Situation:

Beef cattle are one of the few agricultural commodities that exist in all 159 counties in Georgia and include a total of 21,000 beef operations (down from 22,000 in 2001). Cash receipts for cattle and calves in 2003 totaled $264 million ranking it the 5th largest farm commodity in the state. Primarily a cow/calf production system, the beef industry in Georgia is based on sale of calves at weaning. Marketing of the major resource (weaned calves) continues to be the major challenge for the industry. Capturing additional income via retained ownership should be explored. Producers depend almost exclusively on grasses for their grazing and stored forage needs. The large quantity of irrigated acres present an opportunity for producing high quality forage at times when these acres are otherwise idle. Food safety will continue to be the primary issue challenging our industry. A case of BSE in the past year accelerated the need for a mandatory animal identification system.

Trend:

Numbers of brood cows in the state rose in 2002 for the first time in many years. This is a function of increased cash prices and the expectation that demand will remain strong. Low timber prices make combining cattle and pine farming attractive. Cattle alliances are expanding and demand for specification cattle are growing. Demand for lower quality calves will diminish and the price spread will widen between them and number one calves. Programs are developing which offer higher prices for source verified genetics. Trace back via mandatory individual identification will become a reality.

Outlook:

The two to three year outlook for calf prices is positive. Expansion of cow herds is expensive and should be considered carefully. Expansion of stocker operations (especially winter stockering) presents the brightest short term opportunity for both cattle producers and row crop operations. Moderating feed prices will aid profit potential for retained ownership unless markets for finished cattle diminish. Some operations enter the winter feeding period with inadequate hay supplies. Producers must focus on optimum management of cool season annuals and perennials as well as using by-product feeds. Seriously consider educational programs which focus on quality assurance, mandatory ID and adding value to weaned calves.

Applications for County Programming:

- Stockering HERD
- Mandatory ID Alliances
- Georgia Beef Challenge Forage Management
- Beef Quality Assurance

State Pow link:

- Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
- Agrosecurity
- Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Goats raised for meat production continued to increase and Georgia remains a part of the top three states including Tennessee and Texas. The challenge remains to find effective ways to merchandise product in population centers that are dominated by a network of brokers and family ties. While profitability can be significant at the farm gate, efforts at moving larger volumes of product on a regular and consistent schedule are continuing by group marketing such as the Sunbelt Goat (and Lamb) Producers Cooperative, LLC based in Sandersville. Participation in the GNF market goat show continues to grow as these animals provide short-term, low-cost, and relatively easily controlled animals for young and small people. The Georgia Meat Goat Association has become inactive. Much of the goals of a commodity organization has been picked up by regional groups. Dairy goat numbers remain steady with an active and strong state organization. Commercial production of goat milk products is very limited in the state although the consumption of products imported into Georgia is relatively significant. Of the two commercial dairies existing until a year ago, it is only Sweet Grass Dairy near Thomasville that thrives today, and they are doing well. Cheese remains the focus because of the seasonality of production of fluid milk. Opportunities exist for niche marketing, with the caveat that proper labeling must be in place to make legal sales.

In the most recent agricultural census, sheep numbers in Georgia and much of the Southeast showed an increase of 5% or more. This is in contrast to the continued slide in numbers in the Western states which is exacerbated by what has been described as a 500-year drought in some areas. Much of the increase is associated with the continued introduction and use of hair sheep genetics for commercial lamb production. Nationwide the American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) has solidified lamb, wool and feeders programs which provide increased supports to states such as Georgia. The Georgia wool pool has joined with Tennessee in order to ship larger quantities and in a form (baled) much preferred by the mills.
Outlook:
National identification system is coming along with some speed. The goat and sheep sectors are well ahead of our cattle and swine brethren because of the identification requirements associated with the national scrapie eradication program which already requires wide-spread use of a uniform I.D. system.

New trends in internal parasite management for both sheep and goats are creating a more sustainable and effective approach to this challenge. A family of approaches and tools will lessen the dependence on manufactured drugs and reduce the speed of advancing parasite resistance. The FVSU extension veterinarian is prepared to provide training and validation on this topic in group sessions.

A potential use of sheep and goats, and one not impacted by an imported product, is in the control of invasive vegetation by live animals in situations where chemical or mechanical control is not practical or cost effective. Repeated severe defoliation of target plant species reduces vigor and ultimately leads to death. Animal control measures have been documented and refinements are now under investigation. The product sold, is the service...which can not be imported. County-based demonstrations can be effective in catching the public eye.

Country of origin legislation (COOL) is favored by both the sheep and goat sectors since a high proportion of product sold in the U.S. originates in other countries. Confusion is still evident in some forums between COOL and the National I.D. initiative. They are not linked and exist for totally different reasons. Information to that effect needs to be shared with Extension clients.

Customers for lamb and goat meat are a diverse lot. Optimal harvest weight and age continues to be governed by customer preference. This means there will continue to be opportunities for diverse production systems for lamb and goat owners. Information on marketing strategies continues to be in demand. While forage-finished beef is catching the eye of some, a companion species to fill out the product mix appears to be forage fresh lamb which is be requested. Chevon has the potential to be part of system but is general thought to be less main stream.

We continue to see many new people entering the meat goat and lamb production business. Many have little or no previous experience with livestock, yet they are land owners seeking to make use of that resource. Even people who have experience with cattle are at risk of making erroneous assumptions when raising small ruminants. Issues related to feeds and feeding are common place as is the question of optimum breeding system.

Therefore there continues to be a need for informational meetings, problem-solving consultations, technical literature, web-based informational tools, new marketing initiatives, and update training among Extension and animal health professionals. New tools in farmer-based assessment of sustainability, and internal parasite control are available through specialist services.
EQUINE

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 fifth highest Agricultural Commodity. This places horses higher than any other livestock commodity. Only broilers, cotton, timber, and eggs rank higher. There has not been a census nor economic impact study of the Horse industry in Georgia since 1969. Virginia, a southeastern state similar to Georgia in horse numbers, completed an extensive study in 1995 of the economic impact of the horse industry in Virginia. The study concluded that the Agriculture and agricultural service sector received $230.9 million annually and that the total economic impact in Virginia is $1.074 billion. It was also determined that the average horse owning household owned three horses. That would mean that Georgia would have over 80,000 households owning horses. 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.

Trend:
Georgia's horse population is continuing to grow based upon human population increases and the fact that the Georgia climate provides an excellent climate and environment for raising, training, selling and year round activities with horses. As growth continues around urban areas more horse breeding facilities will be in demand. Horse breeding practices have changed as a result of a number of breed associations allowing the use of transported cooled semen and frozen semen, and multiple embryo transfers. 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.

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 informed 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.

Applications for County Programming:
- 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.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agribusiness Development/Value Added
DAIRY

Situation: There are 333 dairies in Georgia that generate an economic impact of $800 million in the state's economy. Even though the number of dairies has declined the level of milk production has been stable. Only Florida and Georgia of the Southeastern states have maintained milk production over the last 20 years. Milk prices were at an all time high during the spring of 2004 resulting in some new facilities and an increase in cow numbers. Population growth continues in the Southeast resulting in increased demands for milk. The increased population is competing for land in the traditional areas of dairying in north Georgia resulting in the movement of dairies to south Georgia. Today over 50% of the milk produced in Georgia is produced south of I 20.

Trend:

Outlook: Fluid milk continues to be in short supply in the South. Farms will continue to become more efficient and larger. Milk prices in Florida and Georgia should remain higher than surrounding states.

Applications for County Programming:

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Situation: Georgia agriculture has experienced dwindling returns due to unpredictable weather and low prices. To remain economically viable, Georgia farmers must become more efficient. Compounding the problem is the fact that Georgia fields are highly variable in terms of soil types, topography, and resulting yields.

Trend: Precision Agriculture (PA) tools and techniques provide a farmer with a way to better utilize and manage crop inputs (seed, chemicals, water, etc.), monitor crop status, and understand resulting crop yields. Increasingly, Georgia farmers are adopting PA systems to give them a competitive edge. One of the fastest growing areas of PA is GPS guidance (lightbars and autosteer systems).

Outlook: As PA hardware and software becomes more affordable and easier to use, the rate of adoption of these tools and techniques among Georgia farmers will increase. Also, as major equipment manufacturers include PA hardware as either optional or standard equipment, adoption will increase.

Applications for County Programming: County programming will be an important outlet for exposing interested farmers to PA systems. Similarly, because agents will often be the first person a farmer turns to with questions about PA, state and district agent training on PA topics will be needed.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Soybean acreage had steadily declined in the state of Georgia since the early 1990s, however in 2003 there was a slight rebound in acreage. In 2004, approximately 250,000 acres were planted which was the most since 1998. The rise in acreage was due to a record yield average of 33 bushels per acre in 2003 in conjunction with high prices during that year.

It is likely that soybean acreage will at least remain stable. With current pressures on cotton prices and increasing production costs, growers will search for less expensive crops to produce.

County Agents hired in the last several years have limited experience with soybeans due to the decline in soybean acreage during the mid- to late 1990s. Other agents who had previous experience are not familiar with current varieties. The issue of Asiatic Soybean Rust is also a concern to both Georgia producers as well as the United States soybean industry as a whole. This disease currently poses a serious threat to soybean production south of the equator and could potentially affect U.S production should it become established.

County personnel will be supported via In-Service Training programming as well as through field days and problem solving contacts. Information will be distributed by the UGA Soybean website, electronic newsletters, popular press articles, extension bulletins, county level grower meetings, demonstration plots and field days.

Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agrosecurity
COTTON

Situation: Cotton continues to be the most widely planted row crop in the state with 1.3 to 1.5 million acres. Nationally, Georgia annually ranks second among states in planted acreage and second to fourth in bale production. World cotton prices remain well below the cost of production, and even with the government support system, there is considerable impetus to scrutinize every input to optimize production efficiency.

Trend: Major issues facing the Georgia cotton industry include (1) fiber quality problems, particularly short fiber content and below average fiber length uniformity, (2) water use efficiency and irrigation management, (3) pest management problems related to nematodes, stink bugs, and weeds such as tropical spiderwort, and (4) general profitability.

Outlook: (1) The U.S. textile industry is expected to use only a third of the domestic crop because of mill closure and off-shore exportation of textile jobs. The industry has voiced significant concerns about the quality of Georgia cotton related to spinning efficiency, and these problems are reportedly due to short fiber content. Research and educational infrastructure are in place to determine and deliver possible solutions. (2) Drought is a frequent problem during the growing season in Georgia, and only about 40 to 45 percent of the crop is irrigated. Research is needed to determine appropriate irrigation regimens, and over the last 5 years, the College has directed considerable resources to address this problem. (3) Pest management issues are being aggressively addressed by scientists in the disciplines of Entomology, Plant Breeding/Genetics, Plant Pathology, and Weed Science. UGA scientists have identified immediate solutions for some problems while other problems remain a challenge for long term research efforts. (4) Profit is always a challenge in the competition of world crop production. Economic analyses are critical to the various on-going research projects and ideas. The UGA Cotton Team in concert with researchers, private industry, and county agents, continues to develop production recommendations for various situations within the state.

