

Extension Connections Newsletter

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Henry-Stark County
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The Power of Pigments: How Colorful Foods Benefit Your Health

Kristin Bogdonas, Illinois Extension nutrition and wellness educator

Color isn't just for your plate—it's for your health. The vibrant hues of fruits and vegetables come from pigmented phytochemicals, natural compounds that offer powerful health benefits. These include carotenoids, flavonoids, and anthocyanins, which act as antioxidants to protect cells from oxidative stress and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Here's a breakdown of how different colors contribute to your well-being:

- **Red and Pink:** Tomatoes, strawberries, and other red-hued produce are rich in lycopene and anthocyanins. Lycopene has been linked to a reduced risk of prostate cancer and heart disease, while anthocyanins may improve circulation and reduce inflammation.
- **Orange and Yellow:** Carrots, sweet potatoes, and similar foods contain beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. This nutrient is essential for immune function and eye health.
- **Green:** Leafy greens like spinach and kale are packed with lutein and sulforaphane. Lutein supports eye health, and sulforaphane has shown potential in inhibiting cancer cell growth.
- **Blue and Purple:** Blueberries, eggplants, and other deep-colored produce are high in anthocyanins, which may enhance brain function and protect against heart disease.
- **White:** Often overlooked, white fruits and vegetables like garlic and onions contain unique phytochemicals. Garlic, for example, is rich in allicin, a sulfur-containing compound with antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties that may help reduce the frequency and duration of colds.

Incorporating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables into your meals ensures a diverse intake of these beneficial compounds. This week, challenge yourself to “eat the rainbow” to support your overall health and well-being.

For recipes that incorporate fruits and vegetables, visit the recipes tab on Illinois Extension's Eat Move Save website: eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu and explore such gems as Green Bean and Potato Salad, Fresh Cucumber Orange Salad, Roasted Beets with Simple Spices, Plant Part Salad and many more!



Golden Garden Days

Celebrating 50 years of Illinois Master Gardeners | Quad Cities Celebration

Join us for this free event!

Wednesday, June 25, 10 am - 5 pm



University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners serving Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark counties invite you to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Illinois Master Gardener program on Wednesday, June 25. This special milestone event is open to the public, and all are welcome to attend. Whether you're a dedicated gardener or someone who simply appreciates beautiful outdoor spaces, you're sure to enjoy this day filled with inspiration, learning, and community connection.

The celebration begins from 10:00 a.m. to noon at Riverside Gardens in Moline, one of our most established Master Gardener sites. Visitors can explore a variety of garden areas including a GIS-mapped tree walk, a demonstration food garden, a rain garden, and a vibrant pollinator garden. A special greenhouse make-and-take activity will be part of the morning festivities.



There will be a lunch break from noon to 1:00 p.m. The Hangry Haven food truck that will be on site so you can picnic at the park, or you are free to visit nearby restaurants on your own.

The afternoon continues from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. with a visit to the Floreciente Community Garden, an award-winning space that was recognized with the 2024 Illinois Extension Diversity Award. As a proud partner site of the SNAP-Ed program, this garden is a shining example of what community collaboration can achieve. During your visit, you'll hear the inspiring story behind the garden's creation and how it has grown into a thriving, welcoming space for the neighborhood. In the spirit of giving back, we invite you to bring fresh produce or non-perishable food items to support a community food drive benefiting this garden and its mission.

The day concludes from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. at the historic Hauberg Estate in Rock Island. This stunning cultural landmark offers the perfect setting to wrap up the celebration. Guests will learn about a developing Master Gardener project on the estate grounds and enjoy a guided tour of the beautifully preserved mansion, designed by renowned architect Robert Spencer. The surrounding landscape, originally designed by famed landscape architect Jens Jensen, provides a scenic backdrop for a garden stroll and restoration updates.



Join us for this memorable day as we reflect on the past 50 years of garden education and outreach, and look ahead to the future. It's also a great day to learn more about becoming a Master Gardener.

