

UT/Williamson County Extension — December Newsletter

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Williamson County Agriculture

As we come upon the winter season, agriculture activity begins to slow. However, we have fielded quite a few questions regarding the outlook of agriculture in Williamson County. Quite frankly, large scale agricultural production is rapidly decreasing, and we are seeing many of these farms converted into smaller 5-15 acre “mini” farms.

The outlook on Williamson County agriculture is trending towards a higher amount of small scale farms producing standard and niche products.

Tips for Pruning—Every year as the holidays approach, we get inquiries as to whether it is ok

to begin pruning grape vines, fruit trees and other crops. Our feeling is that we should hold off until after the first of the year or later. The general recommendation is to wait as late in the dormant period as possible before pruning, yet early enough to get it all done, to lessen the potential for cold injury and to be able to react to damage done by cold events earlier in the winter.

However, with the warm start to the winter season, producers are well-advised to delay the start of pruning and to consider the weather patterns experienced prior to the time they prune. Contact the office for more information.

Horticulture Programming and Williamson County Master Gardeners Activities

As 2015 comes to a close, evaluation of programming is always top priority. The need for horticultural education, both for the homeowner and industry professional, can be proven by the continued request for information.

This year, Agent Amy Dismukes made over 52,000 direct contacts—through workshops, programming, e-mails, direct mail, telephone calls, site visits and daily walk-ins to the office.

Approximately 1,719,444 indirect contacts were made through exhibits, TV programs, newspaper articles and university and/or master gardener related events.

Williamson County Master Gardeners made a huge impact in 2015, funding over 15 community horticulture projects, and volunteering more than 6,450 hours within the community. These volunteer hours equate to approximately an economic impact of \$140,545.50 (\$21.79/hour). WCMG’s assisted Brentwood Parks and Recreation with an Ash Tree Survey. This survey will assist the city of Brentwood with a plan in determining when and how they treat for Emerald Ash Borer, the pest that is forecasted to wipe the ash from Tennessee.



Agent Amy Dismukes, along with other UT and TSU agents and specialists, met to discuss the potential of horticulture programming across the state for residents and consumers.

With the ever-changing climate, the workgroup felt it important to emphasize sustainability and over the next year will be working to broaden the Tennessee Smart Yards program and promote its importance across the state.

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4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
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Horticulture Programming and Williamson County Master Gardeners Activities

Shining Apple Award



UT/TSU Extension is very proud of Mrs. Rachel Simmons (pictured at left) and the Williamson County Master Gardener Association, who were awarded the Walnut Grove Shining Apple Award.

The Shining Apple is an award given by Dr. Looney and the WCS School Board for outstanding volunteer efforts in our schools.

Mrs. Rachel and WCMG volunteers received the award for revitalizing the Butterfly Garden. Each year, teachers utilize the garden as an educational tool where students can learn about pollinators, releasing hundreds of painted lady butterflies each year.

4-H Forestry Team



Agent Dismukes (second from left) met with the State Forester (far right), Jere Jeter, and his team. Mr. Jeter, a resident of Williamson County, congratulated the 2015 National 4-H Forestry Judging Team and discussed the potentials of forestry in the future.

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4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
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4-H'ers Share the Christmas Spirit



Holiday Cheer at the Baptist Children's Home

On Thursday, December 3rd over 80 members of the Williamson County 4-H came together to celebrate the holidays with the Baptist Children's Home. The 4-Her's filled the children with joy by bringing small gifts for each child. They enjoyed each other's fellowship with food and games. This is always a highlight of the 4-H year, to give back to the community and celebrate such a wonderful time!



4-H Parade Sleigh

The Williamson County Livestock project worked hard building a holiday float for the College Grove Parade. The float consisted of a sleigh with livestock animals instead of reindeer, representing the livestock in our county. Members of the group promoted 4-H through the parade and the livestock program. The livestock group also partnered with the Page FFA Chapter and included those members in the sleigh.



The Horse Project will be having their annual Winter Horse Camp December 19-21 at the Ag Expo Park. This is one of the highlights of the year for project members. This year 89 members will participate in the weekend's fun filled activities. The club also represented Williamson County 4-H at the Leiper's Fork Christmas Parade.



4-H'ers from Fairview Middle and the Fairview 4-H Community Club participated in the Fairview Christmas Parade. They walked the two and a half mile route and carried a Williamson County 4-H Banner. It was a great day for a parade and everyone enjoyed giving candy to the spectators.



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Operation Christmas Child Boxes

In November the 4-H Honor Club and Eagle Homeschool Club brought in donations and packed boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The National Collection week was Nov. 16-23, 2015 and the two clubs packed and donated a total of 62 boxes.

This fun and hands on service project allows youth and people of all ages to pick an age group and then purchase items and pack them into a shoe box for youth in other countries who have little to nothing.

Items included in the shoe box were tooth-brushes, soap, washcloths, combs, pencils, school supplies, toys, balls, clothing, flip flops, and much more! Each box is packed full with care to send to these children and share the joy that comes in receiving a gift. Both groups had a lot of fun bringing in the items and packing the boxes. We were overwhelmed with the number of boxes the clubs packed this year because of our 4-H families' generosity.



During the holidays, it is easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle, spending more than you planned.

Watch this video Charles Denney from UTIA did with some of our 4-H members and staff to get some tips to help you stay in budget this holiday season!
<https://youtu.be/nkgMbKOpDus>

Special thanks to The Shoppes on Main for allowing us to use their store in the making of this video.



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FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
UT EXTENSION
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Family and Consumer Science

The fce program is celebrating Christmas with special parties and events for their members. Two of the festive groups are pictured below:



Season's Greetings



Happy New Year!

The fce presidents and vice-presidents of programming had a great day of training and special guests as they prepared for 2016 programs.

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

