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BLUE LETTER

June 2025

No. 3878



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Heating Up In June

Mark Twain once said something to the effect that, while we don't know exactly what forbidden fruit Adam and Eve ate in the Garden, we know that it must not have been a tomato because they repented of it. I'm not sure I love tomatoes enough to risk an eternity in perdition, but I am – like many of you I'm sure – awfully fond of them. Unfortunately, personal obligations kept me from being able to attend this year's Pink Tomato Festival in Bradley County, but Shane Gadberry was more than happy to go in my place, though I don't think Shane is nearly as fond of tomatoes as I am.

In addition to the festivities in Warren, CES had a lot going on in June. In the first week of the month, we had the Extension Homemakers state meeting, the 4-H Teen Stars and Hall of Fame ceremony, and the state Master Gardeners Conference. The following week, the UA System Division of Agriculture hosted the Southern Region Mini Land-Grant Meeting for the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. This event brought together 1862 and 1890 land-grant administrators and other personnel to discuss and make plans related to the issues and challenges that we face. Dr. Deacue Fields provided outstanding leadership for this year's event in Northwest Arkansas. Christina Breckenridge, chief of staff for the division, worked overtime to plan the agenda, arrange facilities, and manage the complicated logistics of a major event – with a

lot of help from her UADA colleagues, of course. The event was a great opportunity for us to showcase our state and some of the great things going on in UADA and the whole UA System.

At the same time the mini land-grant meeting was going on, many of our CES personnel were helping with the annual Anheuser-Busch (AB) grower appreciation day in Jonesboro. AB has partnered with UADA on a variety of extension and research projects that have benefited Arkansas agriculture and rural communities. Their field day has become a can't-miss event in northeast Arkansas. Unfortunately, many of us did miss it this year due to mini land-grant meeting, but we were well represented, nonetheless. I would like to make special mention of a project that FCS state educators Leigh Ann Bullington and Keith Statham-Cleek have been working on all year. They have collaborated with AES/CES colleagues in Food Science to develop an Instant Pot rice pudding recipe using the UADA-developed ARoma-22 rice variety. They served pudding samples at the AB field day, and from what I understand, it was a big hit. This is a great example of collaboration across disciplines, across program areas, and across land-grant functions to elevate a vital Arkansas commodity.

I know this is a busy season for all of you. Thank you for what you do every day for extension and for the people of Arkansas. ■

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- ...And much more!

Master Gardener Excels as a Fitness Example

Chead Blue, Miller County Master Gardener with the UADA, is dedicated to staying active. Chead, 91, can always be found working on multiple Master Gardener projects, community and church activities. Chead was our top walker in Walk Across Arkansas last year. He was Master Gardener president from 2022-2024.

At a local fitness center, he competed against nine other participants in a plank competition. He was



Plank is holding push-up-like position.

reluctant to enter, thinking he wouldn't stand a chance against these young competitors, but he held the plank position for 4 minutes and 45 seconds.

Chead's theory on his long life is this: "If I keep doing what I'm doing, then I can keep doing what I'm doing, but when I quit doing what I'm doing, then I won't be able to do what I'm doing and probably won't be able to start back. A lot of people think that old age kills you, but that's not what kills. It's just sitting around that kills you. If you want to keep living and living a life worth living, start getting active." ■



Chead shows off first place prize.

Progressive Agriculture Safety Day was Informative

During the recent Progressive Agriculture Safety Day held in Star City, fourth-grade students at Jimmy Brown Elementary learned how to be safe around electrical lines, tractors, house fires, sun safety, and staying safe in a boat. The mission of this national program is to provide education, training, and resources to make farming, ranch and rural life safer and healthier for children and their communities. Safety Days are designed to be age-appropriate, hands-on, fun, and safe for children.

On post-surveys, teachers were asked if they believed this Safety Day was beneficial for their students. All fourth-grade teachers agreed that it was. One teacher stated,

"I believe it's important for kids to know what they need to do, and not to do, in emergency situations."

