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BLUE LETTER

January 2017
No. 3777



New beginnings, new ideas

January is the beginning. It is a very intense month for Extension as there seem to be meetings every day in every program area. This *Blue Letter* is an interesting collection of the diversity of programs and activities that we are involved in. We seem to be into everything, and we do a great job overall.

But January is also a month of reflection about documented performance and relevance for us, and while we are an impressive bunch, we always want to get better and better.

Seaman Knapp, credited as the inventor of the modern Cooperative Extension Service, noted "What a man hears, he may doubt; what he sees, he may also doubt; but what he does, he cannot doubt." He learned early on that people were resistant to trying and using new ideas unless they saw them in action.

This idea of effective "hands-on" demonstrations as an extension tool remains a powerful one, and I think it is one where we can be even better. Whatever your program or support area, "hands-on" teaching and demonstration is very powerful, and I would encourage you at this time to plan, implement and report successful demonstrations for 2017.

Demonstrations will be high on my list for review next January, and I would really like to hear about and see ones that are highly effective and visible in the coming months. You are the best "hands-on" educators in the world, and continued sharing of that fact through electronic, social and print media would be great. Let me know if I can help.

- Rick Cartwright



FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Rice mill comes to the River Valley

Connecting the farm to the consumer is the goal of Arkansas River Valley Farms new milling and packaging facilities. A dream that started over a decade ago when River Valley farmers began having to haul their rice to eastern Arkansas is coming to fruition.

Consumer demand for locally grown products was the driving force for Arkansas River Valley Farms to build their own rice mill and packaging facilities. Seeking assistance from the local county extension office, the Ralston family wanted help with everything from package design and labeling to marketing.

The Division of Agriculture's Food Science Department has assisted the Ralstons with package design, labeling and marketing. In addition, the family applied for a USDA value added grant to assist with startup cost. Letters of support were written describing the farming operation and storage facilities. Agronomic support has been provided throughout the growing season for two aromatic rice varieties being grown on the farm for the first time.

With storage capacity of 400,000 bushels already in place, the mill and packaging facilities are currently under construction. Package design and labeling is complete, including licensing agreements to use specific logos for non-GMO and gluten free. The \$250,000 grant was received. The yields for new aromatic rice varieties were consistent for these types in other states and locations within the state. Grain quality, which is a major concern for milling, has been excellent.

Check it out on "Facebook" at <https://www.facebook.com/RalstonFamilyFarms>, with website coming soon. When up and going, the mill will create 20 new jobs for the River Valley. Processing is scheduled to begin this spring. ■



Jonesboro students become wellness ambassadors through EYWAP training

Academies at Jonesboro High School students are making a difference in the health of their school and community through participation in the Extension Youth Wellness Ambassador Program (EYWAP). The EYWAP training was incorporated into Nutrition and Wellness, a one-semester course. Components of the adult Extension Wellness Ambassador Program were correlated to the course frameworks. Surprisingly, they were a great fit. "It was almost as if they were developed side-by-side," noted Dr. Lisa Washburn, CES associate professor - health.

Fifty-six students worked in coalitions on service learning projects including:

- Initiating a backpack program for JHS students.
- Identifying walking paths on campus to promote Walk Across Arkansas.
- Conducting a healthy food drive for the Salvation Army.
- Hosting "Workplace Workouts" for high school faculty/staff.
- Campaigning for healthy menu choices in the school cafeteria.

The training was truly a Craighead County team effort. Nutrition lessons were taught by Jerrie Nelson, EFNEP educator, assisted by nine dietary students from Arkansas State University. Extension Get Fit instruction was led by Debbie DeRossitte, FCS agent. Tyler Brown, Arkansas Healthy LIFE regional program associate, provided technical assistance for the student-led projects.

EYWAP training has been adopted by four additional schools in Craighead and Mississippi counties this semester. ■

Lalit Verma facilitates Engineering and Technology Innovation for Global Food Security Conference in South Africa

As part of his role as president of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) in 2014 and 2015, Lalit Verma, head of the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, was instrumental in organizing the Engineering and Technology Innovation for Global Food Security Conference, which was held in October 2016 in South Africa. This meeting was the first conference of the ASABE's Global Engagement Initiative held outside North America. The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture was among the sponsors of the conference. Two more conferences, addressing water and energy, are planned for the future.

