

Ag Column
Chris Ramsey
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UT-TSU Extension Sullivan County Welcomes Ina Ponder

UT-TSU Extension Sullivan County serves youth in 4th through 12th grades, farmers and home horticulture clientele, and clientele with home-based needs such as food preservation, food safety, parenting, and other household interests.

This year, we are pleased to welcome Ina Ponder to our staff in Sullivan County. Ms. Ponder works with Walter Malone to conduct the 4-H youth program in school programs, camps, and small groups. Ms. Ponder and Mr. Malone keep a busy schedule offering a variety of educational programs. Their programming features various subject areas, such as livestock, horses, small animals, photography, computer science, shooting sports, sewing, and many others. Through these programming areas, their goal is to enable youth to develop skills in leadership, citizenship, communication, critical thinking, and decision-making. Sullivan County 4-H is looking to grow our programs including outdoor meat cookery, judging teams, to enhance youth life skills. One of new focuses is STEAM, which stands for science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

Ms. Ponder comes to UT Extension Sullivan County after working with the Kentucky Department of Health. She also has prior experience working in Extension programming at North Carolina State University. She graduated with a B.S. in Public Health from ETSU and from NC State with a M.S. in Youth, Family, and Community Sciences.

She grew up on a beef cattle farm in Madison County, NC just a few miles from here in Marshall, NC. She enjoys living in the mountains of Northeast Tennessee. For fun, Ina enjoys going back and helping with her family farm.

Ina enjoys working with all ages here in the Sullivan County 4-H Youth Program. One of her favorite activities is going to 4-H camp in the summer. She is proud to talk about a recent experience with working with youth at the Bristol Steer and Heifer Show. It was fun to watch youth bring their calves to show after much effort this spring.

Ina enjoys talking to and working with 4-H youth. We welcome Sullivan County youth and parents to come by and visit her at your convenience. The UT Extension Sullivan County office is located at the Ron Ramsey Ag Center.