

'News You Can Use' From the Extension Office

UGA Cooperative Extension in Hall County



Hall County Cooperative Extension provides information and assistance in the areas of:

- Agriculture and the Environment
- 4-H and Youth Development
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Radon Education

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Hall Farmers Market Opens May 6th

Imagine a picnic table filled with platters of food made with fresh produce grown in Georgia. It would be an endless smorgasbord of delicious delicacies fit for a king. At that table, folks would agree, Georgians know how to roll out the red carpet with good wholesome food and fine southern hospitality.

In Georgia and in Hall County, the fruit and vegetable industry is alive and well. Fruits, vegetables, and nuts accounted for \$828 million in farm gate value in 2006, representing almost 10% of all farm products in Georgia. This ranked fruits and vegetables 4th in the state, behind poultry and eggs, row and forage crops, and livestock.

A wide range of commodities are grown right here in Northeast Georgia, including: apples, beans, bell peppers, blueberries, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, grapes, greens, melons, okra, onions, peaches, peas, pecans, pumpkins, snapbeans, strawberries, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes.

While some of these products are sold via wholesale and retail outlets, the Hall County Farmers Market provides local residents a direct line to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. The days of operation for the Farmers Market are Tuesday mornings from 6:30 a.m. until sellout and Saturday mornings from 8:00 a.m. until sellout beginning Tuesday, May 6th. The Market is on the corner of East Crescent Drive and Jesse Jewel Parkway, near I-985 at Exit 24.

While the Farmers Market features many of the traditional veggie favorites, you can also find a nice selection of potted plants, cut flowers, shrubs, locally produced honey, and jams & jellies.

Also, we're always looking for new farmers and vendors. If you have a large garden and would like to make a few extra bucks, you are invited to join as a market member and sell your produce. You'll be greeted by lots of great customers looking for fresh, home-grown items.





Hall County 4-H News & Events

SPRING CHICKEN FESTIVAL – APRIL 26

Come and help us celebrate one of the things that make Gainesville and Hall County great, **CHICKENS!** The 4-H Club and the great folks at KEEP HALL BEAUTIFUL are sponsoring a fun family festival on April 26 in and around the downtown Gainesville Square. 4-H events will be held from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.

The 4-H Club will sponsor a chicken nugget eating contest, a LEGO building contest and an art contest.

There will be a fun “Chicken Coop” where children can hold baby chickens and learn about chicken development. Also, children will be able to enjoy a **FREE** petting zoo and **FREE** pony rides.

We hope you will mark your calendar and plan to bring your family to the Spring Chicken Festival. Please contact us if you have questions.

Judging Teams

The Hall County 4-H Club will have both a Horse Judging and a Poultry Judging Team at the State 4-H contests this year. Each event is held at the University of Georgia.

BB Rifle Team – Competition Season

The Hall County 4-H BB Rifle Team began the competition season with a practice match in Jackson County and an exhibition shoot with our local law enforcement officers called, “Cops & Kids” in March. The team will participate in a state match qualifying shoot in April. Those team members who qualify will continue on and shoot at the State 4-H Target Sports Weekend on May 3rd.

Spring MEGA Yard Sale

The 4-H Exchange will hold the annual 4-H MEGA YARD SALE on Saturday, **May 3rd** at the Hall County Farmers Market. This event benefits the Exchange Club which will be traveling to Minnesota for a week-long exchange with 4-H'ers in St. James area. If you are interested in renting a space so that you may sell things at the MEGA sale, please contact the 4-H office. 770/535-8291.

Summer Camp

4-H Summer Camp is one of the highlights of the year. 5th and 6th graders will attend camp at Rock Eagle 4-H Center June 9-13th and 7th and 8th graders will go to Jekyll Island 4-H Center for their week of camp June 2-6.



Study Links Sleep Deficiencies to Obesity Risk Among Children

A study in the November issue of *Pediatrics* suggests that children who get less sleep may be at increased risk for childhood obesity. They found that shorter sleep duration in third grade and sixth grade correlated with an increased chance of being overweight in sixth grade, regardless of the child's weight in third grade. Roughly 22 percent of children who slept less than nine hours per day were obese by sixth grade, compared with just 12 percent of children who slept 10 to 12 hours daily. In light of the findings, the researchers suggest that increasing children's sleep duration may be a simple approach to obesity prevention. ([Reuters/Yahoo! News](#), 11/5/07; Lumeng et al., [Pediatrics](#), November 2007)



Heart Attack Symptoms are Different for Women

In a survey of nearly 500 women who had heart attacks, 95% reported having new or different symptoms more than a month prior to the attack. Unusual fatigue in the weeks leading up to the heart attack was most common. Others reported having trouble sleeping or being unusually anxious. Just over half the women reported chest pain as a symptom during their heart attacks, while others reported shortness of breath, unusual weakness, fatigue and dizziness. For those women who reported chest pain, the main location was either the back, between or under the shoulder blades or the high chest area. Women are slow to be diagnosed with a heart attack because of the difference in symptoms from men. Take these warning signs seriously.

EFNEP Programming News

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education program (EFNEP) offers free education plus hands-on cooking activities. Sessions are being held at Good News Health Clinics in Gainesville. Participants have sampled healthy versions of sloppy Joe and chicken vegetable salad.

EFNEP, established in 1969, is federally funded and is conducted through Cooperative Extension nationwide. Sessions were recently held at Ninth District Opportunity Butler Head Start.

EFNEP's free lessons on food and nutrition also are available for children and teens, too. More than 20 West Hall High School and Lanier Career Academy students are currently learning about healthy meal choices. Approximately 50 Gainesville High School Family and Consumer Sciences students recently received University of Georgia certificates for completing the program.

