Childhood overweight and obesity is a major problem in Pitt County. In 2008, nearly 32% of Pitt County children ages 2-18 years old were overweight or at risk for overweight. Many health consequences are associated with childhood overweight/obesity. These consequences include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, asthma, sleep apnea, Type 2 diabetes, and low self-esteem. In addition, childhood obesity is extremely costly. A child treated for obesity under Medicaid costs $6,730 annually, while a normal weight child costs $2,446. In 2008, 527 Pitt County youth successfully completed the 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). According to the 2007 Pitt County Health Assessment, 40% of Pitt County children are enrolled in Medicaid. This means that of the 527 youth that completed the program, 211 are enrolled in Medicaid. **It has been determined that 4-H EFNEP positively encourages these 211 children to maintain a normal weight, thus representing a potential savings of $903,924 a year.**

Tobacco is very important to Wayne County generating over $35 million on 10,800 acres. Tobacco transplants are grown in greenhouses before being transplanted into the field. Greenhouse production is very important because the entire crop is confined within a small area. Disease pressure is a significant threat and could reduce the number of usable transplants. The local Extension center provides programs that educate farmers on disease management. Programs aim to prevent disease through proper sanitation and ventilation. Once diseases are confirmed, we educate growers on effect control measures. Following Extension strategies has saved local growers by providing more usable plants in the greenhouse. **If growers did not utilize Extension’s strategies, they would have to purchase plants which are $35 per 1,000. Local growers have indicated that our programs have saved 10% of their usable plants or a savings of over $500,000.**

When a Forsyth County 4-H'er needed to acquire the skills necessary to apply for and secure a job, "Shannon" turned to the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service Application, Resume and Interview training for youth. After her training, she competed with 55 other young people across North Carolina and earned a trip to National 4-H Congress. **When Shannon and 250 other applicants applied for a job at a local company, she was hired despite the fact that she was unable to work on the busiest shopping day of the year. When the supervisor called to offer the job, he referred to her as “the girl that was in 4-H”, showing that this is what allowed her to stand out from the others. Her customer service and marketable skills have enabled her to continue in her position even after the holidays, earning much needed money toward her college education.**

The average Madison County farmer has a history of production agriculture that included less than 1% of their income or time devoted to marketing. With the loss of Burley tobacco and the declining beef market, many of these farmers are branching out to other commodities, most of which require a much greater emphasis on marketing. This is where **Madison Farms** comes in. **Madison Farms** is a network of farmers that operates out of the Madison County Extension Center's Value-Added facility. **This organization is designed to provide most of the marketing needs for the cooperating farms. In 2009, 45 farmers participated allowing the processing, packaging, storage, marketing, and distribution of over $100,000 worth of farm products to local institutional markets. The institutions include: Mission Hospitals, Biltmore Estate, Mars Hill College, UNC-Asheville, GreenLife Grocers, Public School systems and others.**

A Veterinarian Feed Directed Network (VFD) was developed in 2007 for the trout industry to utilize the new antibiotic **AquafloR. In 2009, the VFD was utilized 17 times, saving 271,000 trout valued at $70,460. The network, coordinating between trout farmers, diagnostic labs, veterinarians, feed mills and feed distributors has worked flawlessly. Other states (Colorado, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Washington and Oregon) are using North Carolina’s VFD system as a model.**
The rising cost of employee health insurance is a major concern of Carteret County Government. Our Family & Consumer Sciences Agent worked with the Human Resources Department to help establish an Employee Wellness program to try to control costs. Working with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the County offered a free health screening for all employees. The results of the screening and a survey to gauge the employees’ interests were used to establish wellness programs to meet the needs of the employees. At the end of the first year, the county was able to hold the cost of employee insurance at the same rate as the previous year. This is the first year the county has not seen a substantial increase in employee insurance costs.

There are many opportunities offered through NC Cooperative Extension and 4-H to volunteer and participate in community service. Davie County 4-H offers opportunities to volunteer through Summer Fun programs, holiday workshops, various community service projects and much more. In addition to participating in these opportunities, one Davie 4-Her decided to take her volunteering experience to the next level. She began volunteering for Special Olympics of North Carolina (SONC) in October of 2007 and started a cheerleading team called the Davie Eagles. Under her leadership this past year, the Davie Eagles Cheerleaders won gold at the SONC State Cheerleading Competition in March. The Davie Eagles has grown from 5 cheerleaders in 2007 to 13 in 2009. As a result of her hard work and dedication, this 4-Her was recognized with the State Youth Volunteer of the Year award at NC 4-H State Council Conference.

