

BOONE COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Report to the People

Take a look at our most successful programs from this past year to see how extension has provided invaluable resources and programming for the residents of Boone County, Kentucky.



 BOONE.CA.UKY.EDU



Florence office is open!

Our Agents are now using this new urban location for programming. Be on the lookout in 2025 for an official open house!

Did you know?

In honor of his retirement and dedicated service to Boone County and the Cooperative Extension, December 9, 2024 was proclaimed to be "Gerald D. Brown Day."

A young woman with her hair in a braid, wearing a red life vest with a white tree logo and the text "KENTUCKY 4-H CAMPING", is seen from behind, paddling a white canoe on a calm lake. The background shows a lush green forest under a bright sky. Other people in canoes are visible in the distance.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

From Camper to Leader: The Boone County 4-H Camp Experience

In 2024, Boone County 4-H brought 322 Campers, 45 teen leaders, and 46 adult leaders to North Central 4-H Camp in Carlisle, KY. A typical 5-day 4-H Camp offers around 96 hours of direct contact between youth and their cabin leaders, which is the equivalent of a family sitting down at the dinner table for 30 minutes, 192 days of the year. The interactions offered at 4-H Camp are so important to youth; with opportunities for them to feel a sense of belonging, to have meaningful conversations with caring adults, to practice generosity, group decision-making, experience new activities, and gain independence by taking on more responsibility in their day.

"I believe in the power of 4-H camp. When my youngest child attended, he had never gone to a camp and he really enjoyed it and wanted to go back. He's not the one to step out of his box normally, so for him to step out of his box and for it to be a good experience it says a lot."

- Loren Scheffler, a 4-H Parent

Camp culture in Boone County is rich with tradition. The value of mentorship and community is evident with many of our teen and adult leaders being former campers. Last year, 30 of our 45 teen leaders and 17 of our 46 adult leaders began their journey as campers. From age 15, campers can return as a counselor-in-training. They have opportunities to attend leadership workshops, assist with leading camp classes, and provide behind the scenes support for their camp session programming. This continuity ensures that the spirit of 4-H camp remains strong, with older youth passing down their knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm to the next generation. As a result, each year's camp not only fosters personal growth and leadership but also reinforces the values of our 4-H Youth Development programming.

4-H Youth Development Online

 [@BOONECOUNTRY4H](#)  [@BOONECOUNTRYLIVESTOCK](#)

Our 4-H program has two independent social media accounts under two separate pages found on Facebook under the handles [@BOONECOUNTRY4H](#) and [@BOONECOUNTRYLIVESTOCK](#). With just 265 combined posts and stories in 2024, this program reached over 66,000 social media users, had over 4,600 interactions and has over 2,700 followers across both accounts.

One of many popular camp activities, canoeing provides a unique team-building exercise where campers can work on communication skills and a practical understanding of physics in action.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture Initiatives in Boone County: Supporting Farmers Through Education and Resources



In conjunction with Extension offices across Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, the Boone County Extension Enrichment Center held the first annual Tri-State Homesteading Conference in 2024.

This past year there have been several Agriculture programs conducted to help the people of Boone County better understand Ag Production in the County. The following programs have been conducted:

- 41 CAIP Applications were approved for on farm cost shares
- 680 ANR Newsletters sent to county farmers per month
- 53 Farm visits to assist county farmers
- 45 Members participated in the NKY Horse Network Annual meeting
- 120 Members attended the NKY Cattle Association Annual Meeting which also presented a program on marketing
- 23 Individuals completed the Pesticide Certification program
- 22 Community members attended the Farmers Market Vendors Annual Meeting

Our many other Agricultural programs saw more than 270 participants learn extensively about a variety of topics including: Fall Pasture Management, Weed ID & Control, the ins and outs of hay, Cattle Handling Facility Design, Backyard Poultry, Fencing, and Breeding Soundness just to name a few.