Student post-surveys showed one student learned, "When you're in the sun always use sunscreen and drink plenty of water." Another student learned "to never go near a moving tractor." On the surveys, 95 percent of students stated a safety behavior or skill that they plan to use. ■

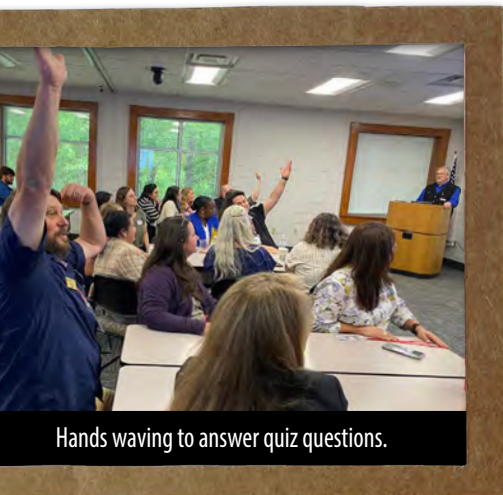


Fourth grade students at Jimmy Brown Elementary at the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day in Star City.

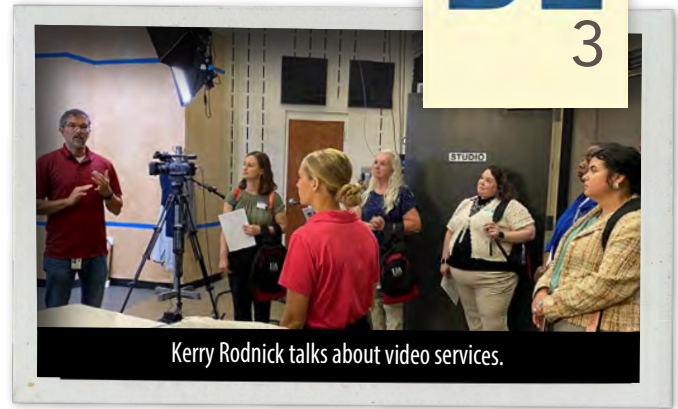
Sowing Seeds of Excellence

Extension welcomed 21 new employees aboard at the Extension's Sowing Seeds of Excellence: Welcome U event May 14 at the state office.

Professional development specialist Steve Siegelin and program associate Vanessa Lewis, with the Community, Professional and Economic Development (CPED) unit, greeted new employees and invited them to share their new positions and roles at Extension. All extension staff members at the opening session were also introduced.



Dr. John Anderson shared Extension's history and foundation, emphasizing the land grant system and Extension's role in communities and the University of Arkansas System. Then new employees were divided into tour groups led by iLead alumni Genean Butler,



Kerry Rodnick talks about video services.

Rebecca Simon, and Leigh Ann Bullington. Participants visited Communications, CPED, 4-H, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Participants enjoyed a taco lunch and had an opportunity to visit with more than 15 extension benefits providers and departments at their expo booths.

The afternoon highlight was the peer-to-peer groups led by extension staff. Participants shared that they enjoyed the event and appreciated being able to tour the building and see where departments and colleagues were located.

Siegelin led a rousing quiz about Extension and Arkansas. Hands from all three tour groups waved in the air to answer the questions. The winners received a UADA bag from Dr. Anderson with goodies provided by various departments.

The next Welcome U event will be Sept. 10, 2025. ■

Katie Holland Recognized as Distinguished Alumna

Katie Holland was recently recognized as a Distinguished Alumna by the University of Central Arkansas Department of Nutrition and Family Sciences. Katie earned a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics in 2003 from UCA and completed a dietetic internship at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System in 2004. She earned a Master of Science in Clinical Nutrition from UAMS in 2005.

She is a registered dietitian nutritionist and has worked with the SNAP-Ed program at UADA since 2009. This award recognizes Katie's outstanding leadership and contributions to nutrition, dietetics, and public health through numerous peer-reviewed publications and national presentations, as well as the excellent quality in curriculum development and evaluation management for the Arkansas SNAP-Ed program. ■





4-H Receives Innovative Grant

Lafayette County 4-H received a \$200 Innovative Grant by the Arkansas 4-H Alumni Association at the Ouachita District Orama on June 10. Ettamarie Belden, alumni

president, presented the award to Lafayette County 4-H member Lena Downs. The award was one of four 4-H Innovative Grants awarded by the Alumni Association in 2025.

