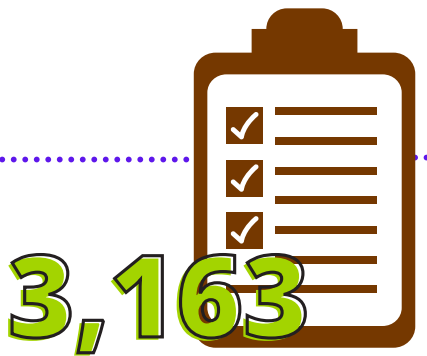
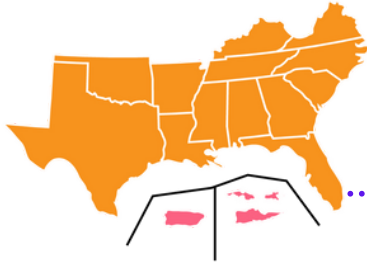


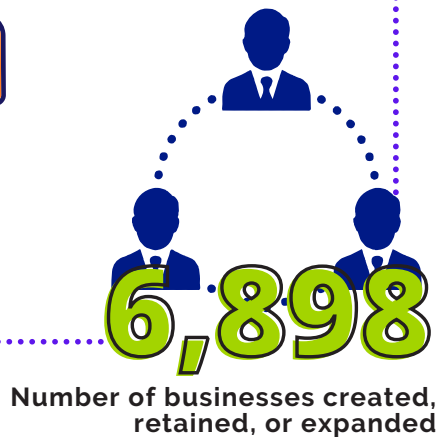
# Southern Region Impacts

2021

## Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



Number of plans adopted and implemented in community, agency, local government, business, or disaster



Value of in-kind resources contributed by organizations/communities



Number of universities reporting



Grants acquired by organizations/communities





Alabama

Through three entrepreneurship programs and advising, 511 Alabamians were trained in small business development. After completing our Business Modeling 101 class, 74% of participants felt ready to design profitable business models (compared to 24% prior to the class). One program highlight included piloting the Birmingham Community Incubator, a collaborative providing six weeks of education/coaching, micro-grants, and networking to women entrepreneurs of color. 100% of graduates have continued to grow their businesses.



Alabama Extension at Auburn University continues to help Alabama communities face challenges and opportunities. Our team addressed workforce development challenges by offering career and soft skills programs to over 7,000 youth and 151 adults. Additionally, Extension received a USDA/NIFA Smith Lever Special Needs Competitive grant to develop and implement strategies to synergize local disaster response efforts. Working with Emergency Management Agency leaders, Extension will lead strategic planning efforts among non-profits, public agencies, government, and other stakeholders.



Arkansas

Community, Professional and Economic Development strengthens capacity of individuals, businesses and organizations through many programs. CREATE LIFT (Celebrating REtail, Accommodations, Tourism and Entertainment by Leading Innovation through WorkForce Training) is a new online workforce certification focused on essential skills, marketing and tourism developed in collaboration with regional community colleges and state workforce agencies. To date, 150 individuals have completed it. A Spanish-language version launched in Spring 2022 has been completed by 10 others.



The Keeping it in the Family Program provides African American landowners training on forest management, options for resolving heir's property, and how to have conversations with family members to begin the process of forest management to keep their land. Additional training is in forestry improvement programs and the use of the local forestry infrastructure in managing and harvesting timber. In 2021 participants received \$283,611 in Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funds to improve 663 acres of forestland.



Florida

The University of Florida IFAS Extension saw a significant increase in the 2021 CRD Indicators. Since 2019, the economic indicators have increased by 78%, public policy indicators have increased by 80%, partnerships and collaborations by 37%, and expanding resources by 112%. These increases can be attributed to a renewed commitment and investment in building a Community Resource Development (CRD) program in Florida.



Georgia

Between 2021 – 2022 UGA's Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program continued to be influential in helping communities around the state address their local housing issues. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) invested a total of \$54.6 million in grant funds through three key programs which include the Community Housing Investment Grant (CHIP), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program.



Kentucky

The Community & Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) launched a cooperative program with USDA Rural Development to create a free digital toolkit and virtual conference to help leaders in small communities strengthen rural placemaking. 1500 participants from states, tribal nations, and territories were introduced to creative resources from the National Endowment for the Arts, Project for Public Spaces, and Extension systems engaged in arts, design, and placemaking programs. For more information, visit: [www.ruralplacemaking.com](http://www.ruralplacemaking.com)



Mississippi

Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES) is helping Mississippians improve their lives. Impacts range from starting a ride-share program in the Mississippi Delta, providing transportation to grocery stores for over 2,000 rural citizens, to conducting economic analysis which aids in community decision making. MSU-ES has improved marketing and branding of farmers markets and aided in developing action plans for downtown revitalization. MSU-ES provides continuing education for elected officials in 299 municipalities in the state and certification training for municipal clerks (27 graduates), tax assessors (76 certified), and tax collectors.

