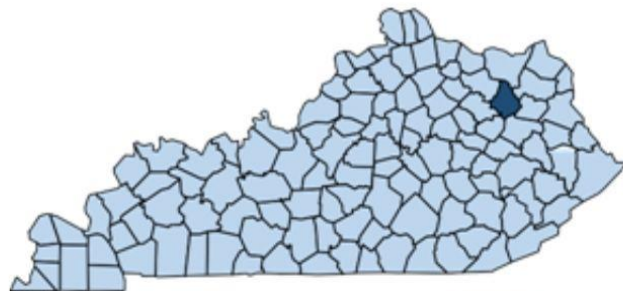


2024

Rowan County Cooperative Extension Service

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE



**4-H Youth
Development**



**Family &
Consumer Sciences**



**Agriculture &
Natural Resources**

Did you know? Rowan County was formed from parts of Fleming and Morgan Counties on May 1, 1856.



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Beginning Homesteading

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in sustainable living, self-sufficiency, and backyard farming. One such initiative, the Homesteading Program, provides participants with the knowledge and hands-on experience necessary to engage in self-sufficient practices. This report highlights the key components of a recent homesteading program, which included raised bed gardening, beekeeping, backyard poultry, and canning 101. The program offered practical solutions for those interested in growing their own food, managing livestock, preserving harvests, and building a more sustainable lifestyle.



Local beekeeping operation in the county as part of the Homesteading movement.

The Homesteading Program, designed to teach self-sufficiency skills, successfully concluded with 20 participants gaining hands-on experience in key areas of sustainable living. Over four weeks, the program covered four essential topics: raised bed gardening, beekeeping, backyard poultry, and canning.

The program featured expert-led instruction, with the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Agent teaching Canning 101 and a local beekeeping expert guiding participants through the basics of beekeeping. Participants also learned how to set up and maintain raised bed

gardens, raised poultry for eggs and meat, and preserved food through canning techniques. The program combined theoretical lessons with practical activities, empowering participants to implement these skills at home. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing confidence in applying what they learned to their own homesteads and future projects.

Community Craft & Farmers Market

The Rowan County Community Craft and Farmers Market, launched in March 2024, quickly became a vibrant local hub, offering a diverse range of products from fresh produce to freeze-dried candy and handmade woodwork. With support from both county and state stakeholders, the market established itself as a platform for local vendors to showcase their goods, creating a thriving atmosphere for shoppers and artisans alike.

What truly set this market apart was the collaborative effort behind its creation. The market manager and local agents worked to build relationships with stakeholders at both county and state levels. This ensured the market's sustainability and success, as these partnerships provided vital resources, marketing support, and visibility for the market in its inaugural season.



Some of the products offered by local vendors for the 2024 season.

The strong presence of state and county stakeholders helped promote the market

throughout the region, bringing in visitors from surrounding areas who were eager to experience the local culture and products. As word spread, the market saw increasing attendance each month, culminating in a successful season from March to October 2024.

The market became more than just a place to buy and sell—it fostered community engagement, offering educational events and opportunities for locals to connect. As the season closed, the market had already become an integral part of the county's economy and social life. Looking ahead, plans are in place to expand and continue supporting local farmers, artisans, and families for years to come.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Middle School Service Retreat

A recent Rowan County Middle School 4-H retreat, organized in partnership with surrounding counties, offered students an opportunity for growth and community involvement. The retreat, which focused on personal development and community service, included a hands-on service project that benefited the Homeless Assistance Group, *The Neighborhood*, in Boyd County.

During the retreat, students participated in a community service project where they assisted in organizing donations, preparing care packages, and helping with various tasks for *The Neighborhood*. This group provides crucial support to homeless individuals and families in Boyd County, offering shelter, food, and other essential services.

The students gained valuable insights into the challenges faced by the homeless community and learned about the importance of giving back. The service project was a powerful experience that not only benefited *The Neighborhood* but also fostered a sense of responsibility and empathy among the students. Feedback from the retreat highlighted



4-H'ers sorting donations as part of their service project with *The Neighborhood*.

a positive impact the service project had on both the students and the local community.

4-H Camp

Rowan County was ready to gear up for the Best Week of the Year - 4-H Camp! 4-H Camp in 2024 hit a record total since COVID of 101 attending.



101 4-H'ers attended 4-H Camp in 2024.

Youth love the feeling of growing up and attending something without their parents/guardians. Our 4-H Camp has a lot to offer, great JC and AC's take time out of their lives to work with youth at 4-H Camp and 4-H Agents and Staff Assistant worked many-hard-long hours to make it happen.

Attending camp at the amazing J.M. Feltner is just icing on the cake. Rowan County youth are making memories and creating opportunities for interacting with others while learning life skills in a weeklong camping experience. The educational ways of 4-H Camp in Kentucky set learning techniques as an activity dedicated to enforcing positive youth development. It is crucial to introduce young minds to an

opportunity such as camp to develop life, soft skills among young audiences and allows 4-H to contribute to shaping the next generation of responsible citizens.

With these objectives in mind, Rowan County attends J. M. Feltner 4-H Camp each summer. This exciting adventure brings three other Eastern Kentucky Counties together with Rowan to explore an amazing week of activities and develop lifelong friends.