Verma was motivated to help create this conference series because our world faces a growing population and a changing climate, which pose threats to our food, water and energy supplies. At the conference, Verma moderated an open forum on Global Engagement and Active Partnerships to Address Grand Challenges. These challenges include improving food productivity; reducing food losses and waste; enhancing energy conservation and efficiency; developing adaptable renewable energy systems; improving water availability, conservation and efficient use; and providing clean water for multiple uses.

For further information on the conference and ASABE's global food security efforts, see the following websites:

<http://asabe2016.co.za/>

<http://www.asabe.org/news-public-affairs/november-2016/asabe-leads-global-food-security-efforts.aspx> ■

Weed scientists to hold third Pigposium in light of increased weed resistance

In 2010, University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture weed scientists conducted a meeting to focus on control of glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth or pigweed. This problem weed had at the time spread within three years from one or two counties in 2006 to every county where row crops were produced. The meeting was titled the "Pigposium" and drew more than 800 attendees from Arkansas and other states across the Midsouth region.

Then in 2014, a Pigposium II field day was conducted at the Northeast Research and Extension Center in Keiser to showcase the Division's recommendations and demonstrate firsthand the importance of using multiple herbicide modes of action as well as to exhibit the effectiveness of cultural methods, such as cover crops, which can influence pigweed emergence.

In 2015, pigweed populations were sampled and resistance to common PPO herbicides such as Valor and Reflex was confirmed. By 2016, PPO-resistant pigweed had spread to 15 counties in Arkansas, in addition to numerous counties in west Tennessee and the Bootheel of Missouri.

Due to the increase in the spread of PPO-resistant pigweed and introduction of new technologies for management, we have scheduled a third Pigposium meeting to focus on best management practices for resistant pigweed populations, practices that can minimize further resistance in weeds and best use of new technologies for future weed control. The meeting will be held on Feb. 28, 2017, at the East Arkansas Community College Fine Arts Center in Forrest City. The agenda will include scientists and growers from across the Midsouth who will focus on new technologies and practices that are effective in managing pigweed. There will be no registration cost for the meeting and lunch will be provided.

2017 Pigposium III Agenda: February 28, 2017, East Arkansas Community College Fine Arts Center, Forrest City

A.M.

- 9:00 Introduction – Current Infestations of PPO-Resistant Palmer Pigweed – Jason Norsworthy, Division weed scientist
- 9:10 Why Should I Proactively Manage for Herbicide Resistance in Pigweed? – Bob Scott, Division weed scientist
- 9:40 Expectations for PPO-Resistant Pigweed Control With Preemergence and Postemergence Herbicides – Tom Barber, Division weed scientist
- 10:10 Palmer Amaranth Management Software: A New Tool in Our Fight Against Pigweed – Michael Popp, Division agriculture economist
- 10:40 Break
- 11:00 Cover Crops and Tillage: Do These Really Help Manage Pigweed? – Larry Steckel, University of Tennessee weed scientist
- 11:30 What Does Pigweed Control Look Like Five Years From Now? – Jason Norsworthy, weed scientist
- 12:00 Lunch

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UA entomology students make impressive showing at Beltwide Cotton Conference

Two students in the Department of Entomology at the University of Arkansas, who are advised by Gus Lorenz, recently competed in the Insect Research and Control Conference student competition at Beltwide Cotton Conference in Dallas, Texas. Aaron Cato, Ph.D. candidate, and Joe Black, M.S. candidate, were both awarded first place in their division of the competition.



From left to right: Nicki Taillon, Zane Taillon, Aaron Cato, Gus Lorenz, Joe Black, Jorge Talavera and Michael Chaney, Entomology Department.

Cato's presentation represented research he conducted on developing a threshold for rice stink bugs in grain sorghum. Black gave results of his research involving horizontal transmission of a bio-pesticide affecting bollworms in soybean.

Zane Taillon and Jorge Talavera, undergraduates at UAF and UA - Monticello, also attended and gave oral presentations. It was their first time to give a presentation, and they did very well. Michael Chaney and Nicki Taillon made poster presentations on plant bug control in cotton and controlling bollworms in dual gene Bt cotton, respectively.

Congratulations to our students. The future is bright for agriculture with these kind of young people. ■



Aaron Cato, Ph.D. candidate, first place.



Joe Black, M.S. candidate, first place.

Mike Daniels named administrative apprentice

Mike Daniels, professor of Environmental Management, has been named administrative apprentice starting Jan. 3, 2017. The administrative apprenticeship is an opportunity for senior faculty to learn advanced administrative and management skills.