"The Cooperative Extension here in Boone County offers a wide variety of opportunities that are extremely informative and useful. These opportunities let us know how we can help ourselves as well as how to collaborate with supportive services in our communities. . . "

- Leslie Sharp on Facebook

Boone County Cooperative Extension Online

 @BOONEKYEXT

You can find our office on five different platforms under the username @BOONEKYEXT. These accounts share program updates and resources across all program areas, including Agriculture as well as providing a resource for general office updates and news. Across all of these platforms, with just 366 posts, videos, and stories our profiles reached over 41,000 social media users, had over 780 interactions, and accumulated over 600 followers across all of our accounts.

COMMUNITY ARTS

Empowering Art & Cultural Organizations with Disaster Preparedness Tools

In response to an increase in devastating weather events, Boone County Extension hosted the Disaster Preparedness Workshop for Arts and Culture for local agencies. Major partners were the UK Department of Arts Administration, Kentucky Heritage Emergency Response Network (KHERN), and Performing Arts Readiness. This workshop welcomed state and national leaders in the field who led engaging discussions in facility risk assessment, festival and event safety planning, using creative arts to heal after disaster, and taking manageable steps towards preparation at home and at work. Participants received a one-year subscription to dPlan, an online emergency preparedness and response tool created specifically for arts and culture organizations.

"It was a great, informative workshop. I learned more than I expected to as a crafter (not part of an artistic/historical facility). Thank you to all the presenters!"

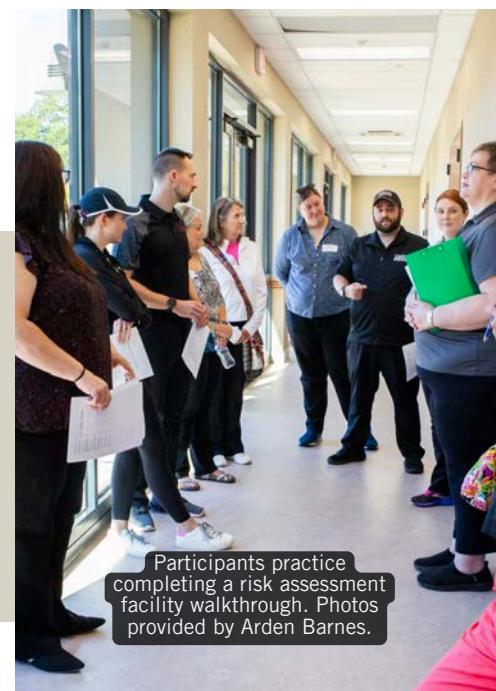
- christinamakie on Instagram

Fourteen organizations from Northern Kentucky, Cincinnati and beyond, participated in the training, representing performance venues, public art agencies, visual art galleries, Extension Homemakers, and Community Arts Extension agents. Survey results indicated 91% of participants reported they consider emergency preparedness very important relative to other priorities in their organization, and 82% of participants said they are very likely to apply something that they learned at the workshop at their workplace within the next six months. It was an informational and successful first-step in preparation and readiness for future emergencies.

Community Arts Online

  @BOONEKYARTS

Our Community Arts program has two independent social media accounts. Found on both Instagram and Facebook under the handle @BOONEKYARTS. With just 148 combined posts and stories in 2024, this program reached over 15,000 social media users, had over 700 interactions and has over 480 followers across both accounts.



Celebrating Success: Program Efforts Foster Learning and Service



Our Fall Nature Hike program provided participants a guided tour through our Nature Center to learn about native plants, fall color and wildlife. Photo provided by Barbara Jones.

The year 2024 proved to be another busy year for the Environmental and Natural Resource program with Boone County Extension. With the collaboration of many local organizations and volunteers we have had the opportunity to support the community through volunteer work and education for all ages. Participants have learned about wildlife, water quality, woodworking, natural crafts, forestry and so much more!

Kentucky Master Naturalist (KYMN) congratulated 15 graduates who dedicated over 600 hours of volunteer service in 2024 alone! They have traveled across oceans teaching others about the environment and to learn about other ecosystems and geology. We are so proud of their efforts and excited to host the program again in May of 2025.

Field trips to the Boone County Environmental and Nature Center have continued to grow in attendance, reaching 17 different schools, and overnight environmental field trips to North Central 4-H Camp have remained steady in attendance.

