

January Program Highlights



Farmer's Market

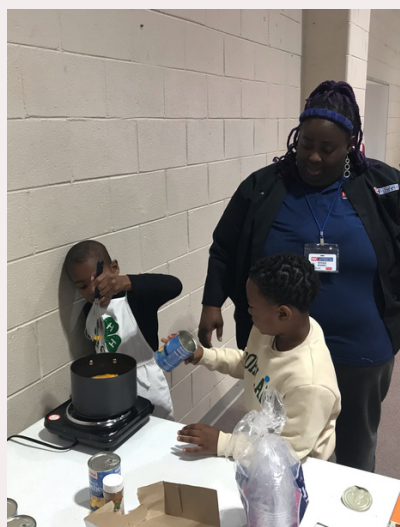
The farmers market concluded its season with the Holiday Market event on November 11th, 2023. The event was a huge success, gathering over 550 attendees. As Christmas tunes filled the air, patrons shopped for gifts and food in preparation for the holiday season. Local, festive crafts like wreaths, hand-painted ornaments, sewn, crocheted, and embroidered items, soaps and natural body care products, hand-poured candles, paintings, greeting cards, and much more were available. In addition, you could find farm-fresh pickings such as collards, cabbages, beets, turnips, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, pasture-raised meats, grits, baked goods, roasted nuts, candies, and far more than meets the eye! With more than thirty participating vendors selections were endless! It was a grand way to celebrate the end of the growing season. On average, the market hosted 234 customers per market day this year! As plans are underway for the market's future permanent location at 429 W. Ridgeway, we welcome a growing vendor lineup. If you grow it, bake it, or make it and enjoy spending Saturday mornings amongst fellow market-goers, call or visit the Cooperative Extension office to speak with the farmers market manager, Tamara Small. Our annual meeting with new and existing vendors will take place in March.

Submitted by: Tamara Small

EFNEP

Warren County Cooperative Extension Expanded Food & Nutrition Program associate has begun virtual cooking classes with Borderless Homeschool. Students created frozen fruit cups and look forward to many new healthy menu items to broaden their cooking skills. The Expanded Food & Nutrition Education program is still training Dinah Gore participants in the Vance/Warren area ages 8-17 for the cooking competition in May at the North Carolina state fairgrounds. These individuals meet every other Thursday afternoon to learn effective communication, food safety skills, and time management skills. Each team member learns to enhance presentation skills and learn the nutrition value in each healthy entree created.

Submitted by: Nitasha Kearney



4-H W.A.Y.

This month 4-H W.A.Y. received two referrals from Warren County Middle School. Families have completed intake into the program and Sentencing Circle meetings are being scheduled. The position of 4-H W.A.Y. Coordinator has been filled and our new team member will be joining us early February.

Submitted by: Noah Henderson

Small Farms

This month we focused on assisting farms with irrigation hook-ups in high tunnels to prepare for the 2024 growing season. We traveled with farmers to the Martin County Farmers Market in Williamston, NC for the Produce Production Workshop. There, we received training in Product Safety Plan Development, On Farm Food Safety, Vegetable Post Harvest Handling and Packing, and Small Farm Marketing. In addition, we attended the first annual Virginia Association for Biological Farming and the Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program Summit. One of our small farmers in North Carolina, Mrs. Carolyn Cheek, was named the 2023 Virginia Small Farmer of the Year!

Submitted by: Reggie Stevenson



Agriculture

The focus of Cooperative Extension ag programs for the month of January is to provide farmers with the training opportunities they need to have a successful growing season. This includes continuing education classes on pesticide safety so that farmers can maintain required certifications and use necessary products safely and effectively. We also provide crop production updates, such as the Regional Tobacco GAP Meeting, which includes the latest recommendations on cultivar selection, disease management, energy efficient curing, and more. Our equipment rental program continues to provide valuable resources to the farming community, with the portable corral seeing frequent use. The Warren County Farmers Market Project Committee is currently focused on providing design recommendations and identifying possible funding sources.

Submitted by: Paul McKenzie

