



Up-Coming Events

March 1, 4-H Community Club 3:15 Extension office

March 8, Culinary Club, Extension office 3:15

March 15, Anglers Club, Chuck Hewitt home pond 3:15

March 21, SVYLS Swine Showmanship, Live Oak Fair Grounds 6:30

March 22, SVYLS Swine Show, Live Oak Fair Grounds 6:30

March 23, SVYLS Steer Show, Live Oak Fair Grounds 6:30

March 24, SVYLS Steer and Hog Sale Live Oak Fair Grounds 9:00

March 29, Home School Club, Extension Office, 10:00

March 29, Archery Club, Extension Office, 3:15

March 30, Senior commodity pick-up 2:00-4:00

Lafayette County Ag and Weather Report

By: Emily Beach

As you can see from the chart, February was an unusually dry month. This creates a strain on pastureland for grazing livestock but not so much for other facets of agriculture since most crops aren't in the ground yet. The warmer temperatures we have experienced have caused an early green-up of lawns and brought on some early blooms in home landscape. Now is a good time to check your sprinkler systems or means of irrigation since we are experiencing dryer conditions.

March is the month for planting annuals and bulbs for late spring and summer blooming. You can also start planning for your spring garden. Warm-season crops like beans, tomatoes, squash, and corn can be planted for a late spring harvest.

February Rainfall Totals (in)			
	2022	2021	2020
Cooks Hammock	1.66	6.06	5.61
Mallory Swamp	1.38	5.47	5.69
Midway Tower	1.37	6.76	5

4-H Archery Club Popular Among Local

By: Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette 4-H Archery Club continues to grow and has become one of the more popular 4-H county 4-H clubs. Kids learn the basic fundamentals of safely shooting a compound bow. 4-H shooting sports has specific guidelines for how to teach youth archery which includes whistle commands that indicate when to approach a shooting line, the time to draw, and when the range is safe to retrieve arrows. Young archery 4-Hers face many challenges when starting the sport archers not only need physical strength, but also mental strength. Just by practicing archery, young archers will learn patience, focus, and self-motivation.



Justin Swinson Jr aims at an archery target.

Lafayette County Youth Compete in 4-H Public Speaking Contest

By: Shawn Jackson

Eight local youth recently competed in the 4-H Public Speaking Contest at Lafayette Elementary School. Individual classroom winners in the fourth and fifth grade advanced to the county contest which was held February 15. Speeches presented at the competition were written by the students themselves and topics were their choice as well, based on their personal interest. While all competitors did an excellent job presenting their speeches to the large audience present, three judges were given the daunting task of identifying three winners which included first place winner Easton Powers, second place Katie Jones, and third place winner Kenly Melland. The knowledge, self-confidence and experience gained from this 4-H public speaking contest will benefit all participants for many years to come.

Photo top: Easton Powers, Katie Jones and Kenly Melland.

Photo bottom: Reese Hurst, Christopher Hornback, Easton Powers, Copelyn Johnson, Natalie Newman, Katie Jones, Rylyn Page, Kenly Melland



4-H Enjoys Making Shrimp and Grits



By: Shawn Jackson

It was a shrimp and grits kind of day at the 4-H Cooking Club meeting. Youth started the meeting learning to make a basic staple of a southern meal, grits. Mrs. Beach shared her secrets to making smooth creamy grits with the club prior to teaching them to cook the shrimp in a skillet of bacon drippings. Members were able to enjoy their shrimp and grits with toppings of their choice including a variety of cheeses and bacon. 4-Hers were able to take home some of their finished work to share with family as well.

Right: 4-Hers cooks shrimp on griddles and prepare grits.

4-H Anglers Club Learn to Tie Flies

By: Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette 4-H Anglers Club recently had an opportunity to explore the art of fly tying. Tony Melvin, a Lafayette County resident and avid fly tyer, recently volunteered with Lafayette 4-H teaching how to tie flies for fly fishing. Fly tying is the process of producing an artificial fly used by fly fishing anglers to catch fish. Fly tying is a manual process done by a single individual using hand tools and a variety of natural and manmade materials that are attached to a hook. Melvin has experimented with just about everything you can think of to make flies. "Once you get into tying these flies, you start seeing things everywhere that can be a fly" said Melvin as he used a piece of elastic from a bungee strap to make what appeared as legs on a fly. Thread, feathers, and yarn are just some of the materials the 4-H Anglers used to make their flies. Each member was able to make two flies. They started with placing a naked hook in a vice. From there, they used a variety of techniques and materials that would lead to a finished product closely resembling a fly, bug, or spider. Melvin says that different flies are better suited for different areas and an example of that is a specific fly that he has much success within the Suwannee River.



4-H Homeschool Club Enjoys Horticulture and Wood Crafts

By: Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette Homeschool 4-H Club spent time this month learning about planting in earth boxes and crafting. Earth boxes is a new concept of container gardening that makes gardening easy, anywhere while producing a bountiful crop. One of the features of the earth boxes is a reservoir of water in the bottom that allows the grower to water less often and keeps leaves and vegetables dry, decreasing the chances for disease and rot. 4-H members assembled three earth boxes and planted tomatoes in them. After planting the boxes, the 4-Hers used scrap wood pieces to make colorful signs with their names painted on them. Most of the signs were either in a patriotic theme or the colors of their favorite sports.



Lafayette Extension Host Peanut Production Meeting

By: Emily Beach

Lafayette County Extension hosted the annual Peanut Production meeting on March 3, 2022 at the 4th District Community Center. This meeting is held to offer an opportunity for peanut producers in our area to hear from University of Florida IFAS Extension researchers to learn about trial results, hear recommendations, and understand what is going on in the peanut industry economy. The first hour was an optional training for pesticide license holders to attain Continuing Education Units (CEUs). There were around 45 people in attendance who heard from 3 UF Professors, each specializing in a field within peanut production. Dr. Barry Tillman, a Professor of Agronomy who specializes in peanut varieties, spoke to the group about improved peanut varieties and trends that have been studied through research trials at various UF research centers as well as on-farm. Dr. Nicholas Dufault, an Associate Professor in Plant Pathology, discussed plant disease management in peanuts and offered tools for developing efficient management programs that will maximize disease control and reduce costly inputs. This was a perfect transition into Dr. Kevin Athern, the Regional Specialized Agent for Rural Agribusiness Development, and his information on budgeting for peanut production, recent trends and the outlook for 2022 in the peanut market. All speakers emphasized the fact that this is a unique year for production of crops considering the costs of major inputs like fertilizers and fuel.

Often times consumers neglect the thought of what goes into producing food on a large scale basis and the cost and precise decision making that has to go along with that. Producers in our area are in a difficult position as the cost of inputs continues to rise and the market is uncertain. Production meetings like these allow for options to be presented and hopefully offers a moment of reflection for comparing past decisions versus what is optimal and most efficient at the current time. Our farmers are highly skilled and have goals set and gaining knowledge from UF IFAS Extension gives them the most current research and information to make them successful.



Ag Agent Emily Beach discusses worker production standards



More than 60 area famers and presenters present at meeting

The 2022 Lafayette 4-H

Chick Chain

What you need to know to participate:

- Clover-Buds, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior 4-H members are eligible to participate.
- Participants should have their chicks by April 1, 2022
- Participants are responsible for obtaining and purchasing their chicks from vendor of their choice.
- Breeds that are acceptable to enter in the program include: Rhode Island Reds, Australorp, Barred Rock, Leghorn, Wyandotte, Orpington.
- Participants will learn poultry nutrition and care, communication skills and record keeping.
- Youth will raise chicks for 20-24 weeks prior to shows.
- Lafayette County 4-H will have two opportunities to present their raised hen: 1) Lafayette County Chick chain show, 2) Tri-County Chick Chain Show Madison.
- Youth interested in participating will need to contact the Lafayette County Extension office to be registered in the program.

IFAS Extension is an equal opportunity Institution. We encourage all races, religions and ethnicities to attend our summer programs. There are scholarships available for minority and underprivileged children. Please contact our office for more information.