Trends in Georgia from Georgia’s Cooperative Extension Service

2006

09/27/2006
### Table of Contents

#### 4-H Youth

- 4-H Youth

#### Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Agriculture & Applied Economics
- Animal & Dairy
- Biological & Agricultural Engineering
- Crop & Soil
- Food Science & Technology
- Horticulture
- Plant pathology
- Poultry Science

#### Family & Consumer Sciences

- Family & Consumer Sciences
Situation

All parents want their children to be healthy. As children and teens go through remarkable physical changes of all kinds, their food intake becomes a critical aspect of this growth and development. Recent research shows that nourishing food not only makes a child / teen healthier, it makes him emotionally more stable, and it improves school performance. Paying attention to the diets of children and teens pays high dividends. A child's nutrition is important to his / her overall health. Proper nutrition can also prevent many medical problems, including becoming overweight, developing weak bones, and developing diabetes. It will also ensure that the child / teen physically grows to his/ her full potential. Healthy eating habits and regular exercise should be a regular part of family life.

Trend

Included in the Situation.

Outlook

Georgia 4-H as well as National 4-H) selected “Healthy Lifestyles” as a critical issue to address in statewide programming. Poor nutrition is a prolific problem across the US and contributes to childhood overweight. This trend can be reversed with preventive programming and interventions. Obesity prevention, encouragement of physical activity and nutrition education should begin as early as possible, by emphasizing healthful diets, good nutrition, and physical activity in early childhood.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

-The best nutrition advice to keep children / teens healthy includes encouraging them to:

- Eat a variety of foods in accordance with the new My Pyramid
- Balance the food you eat with physical activity
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits
- Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol
- Choose a diet moderate in sugars and salt
- Choose a diet that provides enough calcium and iron to meet their growing body's requirements.
- Read labels

-Use the resources on the Georgia 4-H Healthy Lifestyles website: http://www.georgia4h.org/public/more/healthylifestyles/default.htm
-Use Eat Well – Healthy Lifestyles FRIENDS and accompanying curriculum in county 4-H programming
- Conduct programs on the importance of breakfast in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Teach 4-H'ers the importance of serving sizes and how to read nutrition labels.
- Partner with FACS whenever possible to do joint programming and maximize resources.
- Promote good food and activity habits through general nutrition and health programming using the Dietary Guidelines and the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Elect a Health Officer in 4-H clubs and help them plan activities for their 4-H clubs to support this issue.
- Encourage exercise and physical activity at all events
- Utilize Cotton Boll and Consumer Jamboree contest, study guides and materials and compete in area contest
Issue: Nutrition (continued)

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Situation

Physical inactivity has become a serious problem in the United States. More than half of U.S. adults do not meet recommended levels of moderate physical activity, and one-fourth engage in no leisure time physical activity at all (PHYSICAL ACTIVITY). Inactivity is more prevalent among those with lower income and education, and, beginning in adolescence, affects females more than males (NIH; Physical Activity). A pattern of inactivity, also known as sedentism, begins early in life, making the promotion of physical activity among children imperative. Physical activity has been defined as "bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure" (Pate, Pratt et al., 1995). There is no debate about the value of physical exertion-regular physical activity has significant health benefits, and even modest increases in energy expenditure can have health-enhancing effects, including: Reduction in chronic disease risk—hypertension, type 2 diabetes, high blood lipids, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. Even among children and adolescents, physical activity can prevent or delay the development of hypertension and can reduce blood pressure in those young people who already have hypertension (Physical Activity, 1996); lowered risk of colon cancer; Increase in bone density; Reduction of anxiety, improvement in body image and mood; Development of physical fitness; Promotion of weight control through caloric expenditure. This benefit is of particular importance to children, who are experiencing the same epidemic of overweight as adults.

Trend

Included in the Situation.

Outlook

Georgia 4-H (as well as National 4-H) selected “Healthy Lifestyles” as a critical issue to address in statewide programming. More children today are overweight or obese than ever before. “Overweight” means that the individual weighs more than is recommended for a given height; when this excess weight is in the form of fat, health problems may develop. “Obesity” is an excess of body fat. Data indicate that 11% of 6-11 year olds and 14% of 12-17 year olds are obese, double the prevalence of 30 years ago (CDC, 1996). This is of particular concern because body weight and overfatness in children are significant cardiovascular disease risk factors, and the risk tracks into adolescence and young adulthood if not checked in childhood. In addition, obese children often experience exclusion from social groups and low self-esteem.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

4-H Clubs can promote physical activity in a variety of other ways: -start a simple circuit training program at 4-H events or at 4-H afterschool: http://exercise.about.com/cs/exerciseworkouts/l/blcircuitwkout.htm
- Elect a Health Officer in 4-H clubs and help them plan activities for their 4-H clubs to support this issue. Use the Health Officer Guide located at: http://www.georgia4h.org/public/more/healthylifestyles/default.htm
- Use Eat Well – Healthy Lifestyles FRIENDS in county 4-H programming as well as the lesson plans.
- Promote collaboration between physical education and 4-H. Provide ideas for “fitness breaks”, where 5-minute aerobic activities could be used to break up the club meeting or 4-H activity.
- Provide extracurricular physical activity programs. Establish developmentally appropriate 4-H clubs and/or intramural activities of a competitive and noncompetitive nature. Walking clubs, in-line skating, jumping rope, water aerobics, and intramural swim teams provide a few examples.
- Use the Georgia 4-H Healthy Lifestyles site: http://www.georgia4h.org/public/more/healthylifestyles/default.htm
- Coordinate physical activities with other community agencies. Schools usually allow use of school facilities by community agencies that sponsor physical activity programs, facilitate training programs for volunteer youth coaches, invite community groups to an “activity fair” for students in the school gymnasium, or provide a listing of community physical activity resources to students.
- Encourage and enable parental involvement in physical activity. Parental activity level is very important in promoting activity among children. 4-H can help encourage activity in parents by sending home activity homework that parents and children do together, and sponsoring parent-child activity programs at 4-H events.
County Programming Implications/ Applications (continued)

- Provide physical and social environments that encourage and enable physical activity. For example, schools might allow access to facilities before and after school hours and during vacation periods, encourage teachers to provide time for unstructured physical activity during recess and during physical education class, and help 4-H leaders and school personnel to serve as active role models by enabling and encouraging their own participation in physical activity.
- Use VERB campaign materials to motivate kids to be physically active: Verb Kids: http://www.verbnow.com/
  Verb Parents: http://fitfamilyfitkids.com/in_your_area/index.jsp

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Trend statement 2006
Department: 4-H Youth
Program Department: 4-H & Youth

Issue: Teens, Technology & Safety

Situation

Close to nine in ten teens are internet users. (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2005)
The vast majority of teens in the United States, 87% of those aged 12 to 17, now use the internet. That amounts to about 21 million youth who use the internet, up from roughly 17 million teens in late 2000. Not only has the wired share of the teenage population grown, but teens’ use of the internet has intensified. Teenagers now use the internet more often and in a greater variety of ways than they did in 2000. There are now approximately 11 million teens who go online daily, compared to about 7 million in 2000.

Trend

-51% of teenage internet users say they go online on a daily basis, up from 42% in 2000.
-At the same time, the scope of teens’ online lives has also broadened. One out of every two teens who use the internet lives in a home with a broadband connection. Wired teens are more frequent users of instant messaging. And they are now more likely to play games online, make purchases, get news, and seek health information.
-81% of teen internet users play games online. That represents about 17 million people and signifies growth of 52% in the number of online gamers since 2000.
-76% get news online. That represents about 16 million people and signifies growth of 38% in the number of teens getting news online since 2000.
-43% have made purchases online. That represents about 9 million people and signifies growth of 71% in teen online shoppers since 2000.
-31% use the internet to get health information. That represents about 6 million people and signifies growth of 47% in the number of teens using the internet this way since 2000.
-13% of American teenagers — or about 3 million people— still do not use the internet. About half (47%) of teens who say they do not go online have been online before but have since dropped off. Those teens who remain offline are clearly defined by lower levels of income and limited access to technology. They are also disproportionately likely to be African-American.
-45% of teens have cell phones and 33% are texting. Close to half of teens (45%) own a cell phone, and 33% have used a cell phone to send a text message. Texting on cell phones is particularly common among those who already go online frequently and use other internet tools often. Teens who have cell phones are heavy users of online communication tools. One in four cell phone-owning teens have used their phone to connect to the internet.
-75% of online teens — or about two-thirds of all teenagers — use instant messaging.
-48% of teens who use instant messaging say they exchange IMs at least once every day.
-Teens still utilize “landline” phones with 51% of online teens usually choose the landline telephone when they want to talk to friends.

Outlook

As technology evolves and becomes increasingly more affordable, teen use of technology will continue to escalate. Use of email by teens is declining somewhat, but use of blogs, message boards, and instant messages is increasing. As use of technology by teens increases, safety concerns for these teens and the need for education becomes paramount.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

-Use the Georgia 4-H Youth Technology Leadership Team and their resources.
-Conduct programs on Cyber Safety
- Have kids and families sign an Internet Safety Contract such as this one: [http://familyinternet.about.com/library/nuaagree.htm](http://familyinternet.about.com/library/nuaagree.htm)
-Adapt 4-H programs for more use of technology
-Conduct programs on internet “netiquette” and cell phone etiquette
-Conduct activities on preventing Cyber bullying
-Educate youth about Cyber Stalking and ways to prevent it.
County Programming Implications/ Applications (continued)

- Utilize the materials from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Campaign “Don’t believe the Type”. [http://tcs.cybertipline.conv](http://tcs.cybertipline.conv)
- Partner with the Georgia 4-H Youth Technology Leadership Team to promote the “Don’t Believe the Type” campaign.
- Educate teens about the dangers of driving and talking on cell phones. Check out the Cingular “Don’t Drive yourself to Distraction” video for programming.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Issue: Investment or Expansion of Beef

Situation

Cattle prices have been very favorable during recent years. In spite of increasing fuel and fertilizer prices many cow-calf producers have experienced positive returns during the past five years. At the same time, recent drought and anticipated changes in federal crop have traditional row-crop producers searching for viable alternative enterprises.

Trend

One alternative many producers are considering is beef cattle. Georgia’s beef cattle producers possess several comparative economic advantages over producers in other states: the state’s close proximity to Florida which is ranked 10th in the U.S. in total beef cows, the ability to grow forages almost year-round, an abundance of irrigation capacity, and many herds in the state are on a fall calving schedule which allows producers to market their calves when prices are higher. Also, beef cattle are already a secondary enterprise on many operations, accounting for 400 million dollars of agricultural income in the state. Finally, weaned calf and feeder cattle prices are projected to be favorable for the next several years.

Outlook

Producers seeking to make informed economic decisions will turn to the University of Georgia for assistance. County Extension Agents and State Specialists will be asked to provide information on expected annual costs and returns for beef cattle as compared to traditional row-crop enterprises. Additionally, producers will need and want information regarding the long-term economics of adding or expanding a beef cattle enterprise.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Educate producers on how beef cattle, either cow-calf or stockers, can fit into a traditional row-crop operation
- Determining the economics of irrigated pastures
- Develop budgeting software and other educational materials that will enable producers to examine all facets of beginning/expanding a beef cattle enterprise
- Increase producer knowledge of factors affecting the profitability of beef cattle

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Dr. Curt Lacy and Dr. John McKissick (Agricultural and Applied Economics)

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Electronic and printed budgets
- PowerPoint presentations
- Fact Sheets
- Individual assistance
Issue: Small Ruminant (Sheep and Goat) Trends Statement and Opportunities

Situation

Numbers of sheep and goats are growing in the US and in Georgia. In the USA there are currently about 8.0 million sheep and 3.25 million goats of every type.

Sheep sector. After decades of gradual decline, the sheep sector has seen a turn-around that began nationally about three years ago. Most sheep are located in relatively large western flocks that graze the mountains or massive areas of crop aftermath. Traditionally those flocks have focused much on wool production, but they have been hit hard by drought for several years. Mid-western and eastern flocks have traditionally focused on lamb meat production. Production in the East, including Georgia, is in a growth mode. Numbers have increased between 25% - 75% in recent years. A few flocks have been established to support initiatives in locally grown and prepared wool products for niche markets. Most of the growth in the sheep sector is based on the general acceptance and utilization of hair sheep genetics. The Georgia Sheep and Wool Growers Association assists in marketing commercial lambs. They also organize a wool marketing pool (usually in June) which is marketed in collaboration with the Tennessee Sheep Producers Association for higher prices. The Georgia Club Lamb Association provides group sales and awards for sheep owners who focus on raising lambs for 4-H and FFA supervised projects.

Meat goat sector. Meat goat numbers have seen a steady increase over the past 10 years. It is estimated that Georgia now ranks #2 in the nation behind #1 Texas and slightly ahead of #3 Tennessee. While Texas accounts for about 90% of the national total, the southeastern states account for about 30% with continued expansion. Product demand remains high. Interest in market goats as projects for 4-H and FFA youth programs has expanded rapidly as evidenced by the number of local and district shows, and the number of animals and exhibitors at the Georgia National Fair.

Trend

Sheep. There is an increasing interest in raising sheep for commercial lamb production. The consumer base is increasing. Management information is available from state specialists on feeds and feeding, internal parasite management, predator control, suitable genetics, and general health. Lamb consumption is increasing in many areas of the state, and the American Lamb Board actively provides very attractive informational materials on lamb preparation and marketing to anyone who wants it.

Dairy Goats. There is serious consideration underway to create a means by which smaller producers (~20 does) can legally sell fluid milk to the public under a rigorous inspection system but without following all the facilities requirements in the state/federal Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO). Discussions are being held among Georgia legislators and leaders of the Georgia Dairy Goat Breeders Association. The North Carolina niche marketing initiative is being held up as a model for local economic development and enhanced profits to small goat milk producers.

Meat Goats. We expect the number of meat goats and producers to continue increasing in Georgia. Many of these owners are new to agriculture or new to small ruminant production. Demand for the product already exists and is expected to expand over the next several years. Marketing may be directly off the farm or through one of several goat auctions each week. Auction sites remain somewhat unpredictable because some close and other open each year. This dynamic situation can lead to some frustration by meat goat owners. There will continue to be a substantial need for informational meetings, local field days, and informational materials on nearly all technical issues.

Outlook

Expect continued landowner and farmer interest in meat goat or lamb production enterprises. Market trends suggest the price for products will support sufficient economic returns to create profitability most of the time. Production costs, especially those associated with feed, internal parasite control, and land values will need to be kept at a reasonable level. Productivity of goats and sheep can be high, because of their multiple births and short reproduction cycle. The trend for absentee landowners to return to the land will continue. Those clients are looking for enterprises that are not cost prohibitive to start. Farmers growing crops with marginal profitability will continue to look for alternative enterprises to use the land.
County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Marketing methods and locations.
- Health and internal parasite management.
- Optimum breed utilization and systematic crossbreeding.
- General herd and flock management for profit.
- Suitable forages and forage resource management.
- Fencing needs and basic facilities.
- Scrapie eradication program and national animal identification expectations.
- Forage-based goat and lamb meat marketing.
- Mixed-species grazing opportunities.
- Budgets and financial analysis of lamb or goat enterprises.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

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Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Speakers and presenters for county meetings, field days, or functions.
- Web-based information via the Maryland Small Ruminant Page
Issue: Beef

Situation

Unlike other commodities in Georgia, beef cattle are a unique in that they are present in each of its 159 counties. The 2005 Georgia Farm Gate Report indicates that cash receipts for beef cattle in Georgia have increased 30.8% or approximately $111.7 million over the past five years. More specifically since 2000, commodity value increased for beef cows 31.9%, stocker cattle 21.7% and retained-ownership (cattle fed outside of the State) 60.1%. Most beef producers in Georgia are cow-calf operators who sell their calf crop at weaning each year. Recent drought conditions across the State have resulted in little forage production and have stimulated some producers to wean and market their calf crop early. Drought strategies should be developed that not only solve short-term problems, but also are designed to maximize long-term production goals following subsequent production. Marketing opportunities that result in the greatest return for the producer should be evaluated. Once mandated by the international and domestic markets, animal identification and trace-back will become an issue. Although changes in the current plans are likely, guidelines related to this program must be addressed.

Trend

Cattle prices have been very favorable over the past couple of years with some fluctuation. On average, producers have been rewarded by retaining ownership through slaughter. These added gains are not only the result of the current market price and risk the producers take, but also by the improved management. These management areas included preconditioning, vaccinating, artificial insemination, and proper nutritional supplementation. Marketing has improved with the use of electronic identification tags to indicate source verification. Beef Quality Assurance issues are addressed by producers who are tested once every two years. Consumer confidence increases with the understanding that cattle producers understand and administer their management practices in the safest, most humane manner possible. Cattle numbers had been on the rise, but due to persistent drought and subsequent forage production losses, most areas have ended expansion and have begun culling to take advantage of the current market price. Grazing programs related to duel management with timber and crop cover are becoming more popular. Rotational grazing may increase the utilization of pastures traditionally not used and may be relieve the stress of the current drought foraging shortage.

Outlook

Cattle prices appear to continue in a positive direction but will remain volatile with the drought situation across the country. Any expansion at this point would be expensive and producers should consider all variables before doing so. The number of producers who are willing to take additional risks in the market place through retained ownership may be reduced as forage assessments determine winter production needs. As the fall and winter months near, producers who plan to use cool season annuals must optimize their production potential. Biosecurity measures should be evaluated and revised to prevent possible threats to the food supply. Educational programs related to mandatory identification, alternative feed supplements, grazing strategies, stockering, marketing calves, managing risks, and beef quality assurance, should be considered to add value to calves prior to marketing.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

HERD
Bull Test
Beef Challenge
Nutrition and feeding programs
Use of alternative feeds
Forage production and management
Reproductive management
Animal evaluation
Biosecurity
National Animal Identification System
Marketing opportunities
Issue: Beef (continued)

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Tim Wilson
Johnny Rossi
Ronnie Silcox
Carole Hicks
Jary Douglas
Robert Stewart

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Master Cattlemen's Program
- Livestock Newsletter
- Departmental Publications
- UGA Beef Team Web site (http://www.ugabeef.edu)
- Extension Beef Home Page
  (http://www.ces.uga.edu/Agriculture/asdsvm/beef-home.html)
Situation

Milk production in Georgia has remained relatively stable for the past decade despite a decline in number of dairy farms. There has also been a decline in total cow numbers over the last decade in Georgia, but at a much slower rate. This is because the remaining dairy farms have increased cow numbers. Milk yield per cow has increased as dairy producers have adopted new technology, improved genetics, modern reproductive practices and improved nutritional management. Georgia, like the rest of the Southeast, is a milk deficit state in providing its population’s milk needs. Given the projections for continued population growth in Georgia, additional milk production is needed to meet market demand. Approximately 33% of the milk produced in the state is shipped south to help meet fluid demands in Florida. Milk is being shipped into Georgia from other sections of the US to meet the demand here. Milk prices have been very variable over the past decade. Current prices have decreased from a record high in 2004, but are forecasted to improve during the later half of 2006. Higher oil prices, global warming and lack of rainfall are increasing production cost. This results in a critical need for financial management in addition to improved dairy management to survive in the dairy business. A fresh local milk supply is also beneficial to maintaining homeland security and possible terrorist’s activity.

Trend

The trend will continue for fewer, but larger dairies through Georgia and the US. Most of these dairies will continue to focus their operations on milk production. As they specialize, many are subcontracting a portion or all of the forage production needs which provides opportunities for other local farmers. Others dairy farms have contracted someone to raise their replacements animals or have developed a separate unit for this enterprise. The majority of dairy producers are focusing on selecting forages that have improved fiber digestibility, adoption of improved technology and management practices that allow improved productivity, health, and reproductive performance of their dairy cows. Given the increase cost of inputs and current milk prices, producers are looking at how to improve efficiency and reduce cost of production so they can be more competitive in the future. Grazing, improved heat stress abatement and the development of niche markets are opportunities that some dairies are examining to survive.

In our hot, humid climate, more producers are incorporating supplemental cooling for dry cows in addition to lactating cows. This has been shown to maintain intake prior to calving reducing metabolic problems and improving production. There is some interest in alternative cooling systems (tunnel ventilated barns) for lactating cows. Many producers are also modifying their facilities and management to improve cow comfort to minimize health problems and improve performance and longevity.

There are opportunities for small dairies to remain competitive through production of breeding stock or change their current business model to meet specialty markets needs. There is an increasing demand for organic milk and other specialty products such as high CLA milk. A few dairies have incorporated processing whole milk or cheese production as a means of increasing their return. A few dairies have also ventured into agritourism by incorporating corn maze and pumpkin patches for children activities to compliment a visit to an actual dairy farm.

