

Southern University
Agricultural Research and Extension Center
Chancellor's report

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Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success

[SU and LSU Ag Centers Collaborate on Small Ruminant Field Day](#)

The Southern University Ag Center, along with the LSU AgCenter, hosted a small ruminant field day sponsored by the Kentwood Co-op, on April 30 at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. Officials from both institutions brought greetings to the nearly 100 field day attendees.



Drs. Renita Marshall, left, and Sebhatu Gebrelul discuss the SU Ag Center's Master Small Ruminant Certification Program.

Researchers from the SU Ag Center presented information on the Center's newly established Master Small Ruminant Certification Program and shared updates on current research conducted on small ruminants.

The event had a fee of \$5 per person or \$10 per family to cover the cost of lunch and materials. Producers also participated in a FAMACHA certification course for an additional \$10.

FAMACHA (FAffa MAlan CHArt) is a diagnostic tool that helps farmers identify parasite infection in small ruminants, such as sheep and goats.

The tool is a chart that matches eyelid color to anemia levels, an indicator of parasite infection.

FAMACHA was developed in South Africa and is distributed in the United States through the American Consortium for Small Ruminant Pest Control.

Small ruminant experts from both the SU and LSU Ag Centers made presentations on forage management, nutrition and health interaction, distiller grains, infectious and parasitic diseases, small ruminant reproduction and drug use/off label issues.

The day also featured demonstrations and hands-on activities on injections, fecal and blood collection, body condition scoring and a question and answer session with veterinarians.

The lead collaborators were Dr. Sebhatu Gebrelul, who can be reached at 225.771.3841 or emailed at sebhatu_gebrelul@suagcenter.com and Dr. Ken McMillin, who can be reached at 225.578.3438 or kcmillin@agcenter.lsu.edu. Representatives from the SU Ag Center included: Renita W. Marshall, DVM/Associate Professor, Animal Science; Dr. James Henson, research scientist; Malik Allen, a sophomore majoring in Agricultural Economics; Joshua Simon, a junior majoring in Urban Forestry; and Lamar Burton, a senior majoring in Animal Science.

Graduation Ceremony Applauds School Garden Program Participants

Nearly 40 middle and high school students received certificates of completion for participating in the Southern University Ag Center's School Garden Program.

Students from Southern University Laboratory School, Scotlandville Magnet High School and Scotlandville Pre-Engineering Middle Academy, were honored during a graduation ceremony held at the SU Ag Center on May 4.

The year-long program titled, "Eradicating Food Deserts through School Gardens," was developed by the SU Ag Center in response to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) identifying North Baton Rouge as a food desert - meaning there is limited access to fresh produce.

The Center applied for, and received funding through a USDA/National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) 1890 Capacity Building Grant Program. Through this funding, a training series dubbed, "Plant it-Grow it, Try it-Like it," was introduced to teach students basic, transferable gardening techniques from the SU Ag Center's self-produced Community Garden Curriculum.



Aalryah Doucet, center, with Project Director Tiffany Franklin (left), and the Garden Instructor Stephanie Elwood.

Students were also given ownership of school garden spaces to ensure easy access to fresh produce.

Since 2016 marks the final year of the program, a teacher from each participating school was presented with a copy of the Ag Center's curriculum to ensure that the program continues to thrive within the schools.

Six students from the schools also discussed their experiences during the program and expressed how the program and its garden instructor, Stephanie Elwood, impacted their lives.

"When I started the program I wasn't interested in anything Ms. Stephanie was talking about," said Aalryah Doucet. "But the program and Ms. Stephanie have taught me so much that I have decided to major in Agriculture at Southern University. Thank you Ms. Stephanie, she added.

For information about the SU Ag Center's School Gardening Program, contact Tiffany Franklin, Project Director or Stephanie Elwood, Garden Instructor at 225-771-2242.

Grandparents Learn how Gardening Can Help Them Build Bonds with Grandchildren

Southern University Ag Center Extension Associate Stephanie M. Elwood was one of the featured presenters during the 19th annual Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana (GRGICL) Conference. The event was held on April 22 at the Holiday Inn South Hotel in Baton Rouge.

Elwood's presentation, "G3 Grandparents + Grandkids = Gardening," focused on the use of gardening as an opportunity for grandparents and grandchildren to spend quality time together.

"Working side by side with grandchildren is a great time for talks; getting to know one another; sharing what's on each other's mind, as well as, their hopes and dreams for the future. Cross generational gardening also provides an opportunity for both the grandparent and the grandchild to be the teacher and the student, thus increasing the lines of communication," wrote Elwood in an abstract about her presentation. "So many lives and educational skills, such as leadership development, reading, mathematics, responsibility and compassion can be transferred from grandparents to grandchildren while gardening. Growing fresh and nutritious fruits and vegetables may be the primary intended outcome of gardening, but the benefits are so much more," she added.

Stephanie Elwood, Extension Associate



Elwood is a Licensed Horticulturalist with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture. In her position at the SU Ag Center, she works with community and school garden programs within the Baton Rouge community, area schools and juvenile detention centers.

