

'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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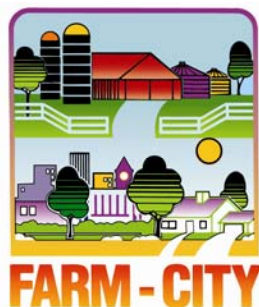
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Hall County Farm City Breakfast – November 19, 2009

American farmers and ranchers literally help feed the world by producing a bounty of agricultural products. To do this, they rely on essential partnerships with urban and suburban communities to supply, sell and deliver finished products across the country and around the globe.

Rural and urban communities working together have made the most of our nation's rich agricultural resources as they contribute to the health and well being of our country and to the strength of our economy.

For many years communities across the nation have recognized National Farm City Week, the third week in November. During the week, local farmers, and those working in agriculture and agribusiness, are honored to encourage the building of strong relationships between our rural and urban community and our city businesses and leaders.



On November 19th, Hall County Cooperative Extension and the Greater Hall Chamber hosted the annual Hall County Farm City Week Breakfast at the East Hall Community Center. This year's Farm City Week Breakfast speaker was Mr. Gary Black. Black is the President of the Georgia Agribusiness Council, Inc., the State's broad based trade association for the food and fiber industry.

Black's message was entitled "Looking Forward through the Rearview Mirror". He spoke of the importance of agriculture and agribusiness to the local and statewide economy, and he stressed that as we move forward we should not forget those agricultural pioneers who came before us.

Sponsors of the event included: Jackson EMC, Ag Georgia Farm Credit, Crystal Farms, Jaemor Farms, Hall County Farm Bureau, Hall County Soil & Water Conservation District, Mar-Jac Poultry and United Community Bank, and Fieldale Farms.

From L to R:
Billy Skaggs, CEC, Hall County Extension, Gary Black, guest speaker, David Lee, Jackson EMC, breakfast sponsor, and Drew Echols, Jaemor Farms.





Hall County 4-H News & Events

What is 4-H Project Achievement?

4-H Project Achievement is a cornerstone in the Georgia 4-H program. From the first Boys Corn Club sharing their crop to today's presentations and portfolios on hundreds of topics, Project Achievement serves to showcase 4-H'ers work and success.

All **5th and 6th grade students** living in Hall County are invited to participate in County Project Achievement which will be held on **January 26**. The countywide speech and performance contest is held at Riverbend Elementary and will begin at 6:00 pm.

Students who choose to participate should prepare a speech no longer than six minutes on a subject of their choice, make a poster that goes along with the speech and bring an item to share or show that is related to their topic. Ribbons are awarded at the county level contest.



Cloverleaf District Project Achievement is held in March. Please contact the 4-H office for complete details and subject areas.

Junior and Senior 4-H'ers must pre-qualify for District Project Achievement by submitting a portfolio to the 4-H office on or before **January 5th**. Any 7th through 12th grader who is interested in participating should contact the 4-H office immediately so that project work can begin. The speech and performance contest for Junior and Senior 4-H'ers is in March and is held at Rock Eagle 4-H Center.

If you would like to learn more about Project Achievement, please visit the Georgia 4-H website at www.georgia4h.org.

Target Sports

The competition is about ready to "fire-up" for the Hall County **BB Rifle Team and .22 Rimfire Team**. The Hall County 4-H shooting sports teams will host a practice match for 1st and 2nd year shooters on **January 30th** at the Chicopee Woods Agricultural Center. The event is free for spectators. Teams from nearby counties will compete and get valuable practice time as the shooting season begins. Hall County 4-H'ers will compete in a practice match, a district match and a state qualifying match in the early months of 2010.

The Hall County 4-H Club invites youth ages 9-19 years old and their families to the **outdoor archery range** in Gillsville. **New members are always welcome**. Members walk an outdoor range and shoot at field targets as well as three-dimensional animal targets. **Equipment is available to use at no cost**. Please call 770.535.8291 if you are interested in more information.



Summer Camp Registration

4-H Summer Camp registration
Friday, February 26 7:00 am – 6:00 pm
at the 4-H office.
Call 770.535.8291 for more details.

Come join us for an amazing summer camp experience!



www.hallcounty4hclub.org

National Radon Action Month

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated January as National Radon Action Month. Communities all over Georgia are leading activities and hosting special events to raise awareness of the health effects of radon exposure, promote testing and mitigation, and advance the use of radon resistant new construction.