This program is a learn-by-doing experience and includes training in ANR, FCS, CED, 4-H and county programs. Some of the activities include commodity board and external stakeholder relations; grants management; personnel management and conflict resolution; resource and budget management; program creation, implementation, management and impact; and special problem solving.

The duration of the position is one year and is designed to increase leadership capability within Extension and the Division. Faculty who work in this assignment will get an understanding of administration and will decide if this career path is something they wish to pursue. Daniels will be expected to continue his current program as well as work in this new assignment, where he will report to to Vic Ford.

Daniels has been with Extension for 20 years and is co-director for the Arkansas Discovery Farms. He has been involved in water quality and environmental management at the state, regional and national levels and has held leadership positions in the American Society of Agronomy. He is a key player for the Illinois River water quality effort and for the Big Creek Watershed project. Please congratulate Daniels on his new assignment. ■

Lafayette County 4-H'ers spread Christmas spirit

At their December meeting, youth from the Country Bumpkins 4-H Club in Lafayette County made homemade Christmas cards, which they later handed out to the 52 residents and nurses of Homestead Manor Nursing Center in Stamps. The cards brought smiles to all recipients. Some residents enjoyed them so much they made sure to request one for their table mates who were late to lunch. ■



Update on UAV operations

Unnamed aerial vehicles (UAVs), unmanned aircraft systems (UASs) or drones will likely be widely used in commercial and hobby endeavors in 2017. Non-hobby operators will mostly do so after obtaining a Remote Pilot Certificate through the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Part 107 regulations released in August of 2016. The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture is also expecting the operation of these devices by employees this year. Thus, a mechanism for approval of safe operations is being created by a team appointed by Dr. Mark Cochran, the UAV Taskforce, to make recommendations on the best methods for approval of employee use to satisfy current FAA regulations.

The greatest question surrounding employee operation concerns approvals of the operator and the site of operations. At this time, a web-based approval process is being created that, if approved for use, would serve the entire University of Arkansas System and allow research, extension and educational operations after an automated approval is granted. Operations with the highest likelihood for automated approval will be for those holding a Remote Pilot certificate or operating under the FAA's Educational Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems and operations to be conducted in Class G airspace. For more information on the current regulations to operate small UAS, see https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/.

Division and partners host Agricultural Nutrient Policy Committee Meeting and Discovery Farm Tour

In November 2016, the Division of Agriculture along with Arkansas Farm Bureau, Tyson Foods and the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts hosted the Agricultural Nutrient Policy Committee (ANPC) in Bentonville for their annual meeting. Representatives from organizations such as National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, American Farm Bureau, Farm Bureau from seven different states, Association of Clean Water Administrators, The Fertilizer Institute, the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc., International Plant Nutrition Institute and National Cattlemen's Association were among the attendees. Private industry was represented by Tyson's, John Deere, Land O' Lakes, Koch Industries and GROWMARK.

The ANPC chose Arkansas for its conference so they could tour and learn more about the Arkansas Discovery Farm Program, which measures nutrient losses from real, working farms to determine the effectiveness of conservation practices. The attendees toured the Marley poultry farm in Elkins and the Haak Dairy Farm in Gravette. Steve Stevens, our cotton Discovery Farmer from Desha County, presented results from his farm via a presentation.

In summary, the conference showcased the stewardship efforts of three of our Discovery Farmers, which increased the awareness across the country of how Arkansas farmers are committed to addressing water quality issues. ■



Cotton Discovery Farmer Steve Stevens shares water quality data collected on his farm.



Dr. Andrew Sharpley (pink shirt in middle) explains the edge-of-field water quality monitoring being conducted on the Marley Poultry Farm.



Dr. Karl VanDevender (blue shirt) shares monitoring plans for the new Haak dairy.

Union County 4-H'ers bring Christmas cheer to nursing home residents

The Union County 4-H Teen Leader Club, 4-H Shooting Sports Club, Centerpoint 4-H Club, Faircrest 4-H Club, Norphlet 4-H Club and Smackover 4-H Club met at Oakridge Nursing Home to deliver gifts, visit with residents and sing carols. The Teen Leader Club put together 100 gift bags for the residents containing items such as lip balm, hand lotion, nail polish, combs, puzzle books, socks, pens and tissues. Blankets were also collected and given to residents. Prior to singing in front of a group of residents, the 4-H'ers had the opportunity to visit with and befriend some residents.



