



THE COUNTY CONNECTION

A Monthly Newsletter from Mayor Randall Hutto
Mt. Juliet | Lebanon | Watertown



In this newsletter:

**Commissioner Spotlight:
John Gentry District 11**
(Page 02)

**2024 Wilson County Ag Hall
of Fame Inductees**
(Page 03)

**77 TN Counties Designated
as Primary Natural Disaster
Areas Due to Drought**
(Page 04)

A Word from Mayor Hutto...

There's always something exciting going on in Wilson County! Most recently, we honored the latest Wilson County Ag Hall of Fame inductees. Johnnie Ricketts, Don Simpson, Nelson Steed, and Bill and Cheryl Ligon were this year's inductees. A banquet was held at the Farm Bureau Expo Center to honor them, and we thank all of those who worked so hard to make it such a wonderful event! We are proud to celebrate our agrarian leaders each year, as agriculture has always been the cornerstone of our community. In the hands of a farmer, the ordinary can become extraordinary. These individuals made so many contributions to our county, many of which were truly extraordinary. While some of them are no longer with us today, their legacy lives on. Congratulations to the 2024 Ag Hall of Fame inductees and their families on this wonderful achievement!

**Commissioner Spotlight:
John Gentry
District 11**



Contact
INFORMATION

Phone: 615-689-3890

**Wilson County
LANDFILL**

**MONDAYS - FRIDAYS
7:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

**ALL LOADS MUST BE
CHECKED INTO THE SCALE
HOUSE BY 2:30 P.M.**

**FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE
CALL 615.449.6684**

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, April 27th, 2024

**Wilson County
Heart Walk**

**NASHVILLE SUPERSPEEDWAY
4847F MCCRARY ROAD | LEBANON, TN**



EMPOWER ME CENTER

TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

SAVE THE DATE



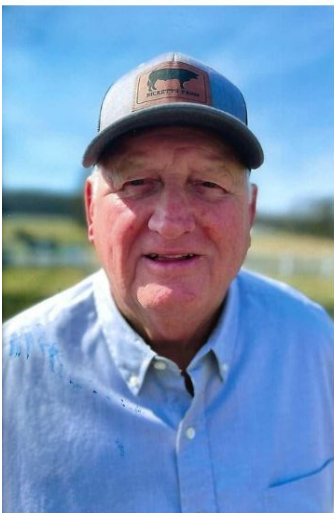
**DARING
TO
DREAM
LUNCHEON**

**APRIL 25, 2024
MADE IN TENNESSEE BUILDING
JAMES E. WARD AGRICULTURAL CENTER
LEBANON, TN**

2024 WILSON COUNTY AG HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



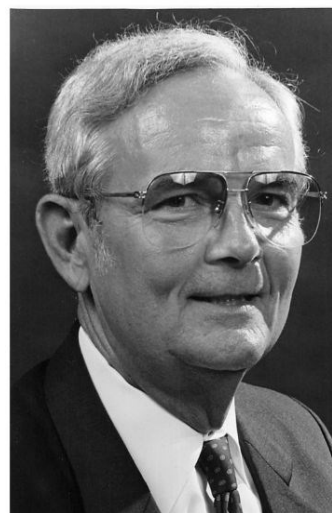
The Seventeenth Annual Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame Banquet was held on April 2, 2024 in the Wilson County EXPO Building. Area FFA and 4-H Members served as ushers for the evening. The following individuals were part of the sixteenth class of inductees: Johnnie Ricketts, Don Simpson, Bill and Cheryl Ligon, and Nelson Steed. Congratulations to the inductees and their families on this wonderful achievement!



Johnnie Ricketts



Nelson Steed



Don Simpson



Cheryl and Bill Ligon



Human Resources is doing a monthly employee giveaway. Winners will receive a Wilson County pullover, please let us know your size. All Wilson County Employees will have a chance to win each month. Please contact HR at 615-206-5065 to claim your prize.

