

# The University of Georgia Cobb County Cooperative Extension

## Annual Report 2010

### Mission Statement

**“The Cobb County Cooperative Extension responds to the needs and interests of people in urban agriculture/horticulture, the environment, family and consumer sciences and 4-H youth in Cobb County with unbiased research-based education.”**

The Cobb County Cooperative Extension provides trainings, programs, resources and services as the educational outreach of The University of Georgia.

The Cooperative Extension came into existence on a national level in 1914 with the passage by Congress of the Smith-Lever Act. The purpose of the Extension Office has always been to provide unbiased research-based information from the land-grant university in each state to the people of the United States by working cooperatively with county governments.

The strength of the Cobb County Cooperative Extension is found in the department’s identification of local issues that fit within its mission. The department works collaboratively to address those issues. Working with other groups and agencies that have regulatory, but no educational delivery system, the Cooperative Extension provides the educational component without duplicating services.

Local empowerment by the people, advisory board, and grass roots program planning ensures that programs offered are needed and relevant.

We accomplish our motto of Learning for Life through our issue based programs in Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H Youth and Urban Agriculture.



*Cobb County...Expect the Best!*



## Cobb County 4-H Program



Cobb 4-H has a strong impact on Cobb County youth. We served 6,491 youth and adults in 2010 through various community service and county events. While implementing the 4-H curriculum in 20 county, city, and private schools during the school day and afterschool, 1,491 fifth graders were able to gain knowledge by doing hands-on activities pertaining to the 4-H curriculum taught. For one hour a month, our highly qualified and trained 4-H staff taught the hands-on 4-H curriculum in 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in Cobb County Schools and Marietta City Schools.

Cloverleaf County Council (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Junior County Council (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) and Senior County Council (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) are three 4-H Clubs offered in the evenings on a monthly basis. Cobb 4-H enrollment included 17 Cloverleaves, 37 Juniors, and 30 Senior 4-H members for 2010.

During 4-H meetings, public speaking, workforce preparation, financial literacy, college preparation, leadership, and life skills were issues addressed.

In addition, we have 14 Cobb County 4-H Horse and Pony Club members through this volunteer-led program. This club worked with youth on leadership development while gaining equestrian skills for competition.

4-H Staff is involved in extensive quarterly training provided by The University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. 4-H staff work directly with the youth of Cobb County and they are caring, engaging leaders who plan, implement, and chaperone events. Trained 4-H volunteers assist with many events and serve as a great support system.

### 4-H Curriculum

Cobb County 4-H adopted the Agriscience track and the Garden Earth Naturalist track, which were written and edited by faculty of The University of Georgia, State Specialist with Georgia 4-H, representatives from the Georgia Department of Education, representatives from the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Georgia Museum of Natural History, and Georgia Partnership in Science and Math (PRISM).

The Agriscience curriculum consists of eight lessons that relate to Earth and Life Sciences. Lessons feature a hands-on approach to the Georgia Performance Standards and connects the standards to research based information from the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at The University of Georgia. The following lessons were taught to enhance the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum: Poison Pump, Georgia Barrier Islands, Vidalia Onions, Plant Classification, Micro-organisms, Mold, and Inherited Plant Traits.

Cobb 4-H lessons like nutrition education enlightened students on the use of the new food pyramid guide in planning healthy, well-balanced meals. Rocks and Minerals incorporated an activity identifying rocks and minerals using methods similar to those used by geologists. These were lesson descriptions which teachers had the option of selecting. Other lessons taught were Marine Life, Seeds to Supper, Clean Water / Conservation, Soil Conservation, Weather/Severe Weather, and Electricity and Magnetism.



## 4-H Activities

Cobb County 4-H offers a variety of out-of-classroom experiences for youth. In addition to special events, Cobb 4-H programming included leadership development, public speaking, and community service.

One of the major opportunities through 4-H has always been project achievement; public speaking skills. Project Achievement is a competition where 4-H'ers choose a topic of interest, research that subject, then create a visual and oral presentation. October through December, 4-H staff visit schools one afternoon a month to help 4-H'ers select a project topic of interest, develop the speech and design accompanying posters.



Cobb 4-H conducted its annual Plant Sale that generated revenue to support Project Achievement activities and trips. 4-H'ers were able to participate in local and area project achievement at minimal cost to their families.