Lafayette County 4-H members

worked with County Extension Agent Jerri Dew to develop a community service project proposal for the grant application. The idea presented was to install

a mini library in the Gin City community. Gin City is an unincorporated farming community in Southern Lafayette County. Gin City Parts & Café, the hub of the community, agreed to host the mini library. Plans are to have the installation complete by August. ■



Lafayette County 4-H members from left to right: Adryanna B., Lena D., Arkansas 4-H Alumni Association President, Ettamarie Belden, Billy D. and Sunnie D.



Lena D. of Lafayette County 4-H accepted the 2025 4-H Alumni Association Innovative Grant from Alumni President, Ettamarie Belden.

Animal Science Hosts

Diverse Student Groups for Summer Learning

Animal Science welcomed numerous student groups to campus this summer for hands-on learning experiences designed to showcase opportunities in agriculture. Students gained practical experience with modern agricultural technologies, such as ultrasound for examining cattle, and delved into the microscopic world of animal parasites. For some groups, the focus narrowed to specific species, with sessions on sheep handling and health assessments like the FAMACHA system, a method for detecting anemia in small ruminants.

These outreach events are a cornerstone of the department's

mission to foster interest in agricultural and STEM fields. The department showcases the academic and career pathways available by welcoming students from various backgrounds, including local high schools, FFA chapters from neighboring states like Missouri, 4-H clubs, and participants in the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative's youth summit. Each visit was tailored to the group's interests and often concluded with a question-and-answer session where students could engage directly with faculty and staff, learning more about college life and the animal science curriculum. ■



LeadAR Class 21 Breaking the Ice

By Adam Watson, director for Gravel & Grit and vice chair of Arkansas Civic Action Network.

LeadAR Class 21 kicked off May 27 at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Little Rock for the Orientation and Team Building Seminar. Over the course of two and a half days, the class would do just that: familiarize ourselves with the style of programming we signed up for over the next 18 months and start building the foundations of teamwork necessary to thrive in such a program.

As I and my soon-to-be colleagues filed into a conference room to begin our journey, I was struck by the silence and general unease. Not to speak on behalf of my classmates, but I think it's safe to say we were all dealing with similar struggles and working through answers to the questions that gave rise to that silence:

- Do I know anyone here?
- Am I wearing the right thing?
- Did I pack everything I need?
- What have I gotten myself into?
- And, perhaps, most importantly: Do I really belong here?

Over the course of the morning activities, I sorted through the answers to those questions as I quickly realized that this isn't the type of program you use to check a box and pad your resume. It's not for self-enrichment or purely personal gain. Instead, LeadAR is a program centered around learning how to bring leadership back into our communities—for their benefit and improvement more so than our own. With that realization came the answers to the larger questions and some relief to the imposter syndrome: we all belong here simply by virtue of making the commitment to be here. Read more [here](#).

Read the “rest of the story” of the Class 21 first seminar in blog posts written by participants.

- [Day Two: LeadAR Class 21 Out of My Comfort Zone:](#)



2025 LeadAr Group Photo.

[Reflections on the ExCEL Leadership Program](#), by

Amber Overholser, associate professor/MPA program director, Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia.

- Day Three: LeadAR Class 21 from [Color Theory to Community Change](#), by Austin DuVall, marketing & communications manager at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute.

Leadership Lunch and Learn Book Review: *Necessary Endings* by Dr. Henry Cloud



The May Leadership Lunch and Learn, hosted by the University of Arkansas System Division of

Agriculture in partnership with the Southern Region Program Leaders Network, offered a timely and thoughtful exploration of *Necessary Endings* by Dr. Henry Cloud. Bethany Cleveland, an instructional designer and civil rights coordinator with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, led this month's book review and brought deep insight into a topic that impacts us all knowing when to let go.

In *Necessary Endings*, Cloud presents a powerful metaphor for pruning: to foster growth, we must intentionally cut away what's no longer serving us. Whether in business, relationships, or personal growth, Cloud emphasizes that not everything healthy is worth keeping – sometimes “good” is the enemy of the “best”. Watch the recording [here](#). Read the blog post [here](#).

