

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3725 • September 2012

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year's drought has been one of the most severe on record, and Extension's timely response in helping Arkansans affected by the extreme conditions was exceptional.

Between July 10 and September 13, nine agent-organized drought summits were held throughout the state, and attendance was at or above capacity in each of the locations. A drought blog was created where pertinent and timely resources and information were posted and made available.

A comprehensive clearinghouse of information was made public through the blog, and fact sheets were distributed, including "Be Aware and Prepare," which provided Arkansans information on preparing for and surviving wildfires.

An economic impact study was shared with state and federal officials to help them make informed decisions, including federal assistance.

Sixty-seven news stories containing information about responding to the drought were released to news outlets which ran the stories in more than 1,000 placements statewide. Several articles were picked up for national and international distribution, helping to tell Arkansas' story.

Extension personnel stepped forward in meeting the needs of Arkansans as you do each and every day. Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

— Tony Windham

Changes for Extension's Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center

For the last several years, the Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center (APAC) headquarters has been located in Malvern with a satellite office at Extension's Little Rock State Office (LRSO). This summer the entire APAC program was moved to the LRSO. Recent additions to APAC's staff include Dr. David Jerome as program director and Nikki Dawson as administrative specialist. They join existing staff members Delbert Taylor and Ray Blevins (program associates providing procurement counseling and assistance to clients), Jan Rogers (administrative specialist) and Stacey McCullough, Bobby Hall and Kim Magee (part-time outreach coordinators for Extension's three districts).

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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

Extension Service to sponsor ten tax update schools

Professional tax preparers, farmers, small business owners and anyone else interested in income tax preparation can attend one of our two-day Income Tax Schools.

The two-day schools will be held in 10 different locations throughout Arkansas, October 29 through December 4. Each class day will run 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The schools cover small business and farm tax issues.

The instructors are tax experts with extensive experience with the Internal Revenue Service. Representatives from the IRS and State of Arkansas will also conduct sessions.

The program meets the guidelines for 16 hours of continuing professional education. Registration costs are \$220 per person. In Batesville, where lunch will be served, the cost is \$235.

For more information, please contact Kim Magee at (501) 671-2072 or kmagee@uaex.edu. ■

Tax School Locations	Dates
Harrison (North Arkansas College)	Oct. 29-30
Fayetteville (Pauline Whitaker Center)	Nov. 1-2
Fort Smith (Kay Rodgers Park)	Nov. 5-6
Batesville (U of A Livestock and Forestry Center)	Nov. 8-9
Monticello (UAM School of Forest Resources)	Nov. 12-13
West Memphis (Utility Commission Training Room)	Nov. 15-16
Texarkana (Rural Electric Cooperative)	Nov. 19-20
Hot Springs (Clarion Resort on the Lake)	Nov. 26-27
Jonesboro (ASU Delta Center for Economic Development)	Nov. 29-30
Little Rock (U of A Cooperative Extension Service)	Dec. 3-4

Water conferences

Do you have a vulnerable watershed in your county? Know someone who keeps up with the latest lawsuits or policy changes when it comes to water?

The U of A Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center will be hosting two conferences this fall dealing with water.

Save the date: Sept. 26 & 27

Those are the dates of the annual Nonpoint Source Pollution Stakeholder Meeting co-hosted with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission.

Day 1 will focus on federal-level challenges to the nonpoint source program as well as the state's strengths in carrying out the program. On day 2, counties report on the status or findings of their NPS projects.

The two-day conference (with lunch included) is free and will take place at the Little Rock State Office. Sign up through www.arkansaswater.org.

Then be sure to **save the date for Nov. 8**. The Public Policy Center and UALR's Bowen School of Law will present Water; The Choices, a Water Law and Policy Conference.

Participate in the Arkansas Water Plan. Hear the latest on federal lawsuits involving the EPA and pollution rules. Learn how water utilities are planning for infrastructure needs. Get an update on El Dorado's success at moving industry off the aquifer and much more.

Students pay \$20 for entry to the day-long conference at the 4-H Center, while the cost is \$55 for professionals and those seeking continuing education credits.

Sign up for this conference at www.regonline.com/uappc.

For more information about either conference, e-mail Kristin Higgins at khiggins@uaex.edu or call 501-671-2160. ■

Ballot newsletter

Arkansas is home to 1.5 million registered voters. Those voters get their ballot information from television, newspapers, radio, the Internet and the county agent.

