Mitchell County Cooperative Extension works to provide the citizens of Mitchell County with educational information to improve their quality of life. Mitchell County still faces the same issues that are affecting our nation; job loss, health issues, ways to keep agriculture profitable, and ways to train our youth for future careers.

We continue to work from our 2009 needs assessment and from informal needs evaluations. This needs assessment was conducted by surveying citizens, gathering input from various focus groups, advisory leadership council input, census information, and direct observation. From this needs assessment, key issues were identified that our staff should focus on in 2012. These included:

♦ North Carolina’s plant, animal, and food systems will become more profitable and sustainable.

♦ Producers will increase sales of food locally to more agriculturally aware consumers through market development, producer and consumer education, and new farmer and infrastructure support.

♦ Agricultural producers, workers, food handlers and consumers will adopt safer food and agricultural production, handling, and distribution practices that reduce workplace and home injuries/illnesses, enhance food security, and increase the quality and safety of food that North Carolinians prepare and consume.

♦ Youth and adult program participants will make healthy food choices, achieve the recommended amount of physical activity and reduce risk factors for chronic diseases.

♦ Adults and youth will apply financial management practices to cover basic necessities, increase savings, reduce debt, and build long-term assets

♦ Futures that Work: School to Career Pathways

Our program efforts included 21,657 contacts made with residents, including 10,237 face-to-face contacts through office visits, workshops, seminars, and demonstrations and 11,420 contacts made through telephone, email, newsletters, and other media outlets. We appreciate the 158 Extension volunteers who extended our educational programming efforts with a contribution of 2,313 hours valued at $46,858.00. The Mitchell County Center received
$94,875.00 in grant and sponsorship funding to extend programming efforts. Highlighted below are some of the 2012 accomplishments:

**Profitable and Sustainable Agriculture:**
- Sixty-three program participants aspired to begin new alternative, value-added enterprises.
- $49,500 in net income gains were realized by the adoption of extension-recommended best management practices.
- $33,300 in net income gains were realized by crop producers who have adopted new technology or marketing strategies recommended by extension.

**Local Food Systems:**
- Two hundred eighty producers gained skills to increase production for local markets.
- $22,800 of increased net income was seen from locally produced agricultural products by increased marketing opportunities.
- $7,500 of increased net income was from sales of locally produced agricultural products to local buyers.
- Two hundred fifty county residents buy from local farmers.

**School To Career:**
- Twenty-two youth (students) participated in 4-H dropout prevention (student at-risk) programs.
- Six hundred ninety-nine (students) gained knowledge in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math).
- Seven teachers were trained in 4-H STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) curriculum.

**Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Chronic Disease Risk Reduction:**
- Twenty-three adults and forty-three youth increased their fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Fourteen program participants increased their physical activity.

FROM: ___________________

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Mitchell County