April Winners

**Jason Denson
Sheriff's
Department**

**Lee Bowling, Jr.
WEMA**

**Teresa Pyles
AG Center**

**Gayle Hellemn
EXPO**

**Natalie Wix
Animal Control**

77 TN COUNTIES DESIGNATED AS PRIMARY NATURAL DISASTER AREAS DUE TO DROUGHT

On March 25, 2024, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Secretary, Thomas Vilsack, designated 77 Tennessee counties as primary natural disaster areas due to a recent drought.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, these counties suffered from a drought intensity value during the growing season of (1) D2 Drought-Severe for 8 or more consecutive weeks or (2) D3 Drought-Extreme or D4 Drought-Exceptional.

In accordance with Section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, these areas of our state and adjacent states have been named as contiguous disaster counties.

Primary Counties

Tennessee	(77)			
Anderson	Davidson	Henderson	Madison	Rutherford
Bedford	Decatur	Henry	Marion	Scott
Benton	DeKalb	Hickman	Marshall	Sequatchie
Bledsoe	Dickson	Houston	Maury	Sevier
Blount	Dyer	Humphreys	Meigs	Shelby
Bradley	Fayette	Jackson	Monroe	Smith
Campbell	Fentress	Jefferson	Moore	Tipton
Cannon	Franklin	Knox	Morgan	Union
Carroll	Gibson	Lauderdale	Overton	Van Buren
Cheatham	Giles	Lawrence	Perry	Warren
Chester	Grainger	Lewis	Pickett	Wayne
Claiborne	Grundy	Lincoln	Polk	Weakley
Clay	Hamilton	Loudon	Putnam	White
Coffee	Hardeman	McMinn	Rhea	Williamson
Crockett	Hardin	McNairy	Roane	Wilson
Cumberland	Haywood			

Contiguous Counties:

Tennessee	(12)		
Cocke	Hawkins	Montgomery	Stewart
Hamblen	Lake	Obion	Sumner
Hancock	Macon	Robertson	Trousdale

A Secretarial disaster designation such as this makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous eligible to be considered for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loan assistance, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have 8 months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. FSA considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm and the security and repayment ability of the operator.

Local FSA offices can provide affected farmers with further information. Visit <https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery> for details.

BRIDGETOWN NATURAL FOODS, LLC ANNOUNCES PLANS TO ESTABLISH OPERATIONS IN WILSON COUNTY

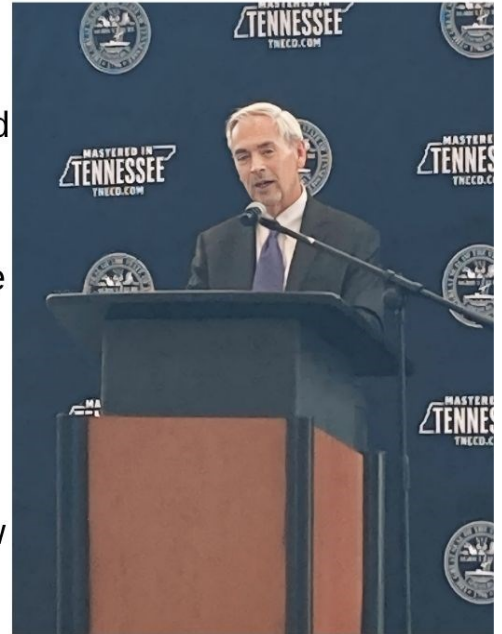
On March 20th, Bridgetown Natural Foods officials announced the company will invest \$78.3 million to expand its Oregon-based operations by locating a manufacturing and distribution facility in Lebanon, Tennessee. Governor Bill Lee, TNDECD Commissioner Stuart C. McWhorter, Wilson County Mayor Randall Hutto, Lebanon Mayor Rick Bell, were present for the announcement, along with several other officials.

The Wilson County facility will be Bridgetown's second location outside of its West Coast headquarters and 219 new jobs will be created as a result of the project.

Bridgetown's new facility will house multiple manufacturing lines, which will produce nearly 100 million pounds of the company's all-natural, organic and gluten-free snack brands annually and optimize distribution to the East Coast by shortening delivery times and decreasing shipping costs.

"With their all-natural, organic and gluten-free brands, Bridgetown produces the perfect snack products. Naturally, with our strong education and workforce development pipeline, high-quality of life and business-friendly environment, we're honored that the Bridgetown team recognized Wilson County as the perfect community to expand their food manufacturing operation." – Wilson County Mayor Randall Hutto.

