Kentucky Cooperative Extension has a lot to be proud of as we look back on 2006. We significantly increased the number of times we interacted with clientele and boosted the number of youth involved in 4-H Youth Development. Kentucky farmers realized even more additional income through use of new practices taught in extension programs.

We also increased our efforts to help Kentuckians adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles—nearly one-fourth of our 2006 programming effort was in that area.

The stories in this year’s annual report portray people whose lives were changed through extension programs. You'll see how:

- Kentucky 4-H reaches out to the growing number of home-schooling families
- Extension Homemakers seek to include all kinds of households
- County agents stretch beyond their traditional mission to foster community leadership
- Our horticulture specialists are building high tech information systems to address the booming interest in home gardening
- An innovative training program offers all rural land owners a chance to realize the untapped opportunity in their woodlands.

Five different people, and five different programs, but all of them illustrate Cooperative Extension's century-old values and goals—fitting our programs to the needs of a rapidly changing society, reliance on local leadership, and zeal to empower all Kentuckians.

These values are constant and are part of all we do. They can be seen in the most recent and innovative extension initiatives in the arts, health, and entrepreneurship and in the most traditional, but still successful, programming for 4-H and farms.

We affirm our pledge to continue to place the needs and opportunities of those we serve above all else. We look forward to serving you in 2007, giving you our best and working to make it better.

M. SCOTT SMITH, Director
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Grants, gifts, and contracts include:

- Extension-related projects and projects led by extension faculty as principal investigators, which are also part of the annual reporting of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station.
- Money received locally for support of county programs.
- The budget for the Kentucky 4-H Foundation, which is accounted separately from that of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

More than $77.7 million in TOTAL FUNDING for the Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006)

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\* Grants, gifts, and contracts include:
Extension made over 6.7 million contacts in 2006.

As part of Extension programming, 202,904 youth were involved in 4-H Youth Development programs. That's 24 percent of eligible youth, supported by 18,995 adult and youth volunteers, or a 10.7 to 1 ratio.

OVER $26 million in additional income was documented for Kentucky farmers who adopted new practices taught in extension programs. Because this increased income will be spent and re-spent on local goods and services, the total impact is likely as much as three times that amount.

IN ADDITION:
- The Get Moving Kentucky! program was conducted in 84 counties, with 15,849 participants moving toward a healthier weight.
- Extension agents supported 143 farmers markets in 94 counties, generating over $5 million for local producers.
- Extension efforts to address home garden and landscape issues were strengthened by the assistance of 1,037 extension-trained Master Gardeners.
- Extension assisted Kentuckians in 1,504 small or home-based businesses in developing entrepreneurial skills and business plans.

AN UPDATE OF SUCCESSES REPORTED LAST YEAR SHOWS:
- 19,441 Kentucky Extension Homemakers reported donating over 375,000 hours of volunteer time to their communities, valued at more than $5.2 million.
- 27,037 Kentucky youth participated in 4-H camping experiences, where they learned life skills, made new friends, and engaged in fun activities.

PROGRAM EMPHASIS (defined by number of contacts)
- 23% Life Skill Development
- 24% Diet, Nutrition, & Healthy Lifestyles
- 15% Leadership & Volunteerism
- 5% Social & Economic Opportunity
- 28% Competitive Agriculture
- 5% Agricultural & Environmental Quality
Asking GardenData.org

Angela Jenkins of Hardin County has been gardening since her grandmother turned her on to the hobby more than 54 years ago. She also is a Master Gardener—trained by Cooperative Extension and informed enough to help other gardeners. But last spring, Jenkins ran into a problem in her hobby greenhouse that baffled her.

So, she turned to GardenData.org, a Web program of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

GardenData.org is a database of commonly asked gardening questions that have science-based answers. Jenkins’ extension agent for horticulture in Hardin County, Amy Aldenderfer, is part of the UK team that answers questions on GardenData.org.

“When someone submits a question, it is forwarded to the person responsible for that subject area, and then the answers are stored in a database searchable by keyword and category,” Aldenderfer said.

“Questions usually are answered (by e-mail) in 24 to 48 hours,” she said. “If there’s an especially complicated question, it may take us up to three days, but we try to get it done as quickly as possible.” The questions then are placed in the Web site’s database.

Jenkins said GardenData.org is bookmarked on her computer at home as a trustworthy, science-based resource.

“I can go there and know I have knowledgeable people who give straight answers, and it’s not someone’s opinion or what their great aunt did—it’s based on fact and science,” she said.

“We modeled GardenData.org on a similar UK program called HorseQuest,” Aldenderfer said, talking about an equine information program that is now part of eXtension, a national Web portal of research-based information provided by extension professionals.

The UK team responsible for creating GardenData.org is studying programs similar to it in other states, combining questions and answers as the starting point of a national eXtension database set to go live later this year.

—Aimee Nielson
Jonathan Carman, age 18, recently began his 10th year in 4-H. Two years ago in a 4-H competition, he cooked up a gooey pie with a meringue topping to show a way to use eggs. The demonstration won second place at the national level.

Jonathan and his nine sisters, who now range in age from 13 to 34, are the children of Dennis and Jan Carman. All of them have been homeschooled by Mrs. Carman in the family’s Jessamine County home, and all have been or are involved in 4-H. Jonathan, like his sisters, enjoys participating in 4-H events.

“The beauty of 4-H to me is the diversity,” Jonathan Carman said. “I’ve been able to meet different people and do so many different things. One thing about demonstrations is that you have to organize them methodically. That’s going to help me with college. I enjoy the writing part of it, too.”