Now there is another way to keep up with Arkansas' 2012 ballot: the U of A Division of Agriculture's Public Policy Center's ballot newsletter. The periodic updates come straight to your e-mail account, so you don't have to waste time searching for updated and credible information.

Most county agents should already be receiving this alert, but if you would like to be on the list, e-mail your contact information to publicpolicycenter@uaex.edu.

The newsletter is open to the public, as well, so make note of it on your Facebook page or pass it on through Twitter or other e-mail lists you have.

And while you're at it, like us on facebook at www.facebook.com/uappc. ■

CHANGES FOR APAC (cont. from page 1)

APAC has been a program of the University of Arkansas since 1993, when the University entered into a Cost Sharing Cooperative Agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency of the Department of Defense. The program, housed within Extension's community and economic development area, helps Arkansas businesses generate revenue and create jobs through sales to local, state and federal public agencies. Over the last ten years, APAC clients have received 10,765 contracts valued at over \$824 million and supporting 25,130 jobs for Arkansans.

The new APAC offices are located in Suite 110 at the LRSO. For more information about APAC, visit <http://www.arcommunities.org/APAC.htm> or contact any staff member.

Social media channels critical drought info

Social media has stepped up to help Arkansans affected by the drought of 2012.

The Arkansas Drought Resource Center was launched July 6 as a way to consolidate information about all facets of drought. Its 14 pages include survival tactics for livestock producers, as well as information about burn bans, water restrictions and the economic and legal ramifications of drought.

As of Aug. 23, the Arkansas Drought Resource Center had amassed more than 6,000 visits, with the heaviest days having more than 300. While most visitors are from the U.S., visits were recorded from India, Mexico, Turkey, South Korea, Canada, Spain, Australia and Hungary.

The most-searched terms involved grant and other aid programs to drought-stricken producers.

"We appreciate all the contributions being made by faculty from across the Division to help our producers, regardless of sector," said Deborah Tootle, associate professor, Community and Economic Development for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

Please send suggested submissions to Deborah Tootle at dtootle@uaex.edu, or Mary Hightower, mhightower@uaex.edu. ■

Saraswat/Pai receive ASABE 2012 Superior Paper Award

A paper authored by Dharmendra Saraswat, associate professor, and Naresh Pai, post-doctoral associate, in the department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering was selected to receive the 2012 Superior Paper Award from the American Society for Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE).

The paper titled "SWAT2009_LUC: A tool for activating the land use change module in SWAT2009," published in the Transactions of the ASABE journal, describes development of a geospatial tool for integrating multiple years of land-use related remote sensing data in the Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT) tool, a hydrological/water quality model.

The geospatial tool is available on the Geospatial Technologies website (<http://bit.ly/zdTsRA>) maintained by Dr. Saraswat. The tool is being used by various watershed modeling groups in the U.S. and internationally.

The Superior Paper Awards are given annually in recognition of exceptional papers published in four ASABE journals during the year preceding the award. Only 5% of the 390 papers published by the ASABE in 2011 were independently selected to receive the Superior Paper Awards. ■



Naresh Pai and Dharmendra Saraswat receiving the Superior Paper Award certificate from ASABE President Sonia Maassel Jacobsen at the ASABE Annual International Meeting in Dallas, Tex.

What's new in publications? Find out at:

http://www.uaex.edu/depts/Administration/blue_letter/Monthly_Publications_Report.htm

Providing voters reliable, unbiased information



Another Election Day will arrive soon and Arkansans will be looking to the U of A System Division of Agriculture Public Policy Center and their local county Extension agents for unbiased ballot information. We make the point of telling the public during our presentations that we're educating them on the issue and not suggesting how to vote.

To keep true to that statement, we have a responsibility of presenting ourselves as impartial when on the job.

So what does that involve?

Think twice about putting campaign stickers on a personal vehicle that's used to travel to ballot education events. The public will be less likely to believe you are impartial if they see a campaign sticker advertising your vote.

Be careful not to send election-related e-mails, tweets or blog posts while at work or working on state computers unless it is specific to a ballot issue education

effort or sharing a balanced review of opinions for and against an issue.

