



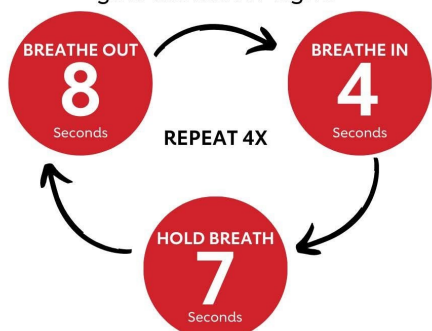
2025 is off to a frigid start for the southeast which hopefully means we will have a good year for our fruiting trees getting in their chill hours! If you are considering doing any work in your yard like adding trees or shrubs, now is the time to do your soil testing ground preparation. Planting trees in the Mississippi is best done in the winter which allows roots to get established before the hot summer comes along. Our last two summers have been tough with high temperatures and low precipitation. The drought of 2023 is still affecting the trees, and its impact will be felt for more years to come so let's pray that God blesses us with a pleasant summer and a normal amount of rainfall. If you have any questions about getting your soil tested or if you need assistance with your pond – give us call. Or, if you want to start home canning give Katrina a call. The Extension service has been helping our communities for over 100 years with science and research-based information coming from the university. There are lots of opportunities that will be available this year for you to learn and grow because that is what we do: Informing Decisions, Shaping Futures, Strengthening Mississippi!

Nearly Half of American adults have high blood pressure. High Blood pressure puts you at an higher risk for stroke and heart disease. The only way to know if you are in the normal range is to get checked. Small steps can make a big difference.

What's one healthy habit you would like to start in 2025?

4-7-8 BREATHING

Inhale through your nose for four counts, hold for seven counts, and exhale through your mouth for eight.



Whenever you're feeling stressed, try the 4-7-8 breathing. Breathing is an essential act that requires no thought. But thinking about it can alter your physical and mental health. It can relieve stress and anxiety or help you wind down.

UNDERSTANDING BLOOD PRESSURE READINGS

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED BLOOD PRESSURE	120 - 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 - 139	or	80 - 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

States with the highest rates of high blood pressure:



Save the Date!

Robotics - February 27, March 17, April 10, May 8 at 4:00 pm; Call the MSU Extension office to register to attend. Seating is limited. Open to youth ages 10-13 as of January 1, 2025

LEGO - Feb. 13, April 17 and May 15 @ 4:00 pm; Coastal Plain Experiment Station. Call the MSU Extension office to register to attend. Seating is limited. Open to youth ages 5-12 as of January 1, 2025.

Basic Sewing Interest Meeting - March 11 @ 3:00 pm at the Extension office. Call our office to register to attend. Limited Seating. Open to youth ages 10 and up as of January 1, 2025 and adults.

Fashion/Clothing Selection Contest Training - 4-Her's ages 10-18 as of January 1, 2025 - February 24, 2025 @ 4:00, Extension Office. Call the MSU Extension office to register to attend.

Job Extravaganza - March 6 at 2:00 pm at the Newton Depot

Computer 101 and Internet Safety April 3 @ 1:30 open to public. Call to register to attend by April 1.

PowerPoint Visual Presentation Workshop - April 3 @ 4:00 open to youth ages 14 as of January 1, 2025 and adults. Call to register by April 1.

Pond Management Workshop - April 12 at 10:00 am, Coastal Plains Experiment Station.



65 7TH STREET, DECATUR, MS 39327; 601-635-7011

Follow us on Facebook at Newton County Extension!

A Healthy Heart



Cardiovascular Basics

Your heart and blood vessels make up your circulatory system, which supplies oxygen and nutrients to every cell in your body. If the vessels that supply oxygen and nutrients become damaged, the whole body may be affected. A healthy circulatory system is the key to a physically healthy life at any age.

What Is Cardiovascular Disease?

Cardiovascular disease is the broad term used to describe a group of diseases that result in blockages of blood flow and that affect circulation in the heart, brain, eyes, kidneys, and legs.

Types of Cardiovascular Disease

- *Arteriosclerosis* — Arteries thicken and harden (hardening of the arteries). This results in poor blood circulation that can lead to angina, heart attack, cardiomyopathy, or heart failure.
- *Atherosclerosis* — Occurs when cholesterol and other fatty substances (plaque) build up within arterial walls. As plaque builds up in an artery, blood flow is limited and over time can be blocked completely.
- *Heart attack* — During a heart attack, a portion of the heart muscle dies. This is usually caused by a sudden blockage of one or more of the arteries that supply the heart with blood.
- *Heart failure* — The heart cannot pump the amount of blood the body needs for life.
- *High blood pressure* — Increased pressure in the blood vessels makes the heart work harder than normal to pump the same amount of blood. This can cause the heart to enlarge and weaken over time.
- *Stroke* — Cardiovascular disease that affects the blood vessels supplying blood to the brain.