Most dairy producers already identify their animals, but the national animal identification program will necessitate the use of radio frequency identification. Many herds are moving to incorporate RFID into management to provide additional information.

Outlook

Demand for milk to meet fluid sales continues to increase creating a greater deficit in the Southeast as more dairies exit. Efforts to minimize the effects of pooling costs on local producers must be addressed. There are efforts underway to recruit additional dairy producers to Georgia. New dairies would have a positive economic impact on the local as well as the state economy. Milk prices are projected to improve during the last quarter of 2006, but input cost will continue to increase for the foreseeable future.

Dairy producers will continue to increase herd size and productivity of cows. Top managers will rapidly incorporate new technology and management as it is developed to improve animal performance. Improvements in facilities will be made to improve cow comfort and improve labor efficiency.
County Programming Implications/ Applications

Production of high quality forage
Nutrient management planning
Improved reproductive efficiency
Supplemental cooling to reduce heat stress
Transition cow management
Replacement heifer development
Business management
Improved herd health programs
National animal identification programs
Mastitis control
Milk quality

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

John K. Bernard
Tommy Bass
Lane Ely
Warren Gilson
William Graves
Steve Nickerson
Joe West

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Extension bulletins, DairyFax newsletter, proceedings from Southeast Dairy Herd Management Conference are located at: http://www.ads.uga.edu/extension/dairycattle/index.html
- Individual and multi county programs as requested by Agents
Situation

The Georgia Horse Industry is estimated to have a $1 billion economic impact to the state of Georgia. Georgia has a diverse horse industry with an estimated 250,000 horses in the state. The horse industry in Georgia combines the primarily rural activities of breeding, training, maintaining, and riding horses with the more urban activities of horse shows, exhibitions, hippotherapy, and public sales. The most recent Georgia Farm Gate Value Report lists “Horses” as the seventh highest Agricultural Commodity based on estimates of money generated from the boarding, training, breeding, and raising of horses. Surveys conducted by other states and breed associations have determined that the average horse owning household owned three horses. This means that Georgia would have over 80,000 households owning horses. From these surveys it has also been estimated that thirty-five percent of these households make a living in the horse industry with the remaining sixty-five percent deriving a partial income or owning horses for recreational pursuits. The American Horse Council in 2004 conducted a national study of the economic impact of the horse industry. Nationally the horse industry contributes $39.2 billion in direct economic impact and has a $102 billion impact when indirect spending and induced spending are included and stimulates $4.1 billion in taxes and land purchases. Many people owning and managing horses do not have agricultural backgrounds as well as some type of formal education or training in caring for horses, facilities, and land. Many of these people seek basic information as well as wanting to be updated on recent advances in equine care and management.

Trend

Georgia’s horse population is continuing to grow based upon human population increases and the fact that Georgia provides an excellent climate and environment for raising, training, selling and year round activities with horses. As growth continues around urban areas more horse boarding facilities and small acreage farms will continue to be in demand. Owners and managers of horse facilities will continue to need information in caring for horses and facilities and learning environmentally sound farm management practices. Trail riding is probably the number one recreational use of the horse; more and better trails will be in demand. Prices paid for horses raised in Georgia tend to be lower than for horses raised in any other regions of the country even though the quality and breeding of the horses are similar. During the last Georgia legislative session Senate Bill 380 was passed establishing an Equine Commodity Commission.

Outlook

Horse activities will continue to increase in the state of Georgia. Multiple equine events throughout the state can be found every weekend of the year. More information will be requested and needed by horse owners and managers in the general care and feeding of horses and breeding practices. Also, more detailed information will be needed to address land management practices especially in urban areas where horses are maintained on limited acreage and zoning laws become more specific.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Management of horses on limited acreage.
- Pasture forage choices and optimum management based on acreage, horse numbers, and management practices.
- Harvested forage recommendations based on quality, price, and horse nutrient requirements.
- Optimum reproductive management practices.
- Horse marketing, profitability of certain horse enterprises.
- Alternative Agricultural enterprise - Horse Boarding.
- Trails development.
- Prospective and new horse owner information.
Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Gary Heusner
Kari Turner

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Adult Horse College
- Horse Extension Bulletins
- Individual and multi county programs as requested by Agents
- Master Equine Management Training - joint project with Oconee River Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc., USDA NRCS, USDA ARS. Training to be done in Oglethorpe County (September – October 2006) and Walton County (TBA)
Issue: Swine

Situation
The swine industry in Georgia ranks in the top 20 of agricultural commodities in the state with cash receipts of $98 million in 2005. Most swine operations in Georgia are farrow-to-finish with additional contract finishing facilities spread around the state. Sow numbers increased slightly in 2005 compared with 2004, but total hog numbers declines slightly reflecting a slight decrease in finishing hogs. Environmental regulations and the lack of a packer continue to limit growth potential. With higher feed cost, the use of alternative feed ingredients is a potential that should be explored to reduce cost. National ID system and food safety issues, as well as animal welfare issues will continue to challenge the industry.

Trend
The number of sows in the state seems to be stabilizing after several years of decline. Prices are expected to remain fairly stable, however feed costs, particularly corn may increase significantly. The number of buying points in the state continues to decrease and marketing animals is a challenge for the producer. Animal ID programs are being developed and will be instituted in the near future. Increased awareness of animal welfare issues, particularly in the area of handling and transport have resulted in new requirements for producers wishing to market animals to certain packers.

Outlook
The short term outlook for the swine industry looks good. The long term outlook is clouded by uncertainty concerning market availability, feed prices and the effects of animal ID programs and animal welfare initiatives within the state. Producers can expect to continue to receive opposition to expansion efforts from both environmental and animal welfare groups. Educations programs on trucker quality assurance, premise ID, animal care and welfare, the use of alternative feed ingredients, and nutrient management should be pursued when ever possible.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Trucker Quality Assurance (TQA)
- Premise ID
- Pork Quality Assurance (PQA)
- Swine Welfare Assurance Program (SWAP)
- Nutrient and Waste management
- Use of alternative feeds

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

- C. Robert Dove
- Tommy Bass

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Situation

As the price of energy increases we are continually looking at new technologies to convert the sun’s energy into a useful product. Conversion of solar radiation into useful products takes place through many technologies ranging from the production of electricity through photovoltaic modules to production of liquid fuels from biomass through processes such as fermentation and pyrolysis. By using these technologies citizens of Georgia can help offset the rise in energy costs.

Trend

The cost of energy continues to rise which in turn forces all produced goods to have higher costs. Currently there is an increased awareness of alternative energies sources, some of which includes solar, wind, biomass and waste products. All sources have possibilities, but there are also inherent costs and risk associated with converting biomass, radiation or wind into useful energy.

The outlook for the use of alternative energies is good in the short run in that there are planned numerous plants for the production of ethanol. Many of the domestic cars being produced can run on an E85 (85% ethanol and 15% gasoline) fuel. The production of bio-diesel fuel from traditional food stocks such as peanuts, cotton and soybeans continues to increase. The cost of solar systems is decreasing and better technologies for converting waste products to energy are being studied. However there is a downside to all of these. There are limited E85 pumps and vendors. The need for traditional feedstocks may require increased land to produce peanuts, soybeans and other crops for ethanol production. The need to produce products for energy could lead to a shortage in other areas such as feed for animals thereby cause costs of the feedstock and produced fuel and consumable products to increase. Other concerns directly relate to the environment. In Georgia there has been an increase in the use of conservation tillage to reduce soil erosion, reduce required irrigation, and lower fuel usage. Likewise, many marginal cropland areas have been protected and taken out of production. As the need for ethanol and bio-diesel feedstocks increases there is a potential to start farming marginal lands again as suggested by some companies. The process of pyrolysis (converting biomass to an oil through high temperatures and pressure) is relatively new and in development Solar systems are still rather pricy and locations for the use of wind in Georgia are limited.

Outlook

Included in Trend

County Programming Implications/ Applications

As farmers start to look at alternative energy sources and feedstocks, agents can and need to work with them to look at short term gain as well as long term planning and conservation issues. Additionally, the economics of some technologies are currently feasible, so long term risk assessments are a must when planning future directions for alternative energy use and production. Currently there are projects being demonstrated on solar and wind usage. Research is continuing on the conversion of biomass to ethanol, diesel and other oil-like products. Agents need to take advantage of seminars, field trips and demonstrations of the different technologies so that information can be passed onto their farmers.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Gary Hawkins, Glen Rains, John Worley, K.C. Das, Dewey Lee, Dan Gellar and Ryan Adolpson

Available Resources to Support County Programming

We are just beginning to investigate the alternative energy issue in some areas. Consequently there are limited funds to help send persons to trainings and conferences. There are however some planned trainings and field days.
Issue: Herbicide Resistant Weeds in Georgia

Situation

In 2005, the presence of glyphosate resistant Palmer amaranth (pigweed) was discovered in Macon County Georgia and a few surrounding counties. Additionally, a survey and greenhouse screening of Palmer amaranth plants grown from seed collected from 61 peanut fields in Georgia indicated that 84% of the Palmer amaranth plants were resistant to Cadre (imazapic) and possibly many other ALS-inhibiting herbicides.

Trend

Herbicide resistant weeds will increase in Georgia because growers are relying almost exclusively on herbicides for their weed management programs.

Outlook

Current weed science research and extension programs are focusing on the most cost-effective strategies to manage existing populations of herbicide resistant weeds and delay the development of future resistance problems.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Herbicide resistant weeds will cause growers to spend more money on production inputs which could potentially reduce economic returns. Growers in all agricultural counties should be educated on the most recent developments in the management of herbicide resistant weeds.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Eric P. Prostko
A. Stanley Culpepper

Available Resources to Support County Programming

At the current time, there are numerous types of information available for county extension agents to use in their county programs including an up-to-date PowerPoint Presentation and "official" UGA control strategies for the management of herbicide resistant weeds. This information is readily available from the UGA Weed Science Web Page at the following address:
http://www.cropsoil.uga.edu/weedsci/resistance.html
Issue: Glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth has been confirmed in Georgia

Situation
Palmer amaranth is among the most troublesome weeds in Georgia cotton. It is an erect annual growing up to 2 m in height and will devastate a cotton crop if not managed. This pest can grow over one inch per day and produce over 500,000 seeds per female plant. For the past nine years, cotton growers have managed Palmer amaranth very effectively with the herbicide glyphosate. However during 2005, a glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth biotype was confirmed to infest 47 fields in central Georgia. In these infested fields, growers have lost the most effective and economical herbicide in the world (glyphosate) for controlling Palmer amaranth. The ability to manage this resistant pest economically without glyphosate is extremely questionable.

Trend
Glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth will continue to spread throughout Georgia and the Southeast having a devastating impact on the economic viability of agronomic cropping systems.

Outlook
The potential for spread of this resistant pest is inevitable. Our most likely chance for managing this pest economically is early detection.

County Programming Implications/ Applications
County agents, consultants, growers, and specialist must play a key role in information delivery and assisting in early detection of this pest as it enters new areas.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue
A. Stanley Culpepper

Available Resources to Support County Programming
NA
Issue: Peanut Acreage Management

Situation

Acreage planted to peanut in Georgia has vacillated between 500,000 and 750,000 in the past seven years.

Trend

Planted acreage was 620,000 in 2004, climbed to 750,000 in 2005, and dropped to 580,000 in 2006 following several years in the 500,000 to 550,000 acreage range. Most of the variation in planted acreage was in response to the 2002 Farm Bill and the new production area in southeast Georgia.

Outlook

Planted acreage in the next few years will be in response to the market situation and contract offers. The desirable acreage range in Georgia in regards to rotation sequence is 500,000 – 600,000. Acreage management, especially at the individual farm level, will be critical for maintaining yield potential and economic viability in the next few years.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

On-farm trials and demonstrations will be used to demonstrate the importance of a long rotation sequence for peanut. County meetings will be used to disseminate data and information.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

John P. Beasley, Jr.
Extension Peanut Agronomist
Crop and Soil Sciences Department

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Extension specialists, research data, field days
In recent years cotton production in Georgia has ranged from 1.2 to 1.4 million acres and 1.5 to 2.2 million bales. While a record production of 853 lb/A was harvested in 2005, many Georgia producers faced devastating drought in 2006. The economic repercussions of this drought could be severe in parts of the state and persist for several years.

Numerous issues face cotton producers, several of which could have profound effect on future production. Political issues loom large on the horizon. Input costs continue to soar. Pest resistance and shifts in pest populations create have created emerging challenges. Gains have been made on the issue of fiber quality, but looming changes in technology will mean a turnover in varieties planted.

Early deliberations have begun on the 2007 U.S. Farm Bill. Federal budget constraints, program payment limitations, conservation provisions, export subsidies, and international trade agreements will significantly influence the viability of cotton – indeed, all agronomic row crop production – in the U.S. and Georgia.

Increases in fuel costs have greatly increased the costs of fertilizer, diesel, and irrigation. Transgenic technology is employed on 95 percent of the cotton acres in the state. Technology costs and seed costs continue to arise. Pending merging of the major technology provider and the dominant seed company diminish opportunities for viable competition...and lower input costs.

Glyphosate and ALS-herbicide resistance in Palmer amaranth (pigweed) has resulted in serious problems in cotton and other agronomic crops. Alternatives are limited, costly, and marginally effective. Addressing resistant pigweed is a sizable challenge across the state. Likewise, the spread of tropical spiderwort, a weed which favors reduced tillage and which is not effectively controlled with glyphosate and many other herbicides, represents a serious threat to cotton production. Concerns linger about the potential loss of efficacy of the pyrethroid insecticides on corn earworm, a common larval pest of cotton in Georgia. Nematodes continue to plague cotton. The role of new seed treatments in nematode management has not been fully elucidated.

Based on the 2003 crop, Georgia producers faced adverse publicity about substandard fiber quality, even to the point that some U.S. textile refused to purchase or limited purchases of Georgia cotton. Progress has been made. Fiber quality in the 2004 and 2005 crops was better in terms of fiber length and strength, and quality discounts were avoided. Research on stink bug management had a substantial role in improved fiber quality in Georgia. A large portion of the crop is exported, and quality preferences in many foreign mills are greater, necessitating significant fiber improvements for the coming years.

The dominant variety in Georgia is DP 555 BG/RR; it carries Bollgard and Roundup Ready technology and is planted on over three fourths of the acreage in the state. Registration for Bollgard is expected to expire in 2009 and will be replaced by Bollgard II or other competitive two-Bt gene technologies such as Widestrike or VIP. Transition to Bollgard II will also involve a conversion to Roundup Ready Flex (RF) technology. Changes in technology include changes in variety. To date, no variety with these new technologies rivals the yield of DP 555 BG/RR. On-going effort is needed to determine the best replacement varieties.

Included in ‘Trend’ Section.
County Programming Implications/ Applications

Agents can work with growers to address several of these issues. For example, field trials would be helpful in investigating of nematode control programs, variety performance, etc. Agents could emphasize the need for attention to fiber quality with growers, dealers, and ginners. Agents participate and promote the annual Beltwide Cotton Conference and the Georgia Quality Cotton Award program in addition to local production meetings, scout schools, etc.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

The UGA Cotton Team, Steve M. Brown, Stanley Culpepper, Glen Harris, Bob Kemerait, Calvin Perry, Phillip Roberts, and Jay Williams

Available Resources to Support County Programming

The Georgia Cotton Commission provides significant support $ to fund local grower meetings and county agent participation in the Beltwide Cotton Conferences as well as statewide grower meetings, tours, etc.
Situation

Georgia is urbanizing, and not just in the Atlanta region. The state has added eight new Metropolitan Statistical Areas since 1990. These include Brunswick, Chattanooga, Dalton, Gainesville, Hinesville-Fort Stewart, Rome, Warner Robins and Valdosta. The process of urbanization creates new issues and new clientele. It demands a multidisciplinary approach to research and new outreach methods.

Trend

The growing population will continue to increase demands on Georgia’s natural resources. Water resources are strained because population growth increases water demands and adversely affect water quality. Land use patterns are changing dramatically as farmland is developed and urban green space is replaced. The importance of current horticulture information for professionals and consumers will continue to increase. Urban landscape research is focusing questions on the total impact of landscapes, including erosion control, stormwater management, temperature modification, quality of life, air quality, and water use. Urban and community forest issues are becoming increasingly important.

Outlook

Urbanization increases demand for cohesive land use and water management plans which include input from all constituents. Extension is well positioned to support county land use initiatives and water management plans. Agents already work closely policy makers, elected officials, Urban Agriculture Industries, and the general populace. Their knowledge of landscape plant selection; installation and maintenance plans; low-input and water wise landscapes; and the impact of these variables on water management will make them invaluable. The need for new communication methods with industry and consumers will be increasingly important.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

These developments present both challenges and opportunities such as...

• Facilitating the delivery of programs and services to clientele by using more internet and mass media.
• Supporting issue teams working cooperatively across county lines to develop and share new resources.
• Facilitating programming and reporting that supports local environmental reporting for educational programs regarding water quality regulations.
• Developing resources to support county agents’ role in urban planning, with city and county commissioners, parks and recreation departments, road departments, local businesses and the general public.
• Facilitating program and resource development for the growing Hispanic population. This is particularly true for the landscape industry as the bulk of this workforce is Hispanic.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Ellen Bauske, Todd Hurt, Gil Landry, Gary Wade, Clint Waltz, Rose Mary Seymour, Mark Risse, Alfredo Martinez, Marco Fonseca, Kent McVay.

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Urban Ag In-service training, website www.gaurbanag.org, Urban Ag Agent list-serv, Urban Ag Industry list-serv.
Situation

The Georgia Certified Landscape Professional (GCLP) program provides landscape professionals an opportunity to document professional proficiency through a regionally accepted certification program. The program was developed through a collaboration of green industry professional organizations, horticultural instructors, UGA faculty and regulatory officials and is administered through the Georgia Center for Urban Agriculture. Participants of the GCLP program receive a 300+ page reference manual, access to a web course, and opportunities for hands-on reviews. Examination includes general knowledge, plant identification, pest/problem identification, landscape plan interpretation and nine hands-on evaluations. Certification is maintained by attending 15 hours of approved continuing education programs every three years or by retesting.

Trend

There are very few barriers to entering the landscape contracting business and often little time for formal education. Certification programs are a means of verifying professional proficiency and developing professionalism in an industry. Certifying 10% of this industry would produce 4,500 professionals in Georgia. With 172 Georgia Certified Landscape Professionals today, there is tremendous opportunity for the future of this program.

Outlook

Since the program’s inception in 1994 there have been 450 applicants, 172 graduates or a 38% success rate, indicating how strenuous this process is. The program also has more applicants in the process (245) than ever before. The Hands-On Exams are currently offered only in Griffin and time limitations restrict this exam to 30 people per testing date. The program is being expanded to offer permanent study and testing sites in other Georgia locations such as Gwinnett Tech and the Bamboo Farm in Savannah. The future of the GCLP program includes offering more targeted study resources and reviews, continuing education programs, graduate networking, and a public awareness campaign.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

There are currently 172 GCLP graduates that need 15 hours of CEU credit every three years. The GCLP CEUs may be given for a wide range of horticultural workshops or programs offered at the County level. The GCLP program is also considered a viable alternative to the Master Gardener program for clients that wish to have the educational materials but do not want to become a volunteer.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Todd Hurt, Ellen Bauske, Gary Wade, Clint Waltz, Gil Landry, & Rose Mary Seymour

Available Resources to Support County Programming

In-service training on GCLP is scheduled for December 12, 2006. Interested Agents will receive admission to the certification program, study resources and promotional materials. The Center for Urban Agriculture will also help promote county programs that offer GCLP CEUs.
Issue: Food Allergens

Situation

Concern about food allergens has been increasing for the last few years and prompted Congress to pass a new law requiring clear and unambiguous labeling of the eight major food allergy causing ingredients on all packaged foods by January of 2006. The issue of allergen liability has found its way into schools, restaurants, grocery stores, and may eventually affect any person or group who provides food for others to eat.

Trend

It is estimated that somewhere around 11 million Americans are allergic to one or more types of food and that as many as 200 deaths occur each year from food allergies. For reasons not completely understood, these numbers seem to be slowly, but steadily increasing. Reactions can vary from a mild rash to life threatening anaphylactic shock, and unfortunately, children seem to be at the greatest risk of the more severe reactions. The FDA has identified 8 major sources of food allergies and they are: milk, eggs, soybeans, wheat, fish, shellfish, ground nuts (including peanuts), and tree nuts (including pecans).

