock

- Twenty-nine (29) 4-H youths completed 38 livestock projects for the Calhoun County Livestock Show and Sale in September 2018. All projects shown and sold at the 2018 event were 4-H youth completed projects.

- Sale of all animals grossed $42,675. The Grand Champion Heifer, shown by a first-year 4-H participant, sold for more than $2,992.

Community and School Agriculture and Natural Resource Efforts

- Eight women participated in Annie’s Project, a six-week farm risk management course.

- Garden-based learning programs were implemented at both Pleasant Hill Elementary and Arnoldsburg Elementary. Each child in the school was given one- to two-square feet of garden space to raise a vegetable crop. All crops were harvested and sold back to the school cafeteria to incorporate into school lunches.

Agriculture and Natural Resources Highlights:

- The 2018 Calhoun County 4-H Livestock Show and Sale grossed 37.7% more than the 2017 show -- an increase of $11,687. Additionally, nine more animals were shown and sold in 2018.

- Calhoun County 4-H/FFA Livestock Association is hoping to build a barn in the near future. Livestock resales resulted in $2,44 in funding to go toward that project.

- While WVU Extension assisted in the acquisition of funds for the original school high tunnel projects at Arnoldsburg Elementary several years back, the ANR Agent was directly involved in the successful introduction and implementation of the high tunnels at Pleasant Hill Elementary in 2018.

Family and Community Development

Food Security Efforts

- Through partnership with the local Family Resource Network, WVU Extension Calhoun County helped secure $12,120 to provide supplemental nutrition to youth participants of the Energy Express/Summer Boost Summer Program and seniors within the community.

- The youth program, funded by a $7,120 Parkersburg Area Community Foundation grant, provided a $10 CSA bag for those summer program youth once a week. On average, 35 youths received a $10 CSA bag for all six weeks of the program.

- The senior program, initially funded by the WV FOODLINK/WVU Food Justice Lab, was providing a commodity food box (as well as some additional fresh produce) to 62 senior participants, as of December 2018. The program began in August of 2018.

Other

- Calhoun County maintained their single Community Education Outreach Services club in 2018.
- A four-week Dining with Diabetes course was hosted for Calhoun County community participants in May of 2018. The class had eight people attend all four sessions.

Families and Health Highlights:

- The effect of the senior food box program could be seen in the pre-program surveys. Of the 40 initial participants who completed surveys, 58.5% claim that they have experienced anxiety or worry that they may run out of food. Participants will continue receiving boxes through July 2019; efforts are in place to see the program become an ongoing service to the community.