RSVP Today and Join us!

There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. Sign up at go.illinois.edu/MG50YearsHMRS or call the Rock Island County Extension office at (309) 756-9978.

Horticulture Helpline | Wednesdays, 9 am - noon (309) 756-9978 | Illinois Extension, Milan, IL

Have a Plant Question? Ask the Master Gardeners!

Our Horticulture Helpline is open every Wednesday from 9 am to Noon. Call us at (309) 756-9978 or stop by the Extension office at 321 W 2nd Ave in Milan to speak with a Master Gardener in person. You can also get answers anytime by filling out our online form at go.illinois.edu/askthemastergardener.

We're here to help with your gardening questions!



Soak It Up: Simple & Beautiful Solutions for Stormwater Management

Adapted from a Good Growing blog article on the topic by Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension horticulture educator

If you're looking to add beauty and purpose to your yard, rain gardens and bioswales are landscape features that do more than just look good—they help manage stormwater and support the environment.

These green infrastructure solutions mimic natural systems to slow down and absorb rainwater runoff, filtering pollutants and recharging groundwater, while also enhancing the visual appeal of your property.

Rain Gardens & Bioswales

Designed as shallow, bowl-shaped beds, rain gardens capture runoff from roofs or driveways and filter it into the ground. Planted with a mix of native flowers, grasses, shrubs, or even small trees, they blend into your landscape like any ornamental garden—but with a purpose. Thoughtful placement and soil consideration ensure proper drainage and protect your home from water damage.



Similar in function but different in form, bioswales are long, sloped channels that slow, filter, and direct water away from problem areas. They're often used in larger spaces or alongside streets and parking areas. Like rain gardens, bioswales are planted with deep-rooted natives that stabilize the soil and support pollinators and wildlife.

Beautiful and Beneficial

These systems don't just function well—they're visually striking, offering color, texture, and seasonal interest. With a smart planting plan based on sunlight and moisture levels, they create a layered look that thrives year-round and provide ecosystem benefits.

Worried about mosquitoes? Don't be.

Properly constructed gardens drain within 24 hours—too fast for mosquitoes to breed.

Did you know:

The Red Oak Rain Garden on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus showcases over 50 native plant species and absorbs more than 27,000 gallons of rainwater!

Want to learn more or build your own?

Read Emily's Good Growing Soak it up: rain gardens and bioswales @: go.illinois.edu/GGRainGardenBioswales
Visit the Illinois Extension rain garden at Riverside Gardens in Moline: go.illinois.edu/RiversideRainGarden



Wellness in Nature: Lesson for Living | Tues. June 10, 10 a.m.

Spending time in nature can benefit mental and physical well-being. From creating a sensory experience while growing vegetables and fruits in a garden to hiking and exploring a forest preserve, even a short amount of time spent in nature can improve overall health. Explore the health benefits of being present in nature and discover simple activities to foster experiences in the natural world.

Register at go.illinois.edu/WellnessNature

Farm Property Insurance | Legal Training for Illinois Small Farms Mon June 23, Noon



Running a successful farm or ranch relies heavily on buildings, equipment, vehicles, and supplies. When these essential resources are lost or damaged, the impact on profitability can be severe. Farm property insurance can help protect against these risks—but only if you fully understand how it works. In this free webinar learn the basics of farm property insurance, including what it covers and how it can safeguard your operation.

Register at go.illinois.edu/FarmPropertyInsurance

Join GIFT Gardens and Help Provide Fresh Produce for Families in Need!



GIFT Gardens: Grow Fresh, Give Fresh – Make a Difference This Summer!

GIFT Gardens (Growing Illowa Food Together) is more than just a gardening program—it's an invitation to transform the joy of nurturing your garden into a way to help those in need. In partnership with Tapestry Farms, University of Illinois Extension, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, and River Bend Food Bank, this initiative brings together beginner to advanced gardeners from the Quad Cities to cultivate and donate fresh produce to local food pantries.

