



MEDIA CONTACTS

Kaylie Moore

Journalist

724-317-6924, kmoore@fayettecountypa.info

Kristi Rooker Kassimer

Public Relations, Digital Media Specialist

412-691-0262, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info

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FAYETTE COUNTY TO CELEBRATE 'AG-UCATION'

Uniontown, PA - The partnership between the Fayette Chamber of Commerce and Penn State Extension will culminate in a one-of-a-kind agriculture event, Saturday, Sept. 22, at the Uniontown Mall.

Presented by Republic Food Enterprise Center, AG-ucation Day takes place 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and will showcase the very best of Fayette County agriculture.

Extension Educator Jennifer Deichert said the Fayette Business Education Partnership generated discussion about agriculture's importance and the need to educate community members on its impact in Fayette.

"There are many misconceptions about agriculture and also a lack of knowledge in our youth," Deichert said. "I've presented at schools and career fairs and I'm surprised at the number of youth that have no idea what agriculture even is.

"It's important for youth and adults to understand where our food comes from and how it's produced."

The extension's 4-H programs and master gardeners, along with the chamber, mall, Republic Food Enterprise Center, Fayette County Fair, Fayette Conservation District, Jackson Farms, Middletown Tractor, Herald-Standard Newspaper and WMBS Radio have combined their resources to make the event a success.

Chamber Executive Director Muriel Nuttall said the goal of AG-ucation Day is to increase awareness of the positive contributions agriculture makes in our community and local economy.

"Agriculture is Fayette County's premiere industry," Nuttall said. "AG-ucation Day will serve as a great example of a true, grassroots, agricultural education effort in action.

"It's also a good reminder for all of us to acknowledge local farmers' efforts as we head into the autumn harvest season."



AG-ucation Day will feature a petting zoo; Jackson Farms ice cream eating contest; educational exhibits; coloring, art and photography contests; sheep shearing demonstrations; horse-drawn wagon rides; tractor/pedal races; mini-tractor contest; produce stand; agritourism discussion panel; an agriculture-themed escape room and much more.

Agriculture-themed vendors and sponsors are still needed. For more information, call 724-437-4571.

Deichert said she's most looking forward to 4-H members having the opportunity to share their agricultural knowledge and help the community understand its importance.

"It's exciting," she said. "People don't realize the potential careers associated with agriculture, like food scientists, food chemists, mechanical engineers, conservationists, horticulturists, entomologists, veterinarians and many more."

Attendees of all ages are invited to compete in the Down on the Farm Costume Contest. Check-in takes place at 4 p.m. and the contest begins at 5.

Pre-registration is required by Sept. 21. First place winners in each of the five age categories will receive \$25, while second place will receive \$15 and third place, \$10.

Costumes will be judged on farm theme, creativity and originality. For rules and more information, contact Deichert at 724-438-0111.

Deichert said with less and less people having home gardens, many forget how their food goes through the farm-to-table or farm-to-store process.

"Our community needs to better understand the importance of agriculture and how dependent they are on it," Deichert said. "We need to keep the dialogue about agriculture open and active."

AG-ucation Day will also offer information on how to get involved with community gardens, understand soil conditions and grow and prepare your own healthy produce, Deichert added.

"We will always need food to survive," she said. "Agriculture is often rooted in tradition, but it also lends us the opportunity to be innovative and creative.

"It is a common thread to every human being."

For more information about AG-ucation Day, contact the Fayette Chamber of Commerce at 724-437-4571.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettecountypa.info.

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