Recognizing the musical talent in Cobb County youth today, Cobb 4-H promoted and implemented a community event where youth Jazz Bands can showcase their talents. "Jazz on the Clover" concert in the park was established as a free family event and showcased local middle and high school jazz bands. "Jazz on the Clover 2010" marked its 3<sup>rd</sup> year with high school, middle school, and homeschool youth jazz bands.

Cobb 4-H'ers participated in the annual Cotton Boll judging held on the district level where winners advanced to the state level. The Cotton Boll & Consumer Judging competition gives students an understanding of the importance of cotton as an agricultural commodity. It also promotes cotton and teaches knowledgeable and rational decisions when purchasing goods and services. Students learned to communicate reasons for choices made when making purchases.

In addition to the many opportunities we provide in 4-H, we also promoted and encouraged schools to participate in the Environmental Educational Programs (EEP) at our 4-H Centers across Georgia. Cobb County, City, and Private Schools participated this year.

Cobb 4-H collaborated with Cobb County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department and Cobb Safe Kids in the county's annual Fall Festival. Over 5,000 children and parents attended this annual festival. Cobb 4-H marketed the free of charge festival. This event provided a safe Halloween environment for the Cobb community to include coloring, costume contest, rides, games and community safety activities. This was a Cobb 4-H community service project.

Additional 4-H activities for 2010 included an annual 4-H Pet Show, 4-H summer camps, State 4-H Junior and Senior Conferences, and a monthly Science Club for 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade 4-H members. Georgia Youth Summit Team coordinated "Pedestrian Safety" education program for summer day camp children. 4-H staff collaborated



with Cobb County Library Youth Reading Program over the summer to enhance their summer reading with hands-on activities such as water conservation and the water cycle. Cobb County 4-H partnered with Cobb Parks summer day camps coordinating educational and hands-on activities to elementary and middle school campers. Cloverleaf 4-H members also participated in competitions such as Milkmake and Pea-nutrition. The competitions are sponsored by Dairy and Peanut Corporations for nutritional promotion.

## **Family and Consumer Sciences**

In response to the need to promote health and wellness in Georgia, Cobb County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Department offered or participated in programs that teach long-term weight management, diabetes self management, food safety and nutrition, as well as participating in Cobb Employees' Wellness Program.

### **Walk Georgia**

Walk Georgia is an 8-week program sponsored by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension, designed to increase physical activity among Georgia residents. Regular physical activity is important for the physical, mental and economic health of our communities. The Walk Georgia program was offered in the Spring and Fall of 2010.



The Spring Walk Georgia program was offered from March 1 – April 25, 2010. 181 people enrolled in the program through Cobb County, of which 124 actively participated.

At the end of the Spring program, 100% of participants from Cobb County reported that they strongly agree or agree that Walk Georgia encouraged them to exercise.

Overall, participants from Cobb County logged 18,184 miles of physical activity.

The Fall Walk Georgia program was offered from September 5 – October 30, 2010. 207 people enrolled in the program through Cobb County, of which 126 actively participated.

Overall, participants from Cobb County logged 15,773 miles of physical activity.

At the end of the Fall program, 100% of participants from Cobb County reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Walk Georgia program.

### **Diabetes Self-Management Program**

Basic diabetes self-management classes were taught by the Diabetes Association of Atlanta educators. Cobb Extension offered these classes most months for individuals recently diagnosed with diabetes, who need an update, and pregnant women with diabetes.

Individuals with diabetes received an individual consultation that included the hemoglobin A1C lab and participated in a group class to learn about diabetes, medications and meal planning.

### **ServSafe® Food Safety Manager Certification Training**

In response to the need to provide training to food service management personnel in the area of food safety, and the requirement from the Georgia Division of Public Health Environmental Health to demonstrate Food Safety Knowledge and one certified food safety manager per establishment, Cobb Extension in Collaboration with Cobb & Douglas Public Health Center for Environmental Health offered three 16-hour Food Safety Certification Trainings on March 10-11, 2010, August 4-5, 2010, and November 3-4, 2010.

## **Nutrition**

Cobb Extension provided four Cobb County Senior Centers with nutrition education materials distributing 992 publications.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005, those who consume more fruits and vegetables as part of a healthful diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases. Because consumers are looking for safe, healthy foods, there has been a resurgence in the idea of growing and preserving your own food. In response to the need to promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthful diet, Cobb Extension Family and Consumer Sciences partnered with the Horticulture Department to offer to consumers **From Your Garden to Your Table**, a two hour workshop on April 1 and April 13, 2010. The workshops were well attended with 64 participants.