Currently, the SU Ag Center is implementing the, "Eradicating food deserts through the Development of School Gardens" program at several middle and high schools, the "Using Agriculture as a Fast Track Vehicle for Change through Experiential Learning" program at an alternative school and juvenile detention center, and the "Grow Healthy Program," which implements gardens at SU Ag Center Nutrition Education sites throughout the state of Louisiana.

GRGICL is a non-profit organization dedicated to offering both information and support to grandparents raising grandchildren and other relatives serving as parents to children who are not their own. The organization partners with other agencies to provide training and support to empower grandparents and kinship caregivers.

For information about the Southern University Ag Center's Community and School Garden Programs, call 225.771.2242.

To obtain information about the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana, visit lagrg.org.

SU Ag Center Participates in Set Training

strengths of the region.

On April 8, 2016, Center for Rural and Small Business Development Director Gloria London and Eual Hall, Development Specialist, attended a Stronger Economies Together (SET) training along with the Louisiana Alliance Cultivating Economic Success (LACES) in St. Helena Parish. This is a United States Department of Agriculture initiative. Its goal is to improve community and economic development by producing a High Quality Regional Economic Development Plan for multi-parish regions that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of the region.



Gloria London, standing center, interacts with other participants

During the fourth session, participants and the regional team developed a better understanding of establishing Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time Framed (SMART) goals, identifying ABCs, tracking success, and developing a cohesive plan of action. Participating parishes benefit from a focused initiative to explore regional economic advantages and to formulate a regional blueprint that strategically builds on the current and emerging strengths of that region. South West parishes participating in this effort are: East Feliciana, St. Helena, Tangipahoa and Washington. The training session was attended by 20 individuals.

SU Ag Center Holds Open House in St. Landry Parish

The Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives, a satellite campus of the Southern University Ag Center, kicked off its annual Summer Youth Program by hosting a parent open-house on June 1 and an all-day student orientation on June 2.



SU Ag Center Interim Chancellor Dr. Adell Brown, Jr. addresses parents of youth enrolled in the Summer Youth Program.

Nearly 100 youth registered to attend the Summer Youth Academic Enrichment Program.

This year's program, themed "Welcome to the Fantastic Voyage," has an enrollment of 95 youth ages 6-18 who reside in St. Landry Parish. Full detail is available on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/suagcenter/>

Park Ridge Magnet School visits SU Ag Center Urban Farm

Sixty students in kindergarten to 2nd grade from Park Ridge Academic Magnet School visited the Southern University Ag Center's Sustainable Urban Agriculture Demonstration Farm on April 25.

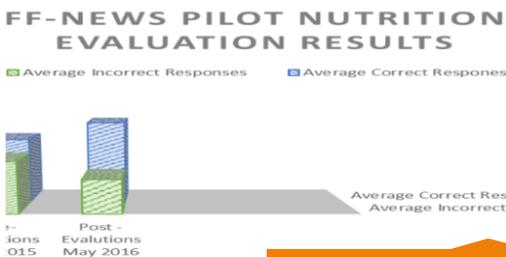
The students toured the Center's greenhouse, learned about milkweed plants (which feed the caterpillars that become monarch butterflies) and how to recycle by making compost.



They were also able to participate in hands-on activities such as tilling the soil in a raised bed, planting seeds, watering plants, smelling the fresh herbs grown in the garden and petting baby chicks.

The farm, known as the “show and tell garden,” is available for tours throughout the year. To schedule a tour, contact Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin or Zanetta Augustine at 225-771-2242.

FF-News concludes pilot nutrition education evaluation with 100 kindergarteners



Evaluation Results

The Southern University Ag Center's Families First-Nutrition Education and Wellness System (FF-NEWS) has concluded its 2015-2016 Nutrition Education Curriculum for schools and communities across the state.



Marquetta Anderson teaching kindergarteners how to choose healthy snacks.

Nutrition Educators Marquetta Anderson and Kiyana Kelly, along with extension associate Ellen McKnight, conducted a

pilot nutrition education evaluation series at The Baton Rouge Bridge Academy. The academy is a new charter school in East Baton Rouge Parish with a student body of 100 kindergarteners. Read full story [here](http://www.suagcenter.com) (www.suagcenter.com).

SU Ag Center hosts annual OMG conference for teenage girls

The Southern University Ag Center played host to an event on May 28 aimed at shaping the leaders of tomorrow. Dozens of girls, ages 10 and up, gathered for the Outstanding Mature Girlz (OMG) Conference at Southern University in Baton Rouge.

With a mix of music and breakout seminars, the event addressed issues on the top of many teenage girls' minds. The topics included mental health, body image and STDs.



Photo by
WAFB

"We have the conference close to the end of the school year, near the beginning of the summer, so we want them to take this information as a tool through the school year and through life," said Sashika Baunchand, founder of Outstanding Mature Girlz.

This was the fourth year for the free event, which is held in tandem with National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The event was covered by WAFB Channel 9. The video is available at <http://bit.ly/1r9Xusr>

Researchers aim to reduce Food Deserts using Vertical Farming

Food deserts are areas described as lacking access to fresh fruits, vegetables and other healthy whole foods. In Louisiana these areas are growing concern because many of its residents lack grocery stores within convenient traveling distance to access affordable, healthy food options. This also contributes to the many health problems associated with improper diets.



