

Boone, DeKalb, Ogle Extension Unit 2



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Extension Council Meeting

Health & Local Foods Subcommittee

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 6:00 pm

Garden Meet Up with Zoom option

Boone: Buchanan Street Community Garden (218 Buchanan Street, Belvidere)

DeKalb: Rick John's Memorial Garden (St. Paul's Episcopal Church, DeKalb – 900 Normal Road)

Ogle: Flagg-Rochelle Library (619 Fourth Avenue, Rochelle)

Boone: ☒ Mark Schuth ☐ Stephanie Meyers

DeKalb: ☐ Abigail Hesslau

Ogle: ☒ Candie Fore ☒ Sarah Hackbarth

Staff: ☒ Bruce Black ☒ Kara Schweitzer ☒ Connie Handel

☒ Judy Hodge ☒ Jan Saglier ☒ Heather Coyle

Public Comment:

Agenda

1. Welcome/Introductions 6:02 p.m.

Thank you for attending our virtual meeting and tours of the gardens. We are grateful that technology worked in our favor for this first time experience.

Ice Breaker Question:

What's your favorite vegetable to grow and/or eat from a garden?

Quite the variety of favorite vegetables to grow and/or eat. Tomatoes, rhubarb, asparagus, green beans, habaneros, zucchini, and sugar peas.

2. Description & Vision of the Committee

The Health and Local Foods Committee has been formed to address the issues in our communities with a more informed scope from our partner council members. Our partners will help in informing us of the current and future needs in our communities relating to health and local foods. This will allow us to provide program opportunities to address these needs as they arise.

3. Minutes

Review minutes from February meeting. Any questions?

No questions regarding the minutes from February.

Items Discussed/Addressed:

Water Quality – Watershed 101 was held in Boone County, 9 participants, DeKalb will be hosting Watershed Steward and Leaders program this fall.

Walkability Survey – Started in Boone County

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:39a77d26-c34d-4f63-8069-1244dd4c68ec>

Nutrition and Cooking Classes – Ogle County offering Homegrown Healthy, there was a request for this type of program in Boone County.

Cost of Food – SNAP could offer Healthy Cents program to help with budgeting.

4. Committee Update

Mike Swedberg (SNAP Educator) – No longer with Extension

Sarah Hackbarth – Second term will end on August 31

5. Garden Tours

Who helps in the gardens? What are we growing? What happens with the food?

Is it a traditional community garden or educational garden?

Great tours of the gardens.

Buchanan Street Community Garden – is on city property. The city allows us to use the water for the gardens. This year they did some garden bed repair for us. Soil contact for next year is Belvidere Cemetery. 4-H Juntos Club works in the garden with Master Gardeners twice a month. Produce is shared with the community at the share table located down the street.

Rick John's Memorial Garden – Lots of technology in their garden with keeping track of soil temperature and moisture. NIU students work with a Master Gardener in the garden. A grant allowed them to make some changes last year to the space. They grow a lot of produce and share it with the local pantry. The students also help with the distribution of the food.

Flagg-Rochelle Library – The Master Gardeners work with a 4-H Club in the gardens. They were there during the tour doing some planting. There are 5 garden beds that the youth work in. They will be growing produce to show at the Ogle County Fair. There is an extra garden bed there that will be an educational garden for the Homegrown Healthy program that will be offered at the library this summer with the help of the Master Gardeners. They have it set up for doing square foot gardening.

6. Summer Focus – Farmer's Markets

Boone – Looking into potentially going once a month 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Belvidere, Wild Cherries
Master Gardeners will be at the Farmers Market ten times this summer to connect with the community.

DeKalb – Looking into DeKalb area market

Connie will work with the Master Gardeners to see if they can make a connection with being at the DeKalb Market.

Ogle – Scheduled to go the third Thursday night in June and July in Oregon

Candie suggested looking into the Byron Farmers Market as another possible location as that one seems to be growing over the years.

Information at the booth would be geared around gardening. Mental health benefits of gardening, healthy choices, recipes of what's available at the market, etc. Master Gardeners to help answer gardening questions.

Suggestions for the Farmers Markets was to have maps and lists of where the local community gardens are located in the county. Also would be good to have a list of where the local food pantries are or organizations that are hosting food distribution days such as the Keen Age Center. Lists can be found on health department websites as well as with local hunger coalitions.

Next Meeting: In Person - Monday, September 29 at 6 p.m. – Ogle County, location TBD – Dinner
Keep watch for more information from Teresa about where the September meeting will be located. For now...please save the date and plan on joining us for dinner and discussion.

Adjourn: 6:35 p.m.

Council Roles Summarized:

- * Linking University of Illinois Extension with local leadership, communities, agencies and organizations.
- * Supporting and advocating for Extension programs. Identifying needs and potential resources (human, financial, physical).
- * Advise the program planning and implementation processes.
- * Assuring council membership represents all segments in counties served.
- * Assuring program outreach meets equal opportunity and program access guidelines.