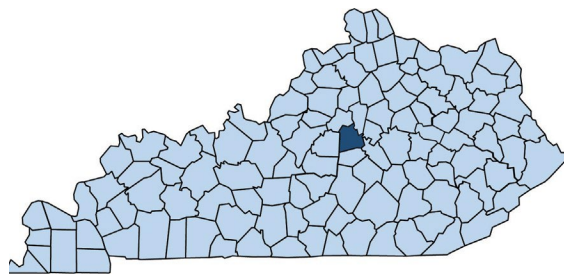


REPORT TO THE PEOPLE



Mercer County 2022



DID YOU KNOW... Mercer County will be celebrating its 250th anniversary in 2024?



<https://harrodsburg250th.com/>

HISTORY
ADVENTURE
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Website: mercer.ca.uky.edu



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4-H Youth Development



Investment in Youth participant showing project at the Mercer County Fair.

164

Number of hours of youth or adult education provided in county.

398

Number of youth who gained an understanding of the role of agriculture in the production of food, fiber and wood products.

Entrepreneurial skills are not taught in the traditional school classroom. To equip our youth, the Mercer County 4-H program offered them the opportunity to sell 4-H market livestock and country hams at the **Investment in Youth Sale**. Program objectives include how to engage in a contract and understand requirements to participate. Participants are required to learn networking, marketing techniques and identify potential buyers. Students have become equipped with the mindset they can be successful, more engaged and take ownership of their success. The program also provided a mechanism to promote agriculture and cooperative extension outside traditional extension clientele. Youth learned skills with their projects, and also improved personal communication skills, problem-solving, teamwork, and critical thinking skills. The 2022 program had 8 livestock participants and 26 country ham youth who sold their projects for \$49,658.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

As the percent of the population involved in agriculture continues to decrease, the Mercer County Agriculture Advisory Council among other groups continue to prioritize the need to educate others on where their food, fiber, and fuel comes from. The ANR agent actively seeks out ways to continue programming based on past successes while also working to identify ways to reach new audiences. This year the agent taught sessions at 4-H **day camps about beef production**, beef cuts and non-food related products we use from cattle. Students learned a variety of information on beef cattle production through interactive games from the KY Agriculture & Environment in the Classroom curriculum and other resources.

In addition, the agent continues to coordinate with the school (grades preschool-2nd) on the annual FarmSCool program which helps educate students about various agriculture commodities and food ranging from grains to meat and more. Other related programs the agent is involved with includes the 6th grade safety day and 3rd grade Ag Day.



ANR agent teaching a session during FarmSCool Farmin' on the Playground day.

2500

Number of clientele increasing agriculture awareness due to Extension programming.

1100

Number of people who increased knowledge of farm health and safety practices.

Family and Consumer Sciences



Craft camp participants show off their completed projects.

8800

Number of hours KEHA members volunteered in community activities and events.

53

Number of individuals who practice effective parenting skills and improved parenting skills.

Horticulture

Insects are all around us, whether you like them or not! Insects play a major role in our lives when it comes to food production and the environment. The Mercer County Extension Agent for Horticulture started a new summer day camp called **Insect Quest**. This day camp was designed to teach youth about the importance of insects while at the same time gaining the skills to properly identify insects for entomology projects for the county and state fair. The real success of this day camp was not the collections submitted, but that this day camp has led to the creation of a new 4-H club. The horticulture agent now leads a monthly insect club. The club is dedicated to teaching the members the importance of insects in our environment, giving them the skills to work on entomology fair projects, and sparking their interest to have a career in an environmental or entomology field someday. Club activities range from in class hands-on sessions to challenges with youth raising their own insects.



Insect Quest attendees work on their insect collections for possible submission to the county and state fair.

80

Number of Master Gardener hours completed in county.

275

Number of people who gained knowledge in consumer and home horticulture.

Heritage Craft Camp, formerly Fort Harrod Area Craft Camp, has been around for almost 50 years. The program has gone through several changes including changing locations with the most recent and final being Boyle County. One thing that has remained steadfast is the purpose of the program. The Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association (KEHA) used this program to encourage new members to join, start clubs, and teach heritage skills. This multi-day event consists of hands-on craft classes, leadership development and relationship building. Research has shown health benefits to participating in activities like those offered. This year was exceptional with the development of a new rug hooking club and several new members joining the Fort Harrod Area Homemakers. One change offered this year was moving from COVID-19 virtual programming to hybrid which allowed accommodation of both in person and virtual audiences. Evaluations conducted covered class specific questions, impact of classes, and general observations from the program. Virtual options and changing to daytime event accommodated a wider audience.

Nutrition Education

Mercer County Senior Nutrition Education Program Assistant partnered with Mercer County Elementary Family Resource Center to conduct an afterschool program (**Foodie Friends**) for K-2 students using the LEAP curriculum. Each month, the NEP would read a story containing information about healthy foods to assist the children in learning to identify different foods. MyPlate was shown so they could learn what food group each food belonged to. Handwashing lessons were presented so the children could learn the importance of why and when to wash their hands. A game would be played so the children could get physical activity each time. The NEP provided a snack to assist the children in learning to identify what food group each snack belonged in on MyPlate. The children were encouraged to check each meal they ate to see if they were eating a variety of different food groups. Each month, the children were introduced to a new food to try to see if they would like it such as sliced sweet potato. 100% tried the food each month with 90% of the class stating they liked each food item. Additionally, 90% stated they would like to have the food again.



Students participating in Foodie Friends preparing their snacks for the day.

119

Number of children and youth that improved their abilities to select foods based on federal dietary guidelines.

96%

Children and youth improved their ability to prepare simple, nutritious, affordable recipes.

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