Since 2020, TNECD has supported nearly 20 economic development projects in Wilson County, resulting in approximately 6,300 job commitments and \$1.2 billion in capital investment. Bridgetown Natural Foods, LLC is headquartered in Portland, Oregon. The company specializes in manufacturing and distributing its innovative and sustainable food products to customers across the U.S. Upon completion, Bridgetown will employ more than 600 people across its Oregon and Tennessee plants.



WEGO STAR TO OFFER RIDES TO ST. JUDE ROCK N ROLL MARATHON

Wilson County is proud to announce its partnership with RTA and the WeGo Star to raise funds for the kids of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital during the April 27, 2024 St. Jude Rock n Roll Nashville Marathon. Sponsored by RJ Corman Railroad, the WeGo Star will make its annual run to Riverfront Park with stops at every station from Lebanon to Nashville. Riders and spectators can ride in style and ease without the worry of traffic and parking. The best part? Ticket proceeds are donated back to the kids of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. \$15 gets you a round trip ticket to the race and you can't put a price on the feeling of helping a child in need. Purchase your tickets online today at <https://ticketsnashville.com>. Saturday, April 27th promises to be an exciting day so leave the keys at home and ride with us. We'll see you at the starting line!

**Ride the WeGo Star
to the  ST. JUDE
Rock'n'Roll
Nashville Marathon**

April 27, 2024

TicketsNashville.com

Proceeds benefit
St. Jude Children's Hospital

Presented by
 **Rj Corman**
Railroad Group

 WILSON COUNTY TENNESSEE
OFFICIAL SEAL
ESTABLISHED 1799

 **WeGo**
Public Transit

UT/TSU EXTENSION MONTH RECOGNIZED ANNUALLY DURING MARCH

Extension Month is recognized each year during the month of March. Last month, Mayor Hutto met with Extension Agents Grace Harville and Morgan Beaty, along with their 4-H students Samuel Cordray and Elijah Hancock, to sign a proclamation which declared March as Extension Month in Wilson County. Our Ag Extension Agents connect us with research-based information from UT and TSU. Their programs focus on Agriculture, Family & Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. We sincerely thank them for all they do for our community! To learn more, follow them on their Facebook page @ UT TSU Extension, Wilson County.



Pictured (left to right): Samuel Cordray, Elijah Hancock, Randall Hutto, Morgan Beaty and Grace Harville.

BURN PERMITS REQUIRED THROUGH MAY 15

To reduce wildland fire risk, Tennesseans are reminded that a burn permit from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Forestry Division is required through May 15 for all open burning where local restrictions do not apply.

Burn permits are free and can be obtained quickly and easily at www.BurnSafeTN.org or by using the [MyTN mobile](#)



app. Online permits are issued 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. in Eastern and Central time zones, depending on your location. Permits are available for burning leaf and/or brush piles and for prescribed fires, including broadcast burning for various purposes such as land clearing, forestry, and agricultural applications.

Individuals with limited internet access may obtain a permit by calling 877-350-BURN (2876). Foresters are available to assist callers Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central, except for holidays.

Permits expire at midnight on the day on which they are obtained, so apply on the day you plan to burn. Fires should be fully extinguished by permit expiration.

The Forestry Division's burn permits are for burning woody debris that exist naturally on the property where it's burned. For information on proper disposal of other materials, including trash, rubber, metal, plastics, furniture, and building materials, please visit www.tn.gov/environment/air/open-burning.html.

Burning without a permit is a crime that carries penalties of up to 30 days in jail and/or a fine.

Some types of debris - such as leaves, grass and stubble - may be of more value if they are not burned. Composting can yield valuable organic matter that can be used to enrich the soil while helping extend the useful life of landfills. In addition, tree branches, trunks, and brush can sometimes be chipped up and simply blown back into the woods or collected and hauled away. Other times, potential hazardous fuel near a structure can simply be drug back into the open woods where it poses no threat to structures.

Please visit www.BurnSafeTN.org for additional tips to burn safely and protect your community from wildland fires.