Experiential Scholars Share Life at Extension

The Experiential Scholars Program (ESP) interns have a new [blog](#). This space highlights the work and experiences of undergraduate students participating in ESP. Over nine weeks, interns work alongside extension mentors on real-world projects in community development, agriculture, health, and conservation. Intern Anaiya Smith said “I'm proud to be a part his internship. It's more than just a step forward in my career, it's a chance to grow both personally and professionally. Follow along as they share stories, insights, and lessons learned while making a difference across Arkansas. ■

Windows 11 Upgrade -

Mandatory Migration - Phase 3 (Started May 2025)

Any computer that is eligible to be upgraded to Windows 11 unless they qualify for an exception. Exceptions will be approved only for the following devices:

- Any device that is used strictly with research\testing\ networking equipment and not connected to the internet.

Contact the Help Desk

New ways of serving you! Technicians are ready to answer your calls. You can request help from the IT Help Desk by calling 1-866-779-3375, (501) 340-0265, visiting services.uada.edu, or emailing tickets@uada.edu.

Email Forwarding Changes (Starts July 1)

Many employees have two email addresses – uada and uark. These employees have been forwarding their email from one inbox to the other inbox so they can login to one account only. As part of our ongoing commitment to protect our organization, UADA will be disabling the email forwarding feature. This decision is driven by the increasing threats posed by cybercriminals who exploit this functionality. The implementation begins July 1, 2025. For more information on why we are making this change and implementation details, visit: [Email Forwarding](#).

Think Before You Click:

Protecting UADA from Cyber Threats

One click can open the door to cybercriminals. Cyberattacks are becoming more sophisticated, and phishing remains one of the most common and dangerous methods used to breach organizations. These attacks often come in the form of emails, text messages, or even social media links that appear legitimate but are designed to steal your credentials, install malware, or compromise sensitive data.

5 Key Questions to Ask

Before clicking on any link or attachment, ask yourself:

1. **Do I know the sender?** If the email is from someone you

don't recognize or even if it looks like it's from someone you do, verify it. Attackers often spoof email addresses.

2. **Was I expecting this message?** Unexpected invoices, password reset requests, or urgent messages demanding immediate action are red flags.
3. **Is the link or attachment suspicious?** Hover over links to preview the URL. If it looks strange or doesn't match the sender's domain, don't click.
4. **Are there spelling or grammar mistakes?** Many phishing emails contain awkward phrasing or typos. These are often signs of a scam.
5. **Is it too good (or too scary) to be true?** Offers of free rewards or threats of account suspension are common tactics to pressure you into clicking.

What to Do If You're Unsure

- **Don't click.** When in doubt, don't interact with the message.
- **Report it.** Use the [Report Message button in Outlook](#)
- **Ask for help.** If something feels off, trust your instincts and check with IT.

Zoom Pro Tip – Your Zoom Web Portal

Signing into your Zoom web portal can give you a lot more options to customize your Zoom experience than just using the settings in the desktop Zoom Workplace app. From the website, you can customize your profile to include a name pronunciation guide, job title, or department. You can also see what type of Zoom license you have.

Add registration to your meeting by scheduling a meeting from the Meetings tab. Create surveys and polls from the Surveys tab. See recordings (local and/or cloud) from the Recordings & Transcripts tab. Browse through and change account settings from the Settings tab. Find meeting reports in the Reports tab. This and so much more can be found in the [Zoom web portal](#).

Hump Day Hacks

Resources can be found on the Hump Day Hacks Resource page in Team Dynamix. May's hacks included finding and editing your transcripts in Zoom recordings, extracting text from images with Adobe Acrobat, conditional formatting in Excel, taking screenshots with Microsoft Edge, and customizing icons in PowerPoint. Join us on July 23, 2025! [Register Now](#). ■

2025 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

Have you missed any past Tech Tuesday webinars or want to join future webinars? Check out the recordings and other resources on the [Tech Tuesday Blog page](#). More Tech Tuesday topics coming soon! Did you miss May's [Working Smarter with AI Tech Tuesday](#)? Check out the recording and resources.



Tailgate Meetups Showcase High Tunnel Growing

Taunya Ernst, high tunnel and urban agriculture educator, has organized a new “Tailgate Meetup” series. While designed to offer something a little different at each meetup, attendees are always given the chance to connect with an experienced high tunnel grower and take part in a hands-on tour of a producing high tunnel.