Applications for County Programming: (1) Fiber Quality. County agents can assist growers in production choices which directly influence fiber quality: variety selection, fertilization, pest management (bug control, weed control, etc.), defoliation timing, and harvest timing. (2) Water Use Efficiency. Agents can deliver the most up to date information on irrigation management, including irrigation initiation, scheduling, and termination, as well as crop stress determination. Agents can also assist the research community in determining strengths and weaknesses of proposed irrigation schedules and models. (3) Agents are intimately involved with pest management issues through active field trial programs and the development of pest control recommendations. Agents play a key role in scouting programs. (4) Agents are critical in the development and delivery of production management information via farm visits and consultation, grower meetings, field trials, and mass media.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
Entomology

INSECT PEST MANAGEMENT OF FIELD CORN

Situation: Field corn is attacked by a number of insect pests that damage or destroy seedling plants thereby reducing stand. Their prevalence is increasing with the use of reduced or minimum tillage. Management of these insects has been difficult because no single treatment adequately controls most common pests in Georgia. New systemic seed treatments are providing more cost effective and safer management tools for seedling insect control in corn. Introduction of transgenic corn containing Bt toxins for control of moth larvae or rootworms also are providing new tools to manage insect pest of corn.

Trend: Seedling damage by insects is increasing in Georgia as farmers transition to reduced tillage systems. Several new systemic seed treatments have been introduced that provide a simple and applicator safe method for controlling seedling insects. One product in particular was used on about 25% of the corn acreage in its first year of use. Transgenic Bt corn for corn borer control has been available for several years. There is increased interest in Bt corn to allow for later corn plantings, which are at greater risk of armyworm and earworm attack. Bt corn for rootworm control also has become available. The utility of rootworm Bt corn varies in the state depending on the presence of western corn rootworm.

Outlook: New seed treatments should enhance insect control while reducing worker exposure to highly toxic insecticides. Transgenic technology also will reduce pest losses in a safe and environmentally benign way.

Applications for County Programming: Growers want reliable, unbiased information regarding the utility of these new management tools for pest control in corn. Most new pest management tools are developed for and marketed in the Mid-western corn belt. Georgia corn growers will continue to rely on the University of Georgia to provide information and leadership in developing and adopting new pest control techniques for local conditions. The University also will continue to provide unbiased information on the risks and benefits of management options.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
IS INSECT SCOUTING IN COTTON STILL IMPORTANT?

Situation:

Trend: YES! During recent years the percentage of cotton acres scouted has declined. This is due in large part to the planting of Bt cotton and the reduced risk of an insect disaster. Improved Bt cottons will soon displace current Bt cotton technologies further reducing the risk of serious insect problems from caterpillar pests. However, bug pests will likely remain a primary pests since Bt cotton only has activity on caterpillar pests. We learned during 2003, that bug pests such as stink bugs can be a serious yield limiting factor.

Outlook:

Applications for County Programming:

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
2004 TREND STATEMENT

Situation: Timely scouting is essential to making effective insect management decisions in peanut production. The percentage of peanut acres scouted in Georgia has steadily declined since the mid-1990’s. The increase in Georgia’s cotton acreage made it difficult to find scouts for peanuts during that time, then many growers simply got out of the habit of scouting. There has been a subsequent increase in private consultants working peanuts. Previously, most of these consultants had been primarily working cotton. County agents are therefore being forced to work closer with consultants with regard to peanut production. Many of these consultants are reputable and knowledgeable about peanut production and the association has not necessarily been adversarial. Many consultants look to county agents for updated information about new varieties and management techniques. Therefore, in the coming years county agents will be challenged to increase peanut scouting for those growers not currently scouting and to work more closely with private consultants.

Outlook:

Applications for County Programming:

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agricultural Worker Education and Safety
Southeastern fruit growers must manage pest insects season-long, while satisfying stringent fruit quality standards. Peach growers, especially wholesale shippers, must produce nearly-flawless fruit. Growers are eager for cost effective peach IPM options that assure high fruit quality, while elevating standards for environmental stewardship, worker safety and food safety. A more detailed understanding of pest biology, better sampling options and pest models are key peach entomology needs in the eastern U.S.

Extension education efforts in fruit are highly regionalized. UGA edits annual revisions of its ‘Southeastern Peach, Nectarine & Plum IPM & Culture Guide’ with inputs from key scientists across the 11 states served. NCSU edits a similar southeastern apple guide. Training for Extension Agents with commercial tree fruit responsibility is conducted in conjunction with the Southeastern Fruit Workers Conference, an annual, region-wide gathering for fruit scientists. A similar regional initiative addresses small fruit. The ‘GA Peach Growers Handbook’ a 280+ page reference for growers and fruit scientists has undergone a major revision and is available on-line. The ‘GA Peach’ web site has developed into a strong educational tool and source of timely pest/crop updates. See [http://www.ent.uga.edu/extension/fruit.htm] for links to fruit IPM sites.

UGA provides leadership for peach entomology regionally. Research focuses on plum curculio, borers, scale and the leafhopper vectors of phony peach disease. USDA’s SE Fruit and Tree Nut Research Laboratory, Byron, GA, and Clemson University are full partners in this collaborative program. UGA, Clemson, USDA, the GA and SC Peach Councils, and grant funding support the program. Projects include evaluation of low-risk insecticides and research to improve management of plum curculio, borers, scale and phony peach vectors.

Peach entomology is benefitting from regional support of IPM research. Regionalization of extension efforts is facilitating outreach, particularly to the wholesale peach shippers of GA and SC, who account for ca 35% of the nation’s fresh peach acreage.

County Agents in key fruit counties are the local source of fruit IPM information. Tree fruit recommendations and references are regional. The Southern Fruit Workers Conference provides advanced agent training for 11 southeastern states. Web pages at UGA, CU, NCSU and UA are providing rapid regional information exchange to improve agent education and facilitate IPM implementation by growers.

Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agricultural Worker Education and Safety
Foodborne Illness
Natural populations of honey bees continue to be small and non-sustainable in Georgia. Wild colonies exist, but they are the products of managed colonies that swarm and usually die within 12 months from parasitic mites and other diseases. From a beekeeping perspective, parasitic mites cause colony losses and increased production costs. From a crop grower’s perspective the loss of natural honey bee populations represents a loss of the free pollination that was enjoyed in the decades preceding the 1990s when parasitic varroa mites first arrived.

The need to treat for disease and mites has made beekeeping a very chemical-intensive industry. All the typical problems of pesticide resistance are showing up in beekeeping as a result. There is growing realization among beekeepers that a priority must be placed on less chemical-intensive solutions. Colony rental for pollination is commonly practiced by growers of apples, blueberries, cantaloupe, pumpkins, squash and watermelons, but this is usually done with a minimum of management other than simply dropping the bees in the field. With little information on cost / benefit for pollination the price received for colony rentals has stagnated at ~$25-35 for over 10 years.

Profitability of beekeeping remains a sore problem for commercial producers. Cheap imported honey will not go away. The most successful beekeepers are those who add value to their product and reach retail markets, avoiding the commodity approach of selling honey wholesale in the drum. There seems to be a correlation between business success and those beekeepers who employ more sustainable pest and disease control practices (although it is granted that the most innovative beekeepers in pest control are likely the most innovative at marketing). It is expected that demand for supplemental honey bee pollination will increase in the near future as acreage of fruits and vegetables continues to supplant more traditional crops.

County programming for beekeepers should concentrate on sustainable disease and pest control practices and innovative marketing of bee hive products. Education efforts for crop growers should emphasize the yield-enhancing benefits of bee pollination and management practices for increasing pollination efficacy of honey bees.

Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Family & Consumer Sciences State Office

WORKFORCE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Situation: Workforce and Affordable Housing

Trend: Workers in urban areas are afforded more housing choices that are accessible to transportation. Due to the high rate of construction in the Atlanta metro area, there are more competitive housing rates available to the workforce. Georgia has seen a large influx of Latino immigrants over the past ten years in response to the economic boom of the 1990’s. Latinos are providing a large source of labor in many types of industry such as farming, poultry, carpet and construction. The immigrant population faces barriers to obtaining housing that meets the American norms. Constraints such as lack of English skills, etc. that prevent them from obtaining safe, clean and decent housing for themselves and their families.

Outlook: Georgia’s workforce composed of nationals and immigrants supplies services to both urban and rural environments. Realizing what an important sector of the workforce the immigrant population composes, it stands to reason that the needs of the worker must be met and maintained at a satisfactory level. This means that workers must have better access to quality, affordable housing. Substandard and subsistence housing stock must be renovated in a timely manner in order to make it suitable for living in by American standards. The quality of life affects the quality of work.

Applications for County Programming: By increasing ties with USDA Rural Development programs, GA Department of Community Affairs and US Department of Housing and Urban Development, agents provide information to all consumers, including non-English speaking immigrants and liaisons to the Spanish speaking community regarding safe housing. Agents can adapt the resources they currently have to make them more user friendly to non-English speaking audiences.

Additional opportunities will arise for agents as a result of:

A) Our recent designation as a HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agency. Extension agents can now provide counseling to consumers looking to afford and maintain the American Dream.

B) And, the newly formed Georgia Institute for Community Housing. This Institute is house with the UGA College of Family and Consumer Sciences’ Housing and Demographics research Center. It will offer communities a three-year program of collaboration and technical assistance. The objective of the Institute is to help communities create and launch a locally based plan to meet their housing needs.

State Pow link: Housing and the Near Environment
Residential water quality and quantity will be affected by the dry conditions Georgia has been experiencing currently and over the past few years. A more regional approach to deal with the drought conditions will be seen with different communities having varying restrictions regarding water usage.

Communities are also becoming more aware of what the upstream neighbor is doing. That is, actions taken by one county may directly affect the water quality of other counties. Residents are becoming more aware of issues pertaining to water quality, and what it takes to maintain a clean water supply. Issues coming to the forefront include watershed (the area that drains to a common waterway) protection and storm water management. Issues and programs related to water quality and quantity may raise the cost of providing safe, clean water to people.

Water quantity and quality remains an important issue to be addressed by the state. 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. Water initiatives at UGA and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources will provide opportunities to conduct events to raise public awareness and education regarding water quality.

By increasing ties to agencies that offer educational resources, agents may disseminate water quality and quantity information in a timely manner. Agents may raise levels of active community participation by pairing with agencies that provide water quality and quantity. Raising awareness regarding water quality and conservation also involves revealing simple measures that people can take. For example, steps to take limiting the amount of water that is wasted and the disposal of household pollutants in a safe manner as not to contaminate Georgia’s water resources may be provided in informal educational sessions. Residents are also educated to responsible landscaping practices and the elimination of over fertilization of lawns. Agents stress prevention measures for all residents and communities. The actions of one affect the environment of all.