Arkansas law is clear that state-owned e-mail systems, computers, phones, printers, etc., are not to be used to campaign for or against an issue or a candidate. Nor can you campaign on work time.

Issue education is different than campaigning.

Campaigning means you are actively encouraging people to vote a specific way. Educating is providing details and information about both sides of an issue.

For example, the fact sheets we provide the public are reviewed by both critics and proponents of an issue before they are released. When you campaign, you take on an image of bias that is not easily discarded.

E-mail or call Kristin Higgins, John Payne or Tom Riley if you have questions or concerns about remaining impartial in both appearance and fact. ■

FCS agents learn to Cook Smart/Eat Smart

Cooking is becoming a lost art among younger generations.

Many nutrition experts see a connection between the lack of cooking skills and increased obesity among children and adults.

As part of Extension's obesity prevention efforts, family and consumer sciences agents will be offering Cook Smart/Eat Smart cooking schools statewide.

In August, 55 county agents brushed up on their culinary skills and learned how to conduct hands-on

cooking classes at one of three trainings conducted by the SNAP-Ed team and Hot Spring County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Cheryl Maxwell.

Agents left enthused about offering Cook Smart/Eat Smart classes in their counties. Cook Smart/Eat Smart is a 12-hour cooking school for adults and older youth. The classes will target SNAP-Ed as well as general audiences and include topics ranging from basic knife skills and safety to healthy meal planning and preparation techniques. ■

Benton County 4-H'ers participate in disaster drill

Saturday, August 25, 20 Benton County 4-H'ers and teen leaders played "victims" in a disaster training drill at Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport (XNA) for more than 60 firefighters, rescue workers and police from Benton and Washington counties.

The scenario was that a passenger jet landed with flames and smoke pouring through the cabin. Wounded and dying passengers were trapped inside.

The members played "victims" and were given scripts and scenarios as to what their injury was and if they lived or died in the end. They were painted with fake bruises and streaks of stage blood. The 4-H'ers were able to act and play their role while providing a great service to the community. ■



Left: Family and Consumer Sciences Agents Susan Britain, Joy West and Terrie James brush up on their knife skills during Cook Smart/Eat Smart training.

Right: Family and Consumer Sciences Agents Jessica Vincent and Sarah Metzger practice making packet meals during Cook Smart/Eat Smart training.

Craighead County 4-H wraps up summer program with City Youth Ministries

Craighead County 4-H teamed up with City Youth Ministries for a 10-week summer program. City Youth Ministries offers a free program and positive environment to area youth weekdays during June through the beginning of August.

Brittany Scott of the Craighead County Extension office assisted City Youth by coordinating and conducting field trips and activities for youth ages 6-12 twice a week within Jonesboro.

Scott taught the youth leadership, communication, team work and community service. The youth visited the Craighead County 4-H Park, NEA Food Bank, Fire Station #1, ASU Petting Zoo and Crowley's Ridge Nature Center where these traits were reinforced through educational activities and games.

Area groups such as the Craighead County Master Gardeners and Teen Leaders assisted with the trips. Over the summer a total of 497 youth participated. City Youth Ministries hopes to begin a 4-H Afterschool Club that would benefit hundreds of inner city youth this fall. ■



Youth in the Craighead County 4-H Park learning about healthy living choices.



Youth at Fire Station #1 in Jonesboro learning about teamwork and fire safety.

Saline County WHEP team does well in national contest

Saline County 4-H members Mary Lewis, Seth Hardwick and Addison Jacobs recently traveled to Kingsville, Tex, to compete at the National WHEP (Wildlife Habitat Education Program) contest.

Four people can make up a team at the national contest, so Saline County asked Matthew Spencer from Drew County who was on the second place Arkansas team to compete with them in the national contest.

The team did very well! They placed third out of 54 teams overall and placed second for their wildlife plan. Matthew Spencer placed second individually out of all the contestants represented at the contest. ■



From left to right: Addison Jacobs, Mary Lewis, Matthew Spencer and Seth Hardwick. The team is posing with the Arkansas flag at the swap meet at the National WHEP competition in Kingsville, Tex.

Aquaculture Field Day set for Oct. 4 at UAPB

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff will host Aquaculture Field Day Oct. 4. The event will feature the latest data on split-pond systems, grain price forecasts, alternative feeds, new treatments to prevent and control aquatic weed problems and the latest disease and regulatory issues.