Four events have been held at various locations throughout the state, with two more scheduled. Common topics covered include soil health, fertility programs, planting schedules, pest management, and irrigation practices. At upcoming events, Ernst will discuss specific techniques like bed preparation and how to install a drip irrigation system inside a tunnel. For more information, email Ernst at ternst@uada.edu or visit the High Tunnel Specialty Production [webpage](#) for more information. ■



Taunya Ernst (second from left) discusses drip irrigation and soil management with local producers at her most recent “Tailgate Meetup” in Casscoe, AR.

FCS Agents Teach Food Fundamentals



Saline, Pulaski, and Lonoke Family and Consumer Sciences agents Devyn Britt, LaTaaka Harvey, and Alicia Boatwright in partnership with the Saline County Library, are hosting a four-part cooking series called

Food Fundamentals. This series is designed to build essential kitchen skills and help community members gain confidence in preparing healthy, affordable meals at home.



Devyn Britt

The first two sessions — Knife Skills and Meal Planning on a Budget — received excellent feedback. Participants have left feeling

confident and motivated to make healthier choices in their daily lives.

Next in the series is Air Fryer Basics on July 8, followed by Preparing Quick and Healthy Meals for Your Family on Aug. 12. ■



From left to right: Alicia Boatwright, Pulaski agent, Devyn Britt, Lonoke agent, and LaTaaka Harvey, Saline agent.

AIMS All Stars

The Office of Organizational Accountability & Evaluation would like to recognize some AIMS All-Stars! Since we are more than halfway through the reporting year, we wanted to highlight some counties and individuals who have diligently reported every month since October. The goal is to strengthen our culture of accountability and promote reporting best practices.

Pulaski, Washington, & White counties have done an excellent job this program year submitting their reports on time, with all or almost all staff reporting every month since October!

We also want to recognize other county staff who have reported consistently since October:

Delta District

Ben Holcomb

Christa Mazzanti
Sarah Stone

Ouachita District

Ashley Elmore
Bethany Gammill
David West

Ozark District

Casey Ford
Cody Salmon
Kristen Ulsperger



Thank you for all your hard work to meet reporting deadlines. Remember to get your monthly reporting done (indicators, contacts, hours, events) by the 5th of each month! ■

All-Tomato Luncheon

Shane Gadberry, assistant vice president for agriculture & natural resources with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, delivers keynote remarks during the All-Tomato Luncheon June 14, 2025, at First United Methodist Church in Warren.



Shane Gadberry was the keynote speaker at the All-Tomato Luncheon.



Save the Date!
Monday, December 1
Extension Employee Conference

Soybean Science Challenge Gets National Recognition

The Soybean Science Challenge curriculum is now included in the [Kid's Garden Community Resource Library](#), a national nonprofit supporting educators and caregivers to bring the life-changing benefits of gardening to kids and further their mission to get all kids learning through gardening. The Kid's Garden Community group has more than 6,000 members nationwide.

The nonprofit's May [e-newsletter](#) included the Soybean Science Challenge (SSC) as a resource for those teaching kids about gardening.

Agents can request soybean seeds from the SSC's "[Grow Your Own Protein](#)" program for school, county office, and community gardens.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a farmer-funded, statewide, middle and high school education



program that seeks to increase student knowledge about the value of Arkansas soybeans to the Arkansas economy, to the labor force, and ultimately to feed and fuel the world. It is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the Cooperative Extension Service.

If you would like to get involved in this program, as a mentor, judge, or volunteer, please contact Dr. Julie Robinson at jrobinson@uada.edu, or Keith Harris at krharris@uada.edu. ■

Soybean Science Challenge

Students Compete at International Science Fair

Summer is here. School is out. Science fair season is over for another year. We would be remiss if we did not mention one final celebration for the students that competed in this year's Soybean Science Challenge.

