

Extending Knowledge, Enriching Lives

That is what N.C. Cooperative Extension is about. This tag line represents what Extension agents have been doing for centuries. Our mission is to deliver education and technology that enrich the lives, land, and economy of Mitchell County citizens.

We are pleased to report that in 2022 that is just what we have done, by Empowering local citizens and helping to Provide solutions to their needs. N.C. Cooperative Extension, Mitchell County Center has addressed issues by:

- Improving Health, Safety & Nutrition
- Increasing Educational Achievement, Opportunities & Excellence
- Increasing Economic Opportunity, Business & Community Development
- Improving the Agricultural, Horticultural & Food Supply System in NC

In spite of all the staff turnover in 2022, we are pleased to share some of our highlights from the past year. We welcome your feedback and any questions or concerns you may have in regards to Mitchell County Extension's work throughout the county.

Spring Williams-Byrd
Interim County Extension Director

272 Volunteers
 gave
 2,319 Hours
 at a value of
 \$69,455



NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



Master Gardener Program Established in Mitchell County

- The Mitchell County Center received numerous requests for an Extension Master Gardener's program.
- The Extension Agent developed a syllabus for the class, based on NCSU curriculum, for the 13 week course.
- Classes began in January with 17 students and were completed in May with 13 students graduating.
- These new Extension Master Gardeners have started volunteering at the Mitchell County Extension Center by mowing phones, working at festivals and events and being advocates for N.C. Cooperative Extension.



Developing a Life Skills School Enrichment Program for Middle School Youth

- Mitchell, Avery, Madison and Yancey county educators recognized a need for a school enrichment program which targeted teaching youth essential life skills to prepare them for life after graduation.
- The High Country 4-H Professional Cluster worked together to develop a program called: Find Your SPARK (Students Preparing to Achieve Real-world Knowledge). This six-week program for 7th and 8th graders focuses on: Mental Health, Decision Making & Professionalism, Exploring Post-High School Options, Building a Resume, Job Searching and Applications, and Interview Skills.
- Evaluations indicated an increase in student's knowledge and understanding of content taught such as symptoms of stress, examples of professionalism and steps involved in the decision making process. Based on the results of evaluations and feedback, this program is providing students with life skills that will enable them to be more successful as they enter high school and beyond.



Having Enough Food

- Half of seniors who qualify for SNAP benefits in NC do not currently receive them and yet many elderly members of our community do not have enough to eat, or do not eat a healthy diet due to budget constraints.
- Three More in My Basket group sessions were offered by the Family and Consumer Sciences agent in an effort to provide education about food access and SNAP benefits.
- 37 participants attended the three sessions with 100% of them reporting that they had learned something about SNAP EBT access and qualification. Eight of the participants reported that they had shared the information with their friends and neighbors.
- As a result of the sessions, one participant privately shared with the agent that she was able to apply for and receive SNAP EBT funds to assist with her food needs by the beginning of the last session.