Radon, a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas, is formed by the natural radioactive decay of uranium in rock, soil, and water. Low levels of uranium occur widely in the Earth's crust and can be found in all 50 states. Unless you test for it, there is no way of knowing how much is present. One out of four homes in our area have radon levels above the EPA's action level of 4 pCi/L. Radon causes over 800 deaths each year in Georgia.



Ginger Bennett, Radon Educator for this area, is eager to provide informative programs for Hall County organizations, associations, employee groups and students. Perhaps your neighborhood association would be interested in learning about radon. To schedule a radon program, contact Ms. Bennett at 770-535-8290 or bennettg@uga.edu.

You may purchase a radon test kit at the Hall County Extension office for \$5 or download an order form at www.gafamilies.com/radon to purchase a kit for \$6.50 by mail.

As more homes are tested for radon and mitigated, fewer people will be exposed and as a result cancer risk will be decreased. Spread the word; start now to prevent Georgians from unnecessary exposure to radon and increased risk of lung cancer. Call Ginger Bennett to find out how you can help spread the radon story in Hall County.

EFNEP Receives 1st Place Educational Award

Food Talk, a free cooking school offer by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, is making national news.

The program recently received the **First Place Educational Curriculum Package award** in the Southern Region and Nationally by the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Food Talk, part of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), combines nutrition education with fun activities. Participants sample quick and healthy recipes such as Fiesta Quesadillas, Famous Fried Rice and Turkey and Curly Noodles.

Locally, more than 500 youth and adults have graduated from the program.

Looking for a new outreach program for parents? Food Talk is a great resource for schools, places of worship, day care centers, youth groups, families and non-profit agencies. Adult participants receive an official University of Georgia certificate and Food Talk cookbook upon completion of their lesson series.

We've held sessions for East Hall Middle School, Family Ties, Habitat for Humanity, Chestatee High School, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Flowery Branch, Gainesville High School and Ninth District Opportunity Head Start Pre-K students at Tadmore, Myers, Wauka Mountain and Sugar Hill elementary schools.



A parent stirs Creamy Pineapple Pudding during a cooking class.

Food Talk is a free cooking school available to area students and parents.

We're currently continuing sessions with Greater A Manger Community Outreach Center and Flowery Branch Elementary.

Our partnership with the Georgia Mountain Food Bank Munch Bunch program is continuing at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hall County.

Great nutrition education and recipes are just a call or e-mail away. Contact: Sandra Stringer, (770) 535-8293 or stringer@uga.edu.

Have a Happy and Affordable Christmas

Do not allow a tight budget or the lack of material gifts to sabotage your enjoyment of the holiday season. Here are some tips to help you avoid the anxiety of overspending in time and money.

Set a spending limit - Determine the amount you can afford to spend during the holidays and stick to it. Include not only gift purchases but also holiday parties, food at home and away from home, postage, recreational activities and travel. Set a limit on the number of gifts for each child or set a dollar amount to spend on each child. Remember you don't show your love by the amount of money you spend. Show your love by the amount of time you spend with that person.

Make a gift list - Homemade gifts such as baked goods or special cards may be more appropriate for neighbors, teachers and service providers. Drawing names and group gifts for special family members are usually less costly ways of giving.



Buy with cash or check only - Research shows that consumers spend less when paying with cash or check rather than credit cards. Charging holiday purchases on high interest credit cards results in repaying the amount borrowed for several years.

Start new traditions that are free or inexpensive - Replace the emphasis on gift giving with other enjoyable activities. Many communities sponsor activities such as church concerts, tree lighting ceremonies, parades and holiday lighting tours.

Be thoughtful in your gift giving - Ask yourself why you are purchasing the gift. Some reasons may be to convey that this person is important to you or that this person has had a positive influence on your life, or you may want to give to someone who is truly in need. Do not get caught up in the "culture of spending" without regard to your family's needs after December. Gifts include giving of your time and talents.

Avoid impulse buying - Shop early to allow time to comparison shop. Plan ahead and decide on the items you can afford to buy before the sales begin. Do not spend money you need for necessities on items just because they are on sale. If you lack control, stay home.



Diabetes Life Lines Newsletter

Diabetes Life Lines is a bi-monthly publication brought to you by your local county Extension office. Inside this issue of Diabetes Life Lines discover the best way to stay motivated to follow treatment plans, Mediterranean Diet May Reduce Need for Diabetes Medicines and more. Read the latest Diabetes Life

Lines Newsletter: www.columbusga.org/Cooperative_Extension/downloadable_forms/09/diabetes.pdf



Access flu.gov. Provided by the Department of Health & Human Services

Hall County Extension Receives Recognition for PRIDE Program

Hall County Cooperative Extension was recently recognized for Outstanding Community Service by the Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute. This Top Program Honor was presented to Hall County for reaching the third highest number of families in the state of Georgia in 2008 with the Georgia Teens Ride with PRIDE (Parents Reducing Injuries and Driver Error) program. Debbie Wilburn, County Agent was recognized as an Outstanding Instructor.