Companies, organizations (including nonprofit, educational, and religious), and individuals that produce, process, distribute, sell, or prepare food need to be aware of the issue of food allergies and what their responsibilities are to control them and/or make the ultimate consumer aware of their presence.

Outlook

As with many other issues in our country today involving consumer safety, there will be an increasing burden on the producer and/or provider to inform the consumer about potential risks associated with the presence of food allergens in the products they sell. As of yet these responsibilities have only been legally mandated for producers of packaged food products, but it is likely that in the future it will “trickle down” to any situation where a person or persons prepares and provides food for the public in any setting such as fund raisers, meals during training programs, snacks for children’s activities, etc.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Internally, extension offices should have written guidelines about the issue of food allergens and have trained all personnel involved in the preparation of food for the general public.

Externally, agents in counties with active food processing segments can provide training regarding the proper identification, control, and labeling of food allergens.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Food Science Extension

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Food Science Extension website – www.efsonline.uga.edu
The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network - http://www.foodallergy.org/
Trend statement 2006
Department: Horticulture
Program Department: Landscape Design

Issue: Conservation and Management of Natural Resources

Situation

Home construction continues to rise in most areas of Georgia. Commercial development, either in front of or as a result of home construction is also on the rise. Runoff and subsequent pollution from new construction sites are creating critical environmental problems that are receiving considerable state and federal attention. Currently, new construction sites greater than one acre fall under regulations requiring site development plans and water management strategies. At the same time, water use is up and predictions suggest severe water shortages if landscaping patterns are not altered.

Trend

There is a movement toward more cluster developments to meet environmental restrictions and increase dwelling density. Zoning laws are encouraging more conservation developments, which require careful attention to vegetation removal and preservation as well as stricter guidelines for landscape planting. Stricter storm water management guidelines will require more detailed landscape planning and creative solutions to preserve aesthetic qualities of the landscape. The individual homeowner may find themselves in a new landscape environment in the next few years and existing homeowners will likely be faced with resolving standing problems as cities and towns move toward storm water taxation and water use regulations.

Outlook

Regulation of storm water as well as planting requirements for new development will only increase. With the new restrictions, new products such as precision irrigation controllers and storm water drainage systems will become more mainstream. Products in the experimental stages or available only commercially will soon become more available to consumers. Landscape plants used are likely to shift toward those with less water requirements or those tolerant of wet areas, or those suitable for both conditions. Landscape designers will likely include rock gardens, rain gardens, less turf areas, and less total impermeable surface area. All this will mean increased opportunities for knowledgeable professional landscapers and landscape designers.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Homeowners, landscapers and landscape designers will need information on suitable plants for new environmental conditions. Though there will not likely be new plants to select from, better information about plant adaptability and suitability for various landscape environments will be important.

Landscapers will need training on the latest BMP’s and small-scale construction of drainage solutions, storm water management systems and other related practices to meet zoning requirements and codes.

The Cooperative Extension Service has an opportunity to take the lead this area through workshops and training session for professionals, homeowner education about new regulations, and articles highlighting positive solutions to these critical environmental issues.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

David Berle

Available Resources to Support County Programming

On-line publications and PowerPoint presentations. (Note: David does not do design work for counties and does not do site visits due to his limited Extension (25%) appointment and heavy teaching load. He is available for phone/email consultation).
Issue: Conservation and Management of Natural Resources

Situation

Small Fruit: Blueberries continue to be a rapidly expanding crop in south Georgia. Acreage has increase by over 200% in the past 15 years. An excellent infrastructure of 22 packing houses is in place. Prices growers received for fresh fruit were fairly good to excellent in 2006. Frozen blueberry prices have been very good. Most growers had a fair to good crop in 2006. Frost damage occurred on some farms. Strawberry production was very good in 2006. A mild winter combined with a dry spring helped producers. Most of the strawberry crop is sold locally. The grape acreage in the state is stable, with several new wineries opening in South Georgia in 2004 and 2005.

Tree Fruit and Nuts:

Apples. In 2005 approximately the apple crop in Northeast Georgia was valued at more than 4 million dollars. It is anticipated that the 2006 season crop will be reduced by as much as 40% due to significant hail damage across the growing region. However, prices are very good due to problems in other apple grower areas in the eastern US. The frost reduced fruit volume only by about 1% relative to 2005. Acreage continues to decline to from 1200 acres in 2004 to around 1050 acres in 2006. This is due in part to the increasing value of land in Northeast Georgia as tourism increases in that area. An additional constraint on the industry is the loss or reduction in allowed use of key organophosphate pesticides. The result is an increase in old pests such as the Dogwood borer and other pests. The industry is attempting to make changes in their IPM programs, moving to more targeted materials that are more healthful to the environment and the worker. As they succeed in this area they will use this as a marketing tool.

Peaches. After two seasons with relatively low net returns to growers, 2006 appears to have been a much better season. An extended cool spring followed by an extremely hot, dry summer, reduced fruit size. With excellent fruit flavor and reduced fruit volumes in California and South Carolina, market conditions were very favorable for the 2006 crop. Acreage has trended downward for the last two seasons, but we anticipate that with a successful season, many of these acres will be replanted. The loss of some effective organophosphates for peach pest management continues to be a factor due to an altered pest complex in orchards, with an increase in problems with Lesser peach tree borer. The industry has made adjustments for effectively managing San Jose scale populations. Unless new pesticides are identified as useful against Lesser peach tree borer, the longevity of orchards will decline substantially.

Pecans. Georgia’s two year pecan production average has declined since peaking in 2001. Georgia harvested 90,000,000 lbs of pecans in 2005; however, earlier predictions for the crop were as high as 110,000,000 lbs. Despite production problems, Georgia was still the top pecan producing state in the U.S, producing 36% of all U.S. pecans. Much of the 2005 crop suffered from quality problems as a result of heavy pecan scab pressure throughout much of the season followed by a severe drought from August-November. The drought occurred at a particularly critical time for pecans, which need excellent soil moisture during the first half of September in order for normal kernel development to occur. Pecan prices for growers were excellent in 2004 & 2005, averaging $1.75 or more per pound.

Weed Control: Growers of small fruits, tree fruits, and nuts are all faced with controlling weeds. Although weed control during all phases of plant growth and production is important, the most critical time for weed control in all these crops is during the establishment period. In small fruits, high priority needs exist for selective preemergent weed control and nut grass control. Other areas of importance include educating growers proper herbicide selection, proper timing of herbicide application, and calibration of herbicide application equipment. Many extension agents do not have the resources, training or time to meet the training needs required by growers to understand the complexity of weed control.

Trend

Small Fruit: Southern highbush blueberries ripen in April and May, bring excellent prices, but are very difficult to grow on low organic matter soil. However soil types conducive to southern highbush blueberry production have been identified and a new system of production in pine bark beds is allowing production to expand. Rabbiteye blueberries ripen in June and July and will grow well on "ordinary" virgin soil. Diseases and thrips have become more of a problem with blueberries, and pest control costs have increased. Some growers are expanding their acreage and picking up small acreage to form better economic units. Several clusters of strawberry growers are forming, so marketing is becoming a more important issue to these growers. Fresh market muscadine sales
Trend (continued)

appear to be static, but prices for wine muscadines have increased to about $400 per ton or more. Production of
vinifera grapes is increasing in the Pierce's Disease free areas of the mountains. Interest in wine production is
increasing.

Tree Fruit: Apple and peach fruit both are impacted by the loss of methyl parathion in 1999. Several insects
continue to worsen with the loss of this broad spectrum insecticide. In apples, there appears to be an increase in
dogwood borer infestations since the cancellation of the methyl parathion label. In peach this material loss may
account for increases in San Jose scale, stink bugs and lesser peach tree borer infestations.

Apples. Growers are planting mostly newer apple varieties, such as Gala and Fuji, and are purchasing additional
varieties from other growers to stock their retail markets. Sanitation in relation to apple cider has been addressed
well within the industry. The Georgia apple industry continues to move toward an agritourist retail business with
value added products and little wholesale. As tourism increases in the area, many growers are incorporating
more tourist opportunities, more value added products and more crops in their marketing strategy.

Peaches. It is anticipated that the acreage pull-backs noted in 2004 and 2005 will be overcome in subsequent
years to some degree with improved wholesale sells. Growers are interested in more dependable peach varieties
that will produce well following climatic extremes, provide excellent color and flavor qualities and rootstocks with
resistance to diseases like Armillaria root rot. Next season South and Middle Georgia growers will be getting their
first crops off of new varieties introduced to orchards in 2004. Next season Middle Georgia growers anticipate the
introduction of budwood for two more firm fleshed varieties that color well.

Pecans: Georgia’s pecan acreage remains at around 140,000 acres. Although orchards are lost to urbanization in
some areas, new orchards are being planted at about the same rate. Much of the acreage that is being lost is
occurring in Mitchell, Dougherty, Lee, and Macon counties. The remainder of the pecan growing region of the
state has seen an increase in pecan acreage. There is an interest in new varieties. Growers in much of the state
are looking for a variety to replace Desirable due to the difficulty in controlling scab on this cultivar. Alternate
varieties being planted include Cape Fear, Oconee, Sumner, Excel, and Caddo. There has been a concern with
the prevention of cross contamination with peanut from harvest trailers as well as contamination of pecans with
pathogenic bacteria through the application of chicken litter. Steps are being taken to minimize both of these
risks. Growers are beginning to realize the importance of sunlight and adequate irrigation in the orchard. Over
the winter of 2005-2006, many orchards were thinned and irrigation systems replaced. Due to high fertilizer costs,
there is a renewed interest in the use of clover in the orchard as a source of nitrogen and to attract and hold
beneficial insects.

Weed Control: Many small fruit, tree fruit, and nut crop producers experience weed control failures. These failures
are usually not caused by a single blunder, but can be attributed to many failures including poor choices of
herbicides, inappropriate timing of herbicide application, misapplication of herbicides, and failure to apply
herbicides.

Outlook

Small Fruit: Primary challenges to the blueberry industry are identification of the best varieties, soils and
production methods for southern highbush blueberries and improving the percentage of rabbiteye fruit going into
the fresh market by better varieties, better pruning, better irrigation, more hand harvesting, and developing new
mechanical harvesting systems. Improved forecasting and implementation of frost control programs are very
important. There is excellent potential for the expansion of the pick-your-own strawberry market since many
counties do not have an operation. Primary problems facing the muscadine industry are diseases in wet years,
low fruit set on female flowered cultivars in some years, and low prices for fresh fruit. Market demand for wine
muscadines is increasing and this is a growth area. Crown gall appears to be an increasingly important problem
for the vinifera grape growers.

Tree Fruit: The outlook for retail sales of apples and peach continues to be excellent. The FQPA remains a
matter of great concern, since the apple and peach industries are very pesticide dependant. Although IPM is
Outlook (continued)

being practiced successfully, additional tools will improve the capacity of these industries to conduct IPM, particularly for the combat of Lesser peach tree borer and Dogwood borer in peach and apple, respectively. Georgia has a reputation for good flavored peaches and apples and is relatively close to many major markets.

**Pecans:** The primary challenge facing pecan production remains the problem of alternate bearing. For some varieties this can be minimized with adequate sunlight, irrigation, and mid-summer crop thinning. Fertility remains an important issue, especially with regard to micronutrients. A 2005 survey revealed that leaf levels of potassium are inadequate in many of our orchards, especially when trees are bearing a heavy crop load. The absence of dicofol for mite control in the next year or two will strain some growers due to the cost of the remaining available miticides labeled for pecan. IPM is being practiced successfully, although there is still room for improvement in this area, especially as it relates to the use of clover in the orchard. Better management of pecan scab on susceptible varieties will continue to be of concern. Pecan prices have been very good since the 2004 season. This has generated additional interest in pecan production. To this point we have not seen a limit to the market demand for pecans.

**Weed Control:** Small fruit, tree fruit, and nut crop producers will continue to need training on the selection, use and application of herbicides.

**County Programming Implications/ Applications**

**Tree and Small Fruit:** County and regional meetings relative to the fruit industry are encouraged. Agent support for state and regional commodity group meetings such as the Southeastern Apple Growers Meeting, Southeastern Peach Convention and the Southeastern Fruitworkers meetings are encouraged. In addition, we will be holding the Home Garden Tree Fruit Update: Diagnosing Tree Fruit Problems at Rock Eagle at Winter School in Jan. 2007. Encourage your peach growers to follow the recommendations in the Southern peach, nectarine and plum pest management and culture guide and the newly published, Southeastern Peach Grower's Handbook, both accessible on the GA Peach Website, http://www.griffin.peachnet.edu/caes/gapeach. They can also find current and previous Southeast Peach Newsletters at that web-site as well as the Peach Management Calendar. In particular, peach growers must spray all acres with dormant oil according to the guide for control of San Jose Scale. In addition, dormant and late dormant copper sprays appear to have excellent prophylactic effect against bacterial spot in peach.

**Pecans:** Agents should stress adequate nutrient regimes with particular attention to zinc, boron, nickel, potassium and nitrogen. Several spring Zn applications are required, especially for young bearing trees. Nitrogen uptake is greatest during spring flush and fall nut fill and should be applied according to Cultural Management of Commercial Pecans (http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/oubcd/B1304.htm). Leaf potassium levels should be maintained at 1.4-1.7% in the “on” year. Boron should be applied at the bloom stage of pecan, beginning with the second fungicide application. Two to three boron applications should be sufficient. Nickel should be applied where mouse ear is a problem. Encourage growers to open crowded orchards to sunlight and fruit thin when they have a heavy crop. Fruit thinning demonstrations and field days will be planned for 2007. Encourage growers to seek up to date information on the Pecan Extension Website, (http://www.tifton.uga.edu/ugapecan/).

**Weed Control:** Short courses that cover weed control need to be offered as stand alone courses or combined with other production trainings. These courses can be used to train agents and/or producers. Training should include weed identification, herbicide selection / use, and equipment calibration.

**Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue**

Lenny Wells, Kathy Taylor, Gerard Krewer, Mark Czarnota.
Available Resources to Support County Programming

Personal consultation, publications, mimeographed material, videos, some PowerPoint presentations.
Situation

**Nursery:** Sales for container nursery stock remain strong in 2005 and 2006. Container nursery production levels have stabilized. The demand for trees is weak and the supply is abundant. The primary market, new construction, has created little demand.

**Greenhouse:** The greenhouse industry in Georgia is valued at $246 million dollars in 2005. The industry continues to grow in terms of gross sales and revenue generated. Over $60 million is spent annually on employment. Most growers feel this growth will continue. However, the industry is changing dramatically.

**Landscape:** The landscape industry continues to grow and prosper, despite the downturn in the economy. Since 2001. The number of small landscape firms is increasing as persons laid off from other professions start landscape businesses. As a result, there is a growing need for industry training.

**Weed Control:** All nursery, greenhouse and landscape operations are faced with controlling weeds. Many factors are critical in making sure the applied herbicides achieve their maximum effectiveness, including proper herbicide selection, proper timing of herbicide application, and calibration of herbicide application equipment. Many extension agents do not have the resources, training or time to meet the training needs required by growers to understand the complexity of many aspects of weed control.

Trend

**Nursery:** Container nursery stock seems to have a strong demand. Hydrangea and new plant promotions have created greater awareness and strong consumer buying. Supply and demand for container stock is well balanced. The strong supply of ornamental trees in the field and weak demand has producers struggling to meet costs. Some growers are going out of business.

**Greenhouse:** Total sales for 2004 and 2005 have not increased at the rate of past years and the number of Georgia greenhouses is shrinking. The reasons for this are: competition, labor shortages and retirement. Texas, Michigan and Virginia have identified Atlanta as important market to replace their shrinking markets. Prices have dropped and poorly managed operations in Georgia are getting out of business. This is not necessarily bad, but should the trend continue, well-managed businesses could be lost. Many operations during the past year were sold due to retirements with no interest from their heirs.

**Landscape:** The awareness of environmental issues is ever-increasing and clients are concerned about pesticide use, recycling of organic materials, water conservation and environmental impact of cultural practices. Homeowners are becoming more sophisticated in their tastes and demands for their landscapes, particularly with respect to use of natives and color beds. The demand for specialty gardens, such as water gardens, butterfly gardens, fragrance gardens and wildlife habitats continues to be strong. There is a growing need for improved professionalism and certified employees throughout the Environmental Horticulture Industry.

**Weed Control:** Many landscape maintenance companies, nurseries, and greenhouse operations experience weed control failures. These failures are never caused by a single blunder, but can be attributed to many failures including poor choices of herbicides, inappropriate timing of herbicide application, misapplication of herbicides, and failure to apply herbicides.

Outlook

**Nursery:** Container nurseries have had an exceptional spring sales season. Growers are now increasing inventories for fall and next spring sales. Container nursery production outlook is good. The demand for field nursery stock is building and it appears recovery will coincide with the recovery of our building economy.

**Greenhouse:** Greenhouse growers need training on financial management, marketing and employee management. Unless growers improve their business skills, the floriculture industry in Georgia will eventually lose its competitive edge, flexibility, and its independence.
Outlook (continued)

Landscape: As urban areas continue to grow, the demand for landscape services will increase. The number of small firms will increase, along with a growing Hispanic workforce. Professionalism and reputation will become important criteria to clients seeking quality work. As landscape companies offer more diversity of services and plants, opportunities will arise for specialty products and landscape services to meet consumer demand.

Weed Control: Growers and landscape contractors will continue to need training on the selection, use and application of herbicides.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Nursery: Nurseries continue to need more environmentally sound production practices. Implementing best management practices should be the goal for every production nursery. Participation of production and retail employees in the GGIA Certification programs would improve employee knowledge and productivity.

Greenhouse: The need for support and training by county Extension agents on a one-to-one and small-group basis will continue. Agents should encourage growers to join their professional association and to attend educational meetings.

Landscape: Encourage certification, help individuals with business management practices, environmentally wise management (IPM, grass cycling, composting) and keep up-to-date on new plants, cultural practices, landscape design trends and new products. Encourage all Environmental Horticulture professionals to join their respective trade associations.

Weed Control: Short courses that cover weed control need to be offered as stand alone courses or combined with other greens training. These courses can be used to train agents and/or industry personnel. Training should include weed identification, herbicide selection and use, and equipment calibration.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Gary Wade, Jim Midcap, Bodie Pennisi, Paul Thomas, Mark Czarnota.

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Personal consultation, publications, mimeographed material, some PowerPoint presentations.
Situation

The demand for up-to-date research-based information on horticultural-related topics will continue to increase as the urban population in Georgia continues to grow. The Cooperative Extension Agent’s availability to provide educational community programs is often limited by time, workload and other factors. As Extension Agents continue to explore non-traditional methods of information delivery, the Master Gardener program in Georgia has grown and evolved over the past 25+ years. MG programs and interest in new programs are still strong, not only in the traditional urban areas, but also rural transition areas.

Trend

Access to digital information will be in greater demand for rapid diagnosis of horticultural-related problems. Environmental awareness and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) continue to be significant factors in the area of consumer horticulture. Homeowner concerns regarding landscape issues such as water-wise gardening and reducing pesticide use will continue to be of importance and the need for non-biased information will remain high. Today’s clients expect to have questions answered promptly and are likely to e-mail or visit the Internet for information, yet still expect to speak with a knowledgeable person whenever they phone or visit the Extension Office. Extension Agents should refocus their training efforts in the Master Gardener Program to teach Master Gardener volunteers for office assistance and program delivery with a strong emphasis on using new technologies. The emphasis in training Master Gardeners should reflect county and regional needs as well as concern for the environment and IPM alternatives. Master Gardener volunteers are also excellent resources for collaborative educational programs tying gardening with nutritional education, youth gardening programs, service learning, environmental education and community development.