Housing and the Near Environment
Situation: Indoor Air Quality: Asthma, Radon and Mold

Trend:
Indoor air quality is important to all. From the home, to the workplace to the daycare center, areas that have poor indoor air quality may have a negative affect on the health of the inhabitants, especially those who are at higher risk of contracting illness. People prone to contracting disease include children, the elderly and those with compromised immune systems. Some indoor air quality issues, such as the presence of radon, have been shown to cause lung cancer over a prolonged period of exposure.

Outlook:
Some types of illness may have an environmental cause, or may be aggravated by an environmental element. For example, mold in the home may cause health problems for those who are sensitive or allergic to it. Mold may be the cause of pulmonary hemorrhage, memory loss, lethargy and may also aggravate asthma. The best ways to decrease the potential and eliminate the appearance of mold in the home is through preventative measures. Excessive moisture is often a cause for the growth of mold. Homeowners with mold problems need to discern where leakage is coming from, whether from leaking roofs or pipes, and eliminate it.

Radon, a naturally occurring substance found in the earth is an odorless, tasteless gas that is produced from decaying uranium. Radon, a proven carcinogen, seeps into buildings where it can collect. Inhabitants then breathe contaminated air. Persons who suspect their homes to be contaminated can purchase a radon test kit for a nominal price from a hardware store. Once levels of contamination are established, the occupant may reduce the levels of radon by making repairs to the home or adding a radon reduction system.

Applications for County Programming:
Education based on evidence from the scientific community should be presented to the general public and members of the building community. Many may be alarmed due to media coverage, and the County Agent may help to allay people’s fears. This can be done with a comprehensive, uniform education program. Each agent would have access to appropriate educational materials and would be knowledgeable of agencies available to ameliorate problems.

State Pow link: Housing and the Near Environment
9/9/2004

28   6366  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.
  - An estimated 325,000 serious illnesses per year result in hospitalizations.
  - An estimated 5,000 deaths per year result from foodborne illnesses.

- The last available data show that during 2000, incidence per 100,000 in the general population for nine pathogens being tracked in 8 sites by FoodNet was highest for campylobacteriosis (15.7), salmonellosis (14.4 cases), shigellosis (7.9) and E. coli O147:H7 infections (2.1).

- Estimates of the incidence for specific diseases in 2003 and 2004 show that Georgians have hundreds of cases of foodborne illness each year that can be addressed in through food handler education. There were 861 cases of Salmonellosis, 622 cases of Campylobacteriosis, 18 cases of listeriosis, and 311 cases of Hepatitis A reported in GA in 2003. As of week 30 in 2004, there were 699 cases of Salmonellosis, 296 cases of Campylobacteriosis, 8 cases of listeriosis, and 204 cases of Hepatitis A. Incidences of other reported diseases can be found at: CDC, http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/distrnds.html and Georgia DHR, Div. of Public Health, State Electronic Notifiable Disease Surveillance System, SENDSS

- 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.

Costs of Foodborne Illnesses

- ERS estimated costs for a single case is $2126 for salmonellosis, but this increases to $13,117 for cases involving hospitalization. In the latest data available from CDC, Georgia had the highest incidence of salmonellosis of all 9 sites monitored by CDC’s FoodNet system.

- ERS estimates that, each year in the U.S., foodborne E. coli O157:H7 disease costs $659.1 million to society and foodborne E. coli non-O157 STEC disease costs $329.7 million for a combined total of $988.8 million.

- 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.

- Estimated incidence of pathogens associated with poor personal hygiene is about 9.3 million cases at a cost of $8,244 million.

- Estimated incidence of pathogens associated with inadequate cooking or cross contamination is about 3.5 million cases at a cost of $4,301 million.

Educational Needs
• 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.

• 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.

• Children may not be taught adequate ways to reduce foodborne illness at home, yet these children are the future food handlers in our society.

• 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 2002, the typical American household spent an average of $2,276 on food away from home. Per capita expenditure in that year for food away from home averaged $910. 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. However, 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 46.8 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.

• There are about 18,453 eating and drinking establishments in Georgia, with 272,400 employees and projected sales of over $10.7 billion dollars for 2002. (U.S. Dept. of Labor and U.S. Census Bureau figures reported by the National Restaurant Association, 3/17/04).

• Georgia currently does not have state-mandated training and certification of restaurant foodservice personnel, but easily accessible voluntary training at the local level is in demand. Current proposals (2004) will require mandated manager and employee education and certification if passed; a 2005 implementation date is being sought.

• The Georgia Department of Agriculture passed a new food code for supermarket/grocery store personnel in March, 2004. Part of the new food safety standards puts emphasis on education and knowledge; grocery store personnel are now seeking ServSafe® certification training from Extension or other sources.

• 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.
There are approximately 30,000 child care providers in Georgia. Georgia DHR inspects and licenses 1,685 day care centers, 229 group day care homes, and 233 residential care facilities and inspects and registers 6,368 family day care homes caring for three to six children. The staff in these facilities have a requirement for training which may include safe food handling. In addition, DHR monitors 1,653 informal day care homes where providers could benefit from food safety training.

Georgia DHR regulates 1,701 personal care homes; the staff in these homes have a need for annual training hours and food safety education.

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.

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, consumer concerns about food security and 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.

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.

**Trend:**

**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.
Applications for County Programming:

- Conduct ServSafe® education for the local foodservice industry.
- Deliver Fight BAC!® food safety information to consumers through programs and exhibits using “Smart Kids Fight BAC!®” and “Fight BAC!® With Allen and Bernie.”
- Conduct food handler education for institutional settings such as child care providers, personal care home providers, school nutrition employees, etc.
- 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.

State Pow link: Foodborne Illness
In 2004, an estimated 35,430 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Georgia. Lifestyle choices including diet and exercise over a lifetime influence cancer rates. Survival rates increase with early detection and treatment. Of those new cases, 6,080 will be breast cancer and 350 will be cervical cancer. In general, mammograms are recommended for women beginning at age 40. In Georgia, only 59% of women over the age of 40 will have had a mammogram this year compared to 62.5% for the nation. Younger women, women of color and low income women are less likely to get mammograms. Older women are less likely to get Pap tests on a regular basis to screen for cervical cancer. Women in the metro area, especially if they were born in another country and/or are low income, are less likely to be screened for cancer. When cancer is found in women who are rarely or never screened, it is more likely to be in advanced stages that are harder to treat.

Cancer rates are likely to rise as the American population gets older and more diverse. Obesity, low consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains and inactivity all increase cancer risk. Early screening and treatment has increased survival rates. Unfortunately, women who are immigrants, older and/or low income continue to be less likely to be screened for breast or cervical cancer.

Cancer will drain more of the health care dollars and resources if rates increase. As funding shrinks, screening programs may be reduced and late stage cancers may become more common. More women may have advanced stages of breast and cervical cancer if they do not have mammograms and Pap tests. This can be reversed if women, especially older women take advantage of the BreasTest and More Program offered through the local health departments.

Agents can use the presentations and exhibits provided by the American Cancer Society and the Department of Human Resources to encourage women to be screened with mammograms and Pap tests through their private doctors if they have health insurance or through the BreasTest and More Program.

Agents can also promote cancer prevention through three cancer prevention presentations available on the Extension Nutrition and Health Web page. These presentations target the general public, senior citizens and participants of the Walk-a-Weigh Program. Extension agents can also promote cancer prevention through general nutrition and health programs about fruit and vegetable consumption, weight control, and physical activity.

**State Pow link:** Chronic Disease
POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Situation:

Every 42 seconds, a child or youth under the age of 20 in the US dies from an accident. In fact, unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children over the age of 1 in our country. Young children are especially susceptible to unintentional injuries. It is currently estimated that 19% (or 3.8 million) of all children from birth to age 4 experience unintentional injuries each year. 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.

By age 2, a majority of children in Georgia (82%) and the United States (78%) have visited a doctor or health department. Visiting the doctor can be intimidating for young children, although it is a situation with which they must learn to cope. There are numerous reasons children make doctor visits, including to complete their immunization series, to get routine checkups or to seek medical assistance for minor childhood illnesses. In addition, about 30% of children are hospitalized at least once during childhood and about 5% have multiple hospital admissions.

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.

Trend:

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.

Outlook:
9/9/2004

Applications for County Programming:
- Conduct Teaching Basic Health and Safety in the Early Childhood Classroom trainings for child care providers.
- 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-H’ers in health/safety projects to share their work with younger children.
- Collaborate with local Safe Kids organizations in community-wide safety education.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
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, 4 million (6%) were living in that situation. Nationally, 4.5 million children are living in grandparent-headed households, which represents 6% of all children under age 18. 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. Nationally, the 2000 U.S. Census reported an increase of 30% of grandparent-headed households between 1990 and 2000. In Georgia, the percentage of grandchildren living in grandparent-headed households increased by 29% during this decade.

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.

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.

- 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.

Positive Development of CYF
FATHERING EDUCATION

Since 1970, Georgia's divorce rate has surged 174%. The out-of-wedlock birthrate has increased more than 180%. Currently, Georgia has the fifth-highest rate (30%) of "mother-only" families in the nation.

Until recently, the role of nonresident fathers’ contributions to their children’s well-being was either ignored or focused primarily on financial support. More recently, the contributions fathers make to other aspects of children's development are being more fully recognized. Fathers who are involved in their children’s lives provide numerous benefits for their children that foster healthy sex-role development, social adjustment, and cognitive development.

In contrast, father absence has been associated with a variety of negative outcomes including higher rates of school dropout, juvenile crime, delinquency, homicides, suicides, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and child poverty.

Father absence may have different effects on boys and girls. Lack of contact with fathers appears to have its most dramatic effects on boys. Boys tend to experience more academic and social disruption than girls when fathers are not present in the household. Father absence challenges girls' emotional stability but does not seem to undermine their school performance.

Trend:

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 is important in improving father involvement in their children’s lives.

Applications for County Programming:

- 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.

Provide child care provider training on ways to involve men in child care settings.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
**CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**Situation:**
Increasing numbers of preschool, school-age, and adolescent youth are being diagnosed with special needs. 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. An inclusive program includes children with disabilities in all appropriate activities in the general education environment. 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 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.

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**Trend:**

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. Teachers and caregivers may need help in developing skills necessary to teach in an inclusive educational environment because they often lack training on special needs and inclusion issues. Many mainstream schools and child care centers are also ill-prepared to provide for students with disabilities.