With innovative recruitment in the classroom and marketing ideas, the Rowan County Camping Program has grown from 35 participants in 2021 to 101 campers in 2024, therefore, exceeding the recommended number of youths required for the last four years. During our stay at camp, we observed the following findings: 95% of the campers felt comfortable taking care of their belongings, enjoyed meeting and making new friends, were positive about the food offered and 100% of the campers enjoyed the activities the camp had to offer.

Parents' comment:

"I have had two children going to 4-H Camp with Rowan County Extension for the last four years, and my husband and I can honestly say our children have learned and experienced nothing but great programs, safe activities and developed life skills from being away from home. Now that our oldest has become a JC Leader, we hope she will continue this leadership by becoming a role model for other youths."

4-H Horse Club Fun Show

The 4-H Horse Club had a successful season with 25 enthusiastic participants and two dedicated volunteer leaders. Throughout the year, club members engaged in various activities, culminating in a *Fun Show* that showcased their horsemanship skills. The success of the Fun Show would not have been possible without the invaluable support of dedicated parents and community members who generously volunteered their time and resources to ensure the event ran smoothly.

Several members of the Horse Club also participated in the State Fair Horse Show, competing at a higher level and gaining valuable experience. Their involvement in

these shows demonstrated their commitment to horsemanship and personal growth.



4-H Horse Club member participating in the Fun Show at Morehead State University Farm.

The combined efforts of the volunteer leaders, parents, and community members made this year's Fun Show a memorable and rewarding experience for all involved.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Baking

Once school is out for the summer, most students like to learn new skills. This past summer nine youth tried out some baking skills. What a perfect reason to attend Summer Baking FUN at Rowan County City Park with the Family and Consumer Sciences/4-H Youth Development Agent. On the first day, the nine youth divided into small groups and emphasis was on learning basic baking techniques, ingredients, kitchen safety, and creative expression through baking. Youth also learned how to turn on an oven, stove and how to clean their kitchen area.

Our first adventure was baking cookies. Baking cookies teaches precision and attention to detail, as you need to measure ingredients properly. Youth also learned how to work with different types of dough and incorporate various ingredients like chocolate chips, nuts, or oats.



Learning to measure the ingredients was so much different than using a premeasured box mix.

Our second adventure was baking quick breads. Quick bread is without yeast, using leavening agents like baking powder or baking soda. This makes them faster to prepare than traditional breads. Examples of quick breads include banana bread, zucchini bread, muffins, and scones.

Both activities helped youth understand the science behind baking, including how ingredients interact, as well as, provide an opportunity to practice patience and follow instructions carefully. 4-H'ers shared their breads with family members.

FCS are Growing Your Vitamins

Providing a healthy vegetable free with recipes for our Senior citizens! For the 8th year, Extension collaborated with the Rowan County Senior High School FFA members, Instructor, Morehead State University farm and MSU Farm student workers to provide sweet potatoes to the senior citizens in Eastern Kentucky.

Extension has taught FFA students about sweet potato production and nutritional value. Over 300 clients from eight different counties were allowed to fill a plastic grocery bag, many took multi-bags of potatoes to family and neighbors that were shut in's, also free recipes and informational materials were given out to each. Extra potatoes were

taken to a nearby church to use for their food giveaway.

FCS Agent and the FFA Members grow sweet potatoes free of charge for senior citizens in Eastern KY. The project began with serving only Rowan County residents and has expanded to nine Eastern Kentucky counties: Bath, Bracken, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Mason, Menifee, Morgan and Rowan.



Sweet potatoes are one of your highest nutritious value vegetables that we can grow.

Four 200-foot rows of sweet potatoes were planted and harvested totaling 20 bushels. During the program, everyone learned to give back to their community, reduce hunger, plant science, nutrition, work as a team and identify one of the healthiest vegetables. During distribution day of 2024, Rowan County FFA Youth distribute to individual clients. When speaking to the group of students that helped make this possible, the following was access: 100% youth learned an important lesson in giving back to our seniors that have given so much to them, developed pride of working for others free, learned about growing sweet potatoes in quantity and the nutritional value.

Agents and Staff work to bring information and educational resources to Rowan County

Priority Program Efforts

- **150+** Number of people who made decisions based on Extension research including interseeding clover/legume, using cover crops and/or alternate forage species.
- **44** Producers Utilized the CAIP Program.
- **200+** youth attended Farm Safety Day held at Morehead State University Farm.
- **101** participants for 4-H Camp.
- **800** Number of individuals who reported they utilized delivery systems/access points (e.g. farmers' markets, CSAs, WIC, food pantries) that offer healthy foods.
- **1200** Number of youth (5-18) engaged in FCS 4-H Programming .
- **125** Number of youth who served in a leadership role.
- **1500** Number of hours KEHA members volunteered in community activities and events.

Meet the Staff



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Cooperative Extension Service

A few of our Programs:

- 4-H Reality Store
- Estate Planning
- Homesteading
- 4-H Camp
- 4-H Horse Program
- 4-H Dog Program
- 4-H Afterschool Programs
- 4-H Shooting Sports
- Youth & Adult Cooking Classes
- Youth Manners Program
- Youth Personal Hygiene Program

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Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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