Outlook

An increased public demand for horticultural knowledge will continue to challenge the University of Georgia CAES and County Extension Offices. It is unlikely that counties will see a dramatic increase in faculty to assist with the high volume of information requests. Baby Boomers will begin to retire and many will seek out volunteer opportunities such as the Master Gardener program as a way to continue learning, networking and connecting with their communities. The current trend of maximizing existing resources particularly demonstrates the vital role that Master Gardeners can play in the future to assist the Extension Agent. Increased utilization of volunteers to handle routine homeowner questions and office tasks, as well as specialized training of volunteers to teach educational programs in the community would thereby free the Extension Agent to manage the commercial horticulture and agriculture requests. A few counties across the state already utilize this system successfully on a daily basis.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Agents should continue to host Master Gardener Program Training sessions with an emphasis on teaching classes such as Waterwise gardening, composting, organic gardening, landscape management with IPM principles and other important topics that address today’s environmental issues. Further training of Extension Agents in Master Gardener volunteer management will give them the skills to lead a strong program. Master Gardener team building, group development and continuing education are essential to volunteer retention. Other excellent avenues for distributing timely and/or seasonal information would be county newsletters, county web sites, news articles, radio and television presentations. In addition, Extension Agents should consider hosting Master Gardener continuing education on a regular basis to update volunteers on new research and current trends. Master Gardeners may tailor community presentations to reflect the current trends in gardening combining easy care, low-maintenance gardening, and smaller personalized garden spaces featuring containers, specialty annuals, and small vegetable gardens with environmentally sensitive, water saving practices.
Trend statement 2006
Department: Horticulture
Program Department: Consumer Horticulture

Issue: Conservation and Management of Natural Resources
(continued)

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Robert Westerfield
Marco T. Fonseca

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Horticultural PowerPoint’s and slide sets available through the AV library.
Fact sheets and bulletins available on-line and at county offices.
Center for Urban Agriculture web site.
Situation

Vegetable production continues to be an excellent profit source for Georgia farmers. Production in Georgia is overwhelming for the fresh market with very little production for processing. South Georgia, because of the mild winters, can produce vegetables year round with hardy vegetables such as Vidalia onions produced in the winter and warm season vegetables such as watermelon produced in summer. Light sandy loam soils in south Georgia are ideal for vegetable production and there is plentiful irrigation water. Northeast Georgia also has a small but significant vegetable producing area dominated by cabbage, collard, sweet corn, pumpkin, and tomato production. The Georgia vegetable industry is nationally recognized as a source of high quality vegetables produced by “Food Safety Certified” growers utilizing recommended food safety guidelines.

Trend

Vegetable production continues to see growth in Georgia, particularly south Georgia. From 2004 to 2005 there was a 23.5% increase in vegetable farm gate value, which reflects an overall trend in the last several years of growth in vegetable revenues. Growers continue to face challenges of producing high quality vegetables under increasing competitive pressures. Security concerns may hinder the economic viability of the vegetable industry in Georgia. Fresh vegetable production is a labor intensive endeavor that relies on a migrant workforce. Increased border security on the Mexican border and an unworkable guest worker program will continue to be a challenge for Georgia growers. Another challenge growers face is the phase out of methyl bromide. This fumigant, in many cases, has no viable alternative; however, use exemptions will be available for the near term. Grower reliance on methyl bromide has been trending downward even with use exemptions. The continued upward spiral in price due to limited availability has forced growers to use less effective alternatives. Organic production, which is an extremely small part of Georgia production has doubled in acres since 2003 with approximately 1,000 acres of total production. Vidalia onion growers with an already nationally recognized commodity, are finding their buyers are particularly interested in organic Vidalia onions. Price premiums are estimated at 50% over conventionally produced onions. Several of our largest growers are entering this niche market. The quantity of Food Safety Certified vegetables grown in the Georgia has increased dramatically during the last three years and we expect to see this trend continue. In addition, we anticipate an increased integration of food security/agrosecurity issues into the food safety program.

Outlook

The outlook appears bright for Georgia vegetable production. The challenge of having the necessary tools for growers to produce and compete requires continued effort. Obtaining necessary exemptions for methyl bromide use is one example. New chemicals, methods, and varieties must be continually developed and evaluated for growers to remain profitable. New markets such as organics have tremendous potential particularly for small and limited resource farmers. The year round growing season, marked by mild winters, high humidity, and rainfall are a mixed blessing for potential organic growers. They, like their conventional counterparts, will have access to early markets, but have a greater challenge in dealing with more insects, diseases, weeds, and a year round environment conducive to the breakdown of organic matter. In addition, growers will continue to be asked to be more vigilant concerning food safety and security.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Keeping agents abreast of developments in new materials and methods is an ongoing and important part of in-service training. Expanding our knowledge base on organic production and related areas is important as are the areas of food safety and security. As more resources and research dollars are spent in these areas, there will be opportunities for technology transfer of this information to county staff and end users.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

George Boyhan
W. Terry Kelley
Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Variety of Internet based publications on vegetables and related topics
- Distance Diagnostics
- Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center
- Vegetable Park – Tifton
Issue: Turfgrass Pathology

Situation

Turfgrass production and turfgrass management are significant and growing industries in the state. There are approximately 1.9 million acres of turfgrass in Georgia with a maintenance value of $1.70 billion. Disease losses and disease control costs account for over $205 million annually. Due to the number of turfgrass species produced and managed, as well as its high aesthetic value, the number of inquiries to county faculty and specialists regarding disease problems have increased considerably. Soilborne disease such as those caused by *Rhizoctonia* (brown and large patch), *Gaeumannomyces spp* (take all), *Pythium spp* (Pythium), *Magnaporthe poae* (Summer patch), *Ophiostoma* (spring dead spot) and nematodes are prevalent in the state and have been responsible for much of the disease losses. Additionally foliar diseases including *Sclerotinia homeocarpa* (dollar spot), *Pyricularia grisea* (gray leaf spot), *Colletotrichum* (anthracnose), *Bipolaris* (*Bipolaris sp*) and *Curvularia* are on the increase in the state. Turf is the second largest and the fastest growing group of samples submitted to the plant disease clinic.

Trend

Turfgrass high value and intensive management practices require that Extension personnel be educated to perform quick, accurate diagnosis and management decisions. Additionally, the increased use and popularity of different turfgrass species, brings a significant need to educate producers, turfgrass managers, landscape companies’ personnel and golf course superintendents and personnel of the problems associated with turfgrass disease identification and management. All this factors has put extra demands on Extension personnel for diagnostic, information resources as well as disease control education programs.

Outlook

Due to the high aesthetic standards demanded by the growing turfgrass industry, county faculty will be asked to provide and implement educational programs for turfgrass disease management, to be a resource for diagnostic education, and to provide science-based information on control of the diseases. With limited resources, the education of and communication with county faculty is the key to handling the increased requests for information.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

County faculty trained in diagnosis of disease problems as well as control recommendations will be able to reproduce educational materials and conduct training for sod producers, landscape companies’ personnel, lawn care companies, golf course superintendents, master gardeners and public at large at the local level to address local or regional needs. These techniques will also provide county faculty the necessary tools and knowledge to diagnose turfgrass problems independently.
Trend statement 2006
Department: Plant Pathology
Program Department: Turfgrass Pathology

Issue: Turfgrass Pathology (continued)

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Dr. Alfredo Martinez, 215 Redding Building, 1109 Experiment street. Griffin GA 30223. Tel 770-228-7375

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Situation

Fruit production within the state of Georgia has a significant impact on the agricultural economy, accounting for more than sixty million dollars worth of total revenue to producers each year. Peaches have traditionally accounted for most of the revenue generated in fruits, but in 2005, blueberries actually surpassed peaches in total sales. Apple, pear, grapes (largely muscadine and wine), strawberry, and bramble berries account for the remaining fruit production in the state. The wine grape and bramble industries continue to grow dramatically. Each of the fruit commodities is susceptible to a number of diseases, and control of these diseases often requires multiple fungicide applications. Yearly losses to disease can be attributed to both the cost of control and the loss of fruit associated with uncontrolled disease.

Trend

The trend for fruit production is variable, largely based on commodity. However, the overall trend is very positive. Peach production will largely maintain its current market, but there is an opportunity for limited expansion. California production may be reduced due to urban sprawl, and high fuel prices may result in better prices at the market. Plum pox virus, a potential “emerging” disease of peaches in the U.S. has not been found in Georgia or the Southeast to date; the Southeastern budwood-testing program will continue to be important for exclusion of this key virus. Resistance of Monilinia fructicola, the brown rot fungus, to DMI fungicides is being observed throughout the middle Georgia region. Adoption of resistance-management techniques will be critical to continued peach production. As the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) has reduced the number of effective fungicides which are available for fruit production, the need to evaluate new fungicides will increase. The advent of new buying points in Georgia could result in a subsequent increase in the production of strawberries, bramble berries, and blueberries, and indeed, this is being observed. Strawberry and bramble berry production has increased in Georgia, as producers look for profitable alternatives to traditional row crop commodities such as tobacco. The loss of methyl bromide may reduce the production of California strawberries, thereby giving advantage to Georgia production, though to date, exemptions have been allowed for strawberry production, and exemptions for methyl-bromide may continue for many years to come. Wine grape production is rapidly expanding in north Georgia – largely as a tourist industry. If warming trends continue, Pierce’s disease of grape may shift to higher elevations. There also is a continued trend in establishment of U-pick operations; new operations continue to multiply, and existing operations continue to expand to include new commodities (i.e. strawberry, brambles, blueberry, peach, apple, etc.) – creating a year-long marketing opportunity. The health benefits of many Georgia fruits (i.e. antioxidants from blueberry) are dictating additional market growth. In the current market, apples have little or no growth potential in Georgia, but these operations will likely maintain a profitable position through road-side marketing and U-pick operations. Muscadines will likely maintain the same market presence as currently observed, with limited growth potential. However, muscadine and other fruit wines are gaining importance in South Georgia.

Outlook

Fruit production, especially small fruit production, does have significant growth potential. Without regard to future projections, all fruit production will continue to require diligent scouting/monitoring for diseases, rapid and accurate identification, and efficacious control. County personnel will provide this information to their clientele. County extension agents will also need to become proficient with new disease monitoring devices and models associated with disease prediction. New management practices and new fungicides will be implemented in IPM programs. Information and training will be required for new technologies as they enter the marketplace.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

As fruit production increases, agents will need training in disease management for each of the fruit commodities within their region. Agents will need to be able to identify the major diseases within their respective commodities, and they will need to become more proficient in the use of digital diagnostics, allowing for rapid diagnostics turnaround time. Agents will need to be proficient in use of expert systems and models associated with disease manifestation plots will continue to be critical to information generation and education of producers. Small fruit production (wine grapes, blueberries, strawberries and brambles) will take on added significance, as small fruit production will provide new market
opportunities for Georgia producers. Resistance management training and research will be of great importance. In addition, the ability to respond to emerging diseases, such as PPV or blueberry scorch virus, another potentially devastating disease, will become more important. Potential agroterrorism will continue to overshadow fruit production, either through the potential introduction of new fruit pathogens, or through the introduction of human pathogens in fruit packing facilities or orchards.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Phil Brannen

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Issue: Prescription Fungicide Programs for Management of Peanut Diseases

Situation

Peanut remains one of the most important crops in the state of Georgia and is planted annually on more than 500,000 acres. Fungal diseases of peanut, such as white mold, Rhizoctonia limb rot, and leaf spot, cost our peanut farmers tens of millions of dollars each year when one considers the losses in yield and costs needed to manage these diseases. Rising fuel costs and the current support price for peanuts (approximately $355 per ton) make it increasingly important to find ways to manage diseases effectively and economically.

Trend

Since 2003, faculty members in the Department of Plant Pathology have worked to develop a fungal disease risk index for peanut. This index assigns a score to each field that is assessed which allows the grower to decide the field is potentially at high, low, or moderate risk to disease. The factors that are integrated into this final risk score include variety, crop rotation, planting date, row pattern, tillage, use of irrigation, and prior disease history in the field. By knowing the factors that increase the risk of disease in a field, growers can begin to make management decisions that either reduces the overall risk to disease or that use fungicide programs that are appropriate for the level of risk.

With the development of the fungal disease risk index (combined in 2005 with the Tomato Spotted Wilt Index to a unified Peanut Disease Risk Index), there has been a concerted effort to develop fungicide programs that are effective and economical for all levels of risk. For example, where risk is determined to be "high", growers are advised to use full-season programs with approximately seven fungicide applications. However, where risk is determined to be either "moderate" or "low", growers are offered reduced input options, for example management programs with four to five applications, that both control disease and reduce management cost for the grower.

Outlook

Peanut growers across the state of Georgia are seeking better ways to effectively manage peanut diseases at the lowest cost. The Peanut Disease Risk Index and the corresponding prescription programs offer growers ways to do this based upon results from research trials. To further convince the growers that use of fungicides can be reduced in lower risk fields, additional on-farm fungicide trials are needed.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

NA

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Situation

Cotton is one of the most important crops in the state of Georgia and is planted annually on approximately 1.2 million acres. Plant parasitic nematodes, for example the southern root-knot nematode, reniform nematodes, Columbia lance nematodes, and sting nematodes, cost growers in Georgia millions of dollars each year to lost yields. There is also evidence that damage from nematodes is also a component in the problem of lower fiber quality. Plant parasitic nematodes are generally considered to be one of the most under-managed pest problems of cotton in the state. In the past, many growers have attributed damage from nematodes to other factors, such as poor soil fertility and “sorry dirt”. Additionally, some growers have been reluctant to use effective nematicides in their fields because of perceived application problems and expense.

Trend

Since 2002, faculty members in the Department of Plant Pathology have worked with county agents to develop an educational program focused on the detection, identification, and management of plant parasitic nematodes of cotton. This program has used surveys of nematodes across the state, grower meetings, and replicated on-farm nematicide trials to demonstrate to growers the importance of effective management of nematodes. Since 2002, an increasing number of growers are sampling each fall to determine the population size and distribution of nematodes in their fields. Many of these growers are initiating more aggressive management programs, e.g. the use of Telone II and increased rates of Temik 15G.

Outlook

The problem with managing nematodes can be described as “out of sight, out of mind”. Because nematodes are nearly microscopic and not as visible as insects or weeds, it is often easy to forget how much damage they can cause. There needs to be a continued effort from within Cooperative Extension to provide education and support to cotton growers on the management of this problem. Education is especially important at this time as new nematicide products, especially seed treatment, are being marketed to our growers for the management of these pests. Growers look to Cooperative Extension for non-biased research-based recommendations. To provide such needed support, additional nematicide trials and educational programs are needed wherever cotton is produced in Georgia.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

NA

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Situation

Poultry is the number one agricultural commodity in Georgia accounting for approximately 50% of the farm gate value and producing more than $4.0 billion in annual farm gate revenue. Poultry meat and eggs are produced on more than 4,000 farms in more than 13,000 production houses across Georgia. As a result, the poultry industry in Georgia annually contributes more than $14 billion in total economic impact to the state's economy. Unfortunately, poultry production is also considered the number one agricultural business at risk for agroterrorism in Georgia.

Trend

Poultry production continues to grow and expand in Georgia. The large numbers of poultry operations and production facilities has resulted in very concentrated areas of production in Georgia. This concentration of production makes poultry farms particularly vulnerable from possible biological contaminations either by natural or intentional introduction. Poultry companies are making efforts to increase biosecurity measures on poultry farms. Information and educational programs on agrosecurity and biosecurity procedures specifically for poultry farms are needed.

Outlook

Faculty of the Department of Poultry Science have developed and educational training program for poultry producers related to agrosecurity and biosecurity procedures for utilization on the farm. These programs will be delivered on a poultry company complex by complex approach similar to the NMP programs conducted in recent years. The plan is to deliver training to all of Georgia’s poultry producers over the next two years.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Poultry production and management and flock safety.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

NA

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Nutrient management planning continues to be a on-going effort to educate poultry growers on the proper utilization of poultry litter and mortality within an environmentally sound system. Continuing education needs for existing growers and bringing new growers on-line with the program are efforts that must still be addressed.

Broiler growers need educational opportunities to learn about nutrient management planning, composting, alternative uses for production wastes, etc. The benefits of such information will ensure that broiler production continues to be a profitable enterprise resulting in the continued success of Georgia’s poultry industry.

Poultry scientists are providing more information on CNMP development, composting, and alternative use strategies. Field trials and observations at the commercial level are providing useful information on products and processes that may help in processing and reducing wastes. Grower and integrator meetings are conducted at every opportunity to report these findings and provide broiler growers with the information needed to make educated management decisions on waste control processes and technologies.

County-based and integrator-based educational programming is needed to best disseminate this information to poultry growers.

Casey Ritz
Dan Cunningham

www.poultry.uga.edu
Extension bulletins
Extension Specialists
Situation

Air quality and ammonia reduction are important components to a successful broiler operation. Health impacts from high ammonia are well documented. New focus is now on the emission levels of ammonia and dust from production houses and the potential environmental and community relation impacts. Proposed federal regulations may be imposed on poultry growers that exceed established emission threshold limits for ammonia.

Trend

Broiler growers need educational opportunities to learn about air quality impacts on broiler performance, the environment, and community relations. The benefits of such information will ensure that broiler production continues to be a profitable enterprise resulting in the continued success of Georgia’s poultry industry.

Outlook

Current research projects being conducted by Extension Engineers and Poultry Scientists are providing more information on ammonia and dust emissions from broiler houses. Field trials and observations at the commercial level are providing useful information on products and processes that may help in reducing emissions. Grower and integrator meetings are conducted at every opportunity to report these findings and provide broiler growers with the information needed to make educated management decisions on emissions control processes and technologies.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

County-based and integrator-based educational programming is needed to best disseminate this information to poultry growers.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Casey Ritz
Brian Fairchild
Mike Czarick
John Worley

Available Resources to Support County Programming

www.poultryventilation.com
www.poultry.uga.edu
Extension bulletins
Extension Specialists
Trend statement 2006  
Department: Family & Consumer Sciences  
Program Department: Housing and Consumer Economics

**Issue: Housing and the Near Environment**

**Situation**

Rising energy costs and temperatures have contributed to an increasing focus on energy conservation.

**Trend**

The use of residential energy has been affected by increasingly hot weather conditions that Georgia has been experiencing over the last few years. A more conservative mindset toward energy use will be seen in communities that are having a strain on power grids as well as individual consumers who see continually-increasing energy bills.

As living costs continue to rise in many areas of Georgia, an active way for consumers to save money on energy is being proactive in learning about conservative energy routines and applying them to everyday life. To prepare for the future of Georgia, saving energy is an important step in securing the stability of energy resources.

**Outlook**

Energy conservation remains an important issue to be addressed by the state. The continual increase in the cost of living as well as the strain on the power grid is proof that conservative energy use should be practiced by all Georgians. Energy programs at various public meetings as well as other outreach initiatives will provide a widespread awareness for these issues regarding energy conservation.

**County Programming Implications/Applications**

By working with different groups who are interested in energy issues, Agents can inform the public on the matters of conserving energy. Those interested in energy issues include, but not limited to, homeowners, home builders, public officials, business owners, environmental advocates, etc. Each agent would have access to many resources in regard to these energy issues as to give proper information on energy-efficient practices in addition to being a personal example in his or her home. Agents can be involved in face-to-face educational programs within the community. The programs would not only cover energy conservation but also the spending aspect of energy consumption. There would be education concerning energy provider plans as well as energy bill literacy.

**Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue**

Jorge Atiles

**Available Resources to Support County Programming**

- FACS Household Energy Savings Series (English and Spanish)  
- *Energy Tips for Homes in Georgia*  
- *Your Manufactured Home*  
- *What Renters Can Do*  
- Home*A*Syst  
- Energy Star National Energy Education Program  
  (http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/housing/estar/)
Situation

Consumers today face a variety of challenges to financial security. Rising energy costs have hit consumers in the pocket as oil, natural gas, electricity, and gasoline prices rise. The rising costs of energy impact families at all income levels, but low- and moderate-income households may be particularly hard hit by rising prices. Increasingly producers will need to pass on rising energy costs to consumers, leading to potential price increases for food, clothing, and other consumer goods. Faced with rising costs and little or no growth in income, many consumers have relied upon credit and home equity to make ends meet. Now consumers with adjustable rate mortgages, adjustable home equity lines of credit, and credit cards with rates tied to some index are feeling the pinch of rising payments as rates start edging upward. The average consumer has 13 obligations listed on their credit report. Of the 13 obligations, 9 are typically credit cards, while 4 are installment loans, including home mortgages and home equity loans. About 40% of credit card users have balances below $1,000, while about 15% carry balances in excess of $10,000. When you combine all non-mortgage debt, just less than half (48%) of credit users owe less than $5,000, while more than a third (37%) owe more than $10,000. Many credit users are but one major event from financial ruin. Divorce, job loss, and catastrophic medical bills are the three leading causes of bankruptcy in the U.S. Until October 17, 2005 when the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act (BAPCPA) of 2005 made it both more difficult and more expensive for consumers to file for personal bankruptcy. Moreover, individuals that do file for bankruptcy are now required to complete a two-hour personal financial literacy course. Between new bankruptcy provisions and the incorporation of financial literacy into Georgia schools, it seems reasonable to expect an overall improvement in the financial literacy of Georgians over the long term leading to a reduction in personal bankruptcy cases, especially among repeat filers. Meanwhile, having good credit, choosing credit options wisely, and managing credit limits has never been more important as credit scores are used as the basis for an ever growing number of decisions. Consumers without bank accounts or access to credit are at-risk for long term financial insecurity.