Pictured (left to right): (back row) Michaela Matocha, Zac Hudson, Hannah Crawford, Lucas Mason, Christen Talley, Kendall Key, Thomas Crawford and Elizabeth Dison; (front row) Ryleigh Hudson, Brooke McCoy, Kaitlin Jones, Hailey Talley, Lacey Rowland and Cody Lee. Not pictured is Kyra Winget.

One resident was a former 4-H'er and shared her experiences as well as former project areas. Caroling was a sweet treat for the residents, and they even sang along to some songs. One Teen Leader brought a friend who played the ukulele to give the performance some flair. All of the residents greatly appreciated the Christmas cheer brought to them. ■



Tech Tuesday webinars for 2017

In 2017, Tech Tuesday webinars will be hosted on the second Tuesday of every month. This is different from the original format of every other Tuesday. Tech Tuesdays will continue to cover topics such as social media, webpages, software programs, apps, educational technology and other topics that can help you in your extension role. Webinars will be hosted using Zoom, sessions will be 30-45 minutes in length and participants will be able to register online. The webinars will also be recorded and posted online so that anyone who is not able to attend can view the recording. The schedule for 2017 Tech Tuesday sessions is:

Feb. 14, 2017	Aug. 8, 2017
March 14, 2017	Sept. 12, 2017
April 11, 2017	Oct. 10, 2017
May 9, 2017	Nov. 14, 2017
June 13, 2017	Dec. 12, 2017
July 11, 2017	

Remember to check out the Tech Tuesday blog, <http://uaex.edu/techtuesdays>, for session recordings and materials. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Robinson at jrobinson@uaex.edu or (501) 671-2082. ■

P.M.

1:15	Comparison of Soybean Technologies: Understanding Risk and Reward – Jason Bond, Mississippi State weed scientist
1:45	A Season to Remember: Our Experiences With Off-Site Movement of Dicamba in 2016 – Kevin Bradley, University of Missouri weed scientist
2:15	Navigating Dicamba Regulations and Labels: What Is Allowed? – Ples Spradley, Division pesticide safety coordinator
2:45	Spray Droplet Considerations: Optimizing Contact and Systemic Herbicides – Jason Davis, Division application technologist
3:15	Break
3:30	Panel: What Are We Doing and Why Are We Doing It? Narrow-Windrow Burning – H. Stevens, producer, Helena Cover Crops – A. Chappell, producer, Cotton Plant Zero Tolerance – D. Coomer, producer, Piggott
4:15	Adjourn

Lemons into lemonade

Every fall the Miller County Red Dirt Master Gardeners host their annual basic training. The committee works all year long planning and scheduling for this event. Unfortunately, this past fall, they did not have enough participants scheduled, per the Master Gardener guidelines, for the training to happen.

Many of the Master Gardeners and the participants who had signed up were disappointed, to say the least. It was then the committee decided to make lemonade out of lemons. Instead of having a basic training, the Miller County Red Dirt Master Gardeners would host a three-day horticulture workshop. This would allow those already in the Master Gardener organization to obtain their education hours, allow the participants who had signed up to attend the classes they had been looking forward to attending, and allow the public to attend to help garner interest for the organization's basic training that will certainly be held in 2017.



The three-day horticulture workshop, held Oct. 26-28 at the First Presbyterian Church in Texarkana, Arkansas, was a huge success. There were approximately 60 participants each day, which included Master Gardeners, those who had signed up hoping to join and members of the public. ■



Help the Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union grow – It's a win-win for all!

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

January 3, 2017 through March 31, 2017, the Credit Union will be conducting a membership drive. We will give away two \$50 Walmart gift cards. A drawing will be held on April 3, 2017.

Here's how you can win:

1. Tell all your co-workers and immediate family members (mother, father, brother, sister, children, grandchildren and spouse) about CESFCU. Each time you refer someone who joins the Credit Union, we will put both your name and the new member's name in a drawing for one of the two \$50 Walmart gift cards!
2. Join by March 31, 2017, and we will waive the \$10 membership fee.
3. That's not all! The motivated member who gets the MOST referrals into the drawing will win a \$25 Walmart gift card. This is our way of saying thank you for going the extra mile to let prospective members learn what a difference credit union membership makes.