April Holidays:

April 10
**National Farm
Animals Day &
National Siblings
Day**

April 11
National Pet Day

April 12
**Grilled Cheese
Sandwich Day**

April 16
**National Librarian
Day**

April 20
**Volunteer
Recognition Day**

April 22
Earth Day

April 24
**Administrative
Professionals Day
(Executive Admin's
Day)**

Wilson County Health Council



March 24 – April 20, 2024

Walk 36 miles, the equivalent of walking across Wilson County, while improving your health, by simply walking or being active for 30 minutes per day, six days each week, over the course of four weeks.

School and community-based teams are encouraged to participate. Team members will log their minutes of activity online using a google form to track the team's participation throughout the event. School and community team participants who log in at least six times will earn a t-shirt and qualify for bonus rewards. Bonus rewards will be awarded to the top schools and community teams.

To view program updates and registration information, and to log event activity, visit [Facebook.com/walkacrosswilson](https://www.facebook.com/walkacrosswilson) or scan the QR code. Registration goes live on **Sunday, March 24, 2024.**

Event Contacts

Jacqueline Guerra, Wilson County Health Department, Jacqueline.guerra@tn.gov
Chuck Whitlock, Wilson County Schools, whitlockc@wcschools.com
Brenda Harper, Community Teams, bsharper@comcast.net



Title Sponsor:

Vanderbilt Wilson County Hospital

VANDERBILT  HEALTH



WILSON COUNTY OBSERVED DDA MONTH IN MARCH

The month of March is annually recognized as Developmental Disabilities Awareness (DDA) Month. On March 7, 2024, Mayor Hutto was joined by Andy White and Kathy Simone of Easterseals Tennessee (ESTN) as he signed the DDA Month proclamation. ESTN continually strives to bring awareness of the importance of creating more accessible and inclusive communities.

"This month and every month, we thank Easterseals Tennessee for their efforts to make profound positive differences in the lives of people with disabilities as they learn, work, and play in their communities. Please join ESTN in working to remove barriers and celebrating the contributions of people of all abilities," said Mayor Hutto on his Facebook page.



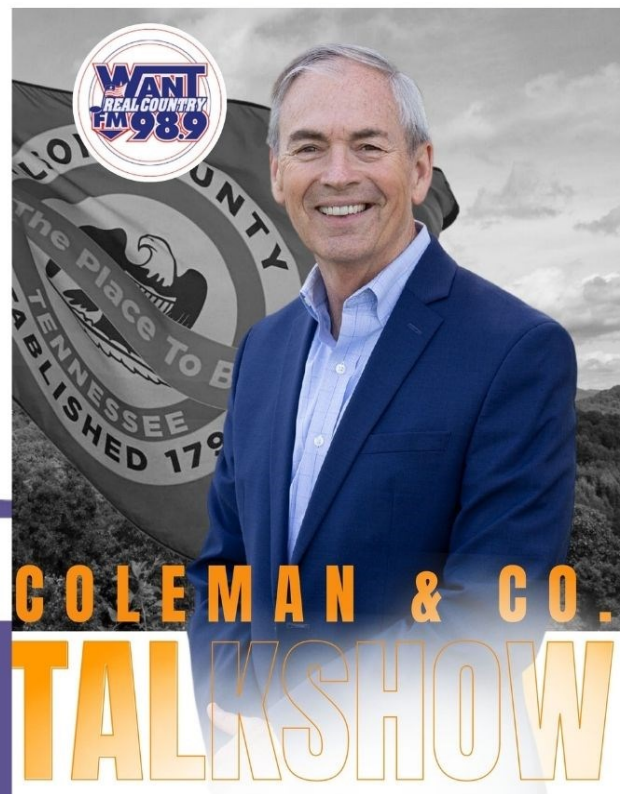
Join us for a fun spring shopping event with VENDORS GALORE All Under One Roof!

Free Admission
 Friday: 4-9 p.m.
 Saturday: 9-4 p.m.



For more information, visit our facebook page at:
[Facebook.com/HappeningsAtTheMill](https://www.facebook.com/HappeningsAtTheMill)

615-443-6901 x 1 • TheMillatLebanon.com • 300 N. Maple St • Lebanon



WANT 98.9 FM / WCOR AM 1490

GUEST, MAYOR RANDALL HUTTO

APRIL 15TH | WITH COLEMAN WALKER

TUNE IN AROUND 7:40AM!