Registration, a trap shoot and tours will all begin at 8:30 a.m. at the UAPB Aquaculture Research Station off Oliver Road. During the Split-Pond School, participants will learn about equipment development for water circulation, results from the farm verification program and the latest cost estimates. The tractor and walking tours will feature a new hybrid catfish study, trematode control,

(Continued on next page)

crappie for small impoundments, using smallmouth buffalo to prevent hamburger gill disease and other topics.

An Aquaculture Business Management and Marketing workshop, sponsored by the National Aquaculture Association and the United Soybean Board, will be held in the afternoon. It focuses on financial management strategies when feed prices are high and fish prices low. For details, contact Almetris Cobbs at 870-575-8523. ■

Passing on the heritage

Monday, August 6, the Union County Extension staff teamed up with Project South to provide the children of military parents an opportunity to learn more of natural resources as part of our national heritage.

The program was made possible with funding from "Operation Military Kids," a partnership between the U.S. Army and Arkansas 4-H.

South Arkansas is teeming with natural resources like wildlife, water, wetlands and trees. The Arboretum of El Dorado was the perfect setting for these fun learning experiences.

The 40 youth participated in 30-minute activities on wildlife ID presented by Laura Rogers, butterflies and gardens presented by Barbie Luther and other Union County Master Gardeners, water conservation presented by U of A County Agent Robin Bridges, forests and frogs presented by U of A Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Liz McKay and "Fruits for Fun" presented by EFNEP professionals Janie Garner and Glenda Parker.



Craig Allen was presented the Achievement Award from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents during the 2012 annual meeting in Charleston, S.C.

U of A 4-H Program Assistant Cynthia Ford coordinated the event with Project South leaders Sterling Claypoole and Sonya Hall.

The activity presenters were assisted by Union County 4-H Teen Leaders Kaitlin Fitzgerald, Webster Senn, John Dillard, Deanna Senn and Joy Senn.

A strong nation needs strong citizens who value the heritage of natural resources. ■



Union County 4-H Teen Leader Kaitlin Fitzgerald and University of Arkansas 4-H Program Assistant Cynthia Ford work with youth on flag etiquette. Ashley Parker, Kaitlin Fitzgerald, Nicholas Colvin, Josiah Taylor, Natalie Colvin and Cynthia Ford practice proper folding of the American Flag in Flag Etiquette Activity.

BENEFITS CORNER

Did you know?

- Cooperative Extension Service provides (free of cost to employees) an affiliate membership with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock:

- Access to the Ottenheimer Library and the Donaghey Student Center
- 10% discount at the bookstore (excludes software, calculators or sundries)

NOTE: You must get an ID card from the Donaghey Student Center.

- Cooperative Extension Service provides the option of joining the Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union by depositing at least \$5 and paying the membership fee of \$1. For additional information, contact the credit union manager.
- Cooperative Extension Service provides access to the Arkansas Employees Assistance Program. The program provides counseling, information and management consultation for employees and their families who experience some form of personal distress, free of charge. For appointments call 501-686-2588 or 1-800-542-6021. The website: www.uams.edu/eap.
- State of Arkansas employees will be eligible to receive 10% off retail pricing, excluding technology, special orders, custom printing purchases and UPS Services, on their PERSONAL purchases at Office Depot's U.S. retail store locations. For full details on the Employee Purchase Program or to opt in and register online to this program, visit SPOT/Work/Office Depot.

Spammers never take a holiday

There's no end to the creativity or effort spammers put into deceptive messages to encourage you to click on a link or provide user account information in response to a warning that your account is about to be deactivated or disabled, a payment is due, the IRS has issues with your taxes or an automated payment transaction failed.

Recent scams include Discover Card and the Better Business Bureau.

Things to look for to determine if a message is valid:

- Did it originate from @uaex.edu or @edison.uaex.edu? These are valid domain names from our systems. Many fakes related to e-mail accounts show other school names or institutions (@hbgsd.k12.pa.us, @cmich.edu, @collierschools.com, @fam.u.edu, @sol.doi.gov)
- Our quota and password expiration notices provide information or instructions regarding how to reset and

sync your passwords. Links are not included in the message. Users are not asked to provide password or username information.