**Outlook:**

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Applications for County Programming:

- 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.
- Teach child care workshops on inclusion and specific special needs issues such as ADHD.
- 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.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
Couples/Relationship Education

Situation:
Other things being equal, children tend to experience more positive outcomes when they are raised by their married, biological parents who have low conflict. However, single-parent and unmarried-couple families are becoming increasingly common in today’s society. It is estimated that more than half of today’s children younger than 15 will at some point live in a family consisting of the mother and child living alone.

Families comprised of a mother and her children only are more likely to experience poverty. In 1999, 8% of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 42% of children in female-headed households. In Georgia, 6% of married-couple families with children under age 18 lived below the poverty level, whereas 35% of female-headed households with children under age 18 lived in this condition. The poverty rate for children under age six living in a married-couple household was 9%, compared to 50% for children from single-mother families (1999). In Georgia, the poverty rate for children under five years old living in a female-headed household was 46%, compared to 7% of children under five from married-couple families. It has been estimated that 75% of children growing up in single-parent families experience poverty for at least some period during their first 10 years of life, whereas only 20% of children from two-parent families have this experience.

In addition to reduced likelihood of poverty, other positive outcomes exist for children from biological, intact two-parent families, including: these children are less likely to experience child abuse, less likely to end up in jail as adults, less likely to be expelled from school, less likely to experience developmental problems, more likely to have good health, and less likely to look favorably on out-of-wedlock childbearing.

An increase in the number of children born or spending a significant portion of their lives in a single-parent household puts them at risk for a variety of negative outcomes. The future welfare of Georgia’s children can be greatly enhanced by the development of healthy relationship skills of their parents. Not only will children experience greater financial benefits, but they are also likely to benefit socially, emotionally, physically and academically as well.

Trend:
The next federal budget will likely include funding to promote “healthy marriages.” The current Administration is planning to support activities that help couples that choose to marry to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to form and sustain a healthy marriage. 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.

Outlook:
Applications for County Programming:

- Organize a local collaboration to support the development of healthy couples. 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.
- Write a grant proposal to secure funding for hiring staff who could conduct classes and home visitation for couples who want to strengthen their relationships.
- Support efforts to include couples education in your local middle- and high school FACS curriculum.
- Produce a series of newspaper/newsletter articles applying the research on healthy couple development.
- Develop your own skills in this content by participating in certified trainings and national conferences.
- Conduct an assessment of your community’s “family-friendliness.”

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR FAMILIES

Situation:

Kids & Money: US teenagers have enormous purchasing power but lack financial knowledge. They spent $175 billion in 2003, but only 26% say that their parents actively taught them how to manage their money. One in three teenagers carry their own credit card, but only 21% of them have taken financial management course in school. More than 20 percent of youth ages 12 to 19 have their own credit cards or access to parents’ credit cards, and half of all college students have a major credit card. Among students with a credit card, 28% roll over debt each month.

Most students have various sources of income such as allowance, wages, and gifts from relatives, but only 54% of students view saving as very important. By far, the most often cited source of financial information is their parents. Ninety four percent of students say they are likely to use their parents as financial information sources, but 30% students say that their parents rarely or never discuss savings or investment with them. Two thirds of students think they should know more about financial issues.

Students continue to receive a failing grade on the annual survey of high school seniors’ financial literacy conducted by JumpStart Coalition. The average score in 2004 was 52.3, only 2 points more than the average score of 50.2 in 2002. It is not surprising considering that only 21% of all students have taken a personal financial management course. In addition, the score only reflects students’ self-reported financial knowledge, it does not reveal whether the financial behaviors of those who have taken a personal finance course are different from those who have not. In fact, among those who have taken a personal finance course, 41% students report that the course changed the way they handle money. Forty one percent said that they began to save, 28% increased their savings, 20% invested their savings differently, and 19% developed a budget.

Consumer Debt/Bankruptcy: Georgia maintains the 4th highest rate of personal bankruptcy in the nation, behind Utah, Nevada, and Tennesee. Georgia has the highest rate of Chapter 13 bankruptcy (as a proportion of all bankruptcies) of any state. In 2003, Chapter 7 bankruptcy filings increased by more than 5,000 filings to a total of 37,220, with Chapter 13 filings reaching a decade high 43,667. In Georgia, 26 of every 1,000 households have filed bankruptcy, which is nearly twice the national average rate.

Trend:

The need for financial literacy education is an emerging issue. Nowadays, students’ purchasing power is becoming larger and larger, however, their lack of financial knowledge is causing more and more problems. Students rely more on their parents and friends as financial information sources. However, increasing bankruptcy filings and incorrect financial knowledge show that adults also need more financial education.

Outlook:

Up to now, most financial programs put emphasis on consumers’ financial knowledge while neglecting their financial behaviors. Therefore, not many encouraging results were seen. Personal finance education does change some students’ savings attitudes and behaviors. Retirement planning education does increase understanding for participants of the need for adequate retirement savings. The benefit received from many financial literacy programs cannot be seen in the short run. A critical question for future programs is identifying delivery methods that reach busy people where they live, work, or go to school.
Applications for County Programming:

Agents can promote positive personal financial management behaviors through the media and by targeting vulnerable populations with educational programs. For youth, available curricula include Financial Champions, the High School Financial Planning Program, and the soon-to-be-released Consumer Savvy. For adults, the Gateway to a Better Life curriculum provides basic personal finance education in English and Spanish for limited resource audiences. Additional curricula and educational materials for financial literacy programs are also available from Fannie Mae, FDIC, the Federal Reserve Board, the Federal Trade Commission and other government entities.

State Pow link: Financial Security for Families
FRAUD PREVENTION

In 2003, more than 300,000 consumers filed fraud complaints resulting in a loss of nearly $450 million. Most victims (74%) are between age 18 and 50. Only 40% victims notified Police department. Internet fraud accounted for over half of all fraud complaints costing consumers nearly $200 million. Identity theft is the fastest growing form of fraud today. Georgia ranks 43 in fraud complaints (76.6 complaints per 100,000 population) and 12 in identity theft (70.5 victims per 100,000 population).

In 2003, the total number of fraud (6,649) and identity theft (6,127) complaints from Georgia consumers has reached 12,776. Top five fraud complaint categories for Georgia consumers are Internet auction, Shop-at-home/Category sales, Internet services and computer complaints, Advance-fee loans and credit protection/repair, Prizes/Sweepstakes and lotteries. Total amount paid reported by 5,229 fraud complaints is $9,490,587. Atlanta, Marietta, Lawrenceville, Alpharetta and Savannah are the top five locations for fraud complaints.

Identity theft types reported by Georgia consumers include credit card fraud, bank fraud, phone/utility fraud, government documents/benefit fraud, employment-related fraud, loan fraud, other types of fraud, and attempted identity theft. Other types of fraud include illegal/criminal fraud, medical fraud, Internet/Email fraud, apartment/house rented fraud, bankruptcy fraud, and security/investment fraud. About 20% of Georgia victims experienced more than one type of identity theft. Atlanta, Marietta, Decatur, Lawrenceville and Alpharetta are top five locations for identity theft complaints in Georgia.

Compared with 2002, fraud complaints in 2003 increased by 37%. Losses from fraud increased by more than $1.7 million last year. The top four fraud complaint categories for Georgia victims from 2001 to 2003 were: Internet auctions; Shop-at-home and catalogue sales; Internet and computer services; and advance-fee loans and credit protection/repair. Atlanta, Marietta, Lawrenceville and Alpharetta had highest reported fraud complaints in Georgia in both 2002 and 2003. In 2002, Columbus was among the top five fraud complaints locations, which was replaced by Savannah in 2003. The fraud complaint rate per 100,000 population in year 2003 increased by 30% from 2002.

From 2001 to 2003, the number of identity theft victims kept increasing but the rate of increase slowed. The total number of identity theft victims in 2002 increased by 82% from 2001, and the total number of identity theft victims in 2003 increased by only 30% from 2002. Both the number and percentage of credit card fraud cases increased sharply in 2002 and decreased slightly in 2003. Bank fraud and phone/utility fraud have increased substantially since 2001. Employment-related fraud increased nearly twice in 2002. Atlanta, Marietta, Decatur, Lawrenceville and Alpharetta had the highest reported fraud and identity theft complaints in Georgia during 2001-2003 period. In 2002, Georgia ranked 13 in identity theft, with 57.5 victims per 100,000 population. In 2003, the rate increased to 70.5 victims per 100,000 population.
Outlook:

Although both fraud and identity theft complaints increased dramatically from 2001 to 2003, Internet-related fraud and identity theft account for most fraud. As Internet purchasing and E-commerce become more popular, security problems will likely persist. Consumer doubts about online privacy and security and the growing digital divide will continue to retard the development of E-commerce. Widespread publicity has raised consumers’ awareness of identity theft. About 45% victims found out they were identity theft victims within one month of the crime. More than 70% victims discovered identity theft within six months of the crime. Although there is plenty of information about how to prevent fraud and identity theft, it may not be able to reach every consumer. More publicity is needed to attract consumers’ attention to fight against fraud and identity theft with law enforcement officials.

Applications for County Programming:

Agents can increase awareness of common frauds and strategies to prevent fraud with information distributed via local media outlets. Educational programs for consumers with credit problems, seniors, minorities, and immigrants about specific types of fraud targeted to them can go a long way toward reducing the incidence of fraud.

State Pow link:

Financial Security for Families
WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Situation: In 2004, the U.S. unemployment rate was stable at 5.5%. During the same time period, Georgia's unemployment rate (4.0%) was below the national rate. The Department of Labor's projection about jobs with the largest decline shows that jobs requiring only short- or medium-term on-the-job training (e.g., typist, sewing machine operator, clerks, secretary, etc.) will suffer from 3%-39% loss in the next 10 years. Meanwhile, most of the fastest growing jobs in the next 10 years require an Associate or Bachelor's degree. For those who have no such degrees, some jobs (e.g., medical assistant, human service assistant, home health aides, occupational therapist aides, etc.) require only short- or medium-term on-the-job training. These jobs are expected to grow at least 35% in the next few years. The problem for unemployed people is that they do not have the necessary education or training for these jobs. In Georgia, only 24.3% population has Bachelor's degree or higher. Among Black and Hispanic population, only 15% and 14% have Bachelor's degree respectively. About 16% and 20% Hispanic population has some college and has graduated from high school respectively. More than half of the Hispanic population does not finish high school. More than one fourth of the Black population is high school dropout. In addition, many unemployed people may not have the correct information about job market. Thus, jobs with large loss of positions may have lots of applicants, while jobs with large demand may have only a few applicants.

Trend: Compared with 2001, 2002 and 2003, Georgia's unemployment rate is decreasing. In 2002 Georgia had the highest unemployment rate of 5.2. In 2003, the rate decreased by 1%. The rate keeps decreasing in year 2004. As the economic environment in the whole nation is becoming better, Georgia's unemployment rate may be stable at the current level. However, as the above table shows, the unemployment rates for people with different education level are different. The unemployment rates for people with relatively lower education levels are considerably high than those with higher education levels. In addition, the median earnings of those with lower education levels are much lower than those with higher education levels. The unbalanced unemployment rates and earnings across different education levels will not change in the long run.