Why do family members and co-workers need to join CESFCU? Because we offer:

- Savings accounts: regular, vacation and Christmas
- Share certificates
- New and used vehicle loans
- Other secured loans such as campers and RVs
- Unsecured loans
- Low interest rate VISA
- No-fee cash advances on CESFCU VISA
- Wire transfers
- Discount theme park tickets
- Online banking
- Payroll deduction

Visit our website, cesfcu.org, and download the membership referral form to get started today! ■

Rural Life Conference set for March 3

Mark your calendars! The 61st annual University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Rural Life Conference is scheduled for Friday, March 3, at the Pine Bluff Convention Center.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. with the opening session at 8:45 a.m. The conference theme is "Promoting the Vitality of Arkansas Communities."

Workshops begin at 10:15 a.m. In addition to the workshops and exhibits by agencies, there will be posters addressing the conference theme or highlighting research-based information important to the community.

Preregistration is requested of everyone even though the conference is free to farmers, the general public and retirees. The cost to professionals and agency personnel is \$50 for those registered before Feb. 20. After that date and on-site, registration is \$75. To preregister, email Tamara Ford at fordta@uapb.edu. ■

Lonoke County 4-H'ers ring the bell for Salvation Army

On Dec. 17, Lonoke County 4-H'ers continued their yearly tradition of ringing the bell for Salvation Army outside of the Lonoke Walmart. Eight youth and seven parents and volunteers donated their time to help the Salvation Army raise money this holiday season. This is a favorite community service project for a lot of the 4-H youth in the county. By the end of the day, the bucket was so full it was overflowing! ■



BENEFITS CORNER

Benefits Quick Reference Chart

- **UMR Medical Customer Service:** 1-888-438-6105
- **List of providers:** www.umar.com. Click on "Find a provider," "Medical," type in "University Arkansas System" Scroll down to "Find a Provider / Getting Care."

Before accessing any provider information, please note the following provider is not included in the University of Arkansas System provider network. This provider may appear in the UMR directory, but is not part of the University of Arkansas System provider network.

Excluded facility
Arkansas Heart Hospital

- **MedImpact Prescription Drugs:** 1-800-788-2949
- **Flexible Spending Account (FSA):** UMR Benny Card / 1-866-868-0145
- **Delta Dental:** 1-800-462-5410 or www.deltadental.com.
- **Superior Vision:** 1-800-507-3800 or www.superiorvision.com
- **Onlife Health:** 1-877-369-0285
Health Coach: www.OnlifeHealth.com
- **Retirement Issues:**
Fidelity – 1-800-343-0860
TIAA-CREF – 1-800-842-2776
APERS – 1-800-682-7377

UA Employees eligible for retirement should provide Extension with a minimum of ninety (90) days advanced notice and are urged to retire on the last working day of the month.

CES Human Resources: 501-671-2219

Please keep your home address updated in Banner Self Service.

Meet the *new* employees!



Matthew Joseph Davis
County Extension Agent -
Agriculture
Jackson County

• What's your background?

I grew up around agricultural industry. My grandparents on both sides worked in agriculture.

I was born and raised in Newport in Jackson County. I

have lived there most of my life, other than college. During my high school years, I was active in FFA, competing in several horticulture events as well as graduating a completer in all agriculture-related courses as well as welding, plasma cutter, electricity and woodworking.

My first job at 16 years old was on Shoffner Research Farm, a research farm in Jackson County. I worked there for a couple of summers. After Shoffner Research, I spent a couple summers with Bowman Farms in Jackson County before I graduated Newport High School and went on to college.

I attended Arkansas State University where I obtained a bachelor's degree in Agriculture Business with an emphasis in Marketing and Management. During my time in college, I worked for Walmart, starting out as part time-hourly and worked up to a salary assistant store manager over fresh/grocery/consumables/operations. I spent almost seven years with Walmart managing associates and the business. On average, I managed 50 to 300 associates and between \$10 million to \$15 million of the store's sales, depending on my shift and daily responsibilities.

• What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?

I have seven years management experience and people skills, time management skills, (teach, train and development mindset), money/funds management and the knowledge of my community and needs here in Jackson County.

• What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

I always try to impress, but I don't know everything. I am willing to learn and I want to be taught. I hate not knowing sometimes. Second, I am newly engaged, so any pointers you may have on being married I am open

ears. I truly am blessed to have this opportunity because it lets me see my bride-to-be a little more often than I used to.

• What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?

I would like to develop some strong programs and make sure extension is well known as a source of information for the county. I want extension to be known from youth to adults as the one-stop shop for your questions and answers as it relates to 4-H, FCS, agriculture, and community and economic development.

