

Winston County Self Help Cooperative and Youth Group
2009 Yearly Reports

Louisville, Mississippi

“A Team Committed to Help Save Rural America”



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Winston County Self Help Cooperative's 2009 Yearly Report

WCSHC History:

Winston County Self Help Cooperative organized in 1985 with four founding members: Mary Hannah, Bobby Hardin, Omerio and Dee Dotson. WCSHC helps small farmers purchase and sell in bulk with a goal of creating sustainability in rural communities. Co-op membership consists of 58 members, averages age 52 (36 males and 22 females).

WCSHC's 2009 Reflections:

Winston County Self Help Cooperative steely determination accrued a successful calendar year with numerous events and accolades. WCSHC's Mantra of "Helping Save Rural America" motivated members to stay engaged throughout 2009. WCSHC fiscal year started on December 27, 2008 with a superb, kick-off meeting and 35 members in attendant. The theme, "The First 100 Days" catapulted members to achieved 70 percent of its goals by March 31.) WCSHC held several educational workshops, field days, outreach meetings and leadership classes.) The cooperative conducted 14 official business meetings and attendant of 32 members per meeting. WCSHC meet first Monday @ 3:50 p.m. at Winston County Extension Office in Louisville, MS. Members attributed the co-op's strategic plan for accomplishing this mark.

WCSHC's Second Saving Rural America Conference:

WCSHC held its Second Saving Rural America Conference on January 2 & 3, 2009 at the Louisville National Guard Armory with more than 370 participants. DR Homer Wilkes, Mississippi State Conservationist served as luncheon speaker. The conference offered multiple workshops: goat husbandry, sheep and cattle management, Mississippi Forestry Commission and USDA's program updates. Six states represented Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas and Tennessee.

WCSHC's Leadership Development:

WCSHC conducted a leadership seminar for 12 individuals from Louisiana and Mississippi on September 27 & 28. Participants learned methods of identifying community resources and developing strategic plans to impact their communities socially and economically.

WCSHC's Field Days:

WCSHC sponsored four field days to provide members, supporter and friends with hands-on experiences and guidance from service providers.

WCSHC's Outreach Meetings:

WCSHC sponsored eight out-reach meetings, collaborated with FSA, NRCS, Farm Bureau and other organizations.

WCSHC's Homebuyer Seminars:

WCSHC sponsored two seminars-provided tips on how to purchase a home and avoid foreclosure. Assisted 10 families with homeownership's issue

WCSHC's Fire Safety Workshops:

Mississippi leads the nation in home fire fatalities. WCSHC sponsored two fire safety workshops and donated over 70 smoke detectors to needy homes.

WCSHC's Heifer Project:

WCSHC passed on 25 bred heifers to five families in 2009. Members sold 130 heads of cattle.

WCSHC's Economic Tours:

WCSHC sponsored three economic tours of various farm entities including blue berry, mushroom and orchard fruits.

WCSHC Collaboration:

WCSHC collaborated with Mississippi State University's School of Veterinary Medicine to provide health care for pass on animals and facilitating continuing education classes. Thirteen members received cost share assistance through Natural Resource Conservation Service' Small Farmers Initiative for fertilization, alternative water sources and pest control, cross fence and other services.

WCSHC's Greensboro Echo Newsletter:

WCSHC published 11 newsletters. The Greensboro Echo celebrated a milestone in the fourth quarter by publishing the 100 edition. Additionally, the WCSH Youth Group appeared in several national magazines and local newspapers.

WCSHC's Continuing Education:

WCSHC sponsored 16 computer trainings which benefited several individuals with job promotions and connected members with current commodity prices and USDA's Programs.

WCSHC's Canning Workshop:

WCSHC conducted three canning workshops. Participants learned methods of preserving fresh vegetables and recipes for home-made jellies.

WCSHC's Legislative Update:

Twelve members visited the Mississippi State Capital and informed legislators of economic needs in rural communities. Member met with the senate chairwoman of agriculture and sounded the alarm on transportation, health care and public schools funding.

Tax Relief Program:

WCSHC assisted 36 families with property taxes issues and save 412 acres of farmland.

Winston County Self Help Cooperative and Youth Group:

The cooperative served 1150 individuals in 2009 on a meager budget. Nevertheless, the cooperative's commitment to "Help Save Rural America" carried forth strength and courage to make a difference in their surrounding communities.

