Solving community problems requires the talents and resources of all Gaston County residents. Cooperative Extension helps bring together local volunteers to work together to identify and address community issues.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- Cooperative Extension coordinates over 500 volunteers to take action in our community through:
  - Bee Keepers Association
  - 4H Entrepreneurship
  - Extension Advisory Council
  - Master Gardeners
  - Extension & Community Association (ECA)
  - Elected Officials Seminar
  - Quality of Natural Resources (QNRC)
  - Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)
  - 4-H programs teach leadership skills to youth
  - Elected Officials Seminar brings community leaders together to address local issues.

Public concern about our food supply grows each day. Cooperative Extension helps Gaston County farmers provide residents with locally-grown food, and educates restaurants and families about food safety.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- Grower permits, marketing, and food safety education programs support farmer markets.
- Foothills Fresh promotes community access to local agricultural products.
- Putting Small Acreage to Work educates people interested in starting or expanding small scale farm enterprises.
- Animal & Crop programs support production of a safe and affordable food supply.
- ServSafe educates food-service employees on food-safety practices.

Businesses need timely research and healthy, well trained employees. Cooperative Extension supports green industry, healthy work environments, and 4H youth ready to support the business community.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- Workplace Nutrition programs keep employees healthy, active, and productive.
- Environmental education helps businesses understand regulations.
- Horticultural education programs train green industry and turf professionals.
- Farm Management programs bring innovation and technology to local farm businesses.

Gaston County residents are challenged to meet health, financial, and support needs of themselves and their families. Cooperative Extension educates youth, adults, and seniors to help create successful families.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- Very Important Parents teaches parenting skills in both English and Spanish
- Nutrition programs address overweight and obesity issues from preschool to seniors.
- SHIIP volunteers provide counseling on Medicare and health insurance issues.
- 4-H teaches youth responsibility and citizenship through clubs, school enrichment, and camps.

Increasing urban growth in Gaston County threatens the quality of our air, water, and land resources. Cooperative Extension involves residents, businesses, and local governments to protect these natural resources.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- QNRC provides residents with tools to conserve energy and reduce air pollution.
- Monitoring of local streams measures water quality and involves residents in creating healthy streams.
- 4-H Youth, QNRC members, and Master Gardeners work to keep harmful pollutants out of our stormwater.
- Land Quality programs identify and protect significant natural sites and working farms.
- Certification workshops teach proper management of agricultural waste and safe application of pesticides.

Gaston County’s problems require innovative solutions. Cooperative Extension brings the research and knowledge of NC State University, NC A&T University, and all of America’s land-grant institutions to Gaston County.

Solutions created through Cooperative Extension:
- NC State University labs diagnose and prescribe pest management solutions.
- Cooperative Extension provides access to research farms and 4-H youth camps throughout the State.
- Cooperative Extension is our local link the University resources such as:
  - Industrial Extension
  - Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC)
  - Forestry, Recreation, and Textile Extension programs
  - The NCSU Solar House
  - Extension & Engagement programs throughout NC State University.
Did You Know?

- Cooperative Extension has provided quality programs to families just like yours since 1914.
- Cooperative Extension is located in all 100 counties and the Cherokee Reservation throughout North Carolina.
- 4-H serves more than 6.5 million members around the world by teaching leadership, citizenship and life skills.

Impacts of Gaston County Extension

- Extension nutrition programs provide an estimated health care savings of over $700,000 to participants each year.
- Extension supports Gaston County’s $20 million agribusiness community by providing over 300 pesticide and waste management certifications.
- 500 Extension volunteers provide volunteer time valued at over $300,000 each year.
- Extension’s 4-H programs reach over 1200 Gaston County youth each year through clubs, camps, and school enrichment.
- Extension reaches over 13,000 Gaston County residents each year through 350 educational workshops and 1500 responses to individual requests for information.

Creating Solutions for Gaston County

OUR VISION:
We engage North Carolina State University and the land-grant institutions with local governments, businesses and people. Our educational programs address the current needs that are identified by our communities and citizens.

OUR MISSION:
Helping people put research-based knowledge to work for economic prosperity, environmental stewardship and an improved quality of life.

Gaston County’s Cooperative Extension programs focus on 5 key issues impacting our communities:

- Building Leaders
- Protecting Our Food Supply
- Supporting Businesses
- Strengthening Families
- Protecting the Environment

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.