The 2025 Soybean Science Challenge had 53 students qualify to compete at their respective regional science fair. Three of the six Arkansas regional science fairs each nominated a Soybean Science Challenge student and their project as a finalist for the International Science and Engineering Fair. They include:

- **Central Arkansas Regional Fair** — Bennet Chen, Little Rock Central High
- **Northeast Arkansas Regional Fair** — Scout Priest, Riverside High
- **Ouachita Mountains Regional Fair** — Thomas Gilliland, Benton Junior High

These students, accompanied by their teacher/mentors, competed at the 2025 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair from May 10-16. More than 1,600 students from 60-plus countries and territories were interviewed during the competition.

Scout Priest received one of five Missouri University of Science and Technology's summer camp scholarships of up to \$1,500 to be used towards attending the camp and travel expenses. Congratulations to Scout on his award!

The Soybean Science Challenge is growing, and the quality of the student-led research projects is being recognized at state, national, and international events. Congratulations to all the participants.

If you would like to get involved in this program, as a mentor, judge, or volunteer, please contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu, or Keith Harris, krharris@uada.edu. ■

Grassland Evaluation Contest



Coach Michelle Mobley and the Independence County 4-H team placed first in the Mid-America Grassland Evaluation Contest. Gabbi M. placed second as a 4-H individual.

Coach Monty Rexwinkle and the Carroll County 4-H Team placed fifth in the contest. Jonathan Kubesch, extension forage specialist, chaperoned the teams to the contest, where participants identified forages, read soil descriptions, managed wildlife, and identified ways to improve pastures for cattle. ■



First place Independence County 4-H team.



Cross County 4-H event winners going on to compete at State O'Rama in Fayetteville next month.

Cross County 4-H

“Foster the Love”

As part of Arkansas 4-H’s “Foster the Love community” service outreach, 4-H members recently collected birthday cake supplies for children in foster care. Cross County 4-Hers rose to the occasions and collected 405 pounds of supplies — cake mixes, frosting, candles, pans and other supplies — the most of any county in the 25-county Delta District. The youth delivered the supplies at the District O-Rama. The Delta District collected more than 3,000 lbs. of supplies total. ■

Sanitation and Listeria Prevention Workshop

The Little Rock state office will host a Food Plant Sanitation and Listeria Prevention workshop on Aug. 12-14 for plant managers, sanitation leaders, engineers, food safety personnel, and anyone interested in learning sanitation best practices.

The workshop will be valuable for those who work in food production facilities subject to inspection by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or state authorities.

“Attendees will get the latest updates from technical experts on sanitation best practices and Listeria prevention in food production,” said Dr. Bill Potter, extension food safety and poultry processing specialist. “The workshop will also include hands-on exercises, networking and timely tips from sanitation specialists.”

The training is applicable to any type of food processing, with special emphasis on reducing Listeria in ready-to-eat food plants. When this bacteria proliferates in a ready-to-eat food processing environment, the result can be significant human illnesses and food recalls. The workshop begins Aug. 12 at 1 p.m. and concludes Aug. 14 at noon. For the full agenda and registration info, click [here](#). ■



4-H Club Shines at Special Needs Rodeo



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The Cool Clovers 4-H Club made a big impact at a recent special needs rodeo event on May 14, bringing smiles and unforgettable experiences to students from the Fountain Lake and Lake Hamilton school districts. Approximately 100 students participated in the event, which was filled with fun, hands-on rodeo activities tailored for all abilities.

Twenty-one dedicated 4-Hers from the Cool Clovers, led by Lisa Driggers and

Shawna Gilbert, volunteered their time and energy to lead various stations, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. The stations included classic “rodeo” events like roping, barrel-racing, flags, and pole bending. A crowd favorite was the bull riding, offering students a chance to ride like a cowboy.

The Cool Clovers 4-Hers demonstrated leadership, teamwork, and community spirit, making the event a true success. After a full morning of activities, the Garland County Extension Homemakers Council provided lunch.

This event wouldn’t have been possible without the 15 adult volunteers guiding the young volunteers, assisting students when needed, and helping keep the day running smoothly from start to finish. Garland County 4-H is beyond proud of the Cool Clovers 4-H Club! ■



A Lake Hamilton School student riding a “mechanical bull” while being supported by volunteers and 4-H youth.