Winston County Self Help Youth Group's 2009 Yearly Report

WCSH Youth Group's Nutritional Workshops:

WCSH youth conducted 10 nutritional workshops to teach the importance of planning nutritious meals for adults and youth of all ages. The workshops promoted eating healthy, reducing obesity and chronic diseases.

WCSH Youth Group's Kids in the Kitchen:

WCSH youth sponsored, "Four-Kids in The Kitchen" which taught kitchen safety, etiquette, healthy food choices, canning techniques and teamwork.

WCSH Youth Group's Fire Safety Workshops:

WCSH youth sponsored two fire safety workshops. Members learned fundamental of fire escape plans and how to identify hazardous materials which causes home fires.

WCSH Youth Group's Forestry Workshops:

WCSH youth sponsored two forestry workshops. Participants learned tree and leaf identification methods and how to appreciate Mother Earth's natural resources.

WCSH Youth Group's Enrichment Classes:

Spearheaded five enrichment classes to prepare youth members for oratory competition and improved reading skills. Youth participated in 16 computer classes to enhance their knowledge of basic computer skills.

WCSH Youth Group's Child Development Workshops:

WCSH Youth participated in 10 child development workshops. These workshops taught different techniques for caring for pre-school children. Arts/crafts, games and playful activities were included in their workshops.

WCSH Youth Group:

The youth group planted spring and fall gardens and donated over \$5000.00 of fresh vegetables to needy families and senior citizens. Additionally, the youth sponsored their "Second Youth in Agriculture Conference" with more than 120 participants.

WCSH Youth Group's Community Services:

WCSH Youth participated in 12 Diabetes Classes and learned methods to lower hypertension and diabetes.

WCSH Youth Group's Relay for Life Meetings:

WCSH Youth partnered with The American Cancer Society in fighting for a cure for cancer. Youth group hosted six meetings.

WCSH Youth Group's Clean Up Campaign:

Youth partake in a campaign to eradicate litter from their communities.

WCSH Youth Group's Float:

Youth group entered a float in the 2009 Christmas Parade.

WCSH Youth Group's Community Service:

WCSH Youth Group donated Christmas boxes filled with food for needy individuals. Youth learned the reason for giving back to the community.

WCSH Youth Group's Community Outreach Projects:

Youth provided potted tomato plants for senior citizen. Youth members conducted four outreach health and wellness programs.

WCSH Youth Group's Mother and Daughter Seminar:

WCSH Youth Group sponsored a "Mother and Daughter Seminar." This event focused on building families relationships.

WCSH Youth Group's Father and Son Seminar:

Father and Son Seminar spotlighted "Bridging the Gap between Male Factors."

WCSH Youth Group Participated in Field Days:

WCSH Youth Group participated in four field days including cattle, forestry and natural resources.

WCSH Youth Group's College Tours:

WCSH youth toured five colleges which included Emory University, Alcorn State University, Morehouse College, University of Georgia and Spellman. Tours provided inspiration and allowed youth to inquire about career choices and majors.

WCSH Youth Group's New Addition:

WCSH Group established the Clover Buds Group. Composition of K - 5th graders.

2009 Collaboration Partners

Winston County Extension Office

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Heifer International

Black Belt Foundation

Dennis Murray of YDACBINC

Winston County Office of Natural Resources Conservation Service

Winston County Office of Farm Service Agency

Rooted in the Community

Mississippi's State Office of Rural Development
Mississippi's State Office of Farm Service Agency
Mississippi State University Extension Program
Alcorn State University's Extension Program
Alcorn State University's Mississippi Small Farm Development Center
Mississippi State University's College of Veterinary Medicine
Mississippi Association of Cooperatives
Federation of Southern Cooperatives
Wayne County Extension Office
National Wildlife Federation
Mississippi Wildlife Federation
Mississippi's Natural Resources Conservation Service
Mississippi Forestry Commission
Southern Echo Incorporation
Southern University's Ag-Center
U S Forest Service
Mississippi Farm Bureau
National Network of Forest Practitioners
Minority Landowner Magazine
Winston County Journal Newspaper
Winston County Public Library
City of Louisville
Winston County's Board of Supervisors
WLSM Radio Station
Harrington Soul Food Eatery
Simpson County Self Help Livestock Group
Wayne County Self Help Group
Attala County Self Help Cooperative
South Rankin County Farmers' Association
Chester Bradley's Cattle Farm