Outlook: Workforce preparedness program need to focus on two areas. One is to provide more information on growing jobs so that people know what trainings they need. In such way, the program can direct unemployed people to the industries that have more positions, at the same time release the pressure for the industries that are losing positions. The second is to help unemployed people to improve resume writing and interview skills.

Applications for County Programming: Information about the value of training and education beyond high school will promote upward mobility for limited resource individuals and families. The Gateway to a Better Life curriculum includes a number of lessons designed to assist limited resource audiences in identifying marketable skills, developing a resume, applying for a job, interviewing well, dressing for work, and succeeding on the job.

State Pow link: Financial Security for Families
9/9/2004

**DIABETES**

**Situation:** In Georgia, about 633,000 adults have diabetes or about 7% of the population, up from about 6% in 1990. Of this number 411,000 have been diagnosed. Diabetes is the 6th leading cause of death in this state. For every death attributed to diabetes, at least two more deaths have diabetes as a contributing factor. In the year 2000, diabetes cost approximately $138 million in hospital charges in Georgia. If all medical costs and costs attributed to pre-mature death and lost job productivity in Georgia were added up, the actual economic impact of diabetes would be closer to $4 billion per year. The average Georgian between the ages of 18 and 64 with diabetes misses 8.3 days of work per year compared to 1.7 days for someone without diabetes.

**Trend:** Diabetes is increasing all other this country as the incidence of overweight and obesity increases. Over the last 20 years, the death rate attributed to diabetes rose an average of 1% per year. More people of African American, Asian, Hispanic and Latino ethnicity are developing diabetes. Unfortunately Type 2 diabetes is being diagnosed in much younger people including school age children and adolescents. Early development of diabetes increases the possibility that complications of diabetes such as blindness, heart disease and amputation will occur at much younger ages.

**Outlook:** Type 2 diabetes, the most common type of diabetes, can be prevented with weight control and regular physical activity. The complications of diabetes can be delayed or prevented with good diabetes control achieved through a healthy eating plan, regular physical activity and medication. If Extension agents and the health care community work together to teach skills to improve health habits at the grassroots level, the incidence of overweight, diabetes and diabetic complications can be reduced. If people do not adopt healthier lifestyles, the problem will only get worse.

**Applications for County Programming:** Agents can offer Walk-a-Weigh Programs and Right Bite Cooking Schools to teach adults how to become fit and prepare healthy food to prevent and control diabetes. They can also promote regular screenings for diabetes through media releases and programs focused at high risk populations. Also agents can use the USDA Power of Choice Curriculum and the Win Kids Lessons to teach children to make better food choices and to become more physically active.

Those with diabetes can increase their skills and knowledge through the Focus on Diabetes CD, The Diabetes Life Lines Newsletter, the Diabetes Fact Sheets and Low Literacy Series and the various diabetes support groups and classes that agents offer.

**State Pow link:** Chronic Disease
MATERNAL AND INFANT

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 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) (ie. 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 1998, only 29% of all U.S. mothers breastfed at 6 months. This rate was alarmingly low for African American women at 19%.

Trend:

Iron deficiency Anemia: The prevalence of iron deficiency anemia among women of reproductive age increased from 1976-1980 to 1988-1994. According to the CDC Pregnancy Nutrition Surveillance System 1996, the rate of anemia was higher among teenage mothers compared to older mothers throughout pregnancy. Anemia was also higher for pregnant low-income, black women (44%) compared to Hispanic (25%) and Non-Hispanic whites (24%). There has not been a change in the prevalence of anemia in young women in national data (NHANES) over the past 18 years.

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.
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%.

The Expanded Foods and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) delivers education to low-income women (majority of women in childbearing age). Agents can use the Eating Right Is Basic 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.

Healthy/Well-Nourished Population
FOODS AND NUTRITION FOR LOW INCOME AUDIENCES

Situation:

More than one million people in Georgia live below the level of poverty (13% of the population) (According to the Department of Health and Human Services, Poverty Guideline is $18,400 per year for a family of four in the U.S. in 2003). Living below the poverty level were 354,633 related children between the ages of 0-17 (16.7%). Both 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. In 2002, 12.9% 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 11.3%. Forty-four percent of Georgia school children were eligible for free or reduced price school lunches in the 2001-2002 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 (0.5%). 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 Family Nutrition Program (FNP), and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Family and Consumer Sciences Extension provides comprehensive nutrition education to food stamp-eligible audiences (FNP and EFNEP) and other limited-resource audiences (EFNEP). Recent studies have found that for every $1 spent on EFNEP $10.64 will be saved on future health care costs. In FY 2003, there were 2,169 EFNEP graduates. Of these graduates, 78% improved their food resource management practices, 81% improved their nutrition practices, and 57% improved their food safety practices. During FY 2003, a total of 87,540 Food Stamp eligible persons attended FNP classes. Nutrition education messages reached 2,380,498 people through media, health fairs, and other groups.

Applications for County Programming:

Agents can promote healthy food and physical activity habits among limited-resource families through general nutrition and health programming using the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (revised 2005), and the Food Guide Pyramid (or new nutrition guidance educational tool provided by the government in 2005).

For adults, Agents can offer Walk-a-Weigh Programs, Seniors Taking Charge I & II, Eating Right Is Basic 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, other state approved curricula and lessons.

State Pow link: Chronic Disease
Foodborne Illness
LATINOS IN GEORGIA – IMPACT OF LANGUAGE BARRIERS

Situation:

More than one in eight people in the United States are of Hispanic origin and Georgia heads the list of states with the fastest-growing Latino populations. Georgia’s Hispanic/Latino population has increased by nearly 17 percent between July 2000 and July 2002 to reach 516,000 residents. 751,438 (9.9%) Georgians speak a language other than English. 426,115 Georgians speak Spanish at home and of those 167,903 speak English less than well.

Urban/Rural: Hispanics are more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to live in urban areas, though rural Georgia has six multi-county clusters that have between 5,000 and 10,000 living in each of the counties within those clusters.

Education: More than two in five Hispanics aged 25 and older have not graduated from high school. Georgia’s Latino population tends to be younger than the overall population, with the largest proportion of the Latino population being between 25 and 44.

Employment: In 2002, Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to be working in service occupations, 22.1% to 11.6% respectively and among full-time, year-round workers Hispanic workers earn less than non-Hispanic White workers.

Economics: Latino buying power in Georgia increased from $1.3 billion in 1990 to $2.7 billion in 1997, up by 100.3%. This gain exceeds the gain in buying power for all consumers as a whole.

Poverty: 21.4% of Hispanics were living in poverty according to the US Census 2002 Current Population Survey. Hispanics represent 13% of the total population but they comprise 24% of the population living in poverty. Hispanic children represent 17% of all U.S. children and 30% of all U.S. children living in poverty. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau)

Trend:

Outlook:

The need for Extension programming in Spanish is increased by large number of Latinos with limited proficiency in English. Proficiency in English is one of the main measures of immigrant integration into mainstream America. An individual with limited English proficiency tend to hold less desirable jobs, earn lower incomes, and fare worse on all well-being indicators. Families with low English proficiency are more likely to be poor and twice as likely to experience food insecurity as families with where the householder has high English proficiency. (The New Neighbors, Urban Institute, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003)

The need for bi-lingual Extension personnel is made all the more urgent with the prediction of continued rapid growth in Georgia’s Latino population. The well-being of Latinos in Georgia impacts all Georgians.
Applications for County Programming:

- Conduct a community survey to determine need and location of Latino populations in your counties.
- Establish a strong partnership with Latino Leaders in your counties; invite members of the Latino community to serve on your county advisory board.
- Establish a task force to create awareness of Extension programming in the Latino Community.
- Write grants that target Latinos and the issues important to Latino families and communities.
- Access and use Extension Espanol (http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/espanol/)
- Use Spanish language materials, exhibits, and training modules from Child Development, Nutrition, Housing, and Financial Literacy.
- Provide training for informal childcare providers and family member caregivers in the Latino Community.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
DEPLOYMENT AND STRESS ON MILITARY FAMILIES

Situation:

At the present Georgia has 62,714 citizens serving the nations as a part the active duty military. Georgia’s Reserve and National Guard number more than 43,000. Reservists on Active Duty from Georgia at height of recent actions numbered over 4000, with 600 presently mobilized. Army National Guard and Air National Guard have over 900 currently mobilized with 700 of those serving overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan. Georgia’s total contribution to military personnel is over 106,000. Military deployment stresses parents and children as well as other relationships; friendships, extended family and work relationships – even impacting community services. Characteristics seen in the general population are also seen in today’s military.

Findings of study conducted by the Military Family Resource Center (2001):

Military Family Structure: Approximately one-half of the service members in any unit are married. One in four junior enlisted is married and one in five has children. The number of single parents is increasing and they may find it difficult to meet scheduling and training requirements (6% of military personnel are single parents).

Joint-service Marriages: Joint –service marriages have become more common (joint-service marriages insure familiarity with military lifestyle, military commitments and career goals, but may interfere with family responsibilities and ultimately impact readiness.)

Military Family Economics: Today’s military marriages may have one or both of the spouses holding down two or more civilian jobs to meet the increased in family cost of living.

Living Arrangements: Many military families may not live near a military facility, which complicates the military’s ability to serve families through military sponsored services and activities (70% of military families live in civilian communities). Junior enlisted experience the greatest housing hardship, competing for marginally adequate housing (junior enlisted makes up 46% of the military).

Family Role Changes: The tradition that the dependent spouse is usually the wife has changed markedly over the past 20 years, which increases the importance of integrating the husband into the military community life.

Outlook:

Family issues are critical to recruitment and retention of trained military. Issues that influence family satisfaction with military life are spouse job opportunities, schooling for children and youth, availability of child care and elder care, frequent separation, unpredictable work hours all issues, financial stress, and sense of dislocation, all of which are challenges to a family’s quality of life. Family and Consumer Sciences Extension has resources available to address many issues impacting military families - family financial management, child development, housing issues, nutrition, aging parents, and youth development.
Applications for County Programming:

Training addressing the impact of separation on children and families can be provided for Family Readiness Group Leaders, Rear Detachment Commanders, and others that work with both military families and soldiers. Training for childcare providers can be provided on the impact of parent deployment on young children (resources are available through the CYF State Specialist). Providing financial education programing for soldiers and their families on using sound financial practices can help to decrease family stress and improve financial outcomes for families.

Provide workforce preparation services to family members to assist them in their job search, such as classes in resume writing, dressing for success, interview techniques, and how to navigate in a new community.

News articles on dealing with issues pertinent to military families.