• What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?

I was brought to extension first because I saw the need for it in my county. I knew farmers needed an agent, and I wanted to be that agent they could rely on for their needs. Second, I was brought to extension because it was a job that was close to my home, gives me an opportunity to help my community and gives me an avenue to follow in agriculture. I always wanted to farm, but with this job I know my knowledge can save a farmer money, time and give them time back with their families. It is very rewarding, to say the least.

• What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?

I enjoy woodworking and repurposing old items. I usually build furniture in my down time. Fishing is something I enjoy. I also enjoy just spending time with my family. This job has given me many blessings so far, and I am very thankful for them.



Blanca Hernandez
County Extension Agent -
Family and Consumer
Sciences - SNAP-Ed
Pulaski County

• What's your background?

I received my undergraduate degree and master's degree from the University of Central Arkansas. I also completed my

dietetic internship there. My background has a predominant focus on National School Lunch program, Child and Adult Program and Summer Program.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I am bringing my knowledge of food safety and nutrition. Both my educational and professional backgrounds have prepared me to help inform others on how to safely feed their families.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I could help them with any translations (Spanish-English).

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I would like to reach as many Spanish-speaking clients in the community as possible.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

I enjoy helping people and working with the community, so I'm excited about this opportunity!

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

My husband and I love to travel. I have three wonderful teenagers at home that keep us busy – two boys Emilio, 17, Sebastian, 15, and my daughter Adela, 13. I also enjoy gardening and redoing old furniture.



Phil Horton
County Extension Agent -
Agriculture
Arkansas County - DeWitt

• **What's your background?**

I graduated from the University of Arkansas - Monticello with an ag-business degree.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I farmed rice, soybeans and wheat for 33 years. I also have some experience with grain sorghum, corn and cattle. I worked as a program technician in the water management program for four years at the Rice Research and Extension Center.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I would like my colleagues to know that I used to have thick black hair and I weighed 175 pounds.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I want to help the people in Arkansas County and earn their trust.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

During my time with the water management program, I had the opportunity to work with many people in extension, and I realized that helping others is rewarding. As a new agent, everyone in extension has been very helpful with preparing me to do a better job.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I enjoy spending time with family. I like duck hunting, deer hunting and being outdoors.



John McMinn
Program Associate - Center
for Agricultural and Rural
Sustainability and Southern
Extension Risk Management
Education Center
Little Rock State Office

• **What's your background?**

I am originally from Stuttgart, where I graduated high school in 2005. From there I went on to the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where I graduated with a B.S. in agricultural business in 2009, and an M.S. in international agricultural economics in 2011. After graduate school, I moved back home to take a job as a GPS consultant with a John Deere dealer. I was with the dealer for a little over four years.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I have been around agriculture my entire life. With Stuttgart being known as the "Duck and Rice Capitol of the World," agriculture was hard to hide from. As early as junior high, I worked on a farm in some capacity or another. Being a farm hand in the summers was a great learning experience. It taught me hard work and accountability.

As a GPS consultant, I experienced a completely different side of row crop farming. In high school, I was

involved with the production/physical labor side of the farm, but as a GPS consultant, I experienced the management aspect of farming. While interacting with customers, I was able to advise them on what decisions or products were best for their operation going forward. Beforehand, I never knew the amount of time and money that went into operating a farm. I also learned how sensitive these matters can be. One bad decision can be the difference in whether or not a farmer is in operation the following year.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

For the most part, I am an easy going, laid back person. I love my dog Boomer. He is half labrador and half golden retriever.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

In my first year with extension, I would like to make a positive impact in someone's life, whether that is by pointing them in the right direction or by helping them save money by adopting a different farming practice.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

I wanted to be part of something larger than myself where I could help people within agriculture. Agriculture has always been a focus in my life, but helping people has always been my main goal. With extension, I can become a resource that people within agriculture can lean on.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I am an avid outdoorsman. Every chance I get I'm hunting, fishing, biking, hiking, skiing or golfing. I wish I could take my dog everywhere I go. I've also been a diehard Razorback fan since I was born. I really enjoy watching movies, and I'm kind of a superhero and science fiction nerd. I don't think I'll ever grow out of that. I also consider myself a "foodie." I enjoy cooking and trying new foods. I like to travel and see new places whenever I can.