4-H Outdoor Day Camp



Crittenden County 4-H hosted its annual Outdoor Day Camp on June 11 in Marion that served 29 youth, ages 5-19. Attendees participated in a variety of station activities. Participants had hands-on interactions with Madagascar hissing cockroaches and bugs they caught with Mississippi County 4-H Agent Kamella Neeley. Natural Resources Conservation Service representatives Marshall Wildy and Zach Brown, with county intern Claudia Pouncey, taught youth how to fish and kayak. County Master Gardeners taught youth how to grow a pollinator garden. Volunteer George Powers taught the kids about outdoor cooking, and the group prepared baked beans, cobbled corn, and spiced apples for lunch.

Nathan Odom, Parkin Archeological Park superintendent,

had an informative table about Arkansas Native Americans and their lives, including tools such as atlatls, animal furs, and bones. Finally, Dr. Jon E. Zawislak, assistant professor of urban entomology, taught youth about beekeeping.

We could not have put this day together without the help of these amazing educators, students and adult volunteers, and UADA employees including our staff chair, Katrina Wallace. Finally, thank you to our sponsors: Tacker’s Shake Shack, Southern Bancorp, Lisa O’Neal, Dianne Person, Kristi Brawley, and Regina Young. ■



Dr. Jon Zawislak discussing beekeeping with Crittenden County youth.



Mississippi County 4-H Agent, Kamella Neeley, and Crittenden County 4-Hers Harlee H., Legend D., with ‘Roachella’ a Madagascar hissing cockroach, SaMiyah S., Citlalli H., and Shaye H.

Livestock & Forestry Research Station Hosts In-service Agent Training

Several ag agents from around the state received in-service training at the Livestock and Forestry Research Station in Batesville.

on small ruminant fecal egg counting techniques. Additionally, extension beef cattle specialist Maggie Justice led a comprehensive beef session, while Kirsten Midkiff, extension animal health instructor, spoke on animal health topics. 4-H youth livestock instructor Allison Harman coordinated the livestock quiz bowl competition.

These in-service trainings are a regular and vital component of the Division of Agriculture's commitment to providing its agents and staff with the latest research-based knowledge and practical skills. This ongoing professional development ensures that Arkansans in all counties receive the most up-to-date and effective information and support for their agricultural endeavors. ■

Extension forage specialist Jonathan Kubesch and forage instructor Kenny Simon led sessions on weed/forage identification and provided hands-on instruction on nitrate testing procedures. Dan Quadros, extension small ruminant specialist, led a session



Dr. Dan Quadros discusses sampling and FAMACHA scoring in small ruminants during the in-service training in Batesville.

Small Ruminant Field Day

Extension specialists and agents provided demos and hands-on training for goat and sheep owners during Small Ruminant Field Day on June 13 at Mr. Bookout's farm in Saffell in Lawrence County. Pastures, reproduction, and health care were the focus of the program. New technologies were presented, including:

- A pregnancy check kit that uses drops of blood to determine if the ewe or doe is pregnant as early as 30 days after conception.
- Technologies to increase herd/flock fertility and synchronize ovulation.
- Methods to monitor reproductive activity.
- Basic care of newborn lambs and goat kids to reduce losses.



- Tools to control internal parasites, a major health issue faced by small ruminants.

Producers had hands-on opportunities guided by instructors. One of the most impactful was a ryegrass and oat demonstration. Two acres were planted and divided with an electric fence. Sheep were turned into the area

to graze on the day of the event. Lawrence County Extension Agent Bryce Baldrige with and Dr. Jonathan Kubesch, extension forage specialist, and Dr. Dan Quadros, extension small ruminant specialist, implemented this method to increase forage yield and carrying capacity, improve nutrition and animal performance, and reduce production costs. ■

Animal Science Participates in

Judging Camp



Dr. Bryan Kutz talking with students at the U of A - Rich Mountain Community College's 2nd annual livestock judging camp.

The University of Arkansas at Rich Mountain Community College hosted its 2nd annual Livestock Judging Camp. The camp was led by Walker Antilla with assistance of Extension livestock faculty and staff Allison Harmon, Bryan Kutz and Blake Davis.