Provide classes, for the spouse/partner, on home maintenance, dealing with school systems, what should be in your family records file, or just how to "maintain" when you are the primary care giver in your family.

Organize a local collaboration to support military families and dependents, include businesses, schools, family service agencies, and faith based groups. Grant writing can be a part of this effort.

Increase your own knowledge base by participating in trainings that address issues impacting military families. Contact your local Guard and Reserve Units to inform them of resources available through Extension.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
WEIGHT CONTROL

Situation:
Being physically inactive and overweight are major contributors to death and disability in this country. According to the Georgia Department of Human Resources, three-quarters of Georgia’s adults are inactive. This inactivity causes at least 32% of all heart disease, 18% of all cases of high blood pressure, 32% of all strokes and 18% of all cases of diabetes. In this country 64% of adults are overweight and 31% are obese. The Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey found that nearly 22% of adults in Georgia were obese. Research done by the University of Georgia found that 20% of Georgia’s children were overweight compared to 15% of children in the U.S. Direct and indirect medical costs attributed to overweight and obesity were estimated to be $117 billion in the year 2000.

Trend:
According to the CDC, the incidence of overweight and obese and inactivity is continuing to increase. When compared to other states, Georgia had the greatest increase in the number of adults who were considered overweight or obese (101%) during the 1990’s. The CDC has reported that the fastest growing group of obese individuals is the severely obese with body mass indices over 40. The childhood overweight and obesity research done by UGA found that 37% of children were at risk for becoming overweight. The risk seemed to be greatest in the rural areas, in African Americans and in younger children.

People are eating away from home more and portion sizes are getting larger. Research at the University of Illinois showed that people tend to eat 30-50% more if they are served larger portions, even though they believe that they are eating the same amount.

Outlook:
These disturbing trends in overweight, obesity and inactivity are not abating. With the increasing average age of the American population, chronic diseases associated with weight and inactivity will also increase. These chronic diseases are likely to develop at younger ages in overweight or obese children and adolescents. 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.

Applications for County Programming:
Agents can promote good food and activity habits through general nutrition and health programming using the Dietary Guidelines and the Food Guide Pyramid. For adults, the Walk-a-Weigh program is an effective way to lose weight and become more fit. For children, prevention of overweight and obesity can be encouraged through the USDA Power of Choice curriculum and/or the WIN Kids Lessons.

State Pow link: Chronic Disease
Situation:

Today approximately 13.9% of the U.S. population is aged 65 and older, but in the next fifteen years that sector of the population will make up close to 20% of the population. The number of Americans aged 45-64 — the "baby boomers" who will reach 65 over the next two decades — increased by 34% in 2000.

The percentage of Georgia’s population aged 65 and older living in poverty is higher than the national average. 15.4% of Georgians aged 65 and older live below the poverty level while the percentage for the U.S. is only 10.9% (US Bureau of the Census).

The percentage of Georgia’s population 65 and older in the labor force is 11.5%, which speaks to both the need and desire of that population to continue or return to work. That number is growing is expected to continue to grow, (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). Part of the desire to remain or return to the labor force may be related to the fear that many elderly have of not being able to meet their total health care and living needs. The median cost per day for nursing home care in Georgia is $70.80, ($25,842 a year).

The median income of older persons in 2001 was $19,688 for males and $11,313 for females. Real median income (after adjusting for inflation) fell by -2.6% for older people since 2000. Households containing families headed by persons 65+ reported a median income in 2002 of $33,802 ($35,219 for non-Hispanic Whites, $26,174 for African-Americans, $38,533 for Asians, and $25,123 for Hispanics). About one of every nine (11.6%) family households with an elderly householder had incomes less than $15,000 and 48.0% had incomes of $35,000 or more.

About 30 percent (9.7 million) noninstitutionalized older persons live alone (7.4 million women, 2.4 million men). Half of older women age 75+ live alone.


Trend:

Growing older no longer has to mean steadily declining health. The miracles of modern medicine, improved diets, better conditions in America's workplaces, and a new awareness of the benefits of exercise are helping people maintain their physical health long into their later years.

Educational programming designed to address the needs of families and individuals dealing with aging will help to decrease the general cost of health care and increase the quality of life for older Americans.

Outlook:
Applications for County Programming:

Collaborate with Department of Human Resources Division of Aging Services, whose mission is to assist older individuals, their families, and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives.

Work with local Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to provide the elderly who are participating in this federal program with nutrition information, which can also address the impact of poor nutrition on general health as well as mental health. TEFAP works to help supplement the diets of low-income persons in Georgia, including the elderly, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost.

Ensure that elderly have the opportunity to participate in all programming that could have an impact on their quality of life.

Arrange for in-service training for those serving the elderly focus on the special needs of the elderly in your community.

Create community and family programming that fosters interaction between the elderly and others in your community as a means of decreasing the isolation of the elderly.

Encourage interaction between 4-H and the elderly in your community as a means of creating cross-generational sharing of knowledge.

Encourage the development of horticultural programs that would specifically involve the elderly

Provide training on end of life issues, dealing with financial issues specific to aging, widowhood and late life divorce.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
IMPACT OF TEEN PREGNANCY IN GEORGIA'S LATINO COMMUNITIES

Situation:

Trend: In Georgia, the birth rate for Latina females age 15 to 19 is more than four times the rate for White females and more than double the rate for African American females (Georgia Department of Human Resources OASIS database). In 2002, the number of births to Latina teens age 15 to 19 comprised approximately 15% of the total number of births to all Georgia females age 15 to 19. This is a significant figure when one considers that Latinas account for only 5% of the total population of females in that age bracket.

Georgia Department of Human Resources OASIS Database & National Center for Health and Statistics.

Outlook: Because of the significant increase in the Latino population, and given the fact that birth rates for Latina teens are so much higher than other groups, the gravity of teen pregnancy among Latina adolescents is of particular concern for Georgia and the nation. Unless Latina birth rates begin to decrease, the actual number of children born as a result of teen pregnancy will only continue to grow because the overall total population of Latina teenagers is projected to increase at a rapid pace. Birth rates, for White females age 15-19, began declining in 1994 and by 2002 the birth rate for White females age 15-19 had decreased by 26%. During the same time period African-American teen birth rate saw a decrease of 30%. While in the same eight year period the Latina teen birth rate increased by 53% (Georgia Department of Human Resources OASIS Database).

According to the Pew Hispanic Center, by 2020 the number of Latinos in the United States will reach 60.4 million (at the present there 37.4 million Latinos in the southeast region of the U.S.), for the southeast region, the US Census projects that the Latino populations will grow at the same rate as the nation and particularly in the 10 to 19 age bracket.

Applications for County Programming:

- Conduct a community needs assessment around the issue of teen pregnancy within the Latino Community.
- Establish a strong partnership with the Latino Communities in your counties, to address the impact and the contributing factors of teen pregnancy.
- Write a grant proposal to secure funding for hiring bi-lingual staff to provide training and to be a contact in the Latino Community.
- Work cross-county to establish a regional initiative addressing Latino Family Strengths and Community Needs.
- Facilitate training for service providers and parents around issues impacting teen pregnancy.
- Collaborate with schools to promote high school completion by providing life skills classes.

State Pow link: Positive Development of CYF
Integrated vegetable production, processing and marketing have been identified as a leading Extension program priority under Dean Buchanan’s budget redirection plans for the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Georgia’s fruit and vegetable industry is worth more than $700 million per year and ranks 4th in the U.S. in fresh produce production. However, two issues and one opportunity face Georgia produce industry: (1) potential food-borne diseases, (2) agrosecurity, and (3) value-added fresh-cut produce. To remain competitive, Georgia producers must be able to document to their buyers and the consuming public that Georgia produce is safe to eat, and to develop new value-added (fresh-cut) products to meet consumer desires.

Consumers are more concerned about bacterial contamination (77%) than any other food safety risk (Bruhn, 1997). Specifically, produce buyers (wholesalers and retailers) are now mandating third-party inspections to certify that their fruit and vegetable producers are using “Good Agricultural Practices” – GAPs – to insure food safety. In light of the vulnerability of fresh and fresh-cut produce to terrorist attack or deliberate contamination, food security plans must be developed and implemented for our industries. To add value to their whole produce, vegetable growers and packers are now developing “fresh-cut produce processing facilities” as an extension of their whole produce businesses.

Extension Food Science has led the development and implementation of a state-certified “GAPs” program since 2000. To date, there are 28 paid clients (growers/packers) at some state of the certification process and 17 have received certification. Also, Extension Food Science has been instrumental in developing food security audits to assist fresh produce growers/packers and fresh-cut processors to evaluate their food security readiness. To date, 20 farms, packinghouses and/or fresh-cut processors have been audited and recommendations made. In addition, at least four new fresh-cut processing operations have been constructed and are now operating in South Georgia. The need for continued food safety training and certification, development and implementation of food security plans, and commodity diversification by moving into fresh-cut produce processing will continue to grow in Georgia’s fresh produce industry.

County agents who have received “GAP” training since 2002 now have the skills to assist their local growers/packers/shippers to get ready for and pass third-party food safety audits. Agent training is needed to teach them how to help their clientele develop and implement food security plans, to build and operate a fresh-cut processing facility, and to address quality control and safety issues of fresh-cut produce processing.

Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Foodborne Illness
Agrosecurity
Horticulture

**ORNAMENTALS (NURSERY, GREENHOUSE, LANDSCAPE)**

**Situation:**

Nursery: Sales for container nursery stock remain strong in 2004, after a weak year in 2003. Nursery production levels have stabilized and little expansion is occurring. The demand for trees is very weak and the supply is abundant. The primary market, new construction, has created little demand.

Greenhouse: The greenhouse industry in Georgia is valued at $252 million dollars in 2003. 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. 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.
Nursery: Container nursery stock seems to have a strong demand. Hydrangea 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 2002 and 2002 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 low and it appears recovery will coincide with the recovery of our 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.

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.
Applications for County Programming:

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.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Agricultural Worker Education and Safety
CONSUMER HORTICULTURE-MASTER GARDENER

Situation: As the urban population in Georgia continues to grow, the demand for up-to-date research-based information on horticultural-related topics will continue to increase. Decreased budgets and reduced personnel have challenged the County Extension Agent's ability to provide educational community programs. Environmental concerns such as pesticide and water issues will continue to be of major importance to homeowners, and continued public reliance on the University Extension System will require that Extension Agents explore non-traditional methods of information delivery.

Trend: Environmental awareness and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) will continue to be significant factors in the area of consumer horticulture. Access to digital information will be necessary for rapid diagnostics of horticultural-related problems. Homeowner concerns regarding landscape issues such as water-wise gardening and pesticide use will continue to be of importance and the need for non-biased information will remain high. A continued trend in budget cuts and less staff will require that Extension Agents refocus their training efforts in the Master Gardener Program to teach Master Gardener volunteers for office assistance and program delivery. The emphasis in training Master Gardeners should reflect county and regional needs as concern the environment and IPM alternatives.