The Family and Consumer Sciences Department also researched and answered more than 900 consumer telephone requests for information.

## **Cobb County Wellness Committee**

Cobb County Extension is a participant in the Cobb Employees' Wellness Works Committee. The committee offered the following health programs in 2010:

*It's All About the Heart*

*Women & Hypertension*

*Breast Health*

*Managing Diabetes*

*A Healthy You Wellness Management Program*

*Focus on Fitness - Tai Chi Class*

*Men's Health*

*UV Safety Screenings*

*Healthy Cooking Demonstration*

The committee also offered a variety of fitness classes and distributed a Health Newsletter to employees.

## **Radon Kits**

Radon is the second leading cause of Lung Cancer in the USA, after tobacco. It kills nearly 22,000 people each year. Radon is an odorless, invisible and tasteless gas released by the natural decay of uranium in our soils and rocks that easily enters our homes through the foundations and well water. The only way to know if your home contains high radon levels is to test for it. In 2010 Cobb Extension distributed 153 radon kits.

## **Newsletters**

- Diabetes Life Lines - 600 distributed to people with diabetes and their caregivers
- Monthly Baby Bouncer Parenting Newsletter – 360 distributed to parents
- Growing Together Child Development Newsletter – 1,680 distributed to childcare providers

## **Media**

CobbLine Newsletter – Extension programs are marketed in the CobbLine, the Water System Newsletter. TV23 – The Cobb County cable station provides air time for Extension programming throughout the year. Web Site Articles – [www.cobbextension.com](http://www.cobbextension.com) - information to assist individuals and families.

## **Speaking Engagements**

Cobb Extension Family and Consumer Sciences staff responds to the needs of the community by speaking at various Cobb community agencies and civic group meetings. These sessions totaled 945 in attendance.

## URBAN AGRICULTURE/HORTICULTURE

Urban Agriculture is the component of the Cobb County Cooperative Extension that provides information and education to the public and professionals on horticulture and natural resources. There is a current surge in home gardening in urban areas. Our university based information and classes are helping many first time gardeners realize their goal of safe food production.

### Soil/Water Testing and Plant Disease Diagnosis

In 2010, our county submitted 1,029 soil tests for analysis. These tests provided valuable information on amending the soil for planting. Another 1,471 water, plant identification, disease, and insect samples were brought in for diagnosis on-site or through laboratory analysis.



### Green Industry Update and Pesticide Review

The Cobb County Extension office presented three green industry updates and two pesticide reviews to more than 300 commercial landscapers. A total of 280 pesticide credits and 90 International Society of Arboriculture credits were given to maintain certifications. In addition, there were 600 contacts made from the commercial landscape industry emphasizing the judicious use of fertilizer, prudent application of pesticides and implementation integrated pest management to protect and conserve water resources.

### Sustainable Landscape Training

Cobb Extension horticulturists partnered with Cobb County Water Department to offer a special Sustainable Landscape Training. This training was limited to the lower tier landscape employees. Subjects included Site Preparation, Water Management and Landscape Maintenance. Certificates of training were provided to each participant. We saw this as a timely subject with proper planting and the potential for a limited future water supply.

### Master Gardener Volunteers

Cobb County Master Gardeners are residents of our community who have received research based Horticultural training from the University of Georgia. In return for this training they provide educational opportunities to Cobb County residents including delivering sound horticultural practices and techniques in accordance with the recommendations and research of the University of Georgia. Master Gardeners made 17,496 contacts throughout Cobb County giving 13,612 hours of volunteer time and driving more than 63,442 miles. The total value of volunteer services rendered by these individuals reached \$304,363 for 2010.



Master Gardeners maintain 12 educational demonstration gardens from which to teach. These gardens included:

- Smith Gilbert Garden and Arboretum
- The Cobb County Wildlife and Nature Garden
- Chattahoochee Nature Center
- Master Gardener Garden Tour
- Plant-a-Row (donated over 1 ton of food)
- Root House Museum and Historical Garden
- McFarlane Park



Additionally, Cobb County has a Master Gardener Teacher program. This program was developed to meet the growing requests for teaching gardens in our schools. The traditional Master Gardener Program training has been adapted to provide participants with the background and knowledge needed to implement successful, student-centered gardens at their school. Gardening in schools expands classroom lessons in the areas of sciences, literature, math, and history. To

date eleven Cobb County schools have Master Gardener Teacher teams working with the children to deliver curriculum based educational experiences using lesson plans coordinated with the teaching gardens.





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