2024 BY-THE-NUMBERS SNAPSHOT:

Number of Programs: 90

- Total Attendance: 3,137

Number of Community Events: 4

- Total Attendance: 787

Field Trips: 29

- Total Attendance: 2,630

KYMN Graduates: 12

- Volunteer Hours: 607

Hike the Trails Attendance: 293

Environmental Education Online

  @BCENVIRONMENTALEDU

Our Environmental Education program has two independent social media accounts. Found on both Instagram and Facebook under the handle @BCENVIRONMENTALEDU. With just 200 combined posts and stories in 2024, this program reached over 33,000 social media users, had over 800 interactions and has over 1,700 followers across both accounts.

Mindful Creations: Crafting to Boost Mental Health & Well-Being

Family and Consumer Sciences Agents were very busy in 2024. One program to highlight is Liz Evans' Crafting Calm: Mindfulness in Handmade Creations. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, "it is estimated that more than one in five U.S. adults live with a mental illness." To address this, Crafting Calm was developed alongside Gallatin County FCS agent, Ronda Rex. This program was a 5-week series focusing on The Ohio State University's Mindful Wellness Curriculum. The goal was for participants to gain tools for mindful practice that encourage patience, focus and a sense of accomplishment.

Based on a pre-program survey, 86% of participants stated that they practiced mindfulness 0 days a week. End of program surveys showed 100% of participants practiced mindfulness at least once a week with the average being 4 days a week. Also, 100% of participants stated that they practiced mindfulness for at least 5 minutes a day with the average being at least 14 minutes a day.

Building Bridges of Shared Understanding Strengthens Individuals & Communities

Programs focused on understanding the backgrounds and cultures of others are offered by family and consumer sciences. Since January 2024, more than 300 adults have participated in programs centered on learning about world cultures and foods. From "Culture and Cuisine" to "hands-on cooking classes for adult English language learners," discovering that we share common foods with unique customs, has been valuable for all.

More than 70 adult men and women attended one or more sessions of the three-part "Healthy Eating around the World" program exploring the dietary guidelines and common foods of countries on different continents. Follow up surveys showed 87 percent learned more about the many cultures in our community, and 87 percent made a new recipe with an international focus. Participants learned more about world geography, spice combinations, customs, and recipes. One person shared "If we can't be in various countries, the next best thing is to experience as much of the culture as we can. Trying different foods widens our appreciation of their culture."



Liz Evans explaining a crafting technique to participants in the Crafting Calm program.



Learning about Mediterranean lifestyles while exploring local foods at the farmers market in the Walk, Shop and Chop program.

Family & Consumer Sciences Online

  @BOONEKYFCS

Our FCS program now has two social media accounts. Found on both Facebook and Instagram, under the handle @BOONEKYFCS. With just 174 combined posts and stories in 2024, this program reached over 39,000 social media users, had over 700 interactions and has over 170 followers across both accounts.

HORTICULTURE

Gardening for Recovery

Over the last few years, Boone County Extension's horticulture team has had a garden program biweekly at the Brighton Recovery Center for Women. The gardening program occurs throughout the growing season, running from late April through mid-September in 2024.

Participants gain confidence through learning about sowing seeds, which insects are beneficial or pests, when to harvest vegetables, and even fence maintenance skills. There are also fun days planned where participants get to arrange flowers that were picked offsite and paint pumpkins. The women frequently tell the horticulture team stories of their life before addiction when they gardened with loved ones such as parents or grandparents.

As the season progresses, participants pick large amounts of produce, which they are then able to use in the kitchen. Days where participants get to pick produce tends to be the highlight of the season as it is a very rewarding experience for the women to pick and taste what they grew.

“We try to pass the word, most people still don't understand what extension is, they don't understand that it's free, that their tax dollars are paying for it and that there's all different kinds of things to do – from making crafts to cooking to grocery shopping to recipes to 'mail oriented' things, there's agriculture, community arts is a new one – that's fun – 4-H of course – but it's tons of fun, people need to come!”

