

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Extension works to keep AI out

Avian influenza, known as bird flu, had a crushing effect on the poultry industry in many states. The U.S. Agriculture Department has estimated that back in the spring, AI affected as many as 48 million birds during more than 170 outbreaks. However, Arkansas, the nation's No. 2 producer of broilers, No. 10 producer of chicken eggs and No. 4 producer of turkeys, had just one infected flock.

The key to prevention is education. And when it comes to educating the public about the threat to flocks from a disease spread by migrating birds, the Cooperative Extension Service is firmly in the lead. During the spring, Extension veterinarian Dustan Clark, working with county agents, traveled the state to spread the word about good biosecurity practices.

With migrating birds returning to the South, Dustan again is hitting the pavement, bringing this serious message of prevention and protection to counties across the state. His efforts are being underpinned by two webpages devoted exclusively to biosecurity. (See <http://uaex.edu/farm-ranch/biosecurity/> and <http://uaex.edu/farm-ranch/biosecurity/avian-influenza.aspx>.) The pages contain fact sheets, video and other electronic resources explaining biosecurity, its application and information about related issues such as showing poultry during fair season.

I firmly believe that Extension's diligence in reaching both industry and backyard flock owners has made a huge difference in preventing disaster in one of Arkansas' largest industries and is truly a significant example of how education can have an impact worth millions of dollars.

– Tony Windham

Tech Tuesday webinars to begin in January



Technology is ever-changing for Extension personnel, and sometimes keeping up with those changes can be a full-time job. Through a recent support unit survey, you have identified some areas of technology use in which you would like timely, easy-to-access information. We have heard your requests.

Beginning in January 2016, several of the support unit personnel will offer a Tech Tuesday webinar series in a multi-unit collaborative effort. The Tech Tuesday webinars will be conducted every other Tuesday beginning Jan 5, 2016. Topics will include

social media, webpages, software programs, educational technology tools and other topics as they are identified.

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 anyone who is not able to attend can view the recording. A schedule of sessions for the next year will be sent to all employees via email as well as posted on the website. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Robinson at jrobinson@uaex.edu or (501) 671-2082. ■



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**

University of Arkansas System

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

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DR. TONY WINDHAM
Associate Vice President for
Agriculture - Extension and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service

Arkansas State Fair Livestock Sale of Champions

The Arkansas State Fair held the 2015 Sale of Champions and Premium Scholarship Program Oct. 16 in Barton Coliseum in Little Rock. Arkansas' junior livestock exhibitors received scholarship awards from the individual or organization bidding the highest amount for their grand champion or reserve grand champion livestock. The scholarships go to:

Grand Champion Pen of Broilers – Makayla Herring of Greene County 4-H, \$3,900, Poultry Federation

Reserve Champion Pen of Broilers – Alaina Campbell of Greene County 4-H, \$2,450, Poultry Federation

Grand Champion Steer – Dodge Cowart of Kirby FFA in Pike County, \$15,000, Arkansas Farm Bureau

Reserve Grand Champion Steer – Brandi Frachiseur of DeQueen FFA in Sevier County, \$9,000, Arkansas Cattlemen's Association

Grand Champion Market Hog – Jessica Griffin of Greene County 4-H, \$3,750, Arkansas Farm Bureau

Reserve Grand Champion Market Hog – Jessica Griffin of Greene County 4-H, \$8,000, Steve Cobb Family

Grand Champion Market Lamb – Riley Hoyle of Taylor FFA in Columbia County, \$5,500, Arkansas Farm Bureau



Kaylie Stone (center) of Clark County with her Grand Champion Meat Pen of Rabbits.



Jessica Griffin of Greene County with her Grand Champion Market Hog.



Carrie Wiggs of White County with her Grand Champion Single Fryer.



Makayla Herring of Greene County with her Grand Champion Broiler.



Riley Hoyle with her brother Jack of Columbia County with her Grand Champion Market Lamb.

Reserve Grand Champion Market Lamb – Kaylie Stone of Gurdon FFA in Clark County, \$3,500, Arkansas Farm Bureau

Grand Champion Market Goat – Riley Hoyle of Taylor FFA in Columbia County, \$3,700, Arkansas Farm Bureau Insurance

Reserve Grand Champion Market Goat – Kaylie Stone of Gurdon FFA in Clark County, \$2,800, Front Porch Magazine

Grand Champion Meat Pen of Rabbits – Kaylie Stone of Gurdon FFA in Clark County, 3,000, Arkansas Farm Bureau

Grand Champion Single Fryer Rabbit – Carrie Wiggs of Rose Bud FFA in White County, \$1,700, Deggeller Attractions



Dodge Cowart of Pike County with his Grand Champion Market Steer.



Riley Hoyle with her brother Jack of Columbia County with her Grand Champion Market Goat.

Ethan Parker represents Arkansas 4-H at National 4-H Dairy Conference

Ethan Parker of Benton County was selected to represent Arkansas at the National 4-H Dairy Conference Sept. 27-30 in Madison, Wisconsin. He was provided an expense-paid trip through the Division of Agriculture Department of Animal Science.