The instruction included current types in market and breeding cattle, sheep,

meat goats, and swine. Youth from Arizona, New Mexico, Missouri and across Arkansas learned about the priorities in livestock selection and current industry trends and improved their communication skills through the presentation of oral reasons. Fifty-one students ranging in age from 9-18 participated in this year's camp. ■

CESFCU Benefits

Did you know that all CES employees (current and retired) immediate family members of CES employees (current and retired) and volunteers of CES departments and organizations are eligible for membership with CESFCU? And that once you are a member you are always a member, even if you change jobs?

Savings

CESFCU offers savings products right for you with competitive rates: regular, vacation, holiday and other special savings accounts for that project or goal as well as 6-month and 12-month Certificate accounts with competitive rates 6 months @ 3.00% and 12 months @ 3.50%.

Lending

CESFCU offers multiple-loan products at low, competitive rates:

- Spring into action with a low-rate auto loan for a new purchase or refinance. Rates as low as 3.99% for 36 months (for models 2020-2025) & 4.99% for 36 months (for models 2015-2019).
- Finance an RV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, trailer or other collateral. Multiple financing terms are available. Enjoy up to 90 days without a payment.

For more information about accounts or loans, visit www.cesfcu.org, email: contactcesfcu@uada.edu, or call 501-671-2038. ■

Benefits Corner

Tuition discounts are available for employees of all campuses within the University of Arkansas System, regardless of the campus where you are employed. There are no discounts for courses taken at a non-University of Arkansas System campus.

Tuition discount benefits are available for tuition only; all applicable fees must be paid in full. All active, full-time (100% appointed) benefits-eligible employees, their spouses and eligible dependents can receive tuition discount benefits. Eligible dependents are considered your spouse or unmarried dependent child as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.

You are eligible for discounts on the final day of regular registration following your continuous employment in a full-time position at the university for one complete fall or spring semester. Each campus may have a different definition of a full-time student. Check with the campus that you are enrolling in to confirm required credit hours.

You must apply for tuition discounts. For application instructions, and information about exclusions and limitations, contact humanresources@uada.edu, your benefits@uada.edu or review additional information at <https://benefits.uasys.edu/work-life/education-benefits/>. ■

Grants & Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Master Field Trial Services Work Order #15	8,778	Bob Scott	Bayer CropScience LP
Blast Resistance of RiceTec Products	2,500	Camila Primieri Nicolli	RiceTec
Sare Program 2024	399,249	Dan Quadros	University of Georgia Research Foundation, Inc.
EXCITE: Regional Immunization Education Staffing Model	310,854	Heather Kay Wingo	Extension Foundation
Evaluation of Various Seed Treatments	80,000	Jarrold Hardke	RiceTec
Urban Stormwater Education Program	228,000	Katie Teague	Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission
Developing the National Cotton Profit-Loss Analysis Tool	30,000	Ryan Loy	Cotton Inc.
Master Field Trial Services Work Order #18	3,990	Terry N Spurlock	Bayer CropScience LP
Master Field Trial Services Work Order #16	8,778	Tom Barber	Bayer CropScience LP
Development & Expansion of Disease Management Decision-Making Tools	15,000	Travis Faske	University of Kentucky Research Foundation
Master Field Trial Services Work Order #17	16,891	Travis Faske	Bayer CropScience LP
TOTAL AWARDS FOR MAY 2025: \$1,104,040			

Personnel Changes

Welcome Aboard:

Jamison Purtle – Administrative Specialist III, Hempstead County
Morena Hicks – 4-H Program Assistant, Montgomery County
Hallie Caldwell – Administrative Specialist III, Pike County
Jane Hermerding – County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences, Mississippi County
Bryce Daniels – Assistant Professor - Family & Consumer Science, LRSO
Maxwell Sturdivant – Post Doctoral Fellow – Plant Pathology, Lonoke Agricultural Center
Rayvin Humphrey – County Extension Agent – 4-H, Jefferson County
Jess Blackwell – Administrative Specialist II – Community, Professional, & Economic Development, LRSO
Krysti Gerlach – Administrative Specialist III – Monroe County
Kacie Gibbins – Program Associate - Hay Verification Coordinator – Crop Soil & Environmental Science, LRSO

Farewell to:

Blake Davis – County Extension Agent - 4-H, Greene County
Evan Jewsbury – Human Resources - Chief Human Resources Officer, Washington County
Ashlin Lippe – Boone County - 4-H Program Assistant, Boone County