According to NC Prevention Partners (www.ncpreventionpartners.org), physical inactivity and poor nutrition costs nearly $11.1 billion each year to NC employers. NC Cooperative Extension partnered with the Gaston County Health Department to provide Weigh Less, a worksite wellness program, to Stanley Total Living Center employees. Eight employees completed this 12-week program (September – December 2009). The program provided a cost savings of approximately $26,712 to this worksite. Total group weight loss was 140 pounds, with 3 participants losing weight, and 4 participants lowering their blood pressure. As a result of this program, 7 participants reported that they are getting at least 30 minutes of daily physical activity, and all participants are eating more fruits and vegetables. Weigh Less will continue to be offered to worksites throughout 2010.

Carteret County, like the rest of North Carolina, has a high rate of obesity. NC Cooperative Extension offered the Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less program to the County Government employees, with 10 employees completing the 15-week program. The group lost a total of 115.5 pounds with 8 of the 10 meeting or surpassing their goal and reporting that as a result of the program, they are now physically active at least 30 minutes per day. One participant reduced her BMI by 5 points. At this year’s County Employee Health screening, one participant stated that she had continued the healthy habits she had learned in the program and was surprised to learn she had lost 11 more pounds. The State of NC estimates that the financial cost of overweight and obesity is $2,384 per person per year. By conducting this program, NC has saved $23,840.

The Transylvania Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB) under the guidance of The Transylvania Cooperative Extension staff applied for and received a $17,500 grant from the NC Ag and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund in August 2008. The grant deliverables included the creation of an approved County Farmland preservation plan and to hold educational workshops to inform farmland property owners about their options to transition their farms and protect valuable farmland. The AAB approved a Plan at their December 2009 meeting. To date, over 450 acres of farmland have been protected with conservation easements and 12 landowners have received extensive help in preparing transition plans. At the request of the AAB and Cooperative Extension, the Transylvania County Commissioners have set aside $30,000 and the local Farm Bureau has added an additional $10,000 to help with transition costs of farm easements.
The Davie County Extension Horticulture Agent worked closely with a new fruit and vegetable producer to develop a successful enterprise. The agent provided production information, problem diagnosis, soil fertility assistance, and marketing resources for the grower. The two corresponded frequently by email, and the agent made site visits as needed. The grower took advantage of marketing opportunities presented by the agent, such as the Goodness Grows, Certified Roadside Stand, Discover NC Farms, and NC Farm Fresh programs. The producer expressed interest in developing a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, so the agent responded with information and examples of other CSA programs. In his second year of production and first year offering a CSA program, the grower had to close CSA subscriptions at forty members. This new venture generated approximately $10,000 in new income and repeat business for the future.

In Forsyth County, family members are having problems with their apartments and homes not being energy efficient. Many families are complaining that their heating and cooling bills are too high and they don't understand why. With Duke Energy raising their rates within the last year, family members will continue to pay higher bills if they don't make some changes. Therefore, NC Cooperative Extension provided simple cost saving tips to residents to help them save money and develop practical ideas in using energy wisely. The participants learned how to caulk and seal their doors as well as purchase energy-saving bulbs. Many participants did not change their HVAC unit's filter on a regular basis, which meant that they experienced higher electric bills due to the unit having to work harder. As participants made changes in being energy efficient in their living environments, they felt that maintaining their home provided to them gave them a sense of pride and saving money in maintaining it.

The needs of three Boone community institutions: the Watauga County Farmers Market, ASU, and the Horn in the West Outdoor Drama, threatened to disrupt Farmers Market operations in the middle of the 2009 growing season. The outdoor drama had come to rely upon parking receipts from student cars, thus decreasing space for Farmers Market customers. As tensions rose, some operators of the outdoor drama publicly suggested that the Farmers Market had outgrown the space. Cooperative Extension engaged members of the public, local officials, and Farmers Market members to generate viable solutions. Tensions briefly escalated to levels where key stakeholders threatened to leave the table, but Extension sustained productive communications. A deal was struck that gave the Farmers Market a defined two-year extension at its current site. Plus, the communication with local officials has generated support for alternative Town- and County-owned sites in the future.

In our fast-paced society, girls are often forced to grow up too quickly. As they navigate their turbulent adolescent years, girls frequently feel alone in their struggles. Currituck 4-H/SOS partnered with the school social worker and offered a Girls In Real Life Situations workshop. This workshop was designed to give girls an opportunity to feel empowered, gain self-awareness, improve daily problem solving, develop positive coping mechanisms, feel connected with other girls, and make healthy decisions as they grow through these rough years. During the 2009 Spring Semester, 9 girls participated in this program. During the semester, it was evident by the reports of the teachers and the school's principal that the workshop was having a positive impact on all 9 of the girls. The success of this program was so great that even though the SOS funding has been eliminated, this particular program is still going on at the school.