Student post-lesson surveys indicate that they're making healthier meal choices. In February, youngsters at Tadmore, Wauka Mountain, Sugar Hill and Myers Elementary schools learned how to decorate their plates with a variety of fruits and veggies. Youth groups, regardless economic background, can schedule sessions.

Information was also distributed to approximately 200 children and adults at the WellCare Winter Wellness Fair and the Ninth District Opportunity Men's Health Fair in Gainesville. Individual lessons are available, too. For more information, contact Sandra Stringer, nutrition educator, at (770) 535-8290 or stringer@uga.edu.



Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County Wins State Award

Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County was awarded the Outstanding Coalition Award at the 2008 Safe Kids Awards Breakfast held at the Georgia Aquarium on Tuesday, Jan. 29, during the 2008 Safe Kids Georgia Leadership Conference. Hall County Cooperative Extension was the first lead agency when Safe Kids was formed in 1992 and served in that capacity for four years.

The Outstanding Coalition Award was granted based on the results of a notable program conducted by the coalition during the past year as well as the coalition's partnerships with community agencies. Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County's award submission featured its lead poison prevention program held in September 2007. The coalition partnered with the Georgia Department of Human Resources Lead Poison Prevention Program to sponsor a continuing medical education program at Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) for healthcare and child safety professionals as well as a toy testing and child blood testing event for the community. The program caught the attention of local, regional and national media, including CNN.



The award submission also highlighted the coalition's partnerships with numerous local agencies to provide education and programs for the community including: the Gainesville and Hall County school systems, the Gainesville Police Department and Hall County Sheriff's Office, Hall County Cooperative Extension, Healthy Families Georgia, the Army Corps of Engineers and Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Gainesville and Hall County fire departments, the Hall County Health Department and Northeast Georgia Medical Center's Emergency Department.

In 2007, members of Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County provided more than 390 programs and events which reached an estimated 41,000 children, teachers, parents and caregivers and distributed more than 5,600 safety devices to families in need including:

734 infant, toddler and booster seats; 496 smoke alarms; 137 carbon monoxide alarms; 2,777 bike helmets; 400 life jackets; 13 exersaucers; 11 cribs; 22 sets of cabinet latches; more than 1,000 outlet plug covers; and 12 baby gates.

This is the fourth state award Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County has brought home. In 2001, the coalition won the Coalition of the Year Award and the Outstanding Program Award for its Helmet Safety Campaign. In 2000, Northeast Georgia Medical Center and Health System was awarded the Joy Maxey Lead Agency Award. Safe Kids Gainesville/Hall County has also won two national awards: the 2001 Outstanding Lead Agency Award and the 2003 Coalition of the Year Award, both from Safe Kids Worldwide.

Shake Your Salt Habit

The average American consumes about 6 to 18 grams of salt daily. That's roughly one to three teaspoonsful. Your body actually needs only about 0.5 grams of salt (0.2 grams [200 mg] sodium [Na]) each day.

Reducing the amount of sodium you consume may help you reduce or avoid high blood pressure. That's important because people with high blood pressure are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke. These diseases are the No. 1 and No. 3 killers in the United States today.



Lunch & Learn Gardening Series at Hall County Library

Sponsored by: Hall County Extension, Hall County Master Gardeners & Hall County Library System
 Wednesday's 12:00 -1:00 pm Library Main Headquarters -127 Main Street, Gainesville, GA 30501

March 19

Frank Bailey, *Mountain View Gardens in Dahlonega*
Landscaping with Wildflowers and Native Plants

April 2

Pat DeNote, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Indoor Plants

April 16

Helen Hyatt, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Waterwise Georgia Garden

April 30

Mary Wenger, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Growing and Propagating Hydrangeas

March 26

Elaine Kelley, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Plant Propagation

April 9

Fran Henry, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Gardening for Birds and Butterflies

April 23

Janelle Whalen, *Hall County Master Gardener*
Kitchen Gardens

For more information, visit
www.hcmgs.com.



Radon is a Silent Killer!

Ginger Bennett, the UGA Radon Educator working out of the Hall County Extension Office, has encountered a lot of folks asking if radon causes a variety of symptoms, from radiation poisoning to asthma. Some of the questions may have been triggered by an episode of Extreme Homes that repeatedly stated that radon caused respiratory problems and asthma in the children living in that episode's home. Extreme Homes even went so far as to blow up the house before rebuilding it. (FYI: homes can be easily fixed for radon; you don't have to blow it up!)

Radon, an odorless, tasteless, invisible radioactive gas, is called a silent killer because it causes no symptoms until the lungs are so damaged that lung cancer has begun to develop. If you breathe in radon-laced air, the DNA in your lung cells is permanently damaged. After several years, this growing damage can lead to the development of lung cancer.

We have enough data to know that radon causes lung cancer. In fact, radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Though a variety of studies are under way to see if radon causes other health problems, not enough data has been amassed to prove that it does.

Radon is a problem in Hall County and all of north Georgia. One in four homes, 25 percent, have tested high for radon. Testing your home is the only way to know if your family is at risk for developing lung cancer from breathing radon. You may pick up a complimentary, easy-to-use radon test kit at the Hall County Extension Office.

An estimated six hundred Georgians die of radon-related lung cancer each year. Isn't it time you took action to protect your family from exposure to this deadly radioactive gas? Test your home today. If your test results reveal a high level of radon, enlist the help of a NEHA or NRSB certified radon mitigation professional. If you are building a new home, call Ginger Bennett to find out about how to make your new home radon-resistant. Call her today at (770) 535-8290 or email her at bennettg@uga.edu.





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***SPRING GARDEN
EXPO - APRIL 11-12
CHICOPEE WOODS
AG CENTER***

DON'T MISS IT!

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