

# CHILTON

COUNTY FARMERS' FEDERATION



## Chilton County Farmers Federation

If you're from Alabama, the term "Chilton County peaches" may make your mouth water and cause you to crave one of those delicious summer treats. As the largest peach-producing county in Alabama, Chilton County is known to many as the Peach Capital.

To celebrate and recognize Chilton County peach farmers, the Chilton County Peach Festival was organized in 1947. The Peach Festival is a huge event in Chilton County and improves each year. From its meager beginning at Thorsby Institute in 1947, which included the selection of a Peach Queen and a Peach Auction, Archie Ogburn's dream did come true, and the Peach Festival tradition lives on.

Activities include Peach Pageants, Peach Run, art exhibitions, a cook-off, fishing tournament, live music, parades, live and silent auctions, barbecue and an evening festival known as the Peach Jam.

A peach auction is held annually at the Jack Hayes field in Clanton. Farmers enter peaches to be judged, and the top five winners receive cash awards. After awards are presented, the baskets of peaches are auctioned.

In support of the peach farmers and peach festival, the Chilton County Farmers Federation often purchases one of the prize-winning baskets of peaches. This year, the Federation purchased the third-place basket, grown by Todd's



*Chilton County Farmers Federation President Wendell Kelley poses with the 2016 Peach Queens and the basket of Todd's Produce peaches purchased by the Federation. Back row from left are Grace Nolan, Kelley and Hannah Tierce; front row are Cresley Haggard and Mary Henning Dale.*

Produce, for \$3,200. For the ninth straight year, M&M Farms grew the first-place basket, which brought \$4,600. Money raised at the auction goes to the

Clanton Lions Club. The Chilton County Peach Festival begins during the third weekend of June each year.

## Farmers Federation Supports Ag Weather Information Service

Does weather impact you or your business? Chilton County farmers are fortunate, they have access to the Agricultural Weather Information Service (AWIS) report.

The Chilton County Farmers Federation supports AWIS by funding reporting costs.

By using this report, Chilton County farmers are able to reduce the impact of weather. In addition, this report allows farmers to make better decisions and reduce costs.

AWIS's experienced meteorologists help farmers understand the weather and be prepared with the right information at the right time.

Chilton County farmers who get the

AWIS weather report speak highly of the accuracy. Currently, the report is available for farmers Feb. 1-April 1.



The weather report is received at the Chilton Research and Experiment Station between 6:30 and 7 a.m. daily.

If Chilton County is experiencing a threatening forecast, the weather report is delivered twice daily, morning and afternoon. Once the report is received at the center, Jim Pitts emails farmers who have requested the report.

The weather data from AWIS is a collection of forecasts extracted from the National Weather Service.

Information such as dew point, wind speed, wind direction, maximum and minimum temperatures, humidity, probability of precipitation, potential evapotranspiration, hours of sunshine and many other predictions are shared through the Chilton County-tailored weather report.

# FFA Garden: Dream Becomes Reality For Area Students

Occasionally, someone has an idea that could be big. Often, the idea remains just that — an idea.

However, for a group of Chilton County agriscience teachers with the dream of an agriscience farm, the dream became a reality and is thriving.

The Chilton County Farmers Federation supports the farm with financial donations, and area farmers contribute by providing equipment.

During its first year of operation, the teaching farm grew sweet corn, field corn, soybeans, tomatoes, cantaloupe and strawberries. It produced a variety of benefits for students, too.

Working on the farm empowers students and their families to make informed food choices that influence healthy eating habits and lifestyles.

The agriscience farm contributes to healthy neighborhoods, and communities gain a better understanding of farming, health and wellness.

The farm allows for experiential activities and provides a platform to



Chilton County FFA members grew an assortment of produce, including strawberries harvested by Maplesville High School students.

teach core content such as science, math and language arts. It also assists students with problem-solving skills.

The farm's produce is often donated to local nonprofit agencies in Chilton County, strengthening the connection between school and community. It

helps increase student awareness of the benefits such agencies provide.

The Chilton County agriscience farm is growing Chilton County's future leaders, consumers, producers and community members.

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**MEMBERSHIP**

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Some benefits are Chevrolet, Buick and GMC vehicles; Choice Hotels, Wyndham Hotels, Polaris, Southernlin, Child Car Seat Program, Farm Bureau Bank, Georgia Aquarium, Six Flags Over Georgia, Alabama Splash Adventure and ASAP Security and Protection.

For a complete list of benefits, visit **ALFARMERS.ORG/BENEFITS**



## Congressman Visits Area Farmers

Chilton County Farmers Federation hosted Congressman Gary Palmer March 31 where he toured Kelley Farms in Verbena and Petals From The Past in Jemison. These locations display the wide variety of agriculture in the county, from row crops and cattle to fruit and vegetable production. During lunch, farmers from throughout the congressional district met with Palmer to ask questions on issues of concern and get a general overview of his experience after his first term in office.

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