Outlook: An increased public demand for horticultural knowledge will continue to challenge the University of Georgia and County Extension Offices. It is unlikely that counties will see an increase in faculty to assist with the high volume of information requests. 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.

Applications for County Programming: Agents should continue to host Master Gardener Program Training sessions with an emphasis on teaching classes such as xeriscape, 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. 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 specialized Master Gardener classes to update volunteers on new research and current trends.

State Pow link: Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
Situation:
As the population in Georgia continues to grow especially in the urban and transitional urban areas, there is a tremendous demand for correct and environmentally safe horticulture information. Pesticide sensitivity, water shortages, water quality and environmental protection are a few of the issues concerning today's public. As natural resources are stretched or negatively affected, people in urban areas will be looking for solutions and alternatives to their problems. Because there is so much information available to the consumer via the Internet and TV, it will be a challenge for the University and county offices to provide solid, research based information to the public. Both the consumer and commercial industries will be affected by these environmental concerns and information overload.

Trend:
There will be increased environmental sensitivity as we have to learn to manage our landscapes and vegetable gardens with fewer pesticides, less water and perhaps fewer resources. Culture IPM methods and improved varietal selection to help prevent problems will become even more important. Information and testing on disease resistant vegetable and ornamental varieties will become increasingly important as pesticide options go off the market. There will continue to be tremendous concern for drought resistant plants and water wise landscapes. Urban tree problems will also cause increased work load for agents and specialist as the traditional Forestry Service will no longer be handling these requests. Agents will need to become more proficient at electronic delivery of information via the Internet and mass media. Consumers and commercial industry folks seem to be less willing to travel to programs and want instead quick, precise answers from the convenience of their home computer, television or radio.

Outlook:
The demand for information pertaining to urban agriculture issues will continue to escalate. The University will need to stay on top of environmental issues and also methods of information delivery. Continued research is needed in developing new and improved varieties as well as new chemical and cultural methods to assist with landscape problems. The questions from the public are getting more difficult and the answers are not always as clear-cut as they once were. Specialists must do a better job of keeping agents updated so that in turn agents will have the latest information to give to the public. The county program may in turn need to become more focused and specialized and move away from covering every subject known to man. Information delivery will need to move from traditional classroom programs to web based and perhaps satellite delivery.

Applications for County Programming:
With fewer county faculty and state specialists, regional programming and information sharing via list serves will become more important to support the client base. More training in computer technology and web page building will be vital for University faculty to reach the new technically skilled audience. Emphasis should be placed on disseminating information on environmentally sensitive issues such as IPM, organic alternatives and water quality and quantity. The use of volunteers, such as the Master Gardeners, will also become a stronger part of delivering county programming.

State Pow link: Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
VEGETABLES

Situation: Vegetable production continues to be an excellent profit source for Georgia farmers. It is one of the few agricultural activities that do not receive direct government subsidies. Production in Georgia is overwhelming for the fresh market with very little production for processing. Processing acres is only 5.5% of the total. 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. According to the 2003 Farmgate report there was a 37% increase in vegetable revenue from 2002 to 2003. This does not reflect a sustained growth pattern, but does reflect strong commodity prices in 2003 and reflects an overall trend in the last several years of growth in vegetable revenues while vegetable acres fell by 2% from 2002 to 2003. Farms continue to grow in size, while the number of farms declines. Growers continue to face challenges of producing high quality vegetables under increasing competitive pressures. The phase out of methyl bromide is an example of one the challenges growers face. This fumigant, in many cases, has no viable alternative; however, use exemptions will be available for the near term. Organic production, which is an extremely small part of Georgia production has seen a 68% increase in acres from just over 300 to over 500 acres from 2000 to 2003. 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. Growers will continue to be asked to be more vigilant concerning food safety and security.

Applications for County Programming: 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.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Foodborne Illness
Agrosecurity
FRUIT AND NUT CROPS

Situation:
Small Fruit: Blueberries continue to be a rapidly expanding crop in south Georgia. Acreage has increased by over 200% in the past 15 years. An excellent infrastructure of 15 packing houses is in place. Prices growers received for fresh fruit was good in 2003 and fair in 2004. Frozen blueberry prices have been good. Strawberry pick-your-own operations continue to increase in number. There are now about 60 strawberry growers in the state, compared to only a few 20 years ago. Most growers had a good crop in 2004. The grape acreage in the state is stable, with several new wineries opening in South Georgia in 2004.

Tree Fruit and Nuts:
Apples. In 2003 approximately 40 million pounds of apples were produced in Northeast Georgia. The 2004 season should yield a similar volume despite some losses to an early spring frost and fire blight. The frost reduced fruit volume only by about 1% relative to 2003. Acreage is at about 1200 down from 1900 acres in 1995. 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 that had otherwise been controlled by those organophosphates. New highly specific pesticides are not adequately effective against this pest. Unless new pesticides are identified as useful against Dogwood borer, the longevity of orchards will decline substantially.

Peaches. The stable 2003-04 winter and early spring provided adequate chill units for peach trees throughout the state and only one mild early spring frost that gave a light thinning in localized areas and some significant loss of the earliest varieties in South Georgia. The crop level was nearly 100% in Georgia as well as other peach production areas, nationally. Generally cool spring temperatures during bloom and early fruit development caused the crop to be delayed slightly, causing wholesalers to experience depressed pricing in the early markets that generally held throughout the season. Additionally, it is believed that the advent of the Atkins Diet depressed produce consumption, including peach, also affecting wholesale pricing and volume shipped. The loss of some effective organophosphates for peach pest management has altered the pest complement in orchards with an increase in problems with Lesser peach tree borer and San Jose scale. Unless new pesticides are identified as useful against Lesser peach tree borer, the longevity of orchards will decline substantially.

Pecans. The 2003 pecan production for Georgia was ca. 60 million pounds. The 2003 season was anticipated to be an "on-production" year. However, the almost daily rains of the summer, improved the environment for the pecan scab organism that reduced the anticipated crop by nearly half.
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 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. Each of the last five years has seen a 2-5% increase in overall acreage as new road-side and U-pick operations were initiated. We anticipate a 5-7% decline in acreage this winter due to the 2004 season market, with removal of older orchards without 2004-05 winter replanting. It is anticipated that this pull-back will be overcome in subsequent improved wholesale years and as balance sheets improve. 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. South Georgia producers have planted three new non-melting fleshed varieties that ship well and hold on the tree longer to attain greater soluble solids and color and Middle Georgia growers are planting two new highly color, firmer fleshed varieties this season. Orchard managers have learned to manage San Jose scale infestations by two annual dormant oil sprays. The addition of Nak or Esteem is another tool available when San Jose scale escapes the oil management program.

Pecans: Approximately 50 million pounds are predicted for 2004, which should mean excellent pricing. Pecan acreage is shifting into new areas, to some degree, as more urban areas are pressing in on traditional pecan acres.
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 good despite current diet trends. The FQPA remains a matter of great concern, since the apple and peach industries are very pesticide dependant. Although IPM is 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: Georgia continues to be in the top pecan producing states in the US. New targeted insecticides against aphids will improve management of this pest. The use of SuperTin may impact future IPM considerations.

Applications for County Programming:

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 Savannah Horticultural Commodity and the Southeastern Fruitworkers meetings are encouraged. 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. In particular, peach growers must spray all acres with dormant oil according to the guide for control of San Jose Scale.

Pecans: Agents should stress adequate nutrient regimes with particular attention to Zn 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 the Pecan Growers Handbook (http://www.ent.uga.edu/pmh/Horticultural_Crops/Fruit_and_Nuts/Pecan/insect_bea ring.htm). The crop will probably be lower in 2004. Shuck removal during the dormant season is recommended for reduction of scab inoculum. For best IPM practices, refer to the Georgia Pecan Pest Management Guide (http://www.ent.uga.edu/pmh/Horticultural_Crops/Fruit_and_Nuts/Pecan/spray_guid e.htm).

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Situation:
Fruit production within the state of Georgia has a significant impact on the agricultural economy, accounting for approximately sixty million dollars worth of total revenue to producers each year. Peaches account for nearly 55% of the revenue generated in fruits, with blueberry pulling a distant second (roughly 30% of revenue). Apple, pear, grapes (largely muscadine and wine), strawberry, and bramble berries account for the remaining fruit production in the state. 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 in some Georgia orchards. 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. Strawberry and bramble berry production has increased in Georgia, as producers look for profitable alternatives to traditional row crop commodities. The loss of methyl bromide may reduce the production of California strawberries, thereby giving advantage to Georgia production. However, 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. 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.

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.
Applications for County Programming:

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 the use of expert systems and models associated with disease management in fruit production. On-farm research and demonstration 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.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agrosecurity
Foodborne Illness
Turfgrass pathology

Situation:
Turfgrass production and management is a significant and growing industry in the state. There are approximately 1.6 million acres of turf in Georgia with a maintenance value of $1.56 billion. Disease losses and control costs account for over $200 million annually. Due to the number of turf species produced and managed, as well as its high aesthetic quality, the number of inquires to county faculty and specialists regarding disease problems have increased considerably. Turf is the second largest and the fastest growing group of samples submitted to the plant disease clinic.

Trend:
Due to Georgia’s increasing population as well as the increased use and popularity of turf species, there is a significant need to educate producers, managers and landscape companies’ personnel of the problems associated with turf and disease management. Turf production and turf management are some of the fastest growing industries in Georgia; this has put extra demands on Extension personnel for diagnostic, information resources as well as control education programs.

Outlook:
Due to the high aesthetic standards demanded by the growing turf industry, county faculty will be asked to provide educational programs for turf 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.

Applications for County Programming:
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 and Master Gardeners at the local level to address local or regional needs. These techniques will also provide county faculty the necessary tools and knowledge to diagnose turf problems independently.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agribusiness Development/Value Added
Agricultural Worker Education and Safety
ALL CROPS

Situation: Fungicides are essential disease management tools used by homeowners and commercial growers alike for remedial control of plant diseases when cultural and biological controls measures aren't appropriate or have been overcome by disease.

Trend: As the older, more broad spectrum chemistries are replaced by the newer, more target specific chemistries, knowledge of fungicide chemistry and mode of action is needed to ensure that these newer fungicide chemistries are used correctly and that fungicide resistance management strategies are well understood.

Outlook: County faculty will be asked to give educated answers to fungicide questions from homeowners to large scale commercial growers. A fundamental understanding of how fungicides work, how they should be applied, how fungi should be matched to fungicide mode of action, and how to sustain the use of fungicides through proper resistance management tactics are all key to answering fungicide questions.