Trend

The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act (BAPCA) of 2005 made it both more difficult and more expensive for consumers to file for personal bankruptcy. Moreover, individuals that do file for bankruptcy are now required to complete a two-hour personal financial literacy course. Between new bankruptcy provisions and the incorporation of financial literacy into Georgia schools, it seems reasonable to expect an overall improvement in the financial literacy of Georgians over the long term leading to a reduction in personal bankruptcy cases, especially among repeat filers. Meanwhile, having good credit, choosing credit options wisely, and managing credit limits has never been more important as credit scores are used as the basis for an ever growing number of decisions. Consumers without bank accounts or access to credit are at-risk for long term financial insecurity.

Outlook

Prices for oil, natural gas, electricity, gasoline and other resources will likely continue to increase as demand from consumers in China, India, and other developing nations increases. Interest rates, which have been at historic lows for much of the last decade will likely continue to go up in the near term, placing pressure on the budgets of many consumers locked into adjustable rate loans. Georgia will continue to attract new residents, including many immigrants. High school completion rates will also likely remain low absent major policy changes to encourage graduation. These indicators suggest the need for basic financial literacy targeted to particular audiences will only increase in the future.
Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Michael Rupured and Pamela Turner

Available Resources to Support County Programming

News article database (FACS Extension web site), Surviving Tough Times (series of 19 fact sheets), Gateway to a Better Life (series of 24 basic life skills lessons), Making Every Dollar Count: Activities for Youth and Adults, PowerPay debt reduction software and support materials, Money Smart (from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) and exhibits: “6 Free Credit Reports”, “How You Spend”, and “PowerPay Your Way Out of Debt”. Check the Consumer Economics section of the FACS Extension web site for additional resources.
Issue: Financial Security: Fraud Prevention

Situation

In 2003, more than 300,000 consumer filed fraud complaints totaling more than $450 million. Most victims (74%) are between the ages of 18 and 50. Internet fraud accounts for over half of all fraud complaints, costing consumers more than $200 million. The total number of fraud complaints (6,649) and identify theft complaints (6,127) place Georgia as 43rd in fraud complaints, and 12th in identify theft complaints. The top five areas of fraud in Georgia are Internet auctions, shop-at-home sales, internet and computer services, advance fee loans and credit repair, and prizes, sweepstakes, and lotteries. Identify theft incidents include credit card fraud, bank account fraud, and telephone and utility fraud.

Trend

Fraud continues to plague everyday citizens, with scammers growing ever more creative in their methods. Whereas telemarketing was the largest area of fraud as recently as ten years ago, computer fraud is the new leader. Consumers that use home computers with Internet access may have little or no awareness of how secure their personal information may be. They may not be able to detect phishing and other fraudulent e-mails they receive. Increasingly, consumers face information security challenges from entities such as employers, credit card companies, and others that experience security breaches that compromise the personal information of large numbers of consumers.

Outlook

Fraud isn’t going away. Developments in technology, while typically offering many benefits and advantages to consumers, often come with new risks as scammers manage to innovate faster than security systems can respond. Consumers can take steps to limit their exposure to fraud by opting out of information sharing by companies they do business with, registering for the national do not call registry, and bringing a healthy dose of skepticism to any non-solicited communications. They may also take steps to reduce the likelihood of identity theft (shredding personal papers that go in the trash and mailing important personal information from secured mailboxes, for example). It’s virtually impossible to eliminate all identify theft risks. Just less than half of identify theft victims (45%) found out they had been victimized within a month of the crime. More than 70% discovered they had been victims within 6 months of the crime.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Family and Consumer Sciences Agents can increase awareness of common frauds and strategies to prevent fraud with information distributed via local media outlets and programs conducted for high risk groups, such as senior citizens.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Michael Rupured

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Telemarketing: It’s a Crime (available from Georgia Governor’s Office of Consumer Affairs); FACS Extension news article database; new exhibit and support materials: 6 Free Credit Reports.
Issue: Child Care Provider Education

Situation

Many young children spend the majority of their day in child care centers, family child care homes, or other forms of non-parental care. Although research indicates that quality of child care is the most important determining factor in young children’s readiness for school, most child care in the United States is only mediocre. Programs with well-trained and well-educated teachers are more likely to provide high-quality care for children.

Trend

According to the 2005 Kids Count data book, 60% of Georgia’s children under age 6 live in homes where their parents are employed. Some form of child care is needed while those parents are at work. Children receive child care either in their own home or in out-of-home settings (including child care centers, registered family child care homes, and the homes of neighbors, friends, or relatives).

Early childhood settings are not simply for custodial care while parents are working. Young children learn valuable motor, language, cognitive, and social-emotional skills in early childhood care that contribute to their readiness to learn in elementary school. Child care quality includes many factors, such as adult-to-child ratios, class sizes, developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials, appropriate guidance strategies, and opportunities for family involvement.

One of the most important factors that determine quality is the education level of the caregivers. Caregivers with more education provide better-quality care and are more responsive to children’s needs, regardless of the amount of child care experience they have. Only a small percentage of early childhood educators have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Research suggests that the quality of early care and education is closely linked to a variety of child outcomes. Children in high-quality settings tend to be more successful than children in low-quality settings. Unfortunately, most child care in Georgia and nationwide is only of marginal or poor quality. High staff turnover, lack of training and experience, and low wages contribute to low quality care. Georgia’s average hourly wage for child care providers is a dollar lower than the national average, and wages for child care workers in Georgia have decreased since 2002. Few child care providers receive any paid benefits, even with many years of experience.

Quality child care that is affordable, accessible, and convenient is not available to many Georgia parents. Child care is the third highest household expense for most families of young children (after shelter and food). High-quality care tends to be substantially more expensive than lower-quality care.

Outlook

Both in Georgia and nationwide, regulators of the child care industry are investigating the possibility of increasing the minimum educational requirements for early childhood educators. Many states are instituting quality rating systems, which allow parents to compare the quality of different programs. Georgia is also investigating developing a leveled system of child care training, in which more experienced child care providers would be required to take more advanced training classes. The leveled system, when implemented, will require that trainers make more intermediate and advanced-level training classes available for experienced child care providers.

The general public does not recognize the difference between high-quality and lower-quality early care settings. Many parents seek the least expensive source of care because they do not understand why high-quality early care and education is a worthwhile financial investment for their children.
County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Provide regular, ongoing, research-based training opportunities for child care providers.
- Keep child care training classes small, and provide opportunities for the providers to engage in hands-on learning activities that can be incorporated into their early childhood settings.
- Develop and teach in-depth class series for intermediate and advanced-level child care providers, using the new levels of professional development system currently in development.
- Encourage early childhood programs to seek national accreditation in order to document that they provide high-quality care.
- Collaborate with your local child care resource and referral agency to sponsor individual and longer-term training for child care providers.
- Publicize training sponsored by other agencies in your local newsletter or newspaper articles.
- Encourage child care providers to seek educational degrees. Refer interested providers to your local college or technical college and other community resources for information, referrals, and application and financial aid information.
- Publicize the “Child Care Quality Matters” interactive web site as a tool to help parents identify and select high-quality early care and education.
- Use the “Child Care Quality Matters” exhibit to educate parents and the general public about the importance of quality in early care and education.
- Oversee child care self-study courses and the New Staff Orientation video series for new child care providers.
- Provide print information on child development for child care providers.
- Collaborate with employers and community leaders to ensure the availability of consistent, high quality child care as a vital part of community infrastructure.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Diane Bales – Extension Human Development Specialist
Don Bower – Extension Human Development Specialist
Ted Futris – Extension Family Life Specialist
Sharon Gibson – Extension CYFAR Coordinator

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Child Care Lesson Plans
- Dare to Be Messy!
- 1-2-3-4: Counting and So Much More
- The Great Pretenders
- More than Punishment
- The Guidance Toolbox
- Ready for Reading
- Building a Bright Future: Brain Development in the Early Years
- Children and Nature
- Stress Management in Child Care
- Involving Families in Early Childhood Programs
- It's Never Too Early to Set the Tone: Sexuality Issues in Early Childhood

Other Resources
- Teaching Basic Health and Safety in the Early Childhood Classroom curriculum and trainer's guide
- Better Brains for Babies new trainer guide and flash presentation (released spring 2007)
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice book (published by NAEYC)
- Georgia Early Learning Standards (www.decal.state.ga.us)
- CYFERnet web site resources (www.cyfernet.org)
- Better Brains for Babies web site (www.bbbgeorgia.org)
- Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning resources (www.decal.state.ga.us)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (www.naeyc.org)

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development
Situation
More and more children of all ages are being diagnosed with special medical, communication, or educational needs. These children can participate in many typical educational and recreational activities with appropriate modifications. Many adults who are not familiar with certain disabilities do not feel comfortable working with children or youth with special needs. Extension can play a role in helping children, youth, and adults with special needs feel welcomed, accepted, and included in their communities.

Trend
Increasing numbers of preschool, school-age, and adolescent youth are being diagnosed with special needs. During the 2000 – 2001 school year, the U. S. Department of Education recorded that 112,559 students in elementary and secondary schools in the United States had multiple diagnosed disabilities. Special needs can include physical challenges such as paraplegia, emotional challenges such as depression, cognitive challenges such as learning disabilities, and behavioral challenges such as ADHD. Children with special needs often rely on adaptations to their environment in order to succeed. Adaptations can include assistive technology (such as wheelchairs and computer programs), special assistance (such as testing accommodations for children with reading disabilities), and trained professionals who work regularly with the child. Early intervention can help young children with special needs make significant progress toward typical developmental milestones.

Early educational philosophy suggested that children with special needs were best taught in self-contained programs, in which they were segregated from typically-developing children and taught only with other children with similar disabilities. More recent research has shown that most children and youth (including those who are developing typically and those with special needs) benefit from inclusion settings. An inclusion program includes children with disabilities in all appropriate activities in the general education environment, with modifications and adaptations where appropriate. The opportunity for children with special needs to share in experiences with typically developing children has significant value for children both with and without special needs. By playing and learning together, children become aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and their peers. They also develop a sense that everyone, regardless of ability, makes important contributions.

Current research about special needs emphasizes that individuals with disabilities are individuals first. Unfortunately, children with special needs are often labeled by their differences and disabilities, even by the adults who provide their caregiving, education and other services. Research suggests that the attitudes, beliefs and values of teachers and caregivers are potential barriers to the successful inclusion of children with disabilities in community-based and school settings. Many adults involved in caring for children with special needs have very little training in helping to manage those needs.

Outlook
All public accommodations must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that persons with disabilities not be discriminated against on the basis of disability. Teachers, youth leaders and child care providers must provide children and parents with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in educational programs and services, and must provide reasonable accommodations to include them. Most teachers and caregivers do not receive any specialized training to meet the special needs of children with disabilities, and may need help in developing skills necessary to teach in an inclusive educational environment. Many schools and child care centers are also ill-prepared to provide appropriate experiences for students with disabilities.
County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Collaborate to include school system special education teachers in parenting education classes.
- Ensure that children with special needs have the opportunity to participate in all appropriate Extension-sponsored youth development activities, including 4-H.
- Teach child care workshops on inclusion, diversity, and specific special needs such as ADHD and language delays.
- Arrange for in-service training in special needs for teachers, caregivers, parents, and youth with and without special needs.
- Create youth and family activities that include and meaningfully involve children with special needs.
- Create buddy systems between youth with and without special needs.
- Use your knowledge in horticulture and animal projects to specifically involve children with special needs in activities where they can succeed.
- Work with your community to raise funds for a wheelchair-accessible community playground. Hold a community celebration with information about inclusion and children with special needs when the playground is dedicated.
- Connect families of children with special needs to community resources that help with diagnosis, intervention, and purchase of assistive technology.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Diane Bales – Extension Human Development Specialist
Don Bower – Extension Human Development Specialist
Ted Futris – Extension Family Life Specialist
Sharon Gibson – Extension CYFAR Coordinator

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- CYFERnet web site resources (www.cyfernet.org)
- NAEYC print and web site resources (www.naeyc.org)
- Inclusion coordinators at local child care resource and referral agencies (www.gaccrra.org)
- UGA Institute on Human Development and Disability (www.ihdd.uga.edu)
Trend statement 2006

Issue: Grandparents Raising Children

Situation

Grandparent-headed households are one of the fastest growing family forms. In Georgia, about 6% of all children under 18 live in families headed by grandparents. Grandparents who have primary caregiving responsibility for their grandchildren have unique needs for education and support.

Trend

Since 1980, the number of children living with and being cared for by their grandparents has increased dramatically. In 1980, 2.3 million (4%) of children under 18 lived in a grandparent’s home. By 1996, more than 4 million (6%) were living in that situation. Nationally, 4.5 million children (or 6% of all children under age 18) are living in grandparent-headed households, and 2.4 million grandparents have primary responsibility for raising their grandchildren. Nationally, the 2000 U.S. Census reported an increase of 30% of grandparent-headed households between 1990 and 2000.

The incidence of grandparent-led families in Georgia is higher than the national average. Approximately 8% of Georgia’s children under age 18 live in grandparent-headed households, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. In Georgia, 92,265 grandparents report that they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them. The number of Georgia children living in grandparent-headed households increased by 29% between 1990 and 2000.

There are a variety of reasons why grandparents may assume a parenting role, most of which revolve around problems related to the child’s parent. Increasing numbers of grandparents are providing care to their grandchildren as a result of divorce, substance abuse and/or neglect, abandonment, teen pregnancy, death, incarceration, and mental health problems. Raising grandchildren requires a great deal of responsibility for the grandparent who takes on the task. These grandparents often lack information about the range of support services, benefits, and policies they need to fulfill their caregiving role. In addition, grandparents often encounter other obstacles surrounding their role including health, social, economic, and child-rearing difficulties.

Outlook

As the number of grandparents raising grandchildren continues to rise, it is important for grandparents to be as informed as possible about how to meet their financial, legal, educational, social support, child care, and parenting needs. Grandparents could benefit from education on child development and parenting, parenting children with special needs, family-school relations, and stress management.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Organize a local support/education group for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Use the CES publication series Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (14 titles) to conduct classes for grandparents or as a basis for media outreach.
- Assess community resources for grandparents raising grandchildren and work to fill educational gaps.
- Use Extension resources to begin conducting support groups and educational programs with grandparents raising grandchildren, in cooperation with state specialists.
- Link grandparents to Project Healthy Grandparents and other resources if they are available in your county.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Diane Bales – Extension Human Development Specialist
Don Bower – Extension Human Development Specialist
Ted Futris – Extension Family Life Specialist

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development
Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren publication series
- Extension e-seminar web site on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (hec.osu.edu/eseminars/grg/)
- CYFERnet resources (www.cyfernet.org)
- Administration on Aging, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (www.aoa.gov)
- AARP Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Educational Program
- Other AARP resources (www.aarp.org)
The Situation

Unintentional injuries are one of the leading causes of injury and death in American children under age 20. Preventing injuries requires the cooperation of children, families, out-of-home caregivers and teachers, and others in society.

The Trend

Every 42 seconds, a child or youth under the age of 20 in the U.S. dies from an accident. Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children over the age of 1 in our country. In 2002, 5,305 American children died from accidental injuries.

It is currently estimated that 19% (or 3.8 million) of all children from birth to age 4 experience unintentional injuries each year. Unintentional injuries happen in both home and out-of-home settings. Approximately 40% of injury-related deaths in 2002 happened in the home.

Young children are especially susceptible to unintentional injuries. Most young children lack the social maturity, experience and problem-solving skills to assess potentially dangerous situations. Even when they sense danger, young children may not know how to respond in an appropriate manner. Without an adequate knowledge of basic safety practices, young children are dependent upon their families and teachers to help ensure protection. Unfortunately, such protection is not always present.

It is estimated that, on an average annual basis, 28% of all visits made by children under age 5 to emergency departments are injury-related. Specifically, 86% of these injury-related visits are due to unintentional injuries. In fact, children account for about 25% of all emergency department visits, even though only a fraction of them represent true emergencies. For children under age 5, 3% of emergency department visits are serious enough to result in hospitalization.

There are multiple costs associated with children who are in poor health, including costs to children, costs to families, and costs to society. For instance, being in poor health limits many aspects of children's lives, including their classroom attendance and performance, their social development, and their ability to participate in physical activities. Family income is also negatively impacted when family members must take time off from work to care for a sick or injured child. On a societal level, child illnesses and injuries also contribute to escalating health care costs. Unfortunately, it is estimated that 11 million children in the United States under the age of 19 do not have health insurance.

The Outlook

Most childhood injuries can be prevented. Community-based education programs can help children and adults learn safety behaviors. Education plays a major role in helping children, youth and parents develop the knowledge and skills needed to be healthy and safe. In addition, child caregivers can dramatically reduce the risk of injury by practicing prevention strategies such as removing hazards from the home and child care environments. Teaching children and adults safe and healthy habits can also help to reduce childhood, family and societal costs such as lost work hours due to injury.

County Programming Implications/Applications

- Conduct trainings on the individual lessons of Teaching Basic Health and Safety in the Early Childhood Classroom (Basic Safety, Emergencies, Going to the Doctor, My Healthy Body, Terrific Teeth, and Eat Healthy, Be Active) for child care providers.
- Use the Teaching Basic Health and Safety in the Early Childhood Classroom activities and family involvement materials to conduct classes for parents and children in Head Start and other groups.
- Earn certification as a Child Passenger Safety Technician and conduct classes and child safety seat checks.
- Earn certification as a PRIDE Instructor and offer classes for parents and beginning teen drivers.
- Encourage 4-Hers in health/safety projects to share their work with younger children.
- Collaborate with local Safe Kids organizations to promote community-wide safety education.
- Promote Poison Prevention Week in your county each November.
- Include exhibits about home and passenger safety in health fairs.
Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

- Diane Bales – Extension Human Development Specialist
- Don Bower – Extension Human Development Specialist
- Ted Futris – Extension Family Life Specialist

Available Resources to Support County Programming

- Teaching Basic Health and Safety in the Early Childhood Classroom curriculum and trainer’s guide
- Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute (www.ridesafegeorgia.org)
- Baby Bouncer publication series
- 1-2-3: Grow! Publication series
- National Poison Prevention Week resources (www.poisonprevention.org)
- Safe Kids Georgia (www.safekids.org)
- Healthy Child Care web site (www.healthychild.net)
- National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (nrc.uchsc.edu)
Situation

In Georgia the rate for all types of cancer is 205 cases per 100,000 people versus 199.8 per 100,000 people for the United States. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in females. The American Cancer Society estimates in Georgia that 6,080 women are newly diagnosed each year and about 1130 die. Black women have the highest death rates from breast cancer even though they are less likely to be diagnosed than white women. Each year, about 410 new cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed in Georgia and 120 women die. Early detection for both breast and cervical cancer saves lives so mammograms and Pap test are vitally important. With early detection, death from cervical cancer is totally preventable and death from breast cancer can be reduced.

Trend

In Georgia, 68% of breast cancers were diagnosed at an early stage compared to 29% diagnosed at a late stage. According to the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 51% of women in Georgia over age 40 reported having a mammogram and a clinical breast exam in the past year. Women age 40-50 or over age 65 were less likely than women age 50-64 to be screened.

Outlook

Deaths from breast and cervical cancer have decreased in the last 50 years, but more needs to be done to get in the rarely and never screened women. Women without access to health care, that are immigrants and that have lower incomes are less likely to be screened. When women are screened, cancers are found earlier and treated sooner decreasing morbidity and mortality. The new vaccine against cervical cancer may eventually wipe out this disease, but it is expensive and only for young girls and women who are not yet sexually active.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Agents can offer the Cooking for a Life Time School to teach people how to reduce overall cancer risk with a special emphasis on breast and cervical cancer. They can also do presentations and exhibits on cancer prevention in general and breast and cervical cancer screening and prevention in particular using handouts on the Extension Nutrition and Health Web page. For those women who have no health insurance, agents can refer them to the BreasTest and More Program at the local health departments.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Crawley, MS, RD, LD – Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Cooking for a Life Time Cancer Cooking School (2 and 4-lesson versions)  
Cancer Lesson plans and handouts on Nutrition and Health Web page -  
Cancer exhibit in English and Spanish
Trend statement 2006

Issue: Diabetes

Situation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated in the year 2004 that 486,000 Georgia citizens had diabetes. Only about a third were diagnosed. That is more than double the number that had diabetes in 1994. Diabetes is nearly twice as likely to occur in non-white populations. It is the 6th leading cause of death and contributes to 224,092 deaths in the U.S. At any age, a person with diabetes is two times more likely to die than a person of a similar age without the disease. Sixty-five percent of those deaths are due to heart disease. Those with diabetes are 2-4 times more likely to have a stroke. Seventy-three percent have high blood pressure. Diabetes is the leading cause of new blindness in adults, contributes to 44% of all cases of kidney failure, and is the most common cause of lower limb amputation. Direct and indirect costs attributed to diabetes are $32 billion per year with $92 billion of those costs due to medical expenses. That compares to $42 billion in health care costs in 1997.

