The Coffee County Extension Staff is dedicated to improving the lives of the citizens of Coffee County through educational programming in the areas of Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development. We offer our programs to all our citizens equally through class room teaching, hands on workshops, newsletters, newspaper articles, on farm demonstrations, farm and home visits, etc... Our programming is based on the current educational needs of our citizens which are identified through local needs assessments.

Row Crop Production
We hosted the annual Middle Tennessee Grain Conference in Coffee County. This conference updated row crop producers on the latest UT information on herbicides, corn and soybean varieties, insecticides, fertility rates and any recommended practice changes for corn and soybean production. We conducted a corn variety standardized demonstration which included 88 varieties of corn and a soybean variety standardized demonstration which included 84 varieties of soybeans. Information created by these test plots were conveyed to all crop producers through newsletters and newspaper articles throughout the year. We hosted a Soybean Scout School to help producers learn to scout soybeans for diseases, insects and weeds. As result of our row crops programming in 2009:
- 303 participants gained knowledge of corn variety performance and agronomic characteristics based on university trial data.
- 50 participants increased their knowledge about nutrient management and the potential for loss and/or harm to the environment.
- 58 participants increased their understanding of corn and soybean pests (weeds, insects, diseases) and their management.
- 72 participants learned corn and soybean best management practices (BMPs) that can improve production potential (e.g., conservation tillage, winter covers, plant population, row spacing, planting dates, plant growth regulators, harvest, variety selection, irrigation, fertility).

Fighting Obesity & Chronic Disease
Our nation is in a health crisis as obesity and related chronic diseases such as diabetes, arthritis, and heart disease have reached staggering rates. Extension is working to reverse these trends through health literacy, nutrition, and exercise programs. Of the 693 family members who participated:
- 90% added exercise to their daily routine.
- 80% eat more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and fat-free dairy.
- 82% eat fewer high-sugar or high-fat foods.
- 89% improved balance, flexibility, and ability to perform daily tasks.
- 100% improved self-care and health literacy skills.

Helping Families in Crisis
Tennessee ranks 4th in the nation in divorce. Extension is working to improve cooperation and communication between divorcing and divorced parents, to reduce conflict, as well as the negative impact on their children. Nearly 98% of 103 parents who participated in the “Parenting Apart: Effective Co-Parenting” program:
- Learned how divorce impacts children.
- Understand the importance of working together as parents.
- Improved communication skills.
- Plan to argue less in front of their children.
Local courts report a reduction in conflict and improved cooperation between divorcing parents.
**Teaching Life Skills**

4-H members gain life skills such as communication, teamwork, citizenship, and responsibility by participating in 4-H activities and events. Coffee County currently has 1667 youth enrolled in 87 4-H clubs. 78 of these clubs are met at school during school hours. Two of these clubs are home school clubs. Four of the clubs are volunteer lead community clubs. The other three clubs include the Coffee County Honor Club and two after school clubs that are agent/program assistant lead.

Here are some highlights of 2009:

- 13 4-H members were inducted into the Honor Club, 6 4-H members were inducted into the All-Star organization, and 4 4-H members were inducted into Vol-State.
- 772 4-H members participated in the poster contest. These members learned to express their ideas and how to work to achieve goals.
- 1072 4-H members participated in public speaking. These members gained communication skills as well as self-confidence through this activity.
- 316 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students participated in Clover Bowl at the local level. Participants gained knowledge in the areas of Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture, 4-H, and Tennessee.
- Coffee County was awarded with the Peggy Davis Service Award.

**Agriculture: Teaching Tool for 4-H**

Coffee County 4-H provides several opportunities for 4-H members to learn about agriculture, and in the process the youth gain several life skills. Through judging team experiences, livestock shows, and various quiz bowls the 4-H members gain decision-making skills, public speaking experience, and learn how to work together as a team. In the past year 4-H members participated in 8 different judging teams, 3 quiz bowl teams, and 4 types of animal projects. The judging teams included Livestock, Forestry, Dairy, Wildlife, Land, Envirothon, Horse, and Meat Cookery. The quiz bowl teams included Horse, Dairy, and Beef. The animal projects 4-H members participated in Coffee County were Beef, Sheep, Horse, and Poultry. 4-Hers that participated in these activities reported:

- 91.89% Can deal with nervousness when giving a speech or talk.
- 94.59% Try to do the right thing.
- 94.59% Take responsibility for decisions they make.
- 100% Like to accomplish things on their own.
- 100% Are willing to try new things.

**Beef and Forage Production**

We cooperate with the Coffee/Grundy County Cattlemen’s Association in conducting 3 beef and forage educational programs each year. We conduct an annual Master Beef Producer Program with an average of 50- participants each year. We host an annual Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement workshop to assist producers in applying for cost share funds through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program. As a result of our beef and forage production program in 2009:

- 52 producers were approved for $217,237 in cost share funds through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program.
- 32 beef producers sold 2564 calves according to BQA guidelines to increase returns by $20,512.
- 30 beef producers utilized bulls with greater genetic potential to produce 2309 head of calves to increase returns by $63,497.
- 32 producers stockpiled tall fescue reducing feed cost by $49,440.
- 35 producers planted 2716 acres with clover for an increased production valued at $81,840.

**4-H Family & Consumer Sciences**

43% of all Tennessee children are either at risk for being overweight or are currently overweight. Coffee County addresses that issue by offering Power U. This 10 session program teaches 4th grade students to make healthier choices in diet and exercise. Overall youth are encouraged to eat more fruits and vegetables and move or play more. In 2009 130 4th grade students participated in Power U classes. As a result of participating in Power U:

- 70% of the participants are more physically active
- 57% eat more healthy foods
- 70% eat less junk food
- 74% drink more water and milk and less sugar sweetened drinks
- 30% read food labels.

One contest that has been successful in Coffee County is the annual Bread Baking contest. 65 members participated in 2009 and learned to read and follow a recipe.

4-H members have the opportunity to participate in judging events. FCS events include LifeSkills, Consumer Decision Making, and LifeSmarts. Although each event is very different, the one constant is that these events teach young people to work as a team to solve a problem.