Applications for County Programming: Training that addresses the basics of fungicide chemistry and use patterns, county faculty can aid both homeowners and commercial growers in making effective fungicide use decisions. These decisions will promote better disease control while preserving fungicide chemistry for the future.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Foodborne Illness
VEGETABLES

Situation: Vegetable production is a significant component of Georgia agriculture. Georgia produces vegetables primarily for the fresh market (93% of acreage) and is ranked in the top five nationally for fresh market vegetable production. For every vegetable crop grown in Georgia there are at least three major pathogens which occur annually and cause loss due to yield and cost of control. Due to environmental concerns and loss of fungicide chemistry due to re-registrations called for by FQPA, fewer fungicides are being made available to growers of commercial vegetables. Also, the 2005 phaseout of methyl bromide creates a need for research and education into new soil fumigant alternatives.

Trend: The high value and intensive management characteristics of vegetable crop production require that producers and county Extension personnel be educated to make fast, accurate disease management decisions. Georgia’s vegetable production continues to increase in both diversity and intensity which emphasizes the need for Extension education in disease diagnosis and management. The fungicide and fumigant arena is also very static in commercial vegetable production and continuous information delivery is essential to correct, efficient disease management tactics.

Outlook: County Extension personnel will be called on to provide educational materials and programs for vegetable disease management and to provide diagnosis of vegetable crop diseases. Training and communication with county Extension personnel are essential in dealing with the diversity of plant disease problems growers face.

Applications for County Programming: Distance diagnostics through digital imaging is a tool by which county Extension personnel can interact with state Extension specialists to solve vegetable disease problems quickly and accurately. Images submitted by county faculty which are representative of certain diseases may augment bulletins that specifically address diseases of commercial vegetables and their management.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
SOYBEAN PATHOLOGY

Situation: Based on the current the value of soybeans, growers in Georgia have increased the statewide average from approximately 160,000 acres in 2003 to 250,000 acres in 2004. Along with this increase in acreage has come a corresponding increase in the management and inputs afforded to the crop. With a financial commitment to irrigation, weed control, insect control, and fertility, many growers now anticipate yields in excess of 40 bushels per acre. Historically, there has been an idea that one cannot afford to treat soybeans with fungicides. Given the potential losses associated with diseases of soybean, e.g. frogeye leaf spot (Cercospora sojina) and the ominous threat from the Asiatic soybean rust (Phakopsora pachyrhizi), soybean growers in Georgia must receive improved information on fungicide use for disease management in this crop.

Trend: Frogeye leaf spot and downy mildew of soybean have been abundant in soybean fields across the Coastal Plain of Georgia in 2004. During much of the growing season, questions from agents pertaining to disease management in soybeans have been as frequent as questions from either peanuts or cotton. Specifically, the agents have been searching for information on the identification of disease symptoms, the fungicides that are used for control, the timing of fungicide applications, and the economic value of such treatments. Agents and growers are also aware that the Asiatic soybean rust is expected to affect American production in the near future. Understandably, both groups are anxious to know how this disease will affect growers in Georgia and what management tools are available now or will be available once the disease arrives.

Outlook: In conjunction with Dr. Phil Jost in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, advances are being made in the education of agents and growers in the areas of disease management in soybeans. This is being achieved though the update of soybean disease information, an increased effort to visit soybean producers and to participate in grower production meetings, and to develop field trials related to the management of fungal diseases of soybeans. In particular, efforts are underway to coordinate the activities of the USDA-APHIS, the Georgia Department of Agriculture, and the University of Georgia in anticipation of the arrival of the Asiatic soybean rust. Specifically, a first-response plan is being drafted and Section 18 labels are being requested for the use of fungicides effective against soybean rust in Georgia.

Applications for County Programming: Management of fungal diseases of soybeans will become of ever increasing importance in Georgia provided that the crop remains viable in the state and that the threat of soybean rust continues. Agents will be called upon by commodity groups and growers to provide educational programming on disease management. In addition, agents will have the opportunity to conduct field trials in their county identifying fungicide programs and soybean cultivars that are economically beneficial for the growers.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Agrosecurity
**PEANUT PATHOLOGY**

**Situation:** Peanut diseases caused by soilborne fungal pathogens, such as *Cercosporidium personatum*, *Cercospora arachidicola*, *Rhizoctonia solani* and *Sclerotium rolfsii* continue to affect growers in Georgia by reducing yields. Under the recent peanut farm program, many growers spend more money on their fungicide disease management program than on any other category of inputs, including the cost of seed.

**Trend:** The tools available to growers for the management of peanut diseases have experienced dramatic improvements in the past 15 years. New peanut varieties developed in breeding programs at the University of Georgia and the University of Florida are more resistant to the Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus as well as to a number of fungal pathogens. The fungicides that growers use today are much more effective against soilborne diseases such as white mold and Rhizoctonia limb rot than chlorothalonil. Also, through the combined studies by researchers in several departments, we now have a better idea how the use of tillage practices, row spacing, planting date, crop rotation, and irrigation can affect the severity of fungal diseases in a field.

**Outlook:** Members of the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Georgia continue to refine the University of Georgia’s Fungal Disease Risk Index that was first released in 2003. Through the use of research studies, we have developed a system by which the peanut growers in Georgia can assess the potential for epidemics of fungal diseases in individual fields based upon their production practices. Based upon their level of risk (low, medium, or high) the growers now have a system by which they can evaluate their current production practices and consider the benefits from alternative practices. In addition, the peanut disease management team within the Department of Plant Pathology is also developing “prescription fungicide programs” which the growers can use with confidence in their efforts to minimize the impact of fungal diseases. Where the risk for disease is determined to be low or even moderate, the grower will be able to apply less fungicide and still maintain top yields. In situations of high risk, growers will need to make at least the standard number of fungicide applications and perhaps more.

**Applications for County Programming:** The development of the University of Georgia’s Fungal Disease Risk Index will provide opportunities for the County Extension Faculty in three specific areas. First, the Index will serve as a teaching opportunity for the agents in their efforts to better educate peanut growers on the management of fungal diseases. The second area will be in the assessment of prescription fungicide programs. Agents will have the opportunity to establish field trials in their counties based upon the results from the Fungal Disease Risk Index. The objective of these trials will be to validate the effectiveness of prescription programs in low and moderate risk fields. Finally, the use of the Fungal Disease Risk Index and prescription fungicide programs will allow agents to have a positive impact on the cost of production for peanuts grown in Georgia.

**State Pow link:** Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability
Poultry Science

4 4311 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Situation: The poultry industry represents one of the few agricultural industries that have shown steady growth in Georgia. There are currently more than 11,000 production facilities located on some 3800 farms in the state. Expansion programs are underway in the southern and central parts of the state that will result in the addition of approximately 400 to 500 new poultry houses. It is estimated that these production facilities will produce over $80 million worth of organic fertilizer when utilized appropriately. The continued growth of this industry depends on the appropriate utilization of this material and compliance with state and federal regulations regarding confined feeding operations.

Trend: Environmental issues are critically important areas of need for the poultry industry. The future growth and viability of this industry depends on its ability to address important environmental issues related to poultry waste management, water and air quality. Georgia poultry producers are developing and implementing nutrient management plans to assure appropriate application of poultry litter as an organic fertilizer for the protection of ground and surface waters of the state. In addition, poultry producers must comply with state CAFO regulations for permitting and application of this material.

Outlook: The need for poultry growers to implement nutrient management plans and to comply with CAFO permits offers a significant opportunity for county agents to work with poultry growers.

Applications for County Programming:

– Provide educational programs on NMPs and CAFO regulations as needed.
– Assist poultry farmers on P-Index assessment as required.
– Assist poultry farmers in soil and litter analysis.
– Assist poultry farmers with the development of their NMPs.
– Provide educational programs on manure application and calibration methods.

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources
Situation:
Pine stumpage revenues in Georgia have declined by 33% between 1997 and 2002. During this same period, pine straw revenues in Georgia have increased by 52% (from an estimated $15.5 million in 1999 to over $25 million in 2003, Boatright and McKissick 2003). Pine pulpwood demand and stumpage values in Georgia and the southeastern U.S. are near 30 year lows (TM-S 2004). Private non-industrial forest landowners (NIPFLs) by incorporating pine straw production in their overall forest management plans can greatly increase their revenues and rate of return (Dangerfield and others 2001). Some NIPFLs have made over $500,000 for pine straw without cutting a stick of wood. Many forest landowners and land managers are interested in managing their loblolly, longleaf, or slash pine stands for pine straw.

Trend:
The near-term future demand for pine straw from longleaf, slash, and in some areas loblolly stands looks favorable. The near-term future of pine pulpwood demand and stumpage value on NIPF lands looks unfavorable.

Applications for County Programming:
A series of two day trainings and workshops is planned to be offered in 2005 (in Vidalia, Valdosta, Macon, and Athens). These workshops and trainings will provide information necessary to effectively manage pine stands for pine straw. Topics include: pine straw yields by species, site quality, land use history, and basal area, a review of cut-over and old-field pine straw studies, other factor that affect pine straw yields, the effect (annual, periodic, none) of pine straw raking on soil moisture status, nutrient cycling, and stand growth. Also covered will be the effect of fertilization on pine straw yields on cut-over and old-field sites, the use of diagnostic tools and soils information to determine fertilizer needs, herbicide use and recommendations, control of invasive exotic species. Finally, management alternatives to getting a cut-over pine stand into pine straw production, sequencing fertilizer and herbicide use, and the economics of pine straw in overall pine stand management. Upon completion of this course, a forest landowner, agent, state forester, or land manager will be able to make effective silvicultural and economical management decisions on managing loblolly, slash, and longleaf stands for pine straw.

State Pow link:
Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources Agribusiness Development/Value Added
WOOD QUALITY

Situation: Pine stumpage prices have declined to historic lows (1970’s prices) for pulpwood and to a lesser extent pine chip and saw (down 45% since 1997). Pine saw timber and pole prices, in contrast, have remained strong since 1997. The future of growing pines on private non-industrial forest lands is to grow quality wood and not just maximize wood volume to maximize revenues. County Agents need to be aware of and able to educate NIPF landowners on chip and saw, saw timber, and pole specifications.

Trend: The future demand and stumpage value of pine sawtimber and poles looks favorable in Georgia. The future on pine pulpwood demand and stumpage value looks unfavorable.

Outlook: There exists a need to train County Agents in South Georgia on chip and saw, saw timber, and pole specifications and in Central Georgia training on chip and saw and saw timber specifications (FASAT training Spring 2005). The trained FASAT agents can then have multi-county landowner meeting on growing quality saw timber and poles and assist them in their woods on trees that will and will not make saw timber or pole specifications.

Applications for County Programming: Responsible for FASAT Spring 2005 Wood Quality Trainings
David Dickens – Associate Professor of Forest Productivity UGA-WSFR

State Pow link: Agricultural Profitability and Sustainability Conservation/Mgmt of Nat Resources