

# Healthier Together Newsletter



## The Reality of Winter Gardens

This winter saw something we do not have often in Georgia – temperatures below 10 degrees!

In Stewart county, the sudden frost killed most of the gardens across the community. As said by Extension Agent Christina Gardener, "It is important for us to realize sometimes the gardens [and gardening] is ugly."

The journey of replanting the garden will begin later this week.



Christina Gardener, with a truck bed full of plants killed by the December frosts.



Plants covered with frost in a community garden.

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Let's become healthier together one step at a time!

## 2023 Action Institute in Dooly County

This winter, a team from Dooly county participated in the Action Institute, a collaboration between the Society for Public Health Education & the CDC Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. The Action Institute aims to improve food access in participating communities. The Dooly County Healthier Together Team consisted of Dr. Heather Padilla, the Healthier Together Project Director; Katrisha Lester, a Healthier Together FACS Educator, along with 6 community members.



(L-R): Katrisha Lester, Jenet Taylor, Dr. Heather Padilla, Donna Coats during the Action Institute in January.

The Dooly Healthier Together Program hosted team members for the 4-day virtual conference at the Dooly County Extension Office. A summary of the final goal created by the Action Institute for Dooly County includes: (1) creating a need assessment for all races and ethnicities who benefit from food distribution through Dooly County food pantries and mobile distributions and (2) encouraging healthy food selection by using nutrition information/education and food demonstrations. We look forward to seeing these changes play out in the Dooly community!

### What is cultural competence?

Cultural competence assert[s] there is an endpoint and assumes that one can learn a quantifiable set of attitudes and skills that will allow you to work effectively within the cultural context of another.

#### Cultural competence is when you...

- Have an expert understanding of people's cultures (social, religion, customs, etc.)
- Are aware of your own lived experiences which may encompass cultural understandings or your own biases

An example of the content covered during the Action Institute.

## Taliaferro School Cooking Club

Hope Smith, a Taliaferro Extension Agent, has worked closely with the 4-H programs to create the 4-H Cooking Club. The program is very popular among the students and has a full roster whenever it is offered. Occasionally, teachers stop in to taste what the students have made! Taliaferro County also has a current Senior 4-H student participating in the District Project Achievement competition with a recipe he learned at the cooking club.



A group of Taliaferro County 4-H students at cooking club.

## Meet your neighbor

Mr. Roger Teeple of Dooly County Highschool has been a constant partner with the Healthier Together Program in Dooly County. He plays a major role in supporting the school garden efforts. Mr. Teeple is a Horticulture and Agricultural Sciences Instructor. He makes an effort to attend collaborative meetings with the Healthier Together Dooly team to provide input. Mr. Teeple was described as being "communicative, knowledgeable, and willing to get the gardens up and going" by Dooly County Extension Agent Katrisha Lester.



Mr. Roger Teeple working in a Dooly County greenhouse.

## Meet your staff

Dr. Allison Berg is the Nutrition Lead for the Healthier Together Georgia project. Dr. Berg oversees the nutrition initiatives, including gardens, grab 'n go coolers to encourage the sale and purchase of healthy foods, and establishing healthy donation guidelines for healthy foods.

When asked about her favorite part of working on the Healthier Together team, Dr. Berg said, "At the end of the day, my job is to help people eat healthier. I can't do that if people do not have access to healthy foods. I love that this project helps address that most basic need and gives people the opportunity to choose to eat healthier."



Dr. Allison Berg at the Year 5 kickoff meeting.



## Upcoming Events

- If you live in Taliaferro County and are interested in the Master Gardener program, please get in touch with Hope Smith for information on future meetings: [hope.smith@uga.edu](mailto:hope.smith@uga.edu)
- February 23-24, College of Environment and Design students are visiting Stewart County.
- Keep an eye on the Healthier Together Facebook page to see when Spring coalition meetings and other events will be scheduled!

### Find out how you can get involved!

Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on events happening near you!



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Email: [healthiertogether@uga.edu](mailto:healthiertogether@uga.edu)

Healthier Together is a High Obesity Prevention grant funded by the CDC and implemented by the University of Georgia Extension. The goals of the grant are to increase community access to healthy foods and physical activities in our 5 target counties: Calhoun County, Clay County, Dooly County, Stewart County, and Taliaferro County.