Esmeralda Peña
EFNEP Program Assistant
Pulaski County

• **What's your background?**

I am a UALR graduate with a B.A. in psychology and a B.A. in professional and technical writing. I was previously employed with the Little Rock School District English as a Second Language

Department, UALR Children's International and Life Skills for Youth Research on children's food preferences under the supervision of the UALR Psychology Department staff.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

Love of food. I hope to share that passion for food and health with others by teaching the EFNEP classes to parents and children.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

Fly like a butterfly, sting like a bee.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I would like to offer my services to as many people as possible but in a thoroughly taught manner. Not rushed.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

My sister, an ESL administrator, told me that an EFNEP program assistant had taught a class for the ESL summer program and immediately sent me the application link. She could imagine me teaching those classes. After living in Arkansas for 18 years, this was my first time learning about extension.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I'm mostly an introvert, but I love being outdoors – parks, gardens, forests, any place green. Also, I'm an AVID yogi.



Dovey Tweedy
Administrative Specialist
Little Rock State Office

• **What's your background?**

I joined the Extension Service in September as an administrative specialist working for Facilities under Graham Peterson at the front desk/switchboard position.

For about 40 years, I worked mostly in the banking industry, doing everything from running a teller window to running a branch office.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

At extension, I am able to use some of the life skills I have acquired over the years, especially when dealing with folks from a wide variety of backgrounds. I am very much a "people" person and have always enjoyed that aspect of every job I have had.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I lived and worked in Japan for a year.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

Growing up in the country, I have always appreciated farmers and food producers. Every day I learn just how many different ways extension assists in so many aspects of food production, as well as education, so people may have a better life. It never ceases to amaze me. My goal is that my part in this endeavor is a productive and successful one.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

The prospect of doing something different with my life was exciting, and I was very happy when I was given this position.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I live with my two adult sons and my four fur babies, kitties that keep us very busy. Taking care of my family keeps me busy in my "spare" time. We love to watch movies and occasionally have friends over for a game of canasta and some good food.

I spend as much time as I can with my niece and her three boys, who are as close to grandbabies as I will probably ever get. It's my pleasure to fulfill the granny role for my sister, whom I lost 15 years ago, but I would gladly give it up to have her back with us.

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Ricky Blair

Media Specialist - Video, Office of Communications, effective December 1, 2016.

Caitlin Palenske

Program Tech - Obesity Reduction, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective December 1, 2016.

Jessica Smith

Budget and Position Control Manager, Financial Services, effective November 16, 2016.

Celise Weems

Program Associate - CARS, Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability, effective November 21, 2016.

Grants and contracts for Month Ending December 31, 2016

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Evaluation of Cotton Yield, Quality and Plant Growth Response to Soil Applied Potassium - II Multi Year Sites	\$ 8,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton Incorporated
Evaluation of Cotton Yield, Quality, and Plant Growth Response to Soil Applied Potassium One Single Year Per Site	11,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton Incorporated
Thrips Control With Alternatives to Neonicotinoids	21,724	Gus Lorenz	Cotton Incorporated
The Effect of a Source of Butyric Acid and Zinc on Performance and Responses and Gut Integrity in Heat-Stressed Male Broiler Chickens	33,450	Karen Christensen	Kemin Industries, Inc.
The Effect of a Source of KemTrace Chromium on Performance Responses and Meat Quality in Heat-Stressed Male Broiler Chickens	37,250	Karen Christensen	Kemin Industries, Inc.
2013-2014 NWA Regional Urban Stormwater Education Program	224,000	Katherine Teague	Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission
America Saves	1,200	Laura Hendrix	Consumer Federation of America
Carroll County Youth Leadership	4,900	Leadra Martin	Walton Family Foundation
4-H Youth Voice: Youth Choice Healthy Living Project	37,759	Lisa Washburn	National 4-H Council
Building Capacity for Watershed Leadership and Management in Twelve Mississippi River	10,632	Michael Daniels	University of Wisconsin-Extension
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Lead Arkansas (LeadAR)	10,000	Stacey McCullough	Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.
Evaluation of Thermocal Calcium Carbonate as a Calcium Source in Broiler Diets	27,379	Susan Watkins	Van Beek Natural Science
Hempstead County 4-H United Way Support	5,000	Terrie James	United Way of Hempstead County
Evaluation and Implementation of New Herbicide Technology Systems in Arkansas Cotton	25,000	Tom Barber	Cotton Incorporated
Total Awards for December 2016	\$457,294		

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture, and County Governments Cooperating

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