For the Carman family, 4-H is more than an extra-curricular activity. It has been a way to supplement the family’s home-school curriculum with learning opportunities such as public speaking and sewing. But more importantly, 4-H has given the children opportunities for community involvement.

“It’s not hard to convince a home-school family that 4-H will supplement what they are teaching at home,” said Cathy Weaver, Jessamine County’s Cooperative Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development. “They benefit us as much as we benefit them. There is a real cohesiveness; 4-H fits right into their curriculum.”

Kentucky 4-H provides opportunities for homeschooled students across the Commonwealth. This spring, for the first time, 4-H will offer a home-school camp at the North Central 4-H Camp in Carlisle.

Recently home-schoolers began to receive e-mails about 4-H through the Kentucky Home Educators Association. 4-H also set up a booth at the 2006 conference of the Christian Home Educators of Kentucky, held in Louisville.

“People tend to think home-school kids are not socialized—that they are isolated in their homes,” said Jan Carman. “One reason we got into 4-H is so we can be involved in the community.”

—Aimee Nielsen
HER WOODLANDS ARE HER NEW JOB

KAREN MARSHALL, when she was working, traveled halfway around the globe to help nations put in place environmental policies.

Now that she's retired, she's still doing much the same thing, only now it's on her own Northern Kentucky land—150 acres in the rolling hills of Owen County.

In many ways, Marshall is typical of a new kind of woodland owner in Kentucky: she doesn't have a huge tract of land, and she's new to the job of managing it.

Being new is what prompted her to enroll in the Woodland Owners Short Course, which is sponsored by the College's Department of Forestry, the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association (of which Marshall is a board member), and the Kentucky Division of Forestry.

The course, which was first offered in 2004, is a series of four field days each summer. The course work is wide ranging and includes management, harvesting, marketing, invasive species, and wildlife. Sessions are held at various sites across the state, based on what's to be covered.

"Mostly, the course is seeing real options," Marshall said. "These farms have been selected for a reason."

Those enrolled in the course build a network they can call on—other woodland owners who may deal with similar issues and people in government agencies who work with woodlands and other natural resources.

"The majority of the woodland in Kentucky is unmanaged," said Billy Thomas, extension associate in the Department of Forestry, who coordinates the course. "Woodland management can help owners get the most from their property by improving woodland health and productivity."

Marshall is shaping a plan to meet her goals.

"I'd like to see these woods going forward, thriving," Marshall said about her land. "I want healthy, productive woodlands."

—Martha Jackson
FRIENDS INDEED

STEPHANIE LANCASTER, 14 years ago, had just moved to Mount Sterling from Arkansas with her husband and 6-month-old son when a new church friend invited her to an Extension Homemakers meeting.

"I had never even heard of Extension Homemakers," Lancaster said. But she went anyway.

"Those women became my extended family," said Lancaster. "The meetings were a break for me. The older ladies held my son. I learned to quilt and make baskets."

As time went by, Lancaster began to take on more leadership responsibilities in the organization. She was encouraged by people like Peggy Powell, family and consumer sciences extension agent in Montgomery County.

When a state chair position for the management and safety program area came open, Lancaster applied for and got the job.

Under Lancaster's leadership, the management and safety committee initiated the first-ever Web site for a program area and came up with the idea of an emergency preparedness checklist. The committee also pulled together some bang-up resources to help people with financial management, with the assistance of Bob Flashman, state extension specialist for family resource management.

"I was able to grow through this," Lancaster said.

Time passed, and the Lancaster family grew. When the youngest child went off to school, Lancaster enrolled at Morehead State University. Extension Homemakers provided Lancaster some scholarship aid and, more importantly, moral support. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

In 2006, the Lancasters moved to Barren County. "I went to an Extension Homemakers meeting the second day we were here," she said.

Lancaster now is a full-time substitute teacher at Barren County High School and is taking a graduate course at UK.

The son who was a baby when she first joined Extension Homemakers is playing football for the Barren County Trojans.

Life has changed, but Lancaster's belief in Extension Homemakers has not.

"Anybody who doesn't live with parents is a homemaker," she said. "It's so diverse; everybody can find something they like."

—Martha Jackson
LEADING A PLACE CALLED HOME

STEVE SMITH watched the transformation of his wife Wanda during the 10 months she participated in Leadership Washington County. So Smith joined the program and agrees that he, too, was transformed.

“I love this community, my whole family grew up in this community, and I think (leadership) helped me become a more viable part of this community,” Smith said.

“Leadership (Washington County) takes you inside the community. You really learn the entire infrastructure of what makes that community function, what makes it work. It makes you feel a real part of it. If people want to become an important part of their community, this is a good way to do it,” Smith said.

Leadership Washington County began 12 years ago after Rick Greenwell, the county’s agriculture and natural resources extension agent, and four county residents participated in a Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association leadership program. The local extension office took the lead in establishing the county program and still plays an integral role.

“They really drive it,” Smith said. “You won’t find anybody that’s any more enthusiastic about the program than the extension staff.”

Greenwell said the program removes barriers that may stop people from taking a more active role in their community.

“It really makes you appreciate your county,” he said. “We are very, very proud of what it has accomplished.”

The program begins with a retreat followed by monthly, daylong meetings. Each day is focused on one topic such as education, law and justice, government, media, business and industry, agriculture, or health and emergency services. It includes site visits.

Smith, owner of American Dairy Services in Springfield, is chairman of the Leadership Washington County steering committee, which is looking at how to make this successful program even better.

The leadership program is a real family affair for the Smiths. Daughter Abby is participating in this year’s teen program.

“I hope she gets as much out of it as we did,” Steve Smith said. “I wouldn’t take anything for the experience.”

—Laura Skillman