As part of the conference, Ethan was able to tour ABS Global, Hoard's Dairyman Publishing firm and dairy farm, World Dairy Expo and dairy producer farms. He also participated in hands-on seminars on topics including artificial insemination, roaming through the rumen and dairy foods evaluation.

Ethan served on the head table committee where he was a facilitator during one of the meals, introducing speakers. Ethan is the son of Drs. Doug and Tammy Parker of Gravette.

Next year's National 4-H Dairy Conference will be Oct. 2-5 in Madison, Wisconsin. Applications for Arkansas 4-H'ers who have a dairy project and are interested in attending the conference will be due in June 2016. ■



Ethan Parker of Benton County touring ABS Global in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

Benton County 4-H'er performs at National 4-H Hall of Fame Ceremony



Lauren Leonard

Benton County 4-H'er Lauren Leonard was selected as one of two youth entertainers for the National 4-H Hall of Fame Ceremony. To receive this honor, Lauren applied by sending a video to the selection committee.

The Hall of Fame Ceremony was held at the National Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland, on Oct. 9. Lauren played her cello as guests arrived and during a two-hour reception.

Lauren's main 4-H project is Arts and Humanities. She was a 2014 state record book winner and State O-Rama Instrumental Activity winner. ■

Severe weather notifications

With winter on the way, if you'd like to be added to the email list for severe weather notifications from the National Weather Service, please email Mary Hightower at mhightower@uaex.edu. ■

Referring to the Division of Agriculture

When referring to the Division of Agriculture, please be sure to use our formal name on first reference: the **University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture**. The word "System" is a key element in our name and defines us as one of seven distinct units within the University of Arkansas System along with the Clinton School of Public Service, the Arkansas Archeological Survey and Winthrop Rockefeller Institute. ■

BENEFITS CORNER

It's Open Enrollment Time!

Good news. **During November**, employees may participate in open enrollment for the health, dental, vision, disability and critical illness benefits programs. Information regarding open enrollment has been mailed to your home address.

To comply with new federal health care reform law, beginning in 2016 we **are required** to gather social security numbers for all covered dependents. If this information is missing for any of your dependents, UMR (CES HR for federally benefitted employees) will contact you. The government will use the information collected to assist in identifying those individuals who have health coverage or who should be purchasing health coverage through the health care marketplace.

A dependent audit will be conducted by an outside company called Aon Hewitt. You will receive instructions from them at your home address sometime in early 2016. These instructions will tell you the documentation required to verify your spouse and/or children's eligibility to remain on your medical (and dental) insurance.

Your health plan vendor will mail your outline of coverage entitled Summary of Benefits Coverage (SBC) directly to your home address.

Please keep your home address updated in Banner Self Service. ■

REMEMBER

State Faculty Conference

December 7, 2015, 10:00 a.m.

Little Rock State Office

Division Awards Luncheon

January 8, 2016

Arkansas 4-H Center, Ferndale

What's new in publications? Find out at:

<http://www.uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx>

Grants and contracts for the month ended October 31, 2015

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
UACES Early Care and Education Projects (Best Care, Best Care Connected, Guiding Children Successfully, 4-H Afterschool) CCDF	237,500	Anne Sortor	DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Test Crop Purchase Agreement	5,000	Bob Scott	Bayer Crop Science LP
Team Approach to Weed Management in Wheat	10,500	Bob Scott	Wheat Promotion Board
Ryegrass Management in Wheat Harvest Seed Destruction	500	Bob Scott	Wheat Promotion Board
Clay County 4-H Citizenship Teen Leaders Program	2,500	Debbie Baker	East Arkansas Planning and Development District
UACES Early Care and Education Projects (Best Care, Best Care Connected, Guiding Children Successfully, 4-H Afterschool) CCDF	85,000	Erica Fields	DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Wheat Verification	5,000	Jason Kelley	Wheat Promotion Board
Agronomics and Economic Factors to Maximize Profit in Wheat-Corn	4,000	Jason Kelley	Wheat Promotion Board
Connecting NPS Management to Receiving Streams Through BMP Education and Demonstration	248,467	Katherine Teague	Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
Demonstration Garden	600	Keri Welch	Arkansas Community Foundation
Ellis Bell Farm 2706	92,057	Michael Daniels	Ellis Bell Farm
Southern Risk Management Education Center at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	1,082,736	Ron Rainey	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
2015-2017 Ongoing Support of Arkansas NPS Adaptive Management Plan	109,111	Stacey McCullough	Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
Total New Awards for October 2015	\$1,882,971		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Kaitlyn Baker

Administrative Specialist, Community and Economic Development, effective October 1, 2015.

Amy Cofer

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Crawford County, effective October 1, 2015.

Millie Collins

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Cross County, effective October 1, 2015.

Terrell Davis

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Pike County, effective October 1, 2015.

Trapper Padgett

Program Technician - Soybean, Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science, effective September 16, 2015.

Luke Parker

4-H Center Physical Plant Manager, Vines 4-H Center, effective September 16, 2015.

Extension says goodbye to:

Maria Luna

Program Assistant - EFNEP, Pulaski County, effective October 2, 2015.

Mason Shuffield

Program Assistant - EFNEP, Pulaski County, effective October 19, 2015.

Krystina Stark

Administrative Specialist - Crop, Soil and Environmental Science, effective October 23, 2015.