-- Michelle Ryder, Master Gardener, interviewed at A Festive Journey (an office-wide collaborative program)

Horticulture Online

  @BOONEHORTNEWS

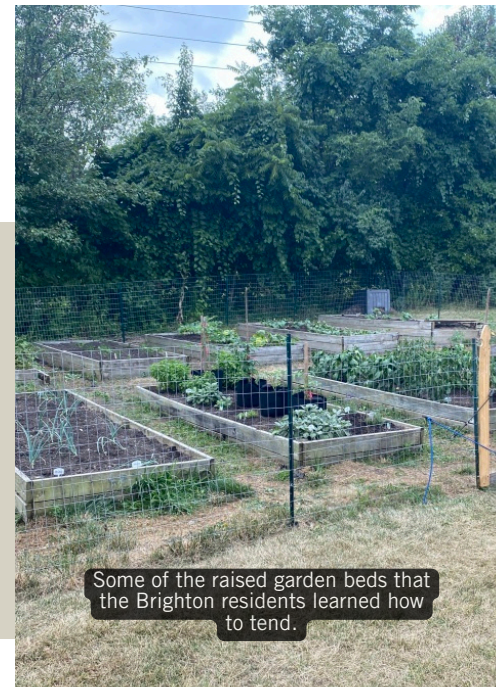
Our Horticulture program has two independent social media accounts. Found on both Instagram and Facebook under the handle @BOONEHORTNEWS. With just 226 combined posts and stories in 2024, this program reached over 30,000 social media users, had over 1,600 interactions and has over 1,800 followers across both accounts.



A plentiful harvest from the Brighton Gardens.



Participants at Brighton learning how to create a gorgeous bouquet from fresh cut flowers.



Some of the raised garden beds that the Brighton residents learned how to tend.

2025 Boone County Extension Leadership

GARY STOCKTON
County Director

LAILA EL-AMIN
Agent for 4-H Youth Development

CATHY FELLOWS
Agent for 4-H Youth Development

RUSTY WOLF
Agent for 4-H Youth Development

SUSAN MILLER
Agent for Community Arts

RICHARD SELLNOW
Agent for Digital Literacy

LACEY KESSELL
Agent for Environmental Education

LIZ EVANS
Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

DIANE MASON
Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences

ROBERT BROCKMAN
Agent for Horticulture

Boone County Farmers Market

 BOONECOUNTYFARMERSMARKET.ORG

Since 1987, the Boone County Cooperative Extension has been supporting local farmers and businesses by hosting an annual Farmers Market. Every May through October our grounds are home to more than 30 vendors who provide our community with everything from locally produced meats, honey, and sweets to a large variety of seasonal produce grown locally.

Boone County Arboretum

 BCARBORETUM.ORG

In 1994, the Boone County Arboretum was established through a partnership with Boone County Parks and the Cooperative Extension. To this day the relationship continues as our office provides staffing and support to the arboretum. Many agents host programs in collaboration with the arboretum and its staff including upcoming 2025 Horticulture and Community Arts programs being held at the arboretum.

DISCOVER ALL THAT
EXTENSION HAS TO OFFER
WITH UPCOMING
PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES



 boone.ca.uky.edu

 859.586.6101

 Monday - Friday
8 AM - 4:30 PM

 BOONE COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, MAIN OFFICE
6028 Camp Ernst Road, Burlington, KY 41005


 BOONE COUNTY EXTENSION ENRICHMENT CENTER
1824 Patrick Drive, Burlington, KY 41005

 ELLIS HOUSE
1973 Burlington Pike, Burlington, KY 41005

 BOONE COUNTY EXTENSION ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURE CENTER
9101 Camp Ernst Road, Union, KY 41091

 EXTENSION NATURE CENTER BARN & GARDENS
9203 Camp Ernst Road, Union, KY 41091

 BOONE COUNTY EXTENSION FLORENCE
7111 Dixie Highway, Florence, KY 41042

 BOONE COUNTY ARBORETUM
9190 CAMP ERNST RD, UNION, KY
* Questions? Contact the Arboretum: bcarboretum.org | 859.384.4999

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.