

Strengthening Communities

Southern Region Successes

July 2018 - June 2019

Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



92,589

Number of jobs created/retained



141

Number of new alliances or networks formed through some type of formal agreement or MOU



5,105

Number of businesses created, retained, or expanded



25,232

Number of participants who report new leadership roles & opportunities undertaken



771

Number of plans adopted and implemented in community, agency, local government, business, or disaster



\$9,126,981

Value of in-kind resources contributed by organizations or communities

\$301,891,887

Grants acquired by organizations or communities

Universities Reporting

15

Full Time Equivalents

76.24

Turn over to read impact stories from around the region

Tuskegee University

Cooperative Extension launched various initiatives to empower target clientele in Black Belt Counties. Over 1,500 individuals strengthened their technical and managerial knowledge base and awareness about financial wellbeing, marketing, wealth creation in rural areas, comparative cluster farming, produce safety, health fairs, youth leadership, professional workers conferences, and farmer's interactive forums and tours.

University of Arkansas

Ballot awareness is very low statewide, but Arkansas is one of two states where Extension provides statewide ballot education to increase awareness. For the 2018 election, Extension distributed nearly 32,000 printed voter guides with 25,000 downloads. Web pages attracted 220,546 unique visitors who recorded 331,611 page views and videos were viewed 16,989 times.

University of Georgia & Fort Valley State University

These universities delivered the USDA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Workshop with 23 participants from 12 counties across Georgia. SBIR competitively awards grants to small businesses to support agricultural research that leads to significant public benefits. Participants reported increased interest in submitting applications which is important given that Georgia has historically had low participation in this initiative.

University of Kentucky

Cooperative Extension Service launched a statewide community assessment in 2018 resulting in data from over 31,400 surveys, 500 focus groups and key informant interviews. The Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) compiled data for 120 county reports and one statewide report of priorities including economic development; substance use disorder; and community pride, leadership, and communications.

Kentucky State University

Understanding that small businesses are the cornerstone of communities, Kentucky State University, in partnership with University of Kentucky CEDIK, the Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Frankfort Business Community, presented a free workshop for minority, underserved, and underrepresented small businesses.

Mississippi State University

The Bricks-To-Clicks™ Marketing Program helps rural businesses clarify their marketing message to increase sales. In 2018/2019, the program trained 180 entrepreneurs, supported 270 jobs and provided educational content to 1,858 additional businesses. For example, HogEye Trap Cameras increased sales 54% during their slowest time of the year while gaining access to almost 15,000 potential online customers.

North Carolina A&T University

Eighteen residents in Vance County attended Community Voices, a leadership development program. The group formed four working groups: housing, health, economic development, and jobs. Housing committee members hosted a community event to share their plans and were able to secure a \$200,000 Rural Business Development grant to work with housing and small businesses.

North Carolina State University

The Farmerworker Health and Safety Program interactive training engages 3,000 farmworkers and farm operators per year. For the past two years Extension has targeted farm labor contractors in particular with much needed training. As supervisors, farm labor contractors play a key role in farmworkers' wellbeing. Our goal is to increase productivity while improving farmworkers' lives and communities.

Oklahoma State University

Extension partnered with local health organizations, nonprofits, and city officials to hold community meetings in towns affected by the opioid crisis. Experts discussed the pros and cons of four different ways to deal with the crisis. The meetings emphasized learning from others and letting group discussions help form opinions. Results were used to develop priority areas and cultivate a path forward.

University of Puerto Rico

After Hurricanes Irma and María, Emergency Plan course participants reported successful plans. In Quebrada Grande they identified health professionals to assist disabled and elderly persons. They also coordinated with neighbors to distribute medicine and hot food to people during the emergency. They were also able to identify those who could help restore roads and electrical systems.

University of Tennessee

Extension focused on improving community viability and rural competitiveness through four funded projects (two USDA, one Appalachian Regional Commission and one Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation/EPA). These various projects supported rural broadband, risk mitigation strategies in dairy production, an Affordability Index to evaluate water service prices, and market feasibility of hard cider production and sales.

Texas A&M University

The Texas Center for Local Food has completed planning the Elgin Local Food Center (ELF) with support from USDA and Texas AgriLife Extension. ELF is a planned shared use kitchen, entrepreneur development, and community food education center serving rural areas. The total project cost is \$2.35M and the City of Elgin Economic Development Corporation has committed \$800,000 in local cash match.

Prairie View A&M University

The Community & Economic Development Unit established The Nonprofit Consortium to allow nonprofits, to collaborate, improve best practices, and build their capacity to grow through writing grants. The consortium provided over 20 hours of training to seven nonprofit businesses on topics that nonprofits struggle with the most. The group submitted \$1.1 million in grants to provide community services.

Virginia Tech and Virginia State University

Opioid and other substance misuse continues to disrupt Virginia communities, families, etc. In response, Extension and partners are delivering evidence-based prevention programming through PROSPER community teams and middle schools. Participants in these programs score significantly lower on negative behaviors, including opioid use and more, up to six and half years past the baseline.