Trend

Diabetes has become an epidemic and is occurring at younger ages. Expensive and disabling complications are more likely to occur in individuals who have diabetes for a longer period of time. As more complications occur, the strain on the health system will be overwhelming. Even pre-school children are being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes which previously occurred only in older adults. Most of the increase in incidence is due to the increase in obesity and inactivity in this country.

Outlook

Diabetes is preventable with improved eating habits, weight control and regular physical activity for all age groups. Communities need to be designed to encourage more activity in daily living and to offer more opportunities for healthy food to be available for all income levels. Prevention of diabetes in children means changing food choices at home, school and day care and increasing activity through organized and spontaneous play for at least one hour daily. Better education about diabetes self-management can improve diabetes control which can lead to fewer diabetic complications.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

For prevention of diabetes, agents can offer the Walk-a-Weigh programs for adults and packaged programs like the Power of Choice, WIN in the Rockies, Kids Walk to School, Fit Families, Generation Fit, Can Fit Super Manual, Exercise Your Options and Jump Start Teens for children and adolescents. Once people are diagnosed, agents can offer the Right Bite Diabetes Cooking School, the Diabetes Life Lines Newsletter and diabetes programs and handouts available on the Extension Diabetes Web page (http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/food/diabetes.php) and the CDC Web site www.diabetesatwork.org. Also available is the CD Focus on Diabetes which has nine self-paced modules to help someone with diabetes manage diabetes better.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Connie Crawley, MS, RD, LD – Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist (ccrawley@uga.edu)

Available Resources to Support County Programming

From UGA Extension:
- Right Bite Diabetes Cooking School
- Diabetes Life Lines Newsletter
- Focus on Diabetes CD
- Walk-a-Weigh Program
- Fit Families (Thomas Co. Extension)

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health
Available Resources to Support County Programming (continued)

Outside Resources:
www.diabetesatwork.org
Power of Choice www.fns.usda.gov/tn
Wellness in the Rockies http://uwyo.edu/wintherockies
Kids Walk to School www.cdc.gov/kidswalk
Can Fit Super Manual www.canfit.org
Exercise Your Options (California Dairy Council -1-866-572-1359)
Jump Start for Teens www.californiaprojectlean.org
Generation Fit (local American Cancer Society)
Issue: Overweight and Obesity in Adults

Situation
One in three adults in the U.S. is obese and 66% are overweight. Twenty-five percent of males in Georgia are obese and 24.4% of females. Overweight and obesity are more common in blacks than whites with black females having the highest obesity incidence of 33%. Those with less income and education are more likely to have a weight problem. An estimated 6,700 Georgians die each year because they are overweight or obese. That is about 10% of all deaths. Almost 26% of adults in Georgia are inactive which contributes to this problem. Women, blacks and those with less income are more likely to be inactive. Intake of fruits and vegetables has also been associated with weight control. Unfortunately, nearly 80% of overweight and obese people in Georgia eat less than five fruits and vegetables per day.

Trend
Obesity and overweight are increasing at an astonishing rate. The fastest growing group are those who have body mass indices over 40 (over 30 is considered obese). During the 1990's, Georgia had the highest increase in the incidence of overweight and obesity in the country. These two conditions are contributing to the rapid increase in many chronic disease including diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and arthritis. Even though more people report being on a diet, the population is getting fatter. Unfortunately people are eating out more, eating larger portions and snacking on high fat, low nutrient foods. We are also aging as a nation and older adults tend to be less active than younger adults.

Outlook
These disturbing trends in overweight, obesity and inactivity are not abating. With the increasing average age of the American population, the incidence of chronic diseases associated with weight and inactivity will also rise. This will significantly increase health care costs. These chronic diseases are likely to develop at younger ages as more adults in their twenties and thirties have weight problems. However, individuals, health care professionals and community leaders can reverse this trend with good preventive programming, innovative community planning and interventions that promote weight control and cardiovascular fitness.

County Programming Implications/ Applications
Using the Walk-a-Weigh program and programming based on My Pyramid and the Dietary Guidelines, agents can help people control their weight and become more fit. Agents can also work with community leaders to develop facilities that promote physical activity. They can also offer the Cooking for a Life Time Program to show people how they can make better food choices at the grocery store and prepare food at home that is lower in fat and calories.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue
Connie Crawley, MS, RD, LD – Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist, Kelly Bryant, MS, RD, LD – EFNEP Specialist; Gail Hanula Ed.S. RD, LD – EFNEP Coordinator

Available Resources to Support County Programming
Walk-a-Weigh Program
Cooking for a Life Time Cooking School
Issue: Financial Security for Youth

Situation

U.S. teens have enormous purchasing power but often lack financial knowledge to manage their resources more effectively leading to an increased chance for financial security in later life. Although most students have some form of income, such as an allowance, wages from a job, and gifts from relatives, just over half (54%) view savings as very important. One in three teens carry their own credit card, and half of all college students have a major credit card. More than a fourth (28%) of students with credit cards roll-over debt each month. The majority of teens (66%) say they need to know more about financial issues. Only a fifth (21%) of teens have ever taken a financial management course in school. Among those who have taken a course, more than a third (41%) said they started saving, more than a quarter (28%) increased their savings, one-fifth invested their savings differently, and nearly one-fifth (19%) developed a budget. Most teens (94%) say their parents are a likely source for financial information. Yet, only about a fourth (26%) of teens say their parents actively taught them how to manage their money. Nearly a third (30%) said their parents rarely or never discuss saving and investing with them.

Trend

The recent incorporation of financial literacy into the Georgia Performance Standards for Economic Understanding means that all Georgia students will learn about money management starting in kindergarten and continuing each year of school through the 12th grade. The standards for grades 7 through 12 will be implemented in Fall 2007, with K through 6 following in Fall 2008.

Outlook

The incorporation of money management into the social studies curriculum will pay off in the long term with financially literate high school graduates on track to become financially secure adults. As the standards are implemented over the next two years, there is a tremendous need in every Georgia school for financial literacy training targeted to social studies teachers. Teachers need content training, information about quality educational resources targeted to various age groups, and assistance in incorporating the content into lesson plans.

County Programming Implications/Applications

Family and Consumer Sciences Agents can provide reach out to social studies teachers to make them aware of FACS Extension as a readily available resource for financial literacy support and information. FACS Agents can work in partnership with local FACS teachers, Georgia Centers for Economic Education, and other entities to offer Professional Development Units for financial literacy training in 2007, 2008, and beyond.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Michael Rupured & Robert B. Nielsen

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Rupured is providing leadership for the statewide planning for training for teachers of grades 7-12 to be arranged and conducted by FACS Agents in their communities. The grades 7-12 training will primarily revolve around the National Endowment for Financial Education’s (NEFE) High School Financial Planning Program (HSFPP®), but will also include financial literacy materials provided by other financial education groups such as the Georgia affiliate of the National Council on Economic Education (GCEE/NCEE). Similarly, Nielsen is providing leadership for training for teachers of grades K-8. Check the Financial Literacy for Youth FACS Extension website for additional youth financial literacy resources.
Trend statement 2006

Issue: Financial Security for Families: Short and Long-Term Savings

Situation

The U.S. personal savings rate has historically been low relative to other nations, but recent trends provide greater cause for concern. Until recently the personal savings rate had not been negative since the Depression. Unfortunately, over the past five quarters the net personal savings rate has been negative (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2006). Some economists believe that the low personal savings rate is not of much concern due to concomitant increases in assets, particularly securities and homes (Garner, 2006). Most agree, however, that a negative personal savings rate frequently does place the economic well-being of individuals and families at risk.

Trend

The U.S. personal savings rate has continually declines over the past quarter century and now sits at a historically low level. Baby boomers nearing retirement do appear to be saving more in recent years, but there is some evidence that the savings are for near-term is it for living expenses that support historically high consumption levels.

Outlook

Given the current situation and historical trend, there is little reason to believe that the personal savings rate outlook is positive. Individuals and families appear to need positive inducements to reverse the trend from a consumption-orientation to a savings-orientation. As a result, numerous new policies and incremental changes to existing tax law have been devised to encourage Americans to increase both short and long-term savings. However, these changes often are considered confusing to the general public. Furthermore, other financial challenges, including excessive consumer debt loads and poor financial habits (Cavanaugh & Sharpe, 2002), are likely to continue to remain significant obstacles to developing effective savings strategies for many families in Georgia and the Nation.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Cooperative Extension has the opportunity to educate Georgians about appropriate short-term and long-term savings goals and the financial tools that may be used for both. By providing clear, simple, and motivational savings steps to the people of Georgia, we can foster a culture of saving and delayed-consumption.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Robert B. Nielsen

Available Resources to Support County Programming

News article database (FACS Extension web site); PowerSave savings demonstration software and support materials; It's Time to Save Panels/Posters (under development); Retirement and Long-Term Savings Curriculum for County Educators (under development); numerous materials from public and private groups, including the FDIC, NCUA, EBRI, IPT, and others; see Consumer Economics section of the FACS Extension web site for these and other resources.

References

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Family Financial Planning

Issue: Financial Security for Families: Planning For Retirement
Situation

Because of the aging Baby Boomers who were born between 1946 and 1964, America is preparing for the largest number and percentage of retirees in our history. This pending demographic shift has many concerned about the preparedness of individuals, families, and institutions. This concern exists for many reasons; four are discussed here.

First, life expectancy continues to increase. This requires that retirement plans consider the probability that one will need adequate funds for a longer period of time than one currently expects. Second, political and economic situation reflects a growing emphasis on personal financial responsibility throughout the life course, including later life. When considering retirement planning, this personal responsibility is expressed through personal savings, investments, Social Security earnings from one’s working years, and pension contributions. Unfortunately, participation in defined-contribution pensions among eligible wage and salary workers in Georgia is terrible. Georgia ranks 47th among the states in pension participation (Copeland, 2005).

In addition, wage and salary workers have a poor understanding of salary replacement needs and generally underestimate the resources needed in retirement (Employee Benefit Research Institute, 2006). Third, the ability of Social Security to weather the pending economic and demographic changes remains uncertain. Social Security payments are the sole source of income for 20% of older Americans (Social Security Administration, 2005), and comprise 50% or more of the income that is received by 65% of older Americans (Social Security Administration, 2005).

Fourth, public and private health insurance and the associated costs of medical care are straining individuals' and families' budgets. Per capita health care expenditures now exceed $6,000 and confusion reigns among retirees who must piece together public and private insurance policies to cover their medical needs.

Trend

Fortunately, life expectancy continues to trend upward. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, the life expectancy for a woman who lived to age 65 was 83.9 in 1990 and is now 85. Similarly, the life expectancy for a man who lived to age 65 was 80.1 in 1990 and is now 82. Unfortunately, personal retirement savings, investments, and pension contributions aren’t all trending upward. In 2001 the median net worth among boomers was a mere $107,000 (Kim, Kwon, & Anderson, 2006). By almost any measure this is an inadequate preparation for retirement, particularly when one considers that most of this wealth reflects home equity. Historically high installment debt loads have also deterred participation in discretionary savings plans (Cavanaugh & Sharpe, 2002). Defined-benefit pensions are also failing more often due to poor pension oversight. Currently, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), the Federal corporation that watches over and protects traditional defined-benefit pensions, oversees the pensions of more than 60 Georgia businesses, or more than 750,000 workers and retirees (Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 2006).

Social Security continues to be the sole source of income for older Americans (Social Security Administration, 2005). In addition, per capita expenditures on health-related services continue to outpace other goods and services. The average annual inflation rate since 1996 is approximately 2.5% whereas the medical care inflation rate over same period is 4.0%. Recent years have seen relatively light inflationary pressure by historic standards, but increasing demand portends future increases. In addition, out of pocket medical care expenditures have trended upward. Per capita national health care expenditures were $3,381 in 1993 (13.4% of GDP), and $5,440 in 2002 (14.9% GDP). These pressures are expected to maintain momentum, reaching $10,709 in 2013 (18.4% GDP) (Heffler et al., 2004).

Outlook

The current situation and past trends suggest that Social Security will, unfortunately, remain the sole source of income for older Americans (Social Security Administration, 2006). Because future Social Security recipients will have fewer workers supporting each retiree, the long-term outlook for Social Security is often questioned. Because of this uncertainty, many economists suggest that people shore up their personal retirement savings to counteract the pressures on Social Security and the potential under-funding of defined-benefit pensions. With respect to medical care services, the increasing demand from Boomers portends greater inflationary pressure that may strain those who are not adequately prepared. A real question for the future is whether we, as individuals, families, and a country, will recognize the challenges ahead and begin saving without significant inducements or mandates.
Cooperative Extension has the opportunity to educate Georgians about the need to invest more time in retirement planning in our increasingly complex financial and policy environment. These education efforts should include information about appropriate saving and investment goals for various stages of life, changes in Social Security financing and eligibility, and strategies for maximizing one’s Social Security benefit. In addition, education about the availability of tax-favored saving and investing options, strategies that employers can use to encourage their employees to contribute to their contributory pensions, and the role of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation will help Georgians prepare for their growing role as stewards of their own finances. Finally, educational efforts that inform Georgians about appropriate public and private insurance options for seniors, and the increasingly complex health insurance options available to those planning for retirement and current retirees, will help reduce out of pocket costs and improve access to medical services.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Robert B. Nielsen

Available Resources to Support County Programming

News article database (FACS Extension web site); PowerSave savings demonstration software and support materials; It’s Time to Save Panels/Posters (under development); Retirement and Long-Term Savings Curriculum for County Educators (under development); numerous materials from public and private groups, including the FDIC, NCUA, EBRI, IPT, PBGC, CMS; see Consumer Economics section of the FACS Extension web site for these and other resources.

References


Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

Issue: Childhood Obesity

Situation
According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), nearly 19% of American children age 6-11 and 17.4% of adolescents 12-19 were overweight in the year 2004. That is up from 4.2% and 4.6% respectively in 1965. The Institutes of Medicine estimates that 9 million children and youth over the age of 6 are obese. In 2001, hospital costs for pediatric obesity and its associated disorders including high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep apnea and gall bladder disease were estimated to be $127 million. Only 6% of kindergarten programs meet the recommendations of the CDC for daily physical activity and schools serving low income and/or minority populations are even less likely to meet these standards. A study in the year 2000 found that only 8% of elementary schools, 6.4% of middle schools and 5.8% of high schools offered daily P.E. year round. In Georgia, the Georgia Childhood Overweight Prevalence Survey found 25% of 4th graders were overweight and another 17% were at risk for being overweight; 19% of 8th graders were overweight and another 19% were at risk for being overweight; and 22% of 11th graders were overweight and another 14% were at risk for being overweight. In other words, approximately 40% of these children had body weights that were of significant concern. An Oral Health screening of only 3rd graders found 24% of these children were overweight.

**Trend**

The rate of childhood obesity doubled for adolescents and children age 2-5 years of age and tripled for children 6-11 years of age in the last 30 years. Children who are younger, that live in rural areas, and who live in households with lower incomes are more likely to be overweight. Between 1972 and 1995, the number of families eating out increased by 89%. Unfortunately those who eat out consume about 200 more calories per day. Children have replaced active play with computer games and watching T.V. More screen time has been shown to increase risk for overweight and obesity. Eighty percent of the 40,000 commercials they see each year are for fast foods, sweetened cereals, candies and toys. Even though 25% of our trips from home are less than one mile away, 75% of those trips are made in motorized vehicles.

**Outlook**

Our children are becoming more overweight and less fit. Overweight children and adolescents are likely to become overweight adults. Our communities are not designed to promote outdoor activities like walking and bike riding. Our schools sell competitive foods that are low in nutritional value for extra income so they are reluctant to restrict these sales. Children and adolescents who are overweight or obese will develop chronic diseases at earlier ages and may not live as long as their parents and grandparents. Our health care costs will become astronomical. School districts are being required to establish wellness plans to improve the school health environment. Efforts are being made to mandate more P.E. in schools. Community leaders and planners are considering land use designs that include more sidewalks, parks and bike paths. Studies have shown that community-wide interventions to reverse poor eating and activity habits are more effective than interventions that only focus on schools.

**County Programming Implications/ Applications**

Agents can build awareness about the overweight/obesity problem and educate their communities about strategies that have worked in reversing the trend. They can also provide programs to prevent childhood and adolescent overweight in schools, after school programs, day camps, 4-H clubs and other community programs using a variety of curricula.

**Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue**

Connie Crawley, MS, RD, LD – Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist, Kelly Bryant, MS, RD, LD – EFNEP Specialist; Gail Hanula Ed.S. RD, LD – EFNEP Coordinator

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**Issue: Childhood Obesity (continued)**

**Available Resources to Support County Programming (continued)**

To Build Community Awareness:
Trend statement 2006

We Can Energize Our Community for Action  http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov
Sizing Up America  www.aafcs.org
Biggest Generation DVD and Manual  www.connectwithkids.com
Food and Fitness Matter: Raising Healthy, Active Kids  www.parentsaction.org

To Work with Children and Youth to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:
Fit Families (Thomas Co. Extension)
Power of Choice  www.fns.usda.gov/tn
Wellness in the Rockies  http://uwyo.edu/wintherockies
Kids Walk to School  www.cdc.gov/kidswalk/
Can Fit Super Manual  www.canfit.org
Exercise Your Options (California Dairy Council -1-866-572-1359)
Jump Start for Teens  www.californiaprojectlean.org
Generation Fit (local American Cancer Society)

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

Issue: Food and Nutrition for Low Income Audiences

Situation

More than one million people in Georgia live below the level of poverty (14% of the population) (According to the Department of Health and Human Services, Poverty Guideline is $20,000 per year for a family of four in the U.S. in 2006). Living below the poverty level were 444,368 related children between the ages of 0-17 (19.1%). Both
Trend statement 2006

percentages are higher than the national average. Poverty puts families at higher risk for malnutrition and disease. The incidence and risk of chronic diseases, especially heart disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, hypertension and stroke, are of primary concern. From 2002 to 2004, 12.3% of Georgia households were food insecure, defined as having uncertain access to enough safe, nutritious food for an active and healthy life. The national average for food insecurity is 11.1%. Fifty percent of Georgia school children were eligible for free or reduced price school lunches in the 2004-2005 school year.

Trend

The Georgia prevalence rate of food insecurity for has increased 2% over a span of 6 years, while the U.S. has seen a slight decline (0.7%) in a span of 4 years. Poverty puts families at higher risk for malnutrition and disease.

Outlook

Malnutrition and disease among low-income persons in Georgia will continue to drain the health care dollar and other resources, if access to safe, nutritious food, as well as knowledge and skills, for an active and healthy life are not provided. Nutrition education targeted specifically towards limited resource audiences, is effective in improving diet quality, resource management, and lifestyle behaviors for individuals and families. Through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Family and Consumer Sciences Extension provides comprehensive nutrition education to limited-resource audiences. Recent studies have found that for every $1 spent on EFNEP $10.64 will be saved on future health care costs. In FY 2005, there were 2,129 EFNEP graduates. Of these graduates, 77% improved their food resource management practices, 83% improved their nutrition practices, and 63% improved their food safety practices.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Agents can promote healthy food and physical activity habits among limited-resource families through general nutrition and health programming using the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid.

For adults, Agents can offer Walk-a-Weigh Programs, Seniors Taking Charge I, II, &III, and EFNEP Meals-in-Minutes to provide classes covering topics such as food safety, meal planning, healthy food choices, nutritious snacks, food budgeting, and healthy cooking techniques.

For children and adolescents, Agents can offer programs from Professor Popcorn, The Power of Choice and/or the WIN Kids Lessons, 4-H Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles curriculum, other state approved curricula and lessons.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Kelly Cordray Bryant, MS, RD, LD, EFNEP Nutrition Specialist (kcordray@uga.edu)
Gail M. Hanula, EdS, RD, LD, Extension EFNEP Coordinator (ghanula@uga.edu)

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Department: Family and Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

Issue: Maternal and Infant Health

Situation

Three important nutrition-related indicators of maternal and infant health in Georgia are iron-deficiency anemia, breastfeeding promotion and adequate folic acid consumption.

Iron Deficiency Anemia: The highest prevalence of iron deficiency is among young children (6 months to 3 years of age) and women of reproductive age (particularly pregnant women). Iron deficiency anemia occurs
Trend statement 2006
when iron deficiency is relatively severe. In children, iron deficiency anemia can cause developmental delays and behavioral problems; in women, it can cause low birth weight babies and preterm deliveries.