- Does the subject line or text mention students? Our domain identifies our educational affiliation. Many spam messages assume CES is a traditional educational institution.

One of your most powerful tools is to ask the Call Center to verify the authenticity of the message. ■

Questions or assistance?

Contact the IT Call Center:

Local Call: 501-671-2255

Toll Free: 866-779-3375

E-mail: callcenter@uaex.edu

Grants and contracts for Month Ending July 31, 2012

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Sequential Treatments for Controlling Glyphosate Resistant Weeds	9,150.00	Ken Smith	Monsanto Company
Herbicide Tolerance of DGT Germplasm	5,000.00	Tom Barber	Monsanto Company
Procurement Technical Assistance for Business Firms (Distressed)	290,001.00	David Jerome	Department of Defense
Field Efficacy of Current/Future Bt Technologies Against Lapidoptera-Internal	5,000.00	Gus Lorenz	Monsanto Company
Pest Detection/Soybean Pest Survey	10,012.00	Gus Lorenz	USDA, APHIS, PPQ
Best Care 4-H Afterschool	85,000.00	Ida Collier	DHS Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education
Best Care Traditional	230,364.00	James Marshall	DHS Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education
Best Care Connected	69,732.00	James Marshall	DHS Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education
Seed Treatment Nematode Management in Cotton	4,880.00	Leo Espinoza	Monsanto Company
North Central Health Network Diabetic Support Group Project	14,000.00	MaLinda Coffman	North Central Health Network
National TAAF Training Coordination Center	200,000.00	Ron Rainey	University of Minnesota
Integrated Resource Management Tool to Mitigate the Carbon Footprint...	76,604.00	Samy Sadaka	Agriculture Experiment Station
Best Care Guiding Children Successfully	174,904.00	Wally Goddard	DHS Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education
TOTAL JULY 2012 AWARDS	1,174,647.00		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Julie A. Blair

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Searcy County, effective August 13, 2012.

Kristie D. Cornett

4-H Program Assistant, Cleburne County, effective August 16, 2012.

Nicole E. Dawson

Administrative Specialist, Community and Economic Development, effective August 20, 2012.

Rosalind M. Donson

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Nevada County, effective July 16, 2012.

Melanie D. Fuhrman

Program Associate, Soybean, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective August 1, 2012.

Jarrod T. Hardke

Extension Agronomist - Rice, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective August 31, 2012.

Hannah B. Harris

Program Assistant, Howard County, effective September 4, 2012.

Elizabeth Y. Johnson

Program Associate, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective August 16, 2012.

Connie L. Jordan

Program Assistant, 4-H, Desha County, effective August 20, 2012.

Tyler D. Keene

Program Technician, Wheat and Feed Grains, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective August 3, 2012.

Dana R. Kelly

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Randolph County, effective August 27, 2012.

Michael A. Paskewitz

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Prairie County-Des Arc, effective July 23, 2012.

Rodriguez R. Mateo

Program Assistant, Sevier County, effective August 22, 2012.

Sarah J. Sowell

4-H Program Assistant, Chicot County, effective August 16, 2012.

Extension says goodbye to:

Aalesha D. Cartner

Program Assistant, Youth, Van Buren County, effective July 31, 2012.

Terra L. Daniels

Program Associate - SRMEC, Southern Regional Risk Management Education, effective July 27, 2012.

Lazaro J. English

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Delta District, effective August 2, 2012.

Lisa J. Foster

County Extension Agent - 4-H - Family and Consumer Sciences, Sebastian County, effective July 31, 2012.

Cheryl L. Gibbins

Administrative Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective July 27, 2012.

Susan R. Holman

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Franklin County-Ozark, effective July 5, 2012.

Kara R. Hunt

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Stone County, effective July 24, 2012.

Reginald James

Institutional Services Assistant, Facility Maintenance, effective August 17, 2012.

Jackquelyn O'Donnell

Administrative Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective August 3, 2012.

Matthew D. Shekels

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Ozark District, effective July 20, 2012.

Erika T. Thomas

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Perry County, effective August 3, 2012.

Rachel M. Umholtz

4-H Program Assistant, Drew County, effective August 31, 2012.

James F. Vincent

Skilled Tradesman, Facility Maintenance, effective August 15, 2012.

Wei Zhou

Program Associate, Plant Pathology, effective July 31, 2012.