Merry Christmas

We would like to take the time to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our family to yours. We have had another successful year because of patrons like you. We find it an honor that your family would trust us with the everyday problems that occur in your operation, family, and finances. We hope our research backed solutions prove to be valuable to your situations. Each August we meet with our committees to plan a year of meaningful, informational programs. We hope that you can attend some of our programs and they become an integrated part of your life.

When an issue arises, please let us be of assistance to helping you find a solution. Our Family and Consumer Sciences agent can assist with health and nutrition, family life, and personal finances. Our Agricultural and Natural Resource agent can assist with livestock, forage, homeowner, wildlife and forestry issues. We also have a wonderful 4-H Program Assistant who works with our 4-Hers to develop life and leadership skills. Pike County Cooperative Extension Service exists to help the citizens of Pike County live better and more prosperous lives. The Christmas season embodies the spirit of what extension is all about. So whether you need to know how to cook the turkey or control spur weeds in the lawn, we are here to help. Thank you for letting us be a part of your family. Best wishes for a wonderful 2017.

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Pike County Cooperative Extension Service

Terrell, Eva, Avonne, and Gay

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.
Farming is a 24/7 job and most of you have a secondary job to support your love for rural life. Though there is never truly down time on a farm, the winter months do allow us to spend some time preparing for the busy spring and summer months ahead of us. Here are some tips that might make your 2017 a little brighter.

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- **SOIL TESTING**— The winter months are a great time to prepare for gardening and pastures. Bring us at least a pint of soil and we can send it off for a FREE soil analysis. All you have to do is bring it by the office and we will take care of the rest. Depending on the time of the year, a soil sample result can be back in less than 2 weeks. Knowing what is going on under the thatch can help you make decisions on soil amendments.

- **PRUNING**— We have some great Fact Sheets on pruning your fruit trees, shrubs, and rose bushes. We can also perform a demonstration on how to prune. Typically late winter is the best time to prune because it prevents open wounds from being exposed to harsh winter climate. Remember to remove all diseased tissue and anything you cut.

- **PLANNING**— Have you ever have visions that are bigger than your garden spot! Planning your garden in the winter allows for you to order seed and prepare for proper spacing.

- **PESTS**— Controlling cool season weeds in pastures and lawns can pay off in big dividends. Many cool season weeds can last well into the spring. Most of these weeds are easy to control, but timing is key. You may also want to print off MP467 Arkansas Small Fruit Management Schedule from UAEX.edu. This wonderful resources gives the recommendation for pests that like to eat your fruit before you do. Peaches, plums, apples, blackberries, strawberries and more are discussed in this publication. It is updated yearly so check for 2017 version soon.
I love Family and Consumer Sciences because it really is the “science of living”. Nutrition, fitness, finance, parenting and relationships - each and every one of these is a part of our daily lives. Here are just a few ways Pike County FCS is ready to help our communities and families have a great new year!

- **ESTATE PLANNING WORKSHOPS** – Preserve your legacy for future generations. The ideal estate plan minimizes taxes, expenses and delays, and assures that your assets reach intended heirs. Learn more about securing the best financial future for you and your family at our February Estate Planning Workshops. Guest speakers include Dr Laura Hendrix, UAEX Assistant Professor Family & Consumer Sciences, and John Ross, Ross & Sholamire Elder Law Attorney & Co-host of Aging Insight radio program.

- **EXTENSION GET FIT CLASSES** – Extension has a great plan designed to get a strength training group started in every community in every county and it’s called Extension Get Fit! If you are interested in starting a class in your church, community or workplace, we can make it happen with a 12 week exercise program with opportunities for U of A Extension trained volunteers ready to step up to keep your group strong and growing. **WHY STRENGTH TRAIN?**
  - Muscle mass
  - Strength & balance
  - Bone density
  - Arthritis symptoms
  - Metabolism
  - Blood sugar & cholesterol
  - Improves mood & attitude
  - Decreases depression
  - Allows you to sleep more soundly
  - Increases your level of energy
  - Socially, allows you to enjoy others’ company & build a new circle of friends.

- **COOKING FOR A CHANGE** – Day and evening classes are scheduled once a month for four months for anyone wanting to cook for a CHANGE: • A CHANGE of FAMILY DINNERS at home instead of dinners from the drive-thru • A CHANGE of diet for those who are wanting to eat for BETTER HEALTH • A CHANGE of FINANCE for those seeking to save $$$ on grocery/restaurant bills. Join us to experience new recipes, cooking methods, and flavors that you, your family, and your pocketbook will love!

- **SAFETY BABY SHOWERS** – Pike County Extension and the Pike County Hometown Health Coalition are working together to bring Safety Baby Showers for new or expectant moms in our community. EHC members will host fun, interactive baby showers that provides education and safety products to help keep their infants safe. Attendees are educated on safety topics such as safe sleep, drowning hazards, scald burns, fire safety, SIDS & Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention and motor vehicle safety. Each participant qualifies for a car safety seat along with individualized installation training by a Certified Car Safety Seat Technician.
A Pike County 4-H tradition is decorating the Christmas tree inside the historic Pike County Courthouse. Thomas D., Thomas A., Zach A., Malaya G., Gracie D. and Autumn W. decorated the Courthouse Christmas tree with ornaments made from natural materials by 4-H members all over the county. These ornaments reflected the "Heritage" theme of our 4-H programs held this year. They are made from boise d' arc apples, sweetgum balls, buttons, and mock oranges.