

EXTENSION *Today*



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

CYFAR REACHES NEW EXTENSION AUDIENCES

By Randy Weckman

Kentucky's Children, Youth and Families at Risk program, funded for five years by a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant, made a decided impact on the communities it served. And it continues to serve the entire state even after the special funding ended.

CYFAR, as the program is usually referred to, had two main goals: to build the capacity of the Cooperative Extension Service to reach out to audiences that were underserved; and to bring educational programs to those new audiences in targeted communities. And the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service reached both goals admirably.

To help build the capacity of the Cooperative Extension Service to work with CYFAR clientele, an educational library for Extension agents to use in programs for the clientele was established. In addition, agents throughout the state were trained on how to involve CYFAR clients in the program development process.

Seven Target Counties

The CYFAR program engaged these formerly "hard-to-reach" families; more importantly, it continues to work with them. The program, administered by Extension offices in seven target counties, offered a variety of new programs to audiences previously underserved by Extension.

- **Boyd County** – an after school program involves youth in creative arts. The young people used their skills to enhance their community.
- **Floyd County** – a special tutorial program helps youngsters with learning

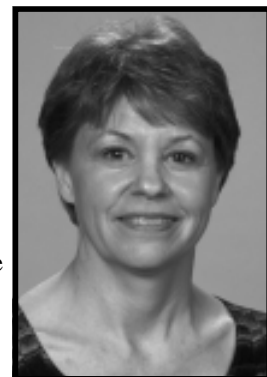


differences excel in school.

- **Madison County** – a grandparenting program helps improve the communication between grandparents and grandchildren. Many of the grandparents have primary responsibility for their grandchildren.
- **Boyle County** – the CYFAR program works with local businesses to develop "family friendly" policies and also works with displaced fathers – fathers who don't live with their children – to assist them in being effective, nurturing fathers to their children.
- **Campbell County** – Cooperative Extension agents and assistants developed a highly successful single-parent support group program that provides a continuing stream of educational materials to single parents.
- **Edmonson County** – a program involves older youth mentoring younger children. The older youth encourage the younger ones to complete homework assignments, become better students and stay in school.
- **Graves County** – the CYFAR program works with a local low-income housing authority to promote healthful lifestyles for children. The program also developed an enrichment program for children in the county.

"In addition to funding excellent programs for this clientele, the CYFAR program also linked agents working with at-risk clientele across the nation.

The national program provided Internet connections among all the CYFAR programs so that agents could gain knowledge from other specialists, agents, and assistants who were developing similar programs," said Janet Kurzynske, Extension specialist in family and consumer sciences who served as project director.



The program also sponsored a set of workshops for agents to attend to gain certification for working with children, youth, and families.

"Six of the seven programs are continuing with local funding. Through Centers of Excellence workshops, the agents responsible for the programs shared with other agents in the state what they had learned. This sharing included learned experiences about collaboration building with agencies and businesses, development of grant-funded grass roots programs, and engagement of underserved audiences. Thus, the program will continue to help agents reach new audiences who need Extension's services," Kurzynske said.

From Across the Commonwealth

Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service programs are locally defined and locally administered. Here are a few examples of county Extension programs that are making a real difference in people's lives.

How Now, Brown Cow Doesn't Give Brown Milk?

Garrard County is fast becoming a bedroom community and its residents are becoming removed from its heritage of farming. To help young people know about where their food comes from before they purchase it in a supermarket, the **Garrard County Cooperative Extension Service** initiated "Agriculture and You" Day for young people. More than 500 young people learned about how farmers provide a continuous stream of wholesome foods.

Quality Child Care

Parents with small children are increasingly concerned about the quality of day care in their communities. The **Fulton County Cooperative Extension Service** provided an



intensive training course for child-care providers. During the 18-hours of instruction, 32 child-care workers were taught how to keep young children safe and secure. Topics addressed included counteracting conflict, stress management, discipline without punishment, and selecting age-appropriate activities.

Better Beef

Grazing warm and cool season grasses appropriately means more beef per acre. To achieve better beef, the **Monroe County Cooperative Extension Service** hosted an all-day mini-school on grazing. The 21 beef producers attending learned about grazing, parasite control in the cattle and how to use temporary watering systems for their herds.

Fighting Violent Youth Crimes

Two-thirds of violent youth crimes occur from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. To combat youth crime in their county, the **Wayne County Cooperative Extension Service** helped local leaders gain support for a Community/Youth Center to help the teens have opportunities to avoid being out on the street and to learn positive behaviors. The nearly 12,000-square-foot structure contains a distance learning facility, private video conference room, a gymnasium, and a multi-purpose room for the young people. The Extension agents were especially useful to the community in researching and planning the youth center.

Food, Fun, and Fitness

Consumers increasingly recognize the interplay between nutrition, diet, and health. The **Boone County Cooperative Extension Service** sponsored Fun, Food, and Fitness camp, a three-day weekend camp focusing on women's health issues. The seventy-four women learned about reducing stress, improving nutrition, and increasing activity to reduce the incidence of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. Ten weeks later, the participants were surveyed to see what changes they had made in their lifestyles. Seventy percent indicated they had increased their activity level, 40 percent reduced their fat intake, 30

percent increased their fiber intake, and 20 percent improved their meal planning.

