Kenton County Extension hosted their fourth annual Farm Harvest Tour on Saturday, September 20, 2014. The Farm Tour provides a great educational experience to the community and links farmers to consumers by promoting locally grown products. Farm Tour 2014 brought our highest participation with approximately 14,417 visits made on that single day.

This year there were 14 farm stops on this self-guided tour. Stops included the Independence Farmers Market, Cooperative Extension Service's Education Center and the Kenton County Library children's program. Other destinations included a dairy farm, two fall ornamental farms, a special events barn, three goat or cattle operations, and an equine demonstration by the Northern Kentucky Horse Network. In addition to these family farms there were 20 other local producers who were invited to sell their farm goods at the aforementioned host sites. This translated into additional sales for the farming community. The farms voluntarily open their farm gates to educate consumers where their food comes from, how to grow their own food, and showcase the stewardship of the land in Kenton County. The Cooperative Extension Service had the opportunity to showcase upcoming programming to non-traditional users of our services.

Visitors were given passports that included a survey to track their visits and gain feedback for upcoming tours. The survey revealed that 48% of the visitors were first time visitors on this tour. We also learned that 23% of surveyed visitors spent $5-15, 32% spent $15-25; 18% spent $25-40; and 27% spent over $40. Visitors were asked if they would return and 98% indicated they would take the tour again and 63% indicated they would make additional purchases from these farms throughout the year.

For the 2014 event, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent Dan Allen worked with local newspapers on editorials and advertising the Tour. He also worked closely with Kenton County Public Works to provide temporary road signage that would assist visitors in finding the venues. Dan worked with the local city halls to promote the event to their residents through signage, newsletters, and distribution of brochures.

Kentucky Department of Agriculture Kentucky Proud marketing, various community partners including Farm Bureau, Kenton County Conservation District, Kenton County Fiscal Court, and private company donations have resulted in positive relationships with the Kenton County Extension Service.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/KentonCountyFarmTour
Website: http://kenton.ca.uky.edu/CommunityEconomicDevelopment

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.