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

PART 2: UTILITIES & BROADBAND



APRIL 30, 2024 | 7:30AM

COLLEGE HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST
1401 LEEVILLE PIKE, LEBANON

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR WILSON COUNTY'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE! JOIN MAYOR RANDALL HUTTO AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM LOCAL UTILITIES AND BROADBAND PROVIDERS FOR A MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION.

**NETWORKING & LIGHT BREAKFAST
BEGINS AT 7:30AM**

**PANEL DISCUSSION
FROM 8AM-9:30AM**

CORPORATE SPONSOR



PRESENTED BY

COLLEGE HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST
& THE LEBANON/WILSON COUNTY CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

FEATURING



PLEASE RSVP FOR THIS FREE EVENT

BY CONTACTING THE WILSON COUNTY MAYOR'S OFFICE AT 615.444.1383
OR BY EMAILING SUSAN SHAW AT SHAWSU@WILSONCOUNTYTN.GOV

WILSON COUNTY KIND SPOTLIGHT



Ms. Carrie Brandon from Mama Bird Bakery has been a supporter of Wilson County Kind from the beginning! She uses her love for baking to show kindness and appreciation to others. Last month, Ms. Carrie wanted to celebrate International Women's Day by showing gratitude to local women-owned businesses. After taking nominations, she delivered freshly baked treats to the staff at Tia's Boutique, The Basement Marketplace, and Salon South. Thank you, Ms. Carrie, for using your gifts for baking to show kindness and encouragement to others!

For more information, visit her on Facebook @Mama Bird Bakery.



WILSON CO. COURTHOUSE DISPLAYS ARTWORK FROM LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS

submitted by Sara Davenport

Wilson County Commissioners recognized artists from its local high schools during the monthly Commission meeting on Monday, March 18th. The artists were presented with certificates and posed for pictures with Wilson Co. Schools, Superintendent, Jeff Luttrell. For several years the walls of the Wilson Co. Courthouse have been decorated with artwork from our local high schools. These works of art will be on display for the next year and the public is invited to come and view them at their convenience. From charcoal drawings to paintings, these young artists display a true talent and Wilson Co. is proud to showcase their works. "Wilson Co. is truly blessed with a diverse student body. From academics, athletics, and liberal arts, I believe we have the best of the best. I appreciate these young artists loaning us their work for the next year and I encourage everyone to come by and see the beautiful displays" - Randall Hutto, Wilson Co. Mayor.

The following students were recognized: Marc Macias (Lebanon High School), Ava Stayshich (Watertown High School), Lindsey Eubanks (Mt. Juliet High School), Joey Johnson (Wilson Central), Lacy Boles (Green Hill High School), and Leah Chekuri (Barry Tatum Virtual Academy). The students are pictured below with the Wilson County Director of Schools, Jeff Luttrell. Congratulations to these incredibly talented students!



BOOKS *Wilson* FROM BIRTH

11 APRIL

6:30-8 PM
FARM BUREAU
EXPOSITION CENTER

IMAGINATION ✦ 20 ✦ DINNER 24

DINNER • LIVE AUCTION
GIVEAWAYS • CHALLENGES

SPONSOR A TABLE

The dinner follows a "Wacky Waiter" format. By reserving a table, you select a person to be your waiter for the evening.

ABOUT WILSON BOOKS FROM BIRTH

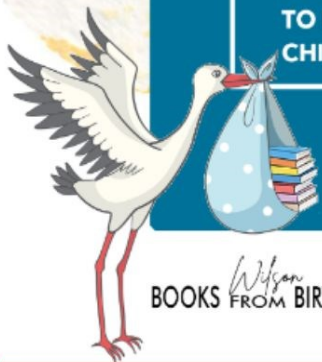
1996 Dolly Parton's Imagination Library was started in Sevier County, TN. In 2005 the IL was replicated in Wilson County as Wilson Books from Birth. Each month, from birth to age 5, children receive a high-quality age appropriate book in the mail, for free!

There are currently 6,140 children enrolled in the program, each receiving a free book in the mail each month. Over 1 million books have been mailed since 2005! We need the community's support this year more than ever!