Developing Management Skills for Greater Profits

Farm families are facing the economic crunch of low farm prices and higher farm expenses. The **Webster County Cooperative Extension Service** collaborated with county agriculture lenders, agribusinesses, and marketing specialists to teach farm families about commodity outlooks and opportunities in agriculture. The 45 farm family members attending learned to communicate within the family about farm finances and how to prepare budgets for the farm and the farm family. A follow-up survey found that 90 percent of the participants used the information from the workshop to understand farm family finances and improve their budgets.

Boxed Curricula = Big Hit

Boxed curricula provide packaged, one-stop shopping for teachers in the Bracken County School system. Developed by the **Bracken County Cooperative Extension Service**, these boxed curriculum programs include environmental science, government, workforce preparation, rocketry, embryology, space science, food and nutrition, parenting, and conflict resolution. Teachers used these 4-H materials to reach 506 students in their classes. Teachers report that students involved in the 4-H boxed curriculum program are gaining higher competencies in reading and science.

Master Gardeners in Boyd County

The **Boyd County Cooperative Extension Service's** Master Gardener program is an important part of the community. The well-trained volunteers

in the program designed – and now maintain – a hospital garden. The garden is used for therapy and patient education. Hospital personnel report that the garden is also being used by the public as a place of meditation. In addition, the volunteers re-landscaped the grounds of Hope's Place, a shelter for abused spouses and children.

Practical Living Skills

Seeing a need to educate young people about practical living skills, the **Lee County Cooperative Extension Service**, along with parents and school leaders, organized and taught a practical living program for third grade students. In the eight-month program, the youngsters learned skills such as proper hand washing, horticulture, and basic cooking. They also learned to work in teams, and each child took a turn at being the team's leader. Teachers reported that the children's new leadership skills resulted in better behavior in the classroom.

Good Eats, Locally Produced

The Ohio Valley Harvest Festival, sponsored by the **Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service**, gave more than 13,000 Louisvillians



something to sink their teeth into. More than 50 producers selling their farm-based goods were paired side-by-side with more than 40 restaurateurs preparing samples of foods using the farmers' fresh produce. Relationships that developed as a direct result of their partnerships have resulted in direct sales to restaurants for more than a third of the farmers involved; and more than a dozen restaurants involved now feature Kentucky fresh produce on their menus.

Magic in Leadership

Leaders of the **Clay County Cooperative Extension Service** Council identified the need to enhance local leadership. As a result, the agents developed the Magic in Leadership program to help local government organizations, civic clubs, church groups, and others polish their leadership acumen. Program presenters included local leaders. The 49 participants learned to conduct effective meetings and to recruit volunteers.

Public Speaking Skills For Youth

It is often true that youngsters who are afraid to give a public speech grow up to be adults who are afraid to give a public speech. But not in Lyon County, anymore. Through the **Lyon County Cooperative Extension Service**, 95 elementary school 4-H'ers learned to be less nervous about public speaking. Each 4-H'er learned to choose a speech topic, research the topic, develop a speech outline, and then deliver the speech in an interesting and effective manner. Of the 95 participating, 87 said they liked giving a speech and 51 percent reported reduced anxiety in speech making as a result.

Using Food Stamps More Wisely

The **Washington County Cooperative Extension Service** presented a series of programs to 177 residents of a local housing project. The program, Kentucky Gets Foodwise, taught the participants how to purchase and prepare nutritious, low-cost meals. They also learned techniques of using appliances

more effectively in preparing family meals. The director of the housing authority said that the program was the most successful program presented during her 15-year tenure.

Keeping Food Fresh and Safe

The potential of bacteria reaching dangerous levels in foods is high, unless the foods are handled properly. The **Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service** provided volunteers of a local food bank with training to help them ensure that the food they handle stays safe. The 42 volunteer "food handlers" reported that the training helped them improve their food handling savvy, especially in terms of food preparation, cooking, cooling procedures, cross contamination, personal hygiene, and storage.



Extension in Key Role

The Cooperative Extension Service is playing a key role in the implementation of Phase I and Phase II of tobacco settlement programs.

Phase II, now in the second of its 12 years, is the settlement worked out with U.S. tobacco companies and tobacco producing states that compensates quota owners, producers, and tenants for their loss of income caused by the national tobacco settlement. In the first year, \$112.7 million was allocated to Kentucky. County Extension agents, along with Farm Service Agency staff, were and continue to be very involved in making farmers aware of the settlement, holding informational meetings, and assisting them in the completion of application forms.

As a result of these intensive efforts, in the first year (1999), 96 percent of Kentucky Phase II forms were completed and returned in the initial response while incurring an administrative cost of only

\$700,000. That means that due to the efforts of Extension and FSA, in Kentucky most all of the money available was put in the hands of farm families as it was intended. In contrast, North Carolina had a lower initial response even though that state had an overhead cost of \$4 million.

Phase I is the Master Settlement Agreement between the cigarette manufacturers and 46 states that compensates the states for smoking-related expenses. Kentucky is due to receive \$3.45 billion over 25 years from this source. The General Assembly allocated about \$180 million of those funds to agriculture in the first biennium, 65 percent to be distributed by a state agricultural development board and 35 percent by county councils.

With the statute specifying that the Director of Extension will be on the state board and that county Extension agents will provide administrative support to county agricultural development councils,

Extension will be playing important roles in implementation in both the state and county aspects of Phase I.

These assignments have already consumed – and will continue to consume – considerable time and effort, but they are critically important to producers, families, and rural communities. We want the Cooperative Extension Service to be actively involved in planning for the future economic well being of rural communities in the Commonwealth. The opportunity for this investment in Kentucky agriculture is unprecedented and I am pleased that the Cooperative Extension Service has a key leadership role.



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