

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

Serving the citizens of Sullivan County with educational programs in Agriculture, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Sciences, Community Resource Development, and 4-H Youth Development as an outreach branch of the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, providing research-based solutions and information to the citizens of Tennessee.



STAFF

AGENTS

- Melody Rose, Agriculture, Horticulture, & Interim Director
- Arizona Bowers, 4-H Youth
- Ethan Harvill, 4-H Youth
- Megan Shelton, Family & Consumer Sciences

PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

- Susan Lachmann

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

- Melissa Hauk

SULLIVAN COUNTY IS FULLY STAFFED!

Sullivan County has been in a period of transition for a year, but we are so pleased to announce we are now fully staffed in all areas of agriculture, horticulture, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H.

We look forward to serving the citizens in Sullivan County in various programs, educational events, field days, livestock shows, demonstrations, and much more in 2026 and beyond. Feel free to reach out to any of our staff for additional information and refer to our website for updates, as well as social media outlets!

Be sure to connect via our website or Facebook! We are updating our website with class/event offerings and information on a regular basis, so check back often...



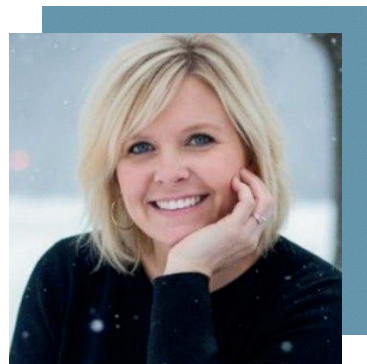
AGRICULTURE

2026 is off to an exciting start! We have certified 53 Master Beef producers via online trainings; held five monthly beef updates at the Extension Office; recertified 17 commercial and 12 private pesticide applicators; and trained two each in Master Backyard Poultry and Master Small Ruminant.

The Tri-State Beef Expo is coming up on Tuesday, August 4th at the Ron Ramsey Ag Center. This event is open for both cow/calf and stocker folks! We have an exciting lineup of speakers (plus a steak lunch), along with Master Beef points available! Check out our schedule and register/pay here:

<https://sullivan.tennessee.edu/tri-state-beef-expo/>

Our monthly beef meetings start up again in August! We meet at the Extension Office at 6:30 p.m. with a speaker zooming in from TN and/or surrounding southern states with important updates in the beef industry. Check out our line-up here: <https://sullivan.tennessee.edu/monthly-beef-producer-meetings/>



UT HORT

HORTICULTURE

Tennessee Extension Master Gardener intern training kicked off in January with 17 participants recently earning intern status as of late April. Interns are now delivering horticultural-focused presentations one Monday per month from June to November as part of their final certification process. View our 2026 MG Interns here: <https://sullivan.tennessee.edu/2026-master-gardener-interns/>. In addition, our certified Northeast TN Master Gardeners are actively engaged in various projects throughout the county, delivering research-based information and showcasing demonstration trials. For more information on our various projects, please visit our website here: <https://www.netmga.net/>

Last but not least, we offered an apple grafting workshop in March with over 50 participants; hiked a few trails in search of spring ephemerals; attended the nation's largest herb event in Asheville, NC, and had seven MGs attend the State Extension Master Gardener Conference in Knoxville this May.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



The Sullivan County 4-H program has had a busy and successful start to the summer! We recently took 32 youth to Junior 4-H Camp, where they enjoyed an outstanding week of learning, leadership, and recreation alongside five dedicated volunteers. Additionally, four members will be attending Junior High Camp, and one student will represent Sullivan County at Regional Culinary Camp. We also submitted two state award applications for consideration at State 4-H Roundup and had two students participate in Academic Conference within their respective project areas.

Citizenship education remains a priority, and we were pleased to host a successful Citizenship Day in downtown Blountville, where approximately 30 students met with county leaders in partnership with the Farm Bureau Women. Our livestock programs continue to thrive, highlighted by a successful Sullivan County Steer and Heifer Show featuring 13 exhibitors and more than 30 animals. Expo entries have also been submitted for the Beef and Sheep Expo, and we look forward to seeing our youth showcase their hard work and dedication.

We are grateful for the leadership of our youth and volunteers. Pearl Taylor will serve as our June Dairy Month Chairperson, while Grayce Hunigan will lead activities as the July Beef Chairperson.



Through the generosity of supporters and donors, we were able to provide 12 partial camp scholarships to county youth. We want to send a special thank you to the FCE Clubs of Sullivan County and Holston Ruritan for a special donation that supported our campers. We also partnered with Tractor Supply to raise several hundred dollars in support of local 4-H programming and extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed.

Our academic teams continue to excel as well. Sullivan County's Cloverbowl teams achieved remarkable success at the regional competition, earning two Regional Champion titles, one First Runner-Up finish, and one Quarterfinalist placement. Competing against teams from 33 counties across the Eastern Region, our youth brought home an impressive number of awards and recognitions.