**Folic Acid:** Adequate folic acid consumption is proven to prevent serious birth defects, particularly Neural Tube Defects (NTD) (i.e. spina bifida, anencephaly, and others), by 50% - 70% if taken before pregnancy or within the first 3-4 weeks of conception. In Georgia, the rates are higher than the national average.

**Breastfeeding:** The rates of breastfeeding in the U.S. are low, especially for infants at 6 months of age. Health organizations recommend that an infant be breastfed exclusively for the first 6 months after birth. In 2001, only 33% of all U.S. mothers breastfed at 6 months, which is up slightly from 1998. This rate was alarmingly low for African American women at 22%.

**Trend**

**Iron deficiency Anemia:** The prevalence of iron deficiency anemia among women of reproductive age increased slightly from 1988-1994 to 1999-2000. However, there has not been a large change in the prevalence of anemia in young women in national data (NHANES) over the past 18 years. According to the CDC Pregnancy Nutrition Surveillance System 2004, from 1996 to 2004, there has been a slight increase in the overall prevalence of anemia among pregnant, low income women, with a higher prevalence for black women (45%) compared to Hispanic (27%) and Non-Hispanic whites (26%). The rate of anemia was higher among teenage mothers compared to older mothers throughout pregnancy. The prevalence of iron deficiency anemia among children declined from 16% in 1995 to 14% in 2004, with black children remaining the highest (20%).

**Folic Acid:** Less than 30% of women of reproductive age in Georgia consume adequate amounts of folic acid (400 mcg/day). The data for Georgia suggests that the rates for NTDs decreased after the 1998 mandatory fortification of enriched grain products with folic acid, but Georgia's rates remain higher than the national average.

**Breastfeeding:** There has been a steady increase in the rate of breastfeeding initiation and duration in the U.S., but this increase has not been equally distributed among all groups, such as low income, African American and Hispanic women.

**Outlook**

**Iron Deficiency Anemia:** Iron deficiency can be prevented among young children by teaching families about child nutrition, including promoting breastfeeding of infants. Iron deficiency among women of childbearing age can be prevented by encouraging a healthy diet including iron-rich foods, as well as periodic anemia screening for women and taking iron supplements during pregnancy.

**Folic Acid:** To ensure adequate amounts of folic acid, the U.S. Public Health Service recommends women of reproductive age take a multivitamin, or supplement, that contains 400 micrograms of folic acid every day, or eat a breakfast cereal that contains 400 mcg, and eat a healthy diet of folate-rich foods. Awareness and education are needed to communicate these messages.

**Breastfeeding:** Breastfeeding saves money. Breastfed infants (especially if breastfed exclusively for the first 6 months) typically require fewer sick care visits, prescriptions, and hospitalizations. The economic savings for low-come families, especially African American families, is a compelling reason to promote breastfeeding. The Healthy People 2010 goals are to achieve breastfeeding initiation rates of 75%, breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months rates of 50% and breastfeeding exclusively for 12 months rates of 25%.

**Department:** Family and Consumer Sciences  
**Program Department:** Food, Nutrition & Health  
**Issue:** Maternal and Infant Health *(continued)*

**County Programming Implications/ Applications**

The Expanded Foods and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) delivers education to low-income women (majority of women in childbearing age). Agents can use the Meals-in-Minutes curriculum and the EFNEP TAMS curriculum to target this audience. Extension agents can also promote general maternal and infant nutrition through general nutrition and health programming on breastfeeding, folic acid- and iron-fortified grain consumption, and other programs to promote healthy food habits.
Available Resources to Support County Programming

Kelly Cordray Bryant, MS, RD, LD, EFNEP Nutrition Specialist, kcordray@uga.edu

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Kelly Cordray Bryant, MS, RD, LD, EFNEP Nutrition Specialist, kcordray@uga.edu

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

Issue: Preventing Foodborne Illness

Situation

Incidence of Foodborne Illnesses

- More than 250 foodborne diseases have been described and present a significant public health challenge.
- An estimated 76 million persons per year experience gastrointestinal foodborne illnesses in the U.S.
- An estimated 325,000 serious illnesses per year result in hospitalizations in the U.S.
- An estimated 5,000 deaths per year result from foodborne illnesses in the U.S.

- The last available data show that during 2005, incidence (cases) per 100,000 in the general population for ten pathogens being tracked in ten sites by FoodNet was highest for salmonellosis (14.6 cases), campylobacteriosis (12.7), shigellosis (4.7), cryptosporidiosis (3.0), and E. coli O157:H7 infections (1.1). Georgia had the highest incidence of salmonellosis cases (21.8) for the 10 sites and is one of the highest sites...
Trend statement 2006
for shigellosis (7.48 cases) and cryptosporidiosis (1.64 cases).

- Estimates of the incidence for 7 specific diseases in 2005 and 2006 are shown in the table below: (CDC, [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/distnnds.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/distnnds.html) except *Georgia DHR, Div. of Public Health, State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System, SENDSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Cumulative 2006 (thru week 34 – August 2006)</th>
<th>Cumulative 2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campylobacteriosis*</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryptosporidiosis</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>2,111</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>E. coli O157:H7</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giardiasis</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>9,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listeriosis</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmonellosis</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>23,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shigellosis</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>6,429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

! In a recent in-home study of consumer food handling practices, only 52% washed hands prior to food preparation, with less than 5% washing as recommended. Only 3% used a thermometer to determine doneness of a hamburger, with only 1% using it correctly. Chicken was undercooked by 82%, and other practices indicated a high rate of unsafe behaviors. (Anderson et al. 2004. A camera’s view of consumer food handling behaviors. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 104(2): 186-191.)

- A meta-analysis of findings from 20 studies that have studied consumer food handling behaviors shows that:
  - Compared with women, men reported greater consumption of raw or undercooked foods, poorer hygiene, poorer practices to prevent cross-contamination, and less safe defrosting practices.
  - Middle-age adults consumed more raw food (except milk) than did young adults and seniors.
  - High-income individuals reported greater consumption of raw foods, less knowledge of hygiene, and poorer cross-contamination practices. (Patil, et al., 2005. Consumer food safety knowledge, practices and demographic differences: findings from a meta-analysis. *J Food Protection* 68(9):1884-1894.)

- ERS estimates Americans spent approximately $17 billion on fresh fruits and vegetables in 1999. CDC estimates that 12% of all foodborne illness outbreaks in the 1990’s were linked to fresh produce. FDA’s proposed action plan to reduce foodborne illness calls for education for all sectors of the food chain, from growers to consumers.

- A study completed at the University of Georgia (Department of Foods and Nutrition) in 2004 revealed that many staff in diverse member agencies of a regional food bank lack basic food safety knowledge and need to improve food temperature control practices, thermometer use, cleaning and storage practices. There are soup kitchens, food pantries and congregate meal sites using home canned foods, a high risk or even illegal practice, in this 23-county area surveyed.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

**Issue: Preventing Foodborne Illness (continued)**

**Situation (continued)**

- Infants, young children, the elderly and those with weakened immune systems are most at risk of serious complications. These may include kidney failure, seizures, strokes, heart complications and death.

- Foodborne and waterborne viral infections are increasingly recognized as causes of illness in humans. Most reports of foodborne transmission describe infections with Noroviruses and Hepatitis A. These can be transmitted from person to person, or indirectly via food or water.

- There are about 21,000 eating and drinking establishments in Georgia, with 366,000 employees and projected sales of over $12.6 billion dollars for 2006. (U.S. Dept. of Labor and U.S. Census Bureau figures reported by the National Restaurant Association, accessed 8/17/06).

- Georgia currently does not have state-mandated training and certification of restaurant foodservice
Trend statement 2006
personnel, but easily accessible voluntary training at the local level is in demand. Current proposals (2006) will require mandated manager and employee education and certification if passed; a 2006 implementation date is being sought.

- The Georgia Department of Agriculture passed a food code for supermarket/grocery store personnel in March, 2004 that emphasizes education and knowledge; grocery store personnel are now seeking ServSafe® certification training from Extension or other sources.

- Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning licenses and monitors approximately 10,000 center-based and home-based child care facilities. The staff in these facilities have a requirement for training which may include safe food handling. In addition, the state monitors 2,000 informal day care homes where providers could benefit from food safety training.

- Georgia DHR regulates 1,753 personal care homes; the staff in these homes have a need for annual training hours and food safety education.

- School systems are now being required to implement a HACCP system of food safety in the school nutrition program.

Costs of Foodborne Illnesses.

- ERS estimated costs in 2005 for a single case is $472 for salmonellosis, but this increases to $9,284 for cases involving hospitalization. In the latest data available from CDC, Georgia had the highest incidence of salmonellosis of all 10 sites monitored by CDC’s FoodNet system.

- ERS estimated in 2005 that the average costs for a single case of E. coli O157:H7 disease were:
  - $477 without hospitalization;
  - $6,194 if hospitalized without HUS complications;
  - $5,510,000 if hospitalized with HUS and end-stage renal disease but no death;
  - $6,557,000 if hospitalized with HUS and death occurs.

- The economic burden of acute listeriosis in the U.S. is estimated at $2.3 billion. Estimates from 1999 put the cost for a case of C. botulinum greater than $18,000. Hepatitis A. costs about $5,000 per case.

Trend

Children may not be taught adequate ways to reduce foodborne illness at home, yet these children are the future food handlers in our society.
Trend statement 2006
Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food, Nutrition & Health

Issue: Preventing Foodborne Illness (continued)

Trend (continued)

• With an increasing number of meals being eaten away from home, there is the potential for increased incidence of foodborne illness due to food handler mistakes. In 2005, the typical American household spent an average of $2,434 on food away from home. Per capita expenditure in that year for food away from home averaged $974. Households in metropolitan areas tend to spend more on food away from home than households located in non-metropolitan areas. In general, expenditures on food away from home rise dramatically for households with more than $30,000 annual pre-tax income, and for those headed by people in peak earning years (35-54 years). However, adults in the younger half of that category, age 35 to 44, are also in their prime child-raising years. As a result, although these households spent the largest total amount on food away from home, their higher average household size (3.2 persons) brought their per-capita restaurant spending down. Nevertheless, even households with less than $30,000 annual pre-tax income spend 34-38 percent of their household food dollar on food away from home. Households headed by persons under age 25 spent 45 percent of their total food dollar on food away from home.

• Education in safe food handling techniques for consumers and foodservice employees, including employee certification, is viewed by food protection experts as a major strategy for reducing foodborne illness.

• High turnover rates in both the restaurant industries and institutional foodservice settings such as child care create a need for continual, locally available food safety education.

• The U.S. imports over 60% of fresh produce, raising safety concerns over both intentional and non-intentional biological and chemical contamination.

• Since September 2001, concerns about food defense and food protection measures have increased. Federal agencies and the food industry are implementing new strategies that need to be conveyed to consumers and food handlers in the industry.

• Demand has been increasing for emergency food assistance, and this type of food distribution is traditionally carried out by a large number of volunteers without food safety training. In some markets, food assistance programs are increasing activities in distribution of frozen and more perishable foods than the traditional shelf-stable products; many are also developing fresh meal preparation components.

Outlook

• New pathogens or changing pathogen concerns continue to emerge and present implications for food handling practices. For example, the increase in viral infections is partly explained by changes in food processing and consumption patterns that lead to high-risk food. We are returning to "fresh" unprocessed foods such as washed and packaged greens, cut vegetables, etc.

• The proportion of outbreaks caused by fruits and vegetables has increased; new attention to safe food handling for these products is needed.

• Re-emerging conditions (e.g., salmonellosis, *E. coli* from undercooked ground beef) and the increasing growth in the foodservice industry emphasize the need for continual consumer and foodservice food safety education.

• Globalization of the food supply and the threat of terrorism have resulted in an increased need for food defense through education from farm to table to prevent intentional as well as unintentional contamination of the food supply.

• Implementation of new food safety systems and/or procedures necessary to ensure food safety and food defense create opportunities for new materials, training programs and pilot venues.
Issue: Preventing Foodborne Illness (continued)

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Conduct ServSafe® education for the local foodservice industry.
- Deliver Fight BAC!® food safety information to consumers through programs and exhibits using the “Smart Kids Fight BAC!®” curriculum, “Smart Kids Fight BAC!®” Computer Games and “Fight BAC!® With Allen and Bernie.”
- Conduct food handler education for institutional settings such child care providers, personal care home providers, school nutrition employees, etc.
- Conduct food handler education for in-home child care providers using “Smart Caregivers Fight BAC!®”.
- Conduct food safety education for occasional quantity cooks (churches, civic groups, emergency food assistance providers, clubs, concession stand workers, etc.).
- Conduct handwashing education programs for youth.
- Educate consumers about safe home food preparation and food preservation practices.
- Conduct/participate in food safety/food defense education programs for responders to food and agricultural emergencies, food handlers and consumers.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

ServSafe®
Cooking For Groups
Food Security: What Consumers Need To Know
Smart Kids Fight BAC!® Curriculum for K-1st Grade
Smart Kids Fight BAC!® Curriculum for 2nd-3rd Grade
Smart Kids Fight BAC!® Food Safety Computer Games CD-ROM
Smart Kids Fight BAC!® Posters
He’s BAC! - A Children’s Guide for Keeping Food Safe
Fight BAC!® Food Safety Game Wheel and Questions
Fight BAC!® With Allen and Bernie
Fight BAC!® Exhibit
Smart Kids Fight BAC!® Exhibit
Smart Caregivers Fight BAC!®
Personal Care Home Manual
www.gafamilies.com
www.uga.edu/nchfp
www.fightbac.org
www.fsis.usda.gov
www.cdc.gov
www.cfsan.fda.gov

Available Resources to Support County Programming

NA
Situation

More and more people living on fixed incomes are faced with rising housing costs in the form of higher rent, housing costs, property taxes and insurance. Population growth, low interest rates and creative financing have resulted in an increased demand for housing. While price increases have slowed down, rising interest rates are impacting homeowners with adjustable rate and interest only mortgage loans. Increased costs have impacted both owner-occupied and rental properties. The median cost of a home in Georgia is slightly over $150,000, with large variations between rural and urban communities. The average rent is over $600 in many Georgia communities, which exceeds some social security and disability payments. A major problem in several rural communities is a shortage of affordable housing. If housing is available, it is often older and in a state of disrepair.

Trend

Georgia has a homeownership rate of 71%, which is slightly above the national rate. The homeownership rate among African Americans and Hispanics is lower, but has been increasing in recent years. Key factors (and sometimes barriers) to homeownership are credit, affordability and availability. Both poor credit and a lack of traditional credit can make it challenging to buy a home. New mortgage products have expanded the homeownership market to include more credit challenged consumers through loan options that include higher interest rates, larger down payments and creative financing. This can often result in an individual either buying a more expensive home than they can reasonably afford. New immigrants face added challenges to homeownership. They often have no banking account or traditional credit. They also may not speak the language or understand the process of buying a home in the United States. These impediments can place them at risk of being taken advantage of by predatory lenders.

Outlook

In the future, Georgia will continue to attract new residents of all ages and nationalities. Employment opportunities in the farming, poultry, textile, and construction industries will result in the continued growth of immigrants, especially Latinos. These new workers tend to move to smaller towns and rural communities across Georgia. New immigrants face many barriers when accessing housing with language being a primary barrier. There will continue to be an increasing need for more bi-lingual employees in the financial services and housing industries. The demand for safe and affordable housing for workers will increase. Communities will need to find ways to attract builders to construct affordable housing for the low- to moderate-income workers as well as the retirees who are relocating in Georgia. Also, steps need to be taken to improve the existing housing stock.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

FACS Extension is a HUD approved housing counseling agency. FACS Extension Agents can provide housing education, information and counseling to prospective homeowners and renters. They work closely with USDA Rural Development programs and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to provide information on housing assistance programs and special loans to help low- to moderate-income individuals and families purchase a home. In some communities there is a need to hire staff members to conduct classes in Spanish for Spanish speaking consumers.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Pamela R. Turner

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Available Resources to Support County Programming

**FACS Extension Curriculum**
- Steps on the Path to Home Ownership (forthcoming in 2007)
- Manufactured Housing Education

**FACS Extension Exhibits**
- Steps on the Path to Home Ownership; Livable Housing for Today's Seniors

**FACS Extension News Articles**

**Other Resources**
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (http://www.hud.gov)
Situation

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, people spend close to 90% of their time indoors. Over an individual’s lifetime, half of the air they inhale will come from their home. The quality of air inside a person’s home can affect the health and well-being of their family. Indoor air contains many pollutants, such as particulate matter from fuel burning devices, tobacco smoke, molds, formaldehyde from pressed wood products, radon, dust mites and volatile organic compounds from household cleaning products. Any of these irritants can trigger asthma attacks or contribute to allergies, airway infections, hypersensitivity, and some cancers.

Trend

Interest in Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) grew in the late 1960s with concerns about radon and its connection to lung cancer. This continues to be a major concern in areas of Georgia with high levels of radon. IAQ education and research expanded to include formaldehyde, volatile organic compounds, molds, dust mites and other allergens. Increasingly, products we use inside our homes contain chemicals that could contribute to health issues. In hot humid climates mold remains a major concern. Studies have shown an association between “damp” or moldy houses and negative health effects. Another trend has been the large increase in the number of people with asthma. According to the CDC, in 2003 about 19.8 million people were currently diagnosed with asthma and 11 million had experienced an asthma attack in the previous year. Asthma attacks often result in lost days of work or school. According to the National Health Interview Survey, in 2002 children between the ages of 5 and 17 missed 14.7 million days of school. During that same time, adults 18 years of age and over missed 11.8 million work days due to asthma. Missed days of school and work plus hospital visits and medical care translate into billions of dollars each year spent on treating asthma. This doesn’t even account for lost productivity. A recent study linked exposure to certain environmental allergens and irritants to an increased risk of developing asthma in childhood. Attention is shifting to improving the IAQ to reduce the number of environmental “triggers.” These triggers include cockroaches, dust mites, furry pets, mold, tobacco smoke and some chemicals.

Outlook

In the future, people will continue to spend the majority of their time indoors, but more attention will be given to IAQ issues. The demand for products and services to improve indoor air quality continues to grow. Builders need to pay more attention to making sure the homes they construct are not only energy efficient, but also provide adequate ventilation to reduce the build up of high levels of pollutants. As the number of home and garden television shows and websites increases, the amount of inaccurate and incomplete information will continue to expand. It is critical for consumers to learn how to identify sources of accurate research-based information.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

FACS County Agents can help alleviate some of the inaccurate information on IAQ issues through providing research-based educational programs. Programs on reducing environmental triggers can be helpful to consumers, child care facilities and schools. Partnering with the EPA and health professionals in the community will help expand outreach to more people at risk.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Pamela Turner, Jorge Atiles

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Trend statement 2006
Program Department: Food and Nutrition

Issue: Foodborne Illness

Situation

Home food preservation remains an important and popular cultural activity. It is critical that those who practice preserving and processing foods at home have access to the most reliable information available concerning food safety and food quality. The Cooperative Extension System (CES) and USDA have historically been recognized by the industry, educators and many consumers as credible sources for science-based recommendations.

Two national surveys conducted by the National Center for Home Food Preservation (in 2000 and 2005) revealed a high percentage of home food processors are using practices that put them at high risk for foodborne illness and economic losses due to food spoilage. In particular, a significant percentage of home canners use practices for processing low-acid foods that put them at high risk for botulism. These include use of very low processing temperatures and no processing at all after filling jars. Even practices reported for canning of acid foods also put them at risk for food spoilage and potential illness from under processed food, and physical injuries (breaking jars and burning from oven canning and inversion of hot-filled unsealed jars). Only about 10-25% of dial gauge canner users had their gauge checked for accuracy.

Only 3-5% of home food preservers recognize the Extension Service or USDA as their source of home food preservation information. About 1/3 of home canners feel free to adapt the directions or procedures they are given in their own way.

Although various kinds of foodborne illness can result from improperly processed foods, whether they be canned, frozen, dried or preserved by other means, potentially fatal botulism is a food intoxication for which many home canners are at high risk. Estimates from ERS-USDA in 1999 put the cost for a case of *C. botulinum* greater than $18,000.

Education and awareness programming is very much needed to improve knowledge and practices used to process food at home.

Trend

- The recognition by consumers of USDA and the Extension Service as a source for home food preservation recommendations is very low in national telephone surveys and it did not improve between 2000 and 2005. However, sales of our own *So Easy to Preserve* book are quite high and increasing. It is also unknown what ultimate source they are using when they cite cookbooks, family and friends as their own source of information. Family, friends and general cookbooks account for about 58-60% of the cited sources for information and this did not change between 2000 and 2005.