# NC STATE UNIVERSITY

NC State Extension created a Broadband Access and Education Coordinator position to build statewide capacity to work on broadband access and digital skills education. A Cooperative Extension-centric Broadband Resources web page of broadband articles has been built. County offices are adding digital skills training capacity, and partnerships are being formed to advocate for connectivity and digital skills for farmworkers, farms, and other rural stakeholders. NC's first Digital Literacy and Skills County Extension Agent has been hired.



The Partnership with USDA at Langston University is particularly focused to support the revitalization of the 13 Historical Black towns of Oklahoma. An advisory board consisting of University Extension professionals, mayors, and community leaders has initiated a new partnership with the local USDA office to meet this goal. Recently, the Langston University CRD team and the advisory board met with all the Oklahoma USDA state directors to identify and align resources/programs for the community's needs. The communities Facilities Direct Loan and Grant program was identified for the towns to apply.



Clemson Extension promotes entrepreneurial development via business planning, feasibility studies, and related assistance for rural entrepreneurs. The SC Center for Cooperative and Enterprise Development (SCCED) and the Freshwater Coast Center for Rural Development (FCCRD) assisted entrepreneurs and communities in receiving grant funds and awards. SCCED alone helped secure grants totaling \$688,904 with \$1,070,000 in pending proposals. Resources obtained for communities totaled \$206,324. Similarly, FCCRD received approximately \$50,000 in private investments for support of new entrepreneurial activities.



Extension focused on enhancing community development and rural competitiveness through two funded projects (USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and National Science Foundation). These projects supported rural infrastructure at the community level (broadband adoption, digital disparities), value-added dairy businesses, and farm profitability across Tennessee. Broadband educational programs focused on access and adoption across seven rural communities. The dairy business innovation initiative started in Tennessee and was expanded to include Kentucky and North Carolina.



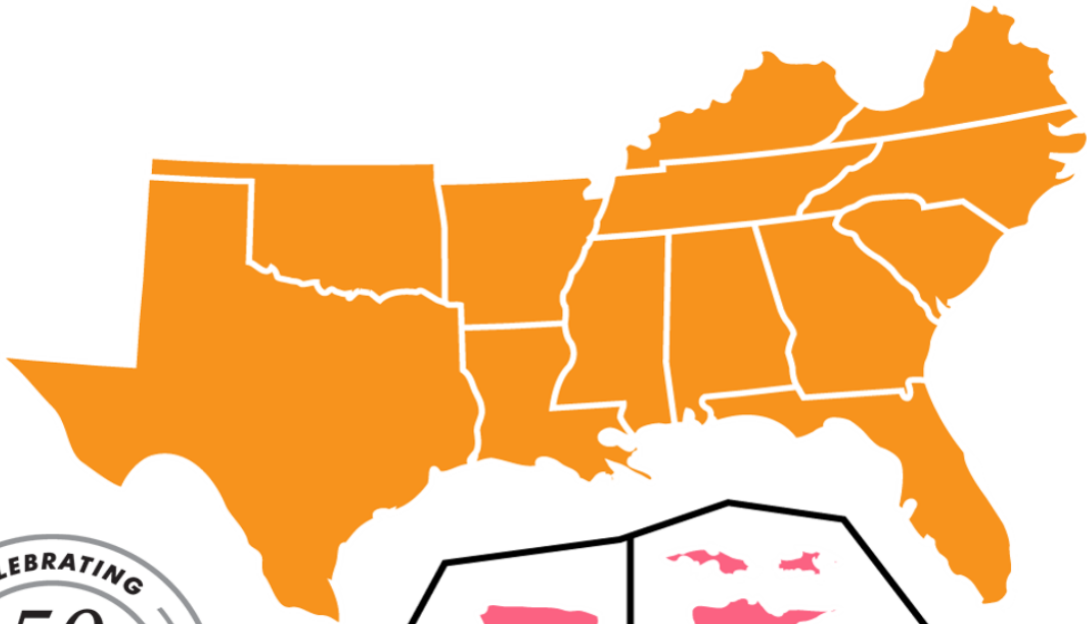
The PVAMU Community and Economic Development unit has partnered with the Houston Furniture Bank (HFB) to provide furniture to low-income families that have been affected by natural disasters. The program kicked off in South Texas which has some of the highest poverty communities in the State. Between the HFB and local South Texas officials approximately \$300,000 in funding and furniture value were raised to provide 56 families with homes full of furniture.



The Texas Food Education & Discovery Network (TXFED) is changing how market farmers and farmers markets access training. TXFED had more than 500 enrollments in its first year and an average 4.6/5 star rating across courses. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is among 13 respected organizations collaborating to provide consistent, reliable, high-quality, peer training and technical assistance through online, asynchronous courses. The first nine courses include content from 50 knowledgeable, experienced farmers and market organizers.



The Grayson County Agriculture and Technical Education (GATE) Center serves a centralized venue for technical education, food entrepreneurship, and other county functions. In just six months of operation, the over \$475,000 investment has already become a focal point for Grayson County's agriculture, small business development, and civic engagement efforts. The center hosted trainings, volunteers prepared 1,800 meals in the commercial kitchen, and prospective food entrepreneurs toured the facility to learn more about growing their businesses.



*Southern Region*  
**Program  
Leadership**  
**Network**  
*Cooperative Extension System*



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