

# NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WARREN COUNTY CENTER 2020 IMPACT REPORT



## Livestock and Field Crops

In 2020, Warren County's No Till Drill was available for its first year of use to farmers of the county. In this year, it was leased 20 times and was used on almost 300 acres. The drill also brought approximately \$2,300.00 back into the county through lease payments. By using this piece of equipment, producers were able to plant crops/forages while maintaining up-to-date land conservation techniques, as well as increasing their knowledge of land management practices through working with their Agent.

## LOCAL FOOD RESOURCES AND MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck and supplies of certain grocery products became limited, the level of interest in home food production rose substantially. The need for training and technical assistance was significant and Cooperative Extension responded with a comprehensive effort. This included articles and tips distributed via social media and other means; seed/plant giveaways by the Local Food Council; a Weekly On-line Chat with the Master Gardener volunteers; on-line classes, and; direct technical assistance via phone and email. These efforts reached hundreds of individuals and families seeking information on successful home production of fruits and vegetables. A major component of our outreach effort was a series of virtual Backyard Ag classes conducted by the Agriculture, Small Farms, and Horticulture agents spanning a period of several months, in collaboration with Agents from surrounding counties. This workshop series reached home gardeners and small farmers from outside of North Carolina, and participating staff earned an award from Epsilon Sigma Phi.



During 2020, the Warren County 4-H program's 126 youth increased their knowledge of life skills (decision making, problem-solving, team-work, goal setting) through hands-on projects. 4-H projects consisted of leadership development, animal science, gardening, cooking, and healthy lifestyles.

## 4-H W.A.Y.

The Warren County 4-H W.A.Y. (Warren Advocating for Youth) Program helps address the needs of at-risk youth in the community. Through 4-H W.A.Y., 12 youth charged with minor offenses have successfully completed the Warren County 4-H Teen Court Program and have been deterred from entering the juvenile justice system. Our Community Service and Restitution program partnered with several community based businesses, including 4 Girls and a Comb, Northend Barbershop, A Touch of Heaven Barbershop, Always-N- Bloom, Warren County Buildings and Grounds, Loaves and Fishes Ministries, and the Animal Ark to allow 15 at-risk youth to complete their court ordered community service hours. These community based partners provide on the job training, job readiness and one-on-one mentoring, while allowing youth to serve out these hours. Educational Empowerment sessions allowed more than 17 youth to be coached in life skills such as effective communication, goal setting, career management, and positive self esteem. Youth were given techniques to properly express and manage their anger as well as ways to better engage and interact with their peers and adults. The parenting component allowed more than 15 parents to learn skills on parenting styles and techniques, and, in partnership with Warren Family Institute, better parent and youth interaction and communication skills. The 4-H W.A.Y. Program fostered positive peer relationships by integrating at risk youth with positive peers within the community. 17 youth volunteers from Warren Early College and New Tech High School served roles as peer support, mentors, Teen Court attorneys, bailiffs, jurors, and clerks. Volunteers were able to gain skills in career readiness, public speaking, and earn community service and internship hours through their graduating credentials. Through the efforts of the 4-H W.A.Y. Program, 4 of our youth population are currently gainfully employed in Warren County, 2 are employed in Vance County, 3 have returned as volunteers through the traditional 4-H Program, 2 who were referred from the Department of Juvenile Justice have made significant changes in behaviors and attitudes and are back on track academically.

## FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE IMPACTS

The Family and Consumer Science Agent partnered with local agencies, nonprofits and faith-based organizations to leverage food box distributions and meals by providing healthy recipes and cooking tips for unfamiliar produce items such as zucchini, butternut squash, chickpeas, meat casseroles. Throughout the year, the program shared tips for handling stress (financial management, mental, and parenting).

## EXPANDED FOOD & NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

- EFNEP helps address the challenges limited resource families face when introducing healthy changes through nutritional education, cooking classes, physical activity strategies, and shopping on a limited budget.
- A virtual cooking camp was provided during social distancing, in collaboration with faith-based organization John 3:16 Center
- Through provided programs, families reported increased fruit/vegetable consumption and they were brought closer together

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## At a Glance

- In 2020, we reached:
  - Direct contacts: 3,275
  - Digital Media: 93,620
  - Mass media: 504,812
  - Indirect: 614,474
- 215 volunteers (value of \$52,767)
- 72 educational sessions
- \$209,872 grants, donations, user-fees, in-kind donations

## SMALL FARMS

- High Tunnel Workshop
  - Crops and production techniques, addressing increasing number of high tunnels in Warren County
- Beekeeping Workshop
  - Introduction for new beekeepers
- Home Dairy Workshop
  - Basics for beginners
  - Economic outlook for industry
- BCS Tractor Lease
  - 2 first-time lessees
- AgriShop
  - Shuttled small farmers to event
  - Workshops on small ruminants, high tunnels, pollinators, plastic mulch use



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