Risk Factors

Risk factors include traits and lifestyle habits that increase the risk of disease. The more risk factors a person has, the higher his or her chances are of developing heart disease. The key to prevention is to reduce risk factors you can control.

Risk Factors You Can Control

- *Diet* — An unhealthy diet that is high in fat and cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease. Choose heart-healthy foods that include lean cuts of meat, low-fat dairy products, five to seven fruits and vegetables daily, and whole grains. Limit fats such as in fried foods.
- *Cholesterol* — A high level of cholesterol in the blood is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Total cholesterol includes LDL, (low-density lipoprotein), HDL (high-density lipoprotein), and other types of cholesterol. LDL, sometimes called the “bad” cholesterol, can turn into plaque that clogs arteries. HDL, referred to as the “good” cholesterol, helps remove the LDL cholesterol from your body.
- *Weight* — Reach and maintain a healthy weight. Extra pounds mean extra work for your heart. Weight loss can result in immediate reduction in blood pressure, lowering your risk for heart disease.
- *Alcohol use* — Consume alcohol in moderation -- one drink per day for women, two drinks for men. Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure and increase the risk for heart failure and stroke.
- *Physical inactivity* — Regular, moderate-to-vigorous exercise reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.

For more information, request Information Sheet 1771 from Newton County Extension.



Ways to Conquer Household Clutter

What Is Clutter?

The word clutter is often used to describe an overaccumulation of items located together in a disorganized fashion. Household clutter is quite common today. Over time, this clutter can feel overwhelming and even negatively impact personal health and well-being. Besides this, natural environments can be negatively impacted when valuable natural resources are consumed during material production, only to become unused clutter or garbage in landfills.

Determine the Type of Clutter

Before deciding what to discard, determine whether you have regular household clutter or sentimental clutter. Clutter comes in many forms. Household clutter might include items like toys, mail, books, cleaning supplies, and hobby materials. On the other hand, sentimental clutter often consists of items passed down from loved ones, such as sports memorabilia, dishes, photographs, jewelry, and other heirlooms. Identifying the type of clutter that you have will help you make better decisions on how to part with it.

How Does It Happen?

Clutter can accumulate over both short and long periods, often taking over before you realize it. Household clutter builds up when we hold on to items that no longer serve a purpose. This clutter can result from various factors, including excessive spending, lack of storage, receiving gifts, buying bulk items, emotional attachment to items, and mental health conditions.

Benefits of Reducing and Preventing Household Clutter

Financial Savings

Experts have estimated that Americans now spend \$300 a month on impulse purchases. In addition, only 20 percent of items are used in the home, while the other 80 percent is potential clutter. Being mindful of your spending habits can prevent clutter in the home and greatly improve

financial well-being. In addition, selling unused items—that would otherwise only be collecting dust—can create additional income.

Less Stress

Most of us spend a large percentage of our time in and around our homes. Research has shown that clutter can reduce our ability to focus and concentrate, which can increase the stress hormone cortisol. Our homes are intended to be the places we relax and recharge after long workdays. But instead, a cluttered home will remind you of all the things that need to be done. Reducing household clutter can lessen your stress and calm your mind. Your home will then rightly serve its purpose as a place for relaxation and socialization with friends. Decluttering is also an opportunity to engage in more movement and physical activity, which supports stress management and builds healthy habits.

Improved Environmental Stewardship

Reducing clutter in your home enables you to properly recycle and donate items that you do not need. Less clutter also helps to reduce carbon emissions by factories and shippers because fewer items are having to be produced and delivered to you. In addition, landfill space is saved when you have less to throw away.

Saves Time

Whether it's moving, storing, cleaning, or looking for lost items, clutter can consume a lot of your time and energy. Decluttering a space will take some time in the beginning, but the result will free up your time over the long run.

Less Allergies and Hazards

A cluttered home is harder to vacuum and dust. This creates the perfect environment for dust mites, pollen, pet dander, and other pests to accumulate. Mold also may go undetected. All these items can cause allergic reactions and asthma symptoms. A clutter-free home is easier to clean and provides a healthier and safer living environment.

For more information, request Publication 4052 from Newton County Extension.



SCENES FROM NEWTON COUNTY JR LIVESTOCK 2025



Anna Kate Westbrook captured the 1st place spot in 13 year old showmanship – Levi Clark was 2nd

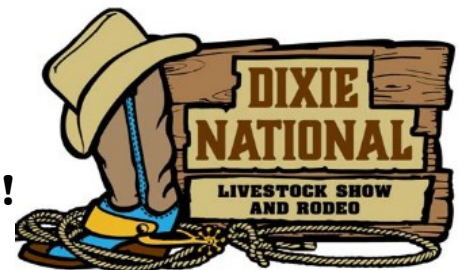


The Clark Family took home the Grand Champion Commercial Gilt at the 2025 SW District Show in Jackson - January 15-17th



The Westbrook family had the Reserve Champion Duroc in the Market Hog Show at the 2025 SW District Show

Dixie National Jr Roundup is the next stop!
January 28 – February 6th





**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION**

TECH TIME TUESDAYS

You're invited to join us for a series offering assistance to clientele with technology.