- Interest in home food preservation information as indicated by use of the National Center for Home Food Preservation web site increases annually. Hits on the website, started in 2002, show an increase in "traffic" every year compared to the corresponding month the previous year. Use in summer months (May through August) in 2005 increased 90-140% over 2004. The site gets from 24,000-105,000 visits per month, depending on time of year and approximately 6 million hits per year (200,000-900,000 per month and 6,000-30,000 average hits per day).

- In 2005, the NCHFP received approximately 1,040 individual email requests for additional information or help; that number has already been exceeded in the first 8 months of 2006.

- There is increased interest in reducing the amount of sugar used in home preserved products. The 2005 national survey revealed that about 1/3 of home canners are already using non-nutritive sweeteners and about 16% are using them in pickles, salsas, jellies, jams, or home canned fruits.

- Jerky remains a popular dried food and recognition that specific procedures are required for inactivation of pathogenic *E. coli* bacteria before storage is not yet common, based on our individual inquiries.

- Over 2/3 of home canners do can high-risk low-acid foods such as vegetables, meats, poultry, soup mixes and seafoods. The prevalence of practices that put them at high risk for botulism did not decrease between the 2000 and 2005 surveys. The number of home canners using totally inappropriate methods for vegetables (boiling water, ovens, no processing) increased in 2005 over 2000. Lack of awareness about appropriate methods and food safety risks in canning seems to be coupled with a persistent interest in home canning.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food and Nutrition
Trend (continued)

- The majority of food-borne botulism cases in the U.S. are from foods improperly processed in the home. In 1990-2000, there were 263 cases of food-borne botulism in the U.S.; 39% were in Alaska from traditional Native fermented and other foods. In the rest of the cases in the lower 49 states, a noncommercial food item was the cause in 91% of the events, and it was most commonly home canned vegetables (44%). Implicated products included home canned asparagus, tuna, peppers, and beets, as well as mushrooms, olives and garlic in oil.

- Demand has been increasing for emergency food assistance, and this type of food distribution is traditionally carried out by a large number of volunteers without food safety training. In some markets, food assistance programs are increasing activities in distribution of frozen and more perishable foods than the traditional shelf-stable products; many are also developing fresh meal preparation components.

Outlook

- There is a market for home food preservation information and education.

- Home practices will continue to be influenced by family tradition and education is needed to overcome proliferation of old, unsafe methods of home food preservation.

- Changing pathogen concerns continue to emerge and present implications for food handling and processing practices.

- Prevalence of cooking shows (and even segments on "news" shows) on television and community cooking classes will continue to produce interest in preserving (canning, primarily) one's own specialty foods as home business. Prevalence of small foodservice outlets is increasing interest in canning salad dressings, barbecue sauces, salsas, relishes and other specialties for direct sales to the consumer. Education is necessary to clarify consumer activity versus commercial food processing and to assist those interested in small entrepreneurial food business.

- Food processing and preservation principles will be and can be used as topics for science education for youth.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Conduct food preservation workshops for youth and adults, such as summer camp classes or church group classes on making jelly, drying fruits or fruit leather, or canning salsa.

- Conduct workshops or store demonstrations on best practices for selecting foods, preparing and packaging in the freezing of fruits and vegetables, and/or meats.

- Conduct workshops on making jerky at home or include instruction on making safe jerky in deer processing workshops.

- Deliver food preservation information to consumers through exhibits using the for-loan table-top exhibits, *Yes, You Can and Freeze in Freshness*.

- Encourage the use of research-based recommendations for safe home preserved foods through exhibits using the for-loan table-top exhibit, *So Easy to Preserve*.

- Educate consumers about safe home food preparation and food preservation practices with a series of newspaper or newsletter articles and radio.

- Educate consumers about safe home food preparation and food preservation practices by distributing information or in-person exhibits at farmers' markets.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Food and Nutrition

Issue: Foodborne Illness (continued)
Trend statement 2006

County Programming Implications/ Applications (continued)

- Run clinics for testing dial gauges on home canners and inspecting the condition of home pressure canners.
- Encourage consumers to take the on-line self-study, Preserving Foods at Home, to learn more about safe canning.
- Educate consumers about the role of sugar in various types of home preserved foods and how sugar can be reduced or should not be reduced in some products.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Elizabeth Andress, PhD – Extension Food Safety Specialist (eandress@uga.edu)
Judy Harrison, PhD – Extension Foods Specialist (judyh@uga.edu)

Available Resources to Support County Programming

Preserving Foods series of fact sheets.
So Easy to Preserve videos (2004).
National Center for Home Food Preservation website, www.homefoodpreservation.com
Exhibits: (laminated three-panel table-top exhibits)
Yes, You Can
Freeze in Freshness
So Easy to Preserve

Judging Home Preserved Foods (2003 manual)

Presto dial gauge testers (4 for loan)
New fact sheet on reducing sugar in preserved foods, to be released in 2007.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Housing and Near Environment Trends

Issue: Residential Water Quality and Quantity
Situation

Georgia has been experiencing a shortfall of rainfall over the past several years, resulting in less water available for home, commercial and agricultural use. This has resulted in more water use restrictions and higher water costs. Water quality continues to be a health concern because the majority (70%) of the water used comes from surface water which could easily be contaminated by runoff. In rural communities over 90% of the water used comes from groundwater, which can be contaminated by leaky septic systems.

Trend

Georgia has long been a water rich state with an average of over 60 inches of water a year. With drought conditions in recent years and increased demand for water, the supply is quickly being depleted. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, public water usage has steadily increased over the past 20 years, with population growth being a major contributor to the increase. Currently, the public supply accounts for about 1.2 billion gallons of water each day. The quality of drinking water and treatment of sewage have long been a health concern.

Outlook

In the future, quality and quantity of water will become an increasingly important issue in Georgia. As the population continues to grow and industries move into the state, water use becomes a politically charged issue. Water for agriculture and industry remain vital to economic development but compete directly with the increasing demand for household water. Drinking water needs to be safe for all Georgians and the rapid development of rural land into urban settings increases runoff and potential contamination of residential wells and streams in the Georgia.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

FACS Extension Agents can provide educational resources and programs to increase awareness of water quality, water conservation and water testing. Protecting water quality includes learning more about how to properly dispose of household products and waste, and manage home septic systems. A good partner on water quality issues is the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Pamela Turner

Available Resources to Support County Programming

FACS Extension Publications
Household Water Quality Series – Arsenic in Your Water; Coliform Bacteria in Your Water; Corrosive or Scaling Water; Disinfecting Your Well Water: Shock Chlorination; Home Water Quality and Treatment; Hydrogen Sulfide and Sulfate; Iron and Manganese; Lead and Copper; Mercury in Your Water; Nitrite in Water; Pesticides, Solvents, and Petroleum Products; Protecting Your Well and Wellhead; Testing for Water Quality.

FACS Extension Power Point Presentations
Mercury; Water and Septic System

FACS Extension Exhibits
Well Water; Protecting Your Home, Lawn and Water from Pollution; Protecting Your Water and Septic System from Pollution

FACS Extension News Articles

Other Resources
Georgia Department of Natural Resources (http://www.conservewatergeorgia.net/)

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Fathering
Trend statement 2006
Father absence places children at elevated risk for emotional, educational, developmental, and behavioral problems. While having a father at home does not guarantee positive outcomes, having a father who is both physically and emotionally connected increases the likelihood of these outcomes. Importantly, it is not the mere presence of a father or the quantity of his involvement that has an effect on child outcomes, but rather the quality of that involvement over time and his relationship with the child and the child’s mother. Unfortunately, an increasing number of fathers are missing contributors in the lives of their children.

Trend
Two major demographic trends contribute to the rise in father absence: the high percentage of marriages ending in divorce and the increase in unwed childbearing. In 2005, about 26% of the nation’s children resided in a single-female headed household. In Georgia, 28%, an estimated 662,000 children, were being raised in a single-female household. A common misperception is that unmarried women are not in contact with the father of their child, but the reality is that childbearing outside of marriage is not confined to single-parent households — unmarried fathers, or other men, are present. The percentage of nonmarital births that occur to cohabitating couples has increased (e.g., 29% in the early 1980s to 39% in the early 1990s). Yet, cohabitating relationships are fragile and relatively short in duration, with less than half lasting five years or more. Similar to the pattern of many nonresident father’s involvement following divorce, most never-married father’s contact with their children declines over time.

Outlook
Increasing numbers of families are headed by unmarried adults. While some unmarried fathers are highly involved in their children’s lives, many are not. Educational programming designed to help fathers develop parenting skills as well as promoting employment and job skills and fostering healthy relationships with the child’s mother is important in improving father involvement in their children’s lives.

County Programming Implications/ Applications
- Purposefully recruit and include fathers in parenting (and other FACS) programs.
- Provide appropriate parent and relationship education programming and resources to mothers and fathers across family structures (e.g., never-married, married, divorced, remarried/stepfamily).
- Provide children with alternate male role models when the biological father is not present in the child’s live. Positive male adult role models can be involved as paid or volunteer 4-H/youth development staff. Male mentor programs can be created and supported.
- Offer child care provider training on ways to involve and support fathers and men in child care settings.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue
Ted Futris, Family Life Education Specialist (tfutris@uga.edu)

Available Resources to Support County Programming
A lending library of general parenting education resources is available, and trainings are offered periodically by developers of other curricula. For best results, it is important to match evidence-based parenting education curricula to audiences and topics. Contact the specialists listed above for resources and support in specifying programming to support father involvement.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Parenting Education

Situation
Research reveals that an involved parent is one the most influential factors in a child’s development. Therefore, parenting education is an integral component for families that contributes to providing the knowledge and skills
Trend statement 2006
needed to contribute to the development of healthy, contributing, well-adjusted children. Parenting education programs and products today target specific family types, children’s ages and risk behavior to foster the optimal parent-child relationship.

Trend

Parenting education helps parents develop and enhance their parenting skills, understand human development, assess alternate approaches to child-rearing, and learn techniques to reduce stress that undermines positive parental functioning. Parents who display dysfunctional parenting practices prior to such training can learn to provide sensitive, nurturing, and attentive care that promotes healthy development.

While parenting education has proven to be effective in promoting positive relationships, studies of family support programs show that in many cases this improvement provides only short-term effects for parents, and has only a weak impact on a child’s long-term development. Close examination of these outcomes revealed several factors that negatively influence participation and retention. Psychological difficulties, subconscious beliefs about parenting, drug or alcohol addictions, or young age found in a parent, among others, are risks for parenting program effectiveness. Additionally, violent, impoverished, or single-parent homes can also contribute as risk factors.

Based on these findings, new programs are being developed that specifically relate to a family’s situational characteristics to achieve better results. For example, programs are now available that can be used at home or online for the dual-earner families that do not have time to commit to regularly attending a community program. Instructional methods that are effective for upper- and middle-income families are not typically as effective with lower-income families. Creative teaching techniques such as modeling, role-playing, or coaching, in addition to appropriate discussions and readings, often improve program effectiveness. Videos and low-reading-level literature are also being formulated for use with parents with limited English literacy skills.

Outlook

In 1999, the Governor’s Education Reform Study Commission for Georgia concluded that parental involvement is crucial for improving academic achievement in children. Grants from U.S. Department of Education, the Georgia Children’s Trust Fund, and other sources have assisted in implementing parenting education programs in many communities across the state, in partnership with schools, social service agencies, and non-profit organizations. Additionally, the increasingly specialized nature of such programs is providing promising practices to enhance the developmental processes of children. However, it remains important for the children in our state that these programs continue not only to be expanded, but also to overcome barriers that inhibit parent participation.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

Agents have a choice, based on numerous factors, to offer varying intensities of parenting education. In some communities, awareness programming may consist of media information, responding to individual questions, and referring inquiries to other resources. In other communities, agents may work alone or in collaboration with agencies such as DFCS and Family Connection Partnership to offer more intensive parenting education. This delivery often consists of series of classes offered to parents identified by DFCS or the courts as at-risk and in need of specific intervention, as well as preventive parenting education offered to specialized groups such as parents of teens, stepparents, foster parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, and parents in targeted ethnic/cultural groups. This level of programming can be time-intensive, but can often be delivered by staff hired on grant funds specifically for this outreach. The guidance techniques that are part of most parenting education programs are also useful topics for child care provider trainings.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Parenting Education (continued)

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Diane Bales, Human Development Specialist (dbales@uga.edu)
Ted Futris, Family Life Education Specialist (tfutris@uga.edu)
Don Bower, Human Development Specialist (dbower@uga.edu)
The national eXtension initiative has funded a parenting education Community of Practice. Georgia Cooperative Extension is helping to develop a national web-based resource for parenting education as part of this effort. State specialists oversee a lending library of parenting education resources, and trainings are offered periodically by developers of other curricula. For best results, it is important to match evidence-based parenting education curricula to audiences and topics. The specialists listed above can advise agents in this process.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Couple and Marital Relationships

Situation

Healthy relationships and marriages, and resulting family stability specifically, benefit the physical, social, and emotional well-being of adults and children as well as the community. Couples in healthy marriages enjoy greater financial wealth, have stable employment, and are less likely to be victims of domestic violence. When a higher percentage of couples have healthy marriages, communities tend to have lower crime rates, lower rates of juvenile delinquency, and lower teen pregnancy rates. However, marriage appears to be fragile and single-parent and unmarried-couple families are becoming increasingly common in today’s society. Still, a two-parent family doesn't guarantee less risk: It can be unhealthy and even dangerous when the couple’s relationship is marked by unresolved conflict and dissatisfaction. The “triple threat” of marital conflict, divorce, and out-of-wedlock births has led to a generation of children at greater risk of poverty, alienation, and antisocial behavior.
Nationally, the marriage rate continues to decline (7.6 per 1000 total population in 2003), and the lifetime probability of divorce or separation remains near 50%. The percentage of children who grow up in fragile—typically fatherless and poor—families has grown enormously over the past four decades. This is mainly due to increases in divorce, out-of-wedlock births, and unmarried cohabitation. Close to a million children under age 18 are affected by parental divorce each year. More than a third of all births are out-of-wedlock. And, an estimated 40% of all children are expected to spend some time in a cohabiting household before the age of 18. As a consequence of these dramatic shifts in family structure, more children are exposed to the risk of poverty: In 2005, 6.9% of married-couple families with children under 18 were living in poverty, compared to 37.7% of female-headed households with children under 18 (a slight increase since 1999 = 34.3%).

In Georgia, similar declines in the marriage rate and leveling rates in divorce have occurred since 1990. In 2003, the marriage rate (per 1000 total population) was 7.6 (vs. 10.3 in 1990) while the divorce rate reached 3.2 (vs. 5.5 in 1990). Furthermore, estimates suggest that nearly 50 divorces occur annually for every 100 marriages in Georgia. Similar to national rates, 39% of births in 2004 were to unmarried females, with a higher proportion of these out-of-wedlock births occurring among African American (67%) and Latina (45%) females compared to White females (22.6%). With regards to risk for poverty, 6.6% of married-couple families with children under age 18 lived in poverty in 2005, compared to 39.6% of female-headed households with children under age 18 (a slight increase since 1999 = 35.3%).

Outlook

The future welfare of Georgia’s children can be greatly enhanced by the development of healthy relationship skills of their parents that result in healthy and stable families. Not only will children experience greater financial benefits, but they are also likely to benefit socially, emotionally, physically and academically as well. A federal initiative to build and support “healthy marriages” is supporting activities that help couples that choose to marry to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to form and sustain a healthy marriage. The elements of a healthy marriage can be learned, and thus, educational programs focusing on communication, conflict management and interpersonal skills are the primary components of the new couples education programs. Research indicates that these efforts are most successful when combined with workforce preparation and financial management education.

County Programming Implications/ Applications

- Organize or partner with local collaborations to support the development of healthy couple relationships and stable marriages. This could include faith-based partners, businesses, elected officials, schools and family-serving agencies. Community events such as family festivals, recognitions, classes and media outreach may be used.
- Support efforts to integrate relationship education in your local middle- and high school FACS curriculum and other programs that reach youth (e.g., 4-H, after-school programs).
- Increase public awareness and improve community resources about healthy marriage programs. Produce and disseminate newspaper/newsletter articles and bulletins applying the research on healthy couple development.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Ted Futris, Family Life Education Specialist (tfutris@uga.edu)
Available Resources to Support County Programming

Georgia Cooperative Extension provides co-leadership to The National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Network (NERMEN), an initiative that envisions a nation-wide outreach through Extension Specialists and Educators in partnership with agencies and organizations at the national, state, and community levels that supports individuals and couples preparing for, developing and enriching healthy relationships and healthy marriages. NERMEN’s mission is to provide research-based resources and promote partnerships to advance the knowledge and practice in the area of relationship and marriage education. Resources and curricula are being identified and developed, and trainings will be offered periodically. For best results, it is important to match evidence-based curricula and resources to audiences and topics. The specialists listed above can advise agents in this process.

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

Situation

Adolescent parents are more disadvantaged than other teens, both before and after becoming parents, and they are generally unprepared for the financial responsibilities and the emotional and psychological challenges of premature parenthood. Consequently, the children of these young parents are more likely to experience health problems at birth, long-term poverty, less stimulating home environments, externalizing and internalizing problems, and become adolescent parents themselves.

Trend

The pregnancy and birth rates among adolescents in the United States remain one of the highest in the industrialized world. Although the national birth rate to 15 to 19-year olds has declined by 33% between 1991 and 2003, recent estimates indicate that the rapidity of this decline has slowed. Moreover, 2 out of 3 births to teen mothers are unintended (either mistimed or unwanted), and the vast majority of teen births occur outside of marriage (89% of births to 15-17 year olds and 76% of births to 18-19 year olds). Although teens account for a diminishing share of all births outside of marriage, teen mothers are likely to have subsequent births outside of
Trend statement 2006

Marriage: approximately 25% of adolescent births are not first births, and nearly one-third of nonmarital births to women aged 20 and older are preceded by a teenage birth.

Georgia ranks among the top ten states with the highest pregnancy and birth rates among women age 15-19. Each year over 20,000 Georgia teens become pregnant and about 75% of these pregnancies result in a live birth. Although Georgia has witnessed a similar overall decline in adolescent pregnancy and birth rates, the decline has been primarily experienced by White and African American females. Between 1994 and 2004, the birth rate among females age 15 to 19 declined 26% and 39% for White and African-Americans, respectively. In contrast, the birth rate for Latina females age 15 to 19 has increased 67% since 1994.

Outlook

Despite declining pregnancy and birth rates among adolescents in general, the population of adolescent females 15 to 19 years of age is expected to increase 10% by 2010. Thus, decreasing pregnancy rates may not mean fewer pregnancies and births. In fact, since 1994, the overall number of births to adolescents in Georgia only declined 7% compared to a 25% decline in the birth rate.

County Programming Implications/Applications

- Encourage and participate in community efforts to delay onset of sexual activity and to prevent first and subsequent adolescent pregnancies and advocate for implementation and investments in evidence-based programs that provide comprehensive information and services to youth.
- Educate parents, and other professionals who work with youth, about the risks of adolescent sexual activity and strategies to foster youth’s healthy sexual development, responsible sexuality and decision-making.
- Educate teenagers on developing healthy romantic relationships and making healthy sexual decisions.
- Expand prevention programs to address high-risk populations (e.g., racial and ethnic minorities, young sexually experienced teenagers, young females).
- Offer comprehensive and appropriate services for pregnant and parenting adolescents, the adolescent’s family, and the father of the infant to foster optimum well-being of the child and family.
- Advocate for the inclusion of the adolescent mother’s partner and/or father of her child in pregnancy and parenting programs when appropriate. These programs should provide both parents access to education and vocational training, parenting and relationship skills classes, and contraceptive education to reduce the risk of subsequent out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Specialist(s) Supporting This Issue

Ted Futris, Family Life Education Specialist (tfutris@uga.edu)
Don Bower, Human Development Specialist (dbower@uga.edu)

Department: Family & Consumer Sciences
Program Department: Child and Family Development

Issue: Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting (continued)

Available Resources to Support County Programming

The Bridge for Adolescent Pregnancy, Parenting, and Sexuality (BAPPS), a multi-state, interdisciplinary leadership workgroup created out of CYFERnet, provides research-based resources to advance knowledge and practice in these areas. Georgia Cooperative Extension is a partner in this national collaboration and is helping to develop resources for parents, youths, and professionals. Resources will be identified and developed, and trainings will be offered periodically. For best results, it is important to match evidence-based curricula and resources to audiences and topics. The specialists listed above can advise agents in this process.