The next **free** PRIDE class for 14-16 year olds and their parents or guardians will be on **January 4, 2010** from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Gainesville State College. For more information or to register please email Debbie Wilburn at dwilburn@uga.edu. The class is filling quickly; please respond ASAP!



The Hall County Extension Office Master Gardener program just accepted 27 excited and enthusiastic applicants for the upcoming 2010 Master Gardener program starting on January 5, 2010.

This is a rewarding and enriching series of classes that trains the Master Gardener intern to become more knowledgeable about gardening in

Hall County, where they can fulfill the mission of supporting and informing the community around them.

In Hall County, over 170 active Master Gardeners are involved in school education, public speaking, plant expos and gardening projects around the County.

~ Wanda Cannon
Hall County Master Gardener Coordinator

**For more information, visit
www.hcmgs.com**

Holidays aren't complete without a Fresh-Cut Tree!

Is it just me or is the Christmas season beginning earlier each year? Personally, I would like to at least finish Trick or Treating before I begin thinking about Christmas. But whether you've got your shopping wrapped up or haven't even started, Christmas is upon us whether you're ready or not!



In many households, the holiday season doesn't begin until the entire family loads up for a trip to the local lot or tree farm to pick out their tree. The scent of a real tree is an integral part of the Christmas season. It's estimated that over 40 million families will celebrate Christmas with a fresh-cut tree.

To ensure a safe and happy holiday season, the

Georgia Christmas Tree Association has a few tips on care and recycling of fresh Christmas trees.

* If buying from a pre-cut tree lot, do a freshness test. Gently grasp a branch between your thumb and forefinger and pull it toward you. Very few needles should come off in your hand if the tree is fresh. Shake or bounce the tree on its stump. You should not see an excessive amount of green needles fall to the ground. Some loss of interior brown needles is normal and will occur over the lifetime of the tree.

* Once you've chosen your tree, keep it in a sheltered, unheated area such as a porch or garage to protect it from the wind and sun until you are ready to set it up and decorate it.

* In caring for a fresh-cut tree, the most important thing to remember is that real trees need water - just like a fresh bouquet of flowers.

* Make a fresh cut across the base of the trunk, 1/4 inch up from the original cut. When a tree is first cut, a seal of sap occurs naturally over its stump which keeps moisture in the tree. It's important to break that seal to allow the tree to take up water needed to keep it fresh throughout the holidays.



* Until you are ready to decorate, keep your tree outdoors, standing in a bucket of water and protected from the wind and sun. This will help the tree retain its moisture.

* Keep plenty of water in your stand. A Christmas tree may absorb a gallon of water in the first 24 hours it's up and between two pints to a gallon of water a day thereafter. Check the stand daily and supply fresh water as needed.

* In addition, keep your tree away from heat and draft sources like fireplaces, radiators and television sets. Test your light cords and connections before hanging them on the tree to make sure they're in good working order. Don't use cords with cracked insulation or broken or empty sockets. Also, be sure to unplug the lights before you go to bed or leave the house. Never overload electrical circuits.



*UGA Cooperative Extension
in Hall County*

Hall County Cooperative Extension
734 East Crescent Drive, Suite 300
Gainesville, Georgia 30501

Phone: (770)535-8293

Fax: (770)531-3994

www.hallcounty.org/extension



- Billy Skaggs, County Extension Coordinator , ANR Agent
bskaggs@uga.edu or bskaggs@hallcounty.org
- Debbie Wilburn, County Extension Agent, FACS
dwilburn@uga.edu
- Judy Tilford, County Extension Agent, 4-H/Youth
jtilford@uga.edu
- Ginger Bennett, Radon Educator bennettg@uga.edu
- Roxanne Hulsey, 4-H Program Assistant rhulsey@uga.edu
- Ruth Alligood, 4-H Program Assistant ruthalli@uga.edu
- Wanda Cannon, Horticulture Program Assistant
wcannon@hallcounty.org
- Sandra Stringer, EFNEP Program Assistant
stringer@uga.edu
- Becky Rogers, Extension Secretary brogers@uga.edu

**UGA Cooperative Extension
734 East Crescent Dr., Suite 300
Gainesville, GA 30501**