LUNCH AND LEARN SESSIONS:

The MSU Extension Newton County Office is offering a three part series about technology for those that want to learn. The sessions will take place at the Newton County Extension Office at 65 7th St., Decatur, MS 39327 from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

DATES AND TOPICS

Smartphone 101

February 18, 2024

Technology After Death

March 18, 2024

Introduction to A.I.

April 15, 2024



THE COST IS FREE, BUT SEATING IS LIMITED. PLEASE CALL 601-635-7011 AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE TO REGISTER.

Newton County Extension will be hosting a pond workshop on April 12th at the Coastal Plains Research Station in Newton. This is a great opportunity to learn about managing your stock pond and avoiding the pitfalls of expenses and trial and error. Learn from the specialists at MSU about fish population management, water quality, weed ID and so much more. Please contact us to reserve your spot!

Pond Management Workshop

Saturday, April 12th, 2025 @ 10 AM

Topics to include:

Building a pond * Stocking options and procedures

Managing water quality * Managing fish

Value of habitat * What is this weed?

Weed management approaches * Herbicide Use

COASTAL PLAINS EXPERIMENT STATION

Newton, MS

51 Coastal Plains Road

Newton, MS 39345

Please contact 662-769-1004 to register

Presenters: Dr. Wes Neal & Dr. Gray Turnage, MSU
Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture



Upcoming Turkey and Quail Management Workshops

MSU is excited to share details about an upcoming Turkey and Quail management Extension event we'll be hosting in Shannon, MS. This event includes two separate sessions over the weekend, and we'd love for you to join us!

Friday Night Feb 28: Science Social - Bird Talk with the Biologist

- Social event with full dinner and beverages.
- Emceed by former MSU quarterback Matt Wyatt
- Several raffles and door prizes
- An update will be provided on the status of turkey and quail populations in the state by MDWFP Director of Conservation Development Adam Butler.
- A panel discussion featuring biologists and representatives from conservation organizations and agencies to answer your pressing questions about quail and turkey management.

Saturday March 1: Gamebird Habitat Management Workshop

- A ¾-day quail and turkey management workshop.
- Topics will include habitat management, predator management, and landowner assistance programs.
- Field demonstrations, such as trapping techniques, timber management, and prescribed fire practices (Weather permitting we will conduct a prescribed burn!) Breakfast and Lunch Provided. Location - Southwind, Shannon, MS

Registration Links:

Science Social - https://reg.extension.msstate.edu/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0081-0004-cd2abdec5c340ef8f5dc70e971050e9

Gamebird Management Workshop - https://reg.extension.msstate.edu/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0081-0004-a4ee56453ad34d1e9df1ee269e51a33a



GAMEBIRD 2025

WEEKEND

SCIENCE SOCIAL NIGHT
AND
HABITAT WORKSHOP

WITH MC MATT WYATT

FEBRUARY 28
& MARCH 1

SHANNON, MISSISSIPPI

HOSTED BY:

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

MSU GAMEBIRD PROGRAM

QUAIL forever
MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE FISHERIES & FORESTRY

Avian Influenza (AI)

What to Do as a Backyard Grower

Promptly report any observation of domestic or wild birds with AI symptoms!

If you suspect your birds have avian influenza, report it online at <https://hpai.ms.gov/> or by calling the Animal Disaster hotline at 1-888-722-3106.

Avian influenza (AI) is a disease caused by Type A viruses. These viruses thrive in wild aquatic birds and can infect domestic poultry such as backyard birds. Infection can occur through contact with fecal material, saliva, or mucous. Infection causes bird illness or even death.

MONITOR YOUR FLOCK!



Mild AI symptoms are similar to a respiratory disease:

- Swollen face
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Watery eyes
- Nasal discharge



Severe symptoms include:

- Decreased feed and water intake
- Decreased production
- Increased mortality and morbidity
- Soft eggshells
- Discolored combs and feet
- Diarrhea

PROTECT YOUR FLOCK!

- Practice a strong biosecurity program.
- Use dedicated footwear for your coop.
- Wash your hands.
- Don't let poultry drink from an untreated water source.
- Prevent contact between your birds and wild birds.
- Limit hunting trips and contact with any other birds (neighbor flocks, auctions, and markets).
- Report sick or dying birds to proper officials.

Questions about avian influenza?

Call your local MSU Extension agent, the MSU Extension poultry specialist at (662) 325-3416, or the Mississippi Board of Animal Health at (601) 359-1170.

Scan for information on infected flocks by county:



Scan for information on how to protect your flock:



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