Whether you tend a container garden on your patio or manage a full backyard garden, every fruit, vegetable, or herb you grow can play a crucial role in fighting hunger in our region.

For those interested in learning more or getting involved, please visit our sign-up page at <https://shorturl.at/7TGJE>. Have questions or want to contribute via donation? Reach out to us at giftgardens@tapestryfarms.org.

Join us in making a tangible impact—grow with purpose, share your harvest, and help nourish our community.

Supporting Farm Families Coping with Dementia

Free Online Educational Series for Caregivers

Do you have a family member with dementia who lives or works in a farming community? You may be eligible to participate in Farm Families Coping with Dementia (FFCD)—a free, online educational series designed to support caregivers of individuals in agricultural settings who are experiencing signs and symptoms of dementia.



This four-week program offers practical guidance and expert insights to help caregivers navigate the unique challenges of dementia in farming environments. Each weekly session covers a key topic:

- Dementia Basics
- Farm Safety and Dementia
- Improving Safety with Dementia
- Caregiving and Communication

Participants who qualify after a brief screening may receive up to \$50 for completing surveys and providing feedback.

Program Details: Start Dates: July 2025 | Location: Online via Zoom

This program is part of a research study designed to provide meaningful support to caregivers in rural and agricultural communities. Learn more and find out if you're eligible by calling **(319)-384-3817** to complete a brief eligibility survey. If you have questions about the program, contact Julie Bobitt – jbobbitt@uic.edu



4-H at the Henry County Fair Cambridge, IL | June 14-21

Check out the 4-H Shows during the 2025 Henry County Fair in Cambridge, IL. The 4-H Food Stand will also be open. It's a great way to support the program while you enjoy a fresh squeezed lemon shakeup and other delicious items!

FOOD STAND HOURS:

Tues June 17, 7 am - 3:15 pm

Wed June 18- Sat June 21, 7 am - 7 pm

2025 Henry County 4-H Show Schedule

Saturday, June 14

*General Projects Judging, 9-11 a.m.

Dog Obedience & Showmanship 2 p.m.

Wednesday, June 18

Bucket Calf Show, Noon

Master Showmanship, 6:30 p.m.

**General Projects will be on view in the Art Hall building starting Tues June 17 at noon to Sat June 21 til close.*

Thursday, June 19

Swine Show, 8 a.m.

Beef Show (steers and heifers) 9 a.m.

Sheep Show (after swine show)

Goat Show (after sheep show)

Junior Livestock Auction 6:00/6:30 p.m.

Friday, June 20

Horse Show, 9 a.m.

Saturday, June 21

Rabbit Show, 8 a.m.

Poultry Show, 9 a.m.

Visit the Henry County Fair website for more
www.henrycountyfairillinois.com



Farm in the Park

Friday, June 13 • 3:30–6:00 PM

Central Park, Aledo, IL



Celebrate Agriculture with the Whole Family!

Join us for a fun-filled afternoon of hands-on learning, games, and good food!

Explore Agriculture Up Close

- Hands-on stations from Mercer County Farm Bureau & Ag Education
- Gardening tips and resources from Master Gardeners
- Nutrition fun and healthy living tips from SNAP-Ed

Games | Prizes | Bounce House

- Kids: Have a blast in the bounce house provided by the YMCA
- Follow the Agriculture Education signs – answer at least 5 questions, then stop by the Farm Bureau table to claim your prize!

Petting Zoo & Butterfly Bus

- Get up close with friendly farm animals! Step inside the Butterfly Bus to explore pollinators!

Grab a Bite & Support 4-H

- Enjoy a hot dog served with Kitchen Cooked potato chips, cookie, and a water — just \$5! Meal proceeds support local 4-H youth through the Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation.

- **Visit the BEAST from News Channel 8**

This event is brought to you by:



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA - CHAMPAIGN



For more information contact
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