Drs. James Henson, left, and Marlin Ford setting up an Aeroponics System in the green house

potential of producing traditional row crop products, using vertical farming techniques such as: Aeroponics, a soil-less process of growing plants by nourishing their suspended roots with air or mist; Hydroponics, a method of growing plants using only liquid nutrients in water and Aquaponics, the soil-less growing of plants through the use of hydroponics and raising fish together in one system.

The research is being followed by the *Advocate* <http://bit.ly/1XAH3Ea> and WBRZ <http://bit.ly/1UwLLLY>.

Researchers at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center are exploring the

For the full article, visit our [blog](http://suagcenter.blogspot.com/2016/06/su-ag-center-researchers-to-use.html) page at <http://suagcenter.blogspot.com/2016/06/su-ag-center-researchers-to-use.html>

Southern University Ag Center staff participate in ‘Red Nose Day’

Several staff members at the Southern University Ag Center participated in ‘Red Nose Day,’ a national campaign to bring awareness and raise funds to fight child poverty in the United States and in some of the poorest communities in the world.



Left-right: Angela Jackson, Kim Butler, Ellen McKnight, Joyce Tubbs, Tiffany Franklin, Kelli Hollins, Decobea Butler, Kendrah Selders and Milissia John-Baptiste participated in Red Nose Day at SU Ag Center

Over the past 25 years, the campaign has raised over \$1 billion globally. The 2015 campaign raised \$23 million that funded programs designed to keep children and young adults safe, healthy and educated.

For additional information about ‘Red Nose Day,’ visit <http://rednoseday.org/>.

Publication:

Dr. Yadong Qi, Professor of Urban Forestry, and **Dr. Kit L. Chin**, Professor of Plant and Soil Sciences, have co-authored an article with Dr. Xiaobing Liu, chief scientist at the Chinese Academy of Science. The article is entitled "**Growth and Development Responses to UV-B**

Exclusion in Crops," and has been accepted for publication by the *International Journal of*



Dr. Chin



Dr. Qi

Plant Production and will appear in the 2016 issue 10(4). The *Int. J. Plant Prod.* is a world-wide open access journal with abstracting/indexing in major world databases including Science Citation Index, Journal Citation Reports, Biological Abstracts, BIOSIS,

Scopus and CAB. For more information on the upcoming publication, please contact Dr. Yadong Qi at yadong_qi@suagcenter.com.

De'Shoia A. York, Associate Specialist, Nutrition has accepted an invitation to serve on an Advisory Group for the Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center (RCPNC). The Center's work focuses on families with children who live in persistently poor counties/parishes in 15 states. The RCPNC's goal is to help these families by increasing their participation in USDA-FNS Child Nutrition programs and other nutrition assistance programs. York will serve in this capacity for 3 years.



Mrs. York has also accepted an appointment to serve on the Association of SNAP-Ed Nutrition Networks (ASNNA) Evaluation Committee.

ASNNA, and other implementing agencies, is the professional organization for SNAP-Ed Implementing Agency administrators and leaders who work together to promote communication between federal and state agencies; promote social marketing within nutrition education; serve as a nation-wide resource for nutrition education; networking expertise, and partnership development within SNAP-Ed; and advance successful practices that lead to the incorporation of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, specifically among SNAP-Ed eligible individuals and communities. De'Shoia will serve as the SNAP-Ed National Program Development Team's Liaison for the organization.



Carolyn Robinson, Associate Area Agent for East, West Carroll and Morehouse Parishes, was appointed the new president of the Louisiana Extension Association of Family and

Consumer Sciences at the organization’s annual meeting in Natchitoches, Louisiana, on May 5. Read more at <http://www.lsuagcenter.com/articles/page1463070355405>



Delane Ross, Area Agent for St. Martin and Iberia Parishes, was featured in a

recent episode of ‘This Week in Louisiana Agriculture’ (TWILA). Click the following link to watch the [YouTube](#) video.

[SU Ag Center recognizes staff for earning degrees](#)

The Southern University Ag Center congratulates the following staff on earning their degrees on May 13, 2016:



Ellen C. McKnight, Extension Associate – Nutrition Evaluation & Publication, earned a Masters of Public Health Administration from Southern University and A&M College.

Marquetta L. Anderson-Reynolds, Nutrient Educator, earned a Master’s of Public Administration with a concentration in Healthcare from Southern University and A&M College.



Harold Mellieon, Jr., Livestock Show Director and Assistant/Associate Specialist for Animal Science, earned a doctorate from the College of Human Sciences and Education in the School of Human Resources Education and Workforce Development at Louisiana State University.



[UPCOMING EVENT:](#)

July 22: The Morehouse Parish Black Farmers and Landowners Association, Southern University and the LSU AgCenter to hold their annual field day at

Harper Armstrong’s farm at 5821 Mer Rouge Road in Bastrop. Registration begins at 8 a.m., and presentations at 8:30 a.m.