Finally, we are incredibly proud to announce that Sullivan County has two newly selected State 4-H Communication Ambassadors: Mel Liebe and James Sanchez. We also have LB Cox serving as a State 4-H Healthy Living Ambassador. These outstanding young leaders will represent Sullivan County at the state level, and we look forward to supporting them as they serve as ambassadors for Tennessee 4-H.

Stay Connected With Sullivan County 4-H

Be sure to be on the lookout for more exciting 4-H opportunities this summer by following us on Facebook at UT Extension Sullivan County! Items to still happen this summer include Day Camps (featuring Culinary Arts, Sewing, etc) Service Opportunities, and more!

If you'd like to be more involved, there are several ways to stay in the loop! Sullivan County 4-H shares updates on the Sullivan County Extension Facebook Page, communicates through our BAND group chat, and sends out a monthly newsletter. We'd love to have you follow along and get involved!



To join our BAND group, visit: [Your paragraph text](#)
To sign up for our newsletter, email: abower27@utk.edu

Sullivan County 4-H Campers



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES



The Sullivan County Family and Consumer Sciences Program is off to a busy start in 2026! Sullivan County's Family and Community Education (FCE) Clubs have been busy as bees working with our agent on multiple sewing projects and classes, including a beginning sewing workshop where participants worked together with FCE members to construct a pillowcase using basic machine sewing techniques, as well as holding a week-long quilt camp where members made over a dozen patriotic quilts to be presented to distinguished Sullivan County Veterans in honor of the USA's 250th birthday this year. More sewing classes are currently being planned, so keep your eyes open for those in the coming months. Additionally, if you would be interested in learning more about FCE clubs, go to <https://tafce.tennessee.edu/>

Our other FCS programming is gaining momentum now that our agent has completed most of the required training for new agents. Co-Parenting is currently being offered on a monthly basis at our office. Check our Facebook page for upcoming dates if that is something you are needing or wanting to complete. The cost of the class is \$45, and it does satisfy the Tennessee requirement for divorcing couples.

We have already hosted food preservation classes on water bath canning strawberry jam as well as fermentation of sauerkraut. We will be hosting pressure canning classes very soon, so watch our Facebook for the dates of those.

A highlight of our FCS program is the community partnerships that have been formed or brought back to life. Various classes are being held at the Kingsport Senior Center on a regular basis. A partnership with the ARC&D has made it possible for our FCS agent to teach many food preservation classes to Build It Up program participants at no cost to participants. Our agent was able to take part in the bi-annual drug takeback day in partnership with the Sullivan County Anti-Drug Coalition and the Kingsport Police Department.

In looking toward the future, we are hoping to keep the momentum going and offer even more programming. Please take a moment and fill out the following survey to help us develop that programming schedule: [FCS Program Feedback - Fill out form](#)

TENNESSEE CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM (TNCEP)

Unfortunately, due to lack of federal funding, Susan's last day with Extension was June 30, 2026. We will miss her enthusiastic spirit, boundless energy, and steadfast knowledge she gave in all her programs. TNCEP touched the lives of many Sullivan County residents over the years and will be greatly missed!

Susan was most noted for her live segments via Daytime Tri Cities each second Thursday of the month. The segments promoted nutrient dense foods, wise use of food budget and food storage as well as promoting our UTIA Extension programming. Find a segment here: <https://www.wjhl.com/daytime-tri-cities/warm-and-inviting-soups-spice-blends/>

Lastly, as this very important nutrition education program concluded June 30 due to lack of federally funded appropriations, we will miss this effective program as a total Extension program. Watch Susan on WJHL here: <https://youtu.be/TmbsAJdzPww?si=AeDtOa2ZU51xr7Kr>



With FY 2026 nearing an end, we have been preparing for FY 2027 (organizing the new and cleaning out the old). Spring Cleaning is almost complete! Our UT DASH software system has improved and most of the kinks have been resolved and more efficient. The Ag Store (Payment Store) is active and updated (the link is located in the upper right-hand corner of the opening page of our website or a QR Code provided by the agent on their event flyer). We are continually adding more events. This allows participants to register and pay fees for our agents' events online through our website without having to stop what they are doing and drive to our office. However, we are still accepting cash and/or check payments in person if this is preferred method of payment.

FROM MELISSA'S DESK



Our phone system has been updated to assist you in getting in touch with your agent of choice when you call our office @ 423-574-1919. When in doubt, just press 0 for Melissa!

Melody (ANR): press 1
Arizona (4H): press 2; then 1
Ethan (4H): press 2; then 2
Megan (FCS): press 3
Diabetes: press 4

I am excited for FY 2027 and all that is being planned. This is going to be a year of great experiences (not just for us but for our community and friends of Extension). We can't do what we do without YOU and your support. Thank you!