PROVIDING THE
GIFT OF FREE
BOOKS
TO LOCAL
CHILDREN

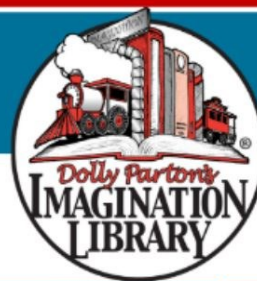
TABLE
\$300

PRESENTING SPONSOR:
THE HANKINS FOUNDATION



BOOKS *Wilson* FROM BIRTH

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



GOVERNOR'S
EARLY
LITERACY
FOUNDATION

You're invited!

Mental Health Fair

Hosted by the Wilson County Mental Health Committee
In conjunction with the Wilson County Health Council
And the Wilson County Health Department

Join us, come relax and help us celebrate the official
launch of the Wilson County Mental Health Committee



May 4th, 2024



10 AM - 2 PM



228 E Main St,
Lebanon, TN 37087

- Several mental health organizations and resources will be available 
- Food trucks, hot dogs, and giveaways 
- Family fun activities and bouncy houses
- Many community partners will be present! 



Estás invitado!

Feria de Salud Mental

Organizado por el Comité de Salud Mental de Wilson en colaboración con el Consejo de Salud del Condado de Wilson y el Departamento de Salud de Wilson.

Únete a nosotros, ven a relajarte y ayúdanos a celebrar el lanzamiento oficial del Comité de Salud Mental del Condado de Wilson



El 4 de Mayo del 2024



10 AM - 2 PM



228 E Main St,
Lebanon, TN 37087

- Varias organizaciones y recursos de salud mental estarán disponibles
- Carritos de comida, hot dogs, y regalos
- Actividades divertidas para toda la familia y casas inflables
- Muchos socios comunitarios estarán presentes



**FREE MEALS
FREE GROCERIES
FREE KITCHEN TOOLS**



COOKING MATTERS

FREE, 6-WEEK COOKING WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS

Cooking Matters is a hands-on cooking and nutrition class designed for adults to learn skills for cooking healthier family meals and saving money in the grocery store.

Classes will be held on Thursdays from March 12th-April 23rd, 5:30-7:30 PM at the Wilson County Fairgrounds 945 E Baddour Pkwy, Lebanon, TN 37087

SPACE IS LIMITED - PARTICIPANTS MUST REGISTER!!

FREE GROCERIES AFTER EACH SESSION

HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL



CHILDCARE PROVIDED

OR GO TO [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/DKUMADBNSCQFUNN36](https://forms.gle/DKUMADBNSCQFUNN36)

***** Class open to adults who are on OR eligible for SNAP/WIC/Head Start or other assistance programs. *****



Questions?

**Contact Extension Agent Leslyne Watkins
615-444-9584 Lwatkin7@utk.edu**



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) under an agreement with the State of Tennessee.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Real. Life. Solutions.™

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
UTEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

COMIDA GRATIS
DESPENSA GRATIS
UTENSILIOS PARA LA
COCINA GRATIS



COOKING MATTERS

PARA LOS PAPAS, GRATIS CLASE DE COCINA DE 6 SEMANAS

Cooking Matters es una clase práctica de cocina y nutrición diseñada para que los adultos aprendan habilidades para cocinar comidas familiares más saludables y ahorrar dinero en la tienda.

Las clases se llevarán a cabo los jueves del 12 de marzo-23 de abril de 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm en el Wilson County Fairgrounds 945 E Baddour Pkwy, Lebanon, TN 37087

ESPACIO LIMITADO; EL PARTICIPANTE DEBE REGISTRARSE.

DESPENSA GRATIS DESPUÉS DE LA CLASE

HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL



**CUIDADO
DE NIÑOS DISPONIBLE**

O IR A [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/ERGCHNGG8WHE4NCG6](https://forms.gle/ERGCHNGG8WHE4NCG6)

**** Esta clase esta disponible para adultos que reciben SNAP/WIC/Head Start o algun programa de asistencia. ****



**¿Tienes preguntas?
Contactar a Extension Agent Leslyne Watkins
615-444-9584 Lwatkin7@utk.edu**

Sponsored by:



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) under an agreement with the State of Tennessee.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Real. Life. Solutions.™

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
UTEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE