Lafayette Extension Host Goat and Chic-chain Show

Shawn Jackson
Lafayette County 4-H recently hosted its first ever goat and chic-chain livestock show. The event was held on Friday October 21, at the Lafayette County Ag complex in Mayo. The goat competition consisted of 5 goats, with 4 competitors competing in a meat goat class. Mr. Cody Norton, former University of Florida livestock judging team member, judged the class of goats and carefully explained to the exhibitors and guests the qualities he was looking for in a top prize winning goat. Tinley Jackson showed the grand champion goat and also was awarded the prize for showmanship. Tinley showed a female boar goat which was bread and born on the farm of Neil and Julie McCray. Other goat exhibitors included Gracie Swindell, Jace Fike and Kaitlyn McCray.

Seven 4-H Youth showed chickens in the livestock show. The chickens shown were the adult hens that were raised in the 2021 4-H chic-chain project which starts in the spring of each year by purchasing baby chicks. This portion of the show was judged by Hamilton County 4-H Agent, Greg Hicks. Mr. Hicks also gave youth tips on how to hold and remove chickens from their cages with limited stress. He interviewed each participant about their chick-chain experience while examining the chickens for desirable characteristics in laying hens. Ava Keen’s Rhode Island Red named “Penny” was awarded the grand champion chicken. Lanae Colson was awarded the showmanship prize for her ability to handle her chicken with ease, as well as her depth of knowledge regarding the raising of her hen. Exhibitors in the Chick-chain show included Holland Jackson, Jayden Lumpkin, Miles Jackson, Ava Keen, Lanae Colson, Emilee Elizabeth Jackson and Derby Sherill. These 4-Hers will be showing their hens in the tri-county Chic-Chain contest in Madison in November 9. Photos inside

October Weather and Agriculture Report

Emily Beach
Drier days have allowed for many things to happen in our county in the last month. Lawns and roadways have seemingly become free of standing water again in most places. Hay fields have been able to dry out enough for cuttings to be made as we prepare for winter. It has also allowed the peanut harvesting season to be reaching an end point for the majority of producers and for cotton to continue to progress.

Fall gardens seem to be flourishing and syrup is being cooked because sugar cane is ready for harvest. Fall corn for silage has been chopped and stored as well. Many producers are making decisions about winter forages and cover crops are being prepared to go into the ground.
By Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette County Youth Farm Judging Contest was held on Friday, October 8. Over 150 youth from Dixie, Madison, Gilchrist, Taylor and Lafayette Counties were represented at the 26th annual event. Livestock classes being judged at the contest included market hogs, replacement guilts, beef market heifers, beef replacement heifers and laying hens. Other categories for judging included peanuts, corn, hay, tobacco, and silage. Youth also participated in the optional farm management competition that consisted of identifying feed commodities, weeds, insects, tools and a farm general knowledge test.

Farm Judging contest help develop life skills that are important in youth development. In livestock judging, youth must develop a keen sense of judgment and confidence to make a decision that will have to be defended in a set of oral reasons. Participation in livestock judging builds character and makes the individual more self-confident. The farm management portion of the contest teaches youth knowledge about what is fed to animals before slaughter, the ability to recognize common tools used in ag and other industries as well as general knowledge about the importance of agriculture to the nation’s food supply.

After the contest, participants and volunteers were fed pizza, chips, and drinks.
Lafayette 4-H Has Busy October With Shows, Contest, Meetings

Shawn Jackson

The Lafayette 4-H had a busy month of October holding six club meetings, a small animal livestock show, farm judging contest and participating in the Mayo Pioneer Day festivities. The Clover Buds 4-H Club met on October 4. The highlight of this meeting was making scrap wood gnomes. The Mayo Community 4-H Club also met on October 4th. The topic of the meeting was identifying and distinguishing between pumpkins, squash and gourds. The craft of the day was a cloth pumpkin stuffed with tissue paper. The 4-H Cooking Club met on October 11. These club members enjoyed practicing making chocolate chip cookies from scratch. The Anglers Fishing Club met on August 18, at Pickett Lake. The day of catch and release fishing led to a total club catch of two bass and one blue gill. The Home School 4-H Club met on October 25. These youth made wooden candy corn crafts and also learned about Verma casting and built their own personal Verma cast beds to take home. Finally, the Shooting Sports 4-H Club met on the afternoon of October 25 as well. Lead by Anthony Newman, members of this club practiced their archery skills while reviewing all archery safety rules and practices.
4-H Holiday Bake-off December 7
Shawn Jackson
Lafayette 4-H will hold its annual holiday bake-off on Tuesday December 7, at 3:00 PM, at the Mayo Community Center. This event is open to all Lafayette 4-H members. Those wishing to participate should have their prepared holiday treat at the extension office by noon on the day of the competition, along with the recipe. A form to place the recipe on can be picked-up at the extension office. The winner of the competition will win the highly coveted golden spoon.

LES Kindergarteners Learn About Pumpkins and Jack-o’-lanterns
Emily Beach
On Wednesday, October 27, Mr. Jackson and I were able to visit all of the Kindergarten students at LES. During our time with each group, we were able to talk about the life cycle of pumpkins and ideas like germination, photosynthesis, and harvesting. We discussed the different varieties of pumpkins and their uses.

Mr. Jackson then taught the kids about the history of the jack-o’-lanterns. He told the kids that long ago, Irish tradition was to use turnips or large potatoes to scare away ghosts or evil things. Then Irish immigrants brought the tradition to America but then started using pumpkins since they are larger and were a popular crop here. He then carved a pumpkin for each group showing them the steps for making the perfect Jack-o’-lantern.

DON’T FORGET TO DONATE UN-OPENED JARS OF PEANUT BUTTER FOR OUR PEANUT BUTTER CHALLENGE. YOU CAN BRING THEM TO THE EXTENSION OFFICE UNTIL NOVEMBER 24! ALL DONATIONS STAY LOCAL.

Pumpkin Facts
- Depending on the ultimate size of the pumpkin, it takes 80 to 120 days for a pumpkin to grow from seed to fruit.
- Pumpkins are native to North America and are one of the oldest domesticated plants.
- According to science, the pumpkin is a fruit.
- The largest pumpkin ever recorded was over 1800 pounds.