

## Extension Connections Newsletter

Rock Island County  
321 W 2nd Ave, Milan, IL 61264  
309-756-9978

Henry-Stark County  
358 Front St., Galva, IL 61434  
309-932-3447

Mercer County  
910 13th St, Viola IL 61486  
309-513-3100

Website: [extension.illinois.edu/hmrs](https://extension.illinois.edu/hmrs) | Email: [uie-hmrs@illinois.edu](mailto:uie-hmrs@illinois.edu)

### Fairs, Flavors & Fresh Air—Your Guide to a Safe & Satisfying Summer!

July ushers in all the things we love most about summer—county fairs, backyard barbecues, garden produce, and long sunny days. But with all the fun, it's important to stay safe, make smart choices, and enjoy everything this season has to offer in a healthy way!

#### Fair Food Frenzy? Be Smart About Your Snacks

It's fair season—and yes, that lemonade shake-up and funnel cake are calling! But a little planning can help you enjoy the treats without overdoing it.

- Snack before you go so you're not tempted to splurge right away.
- Bring water to stay hydrated—and consider splitting treats like that shake-up with a friend.
- Pick two favorites and savor them slowly.
- Sit down to enjoy your food—eating mindfully can help you feel full and satisfied.
- And while walking the grounds is great, remember: 10,000 steps only burns about 300-400 calories—so movement helps, but mindful eating is key!

#### Get Grilling—July is National Grilling Month!

Grill lean meats for a heart-healthy meal, and don't forget the marinade!

- Mix 3 parts oil + 1 part acid + seasonings (ex: olive oil, soy sauce, ginger) for juicy flavor.
- Avoid metal—use glass, plastic, or a zip-top bag, and always refrigerate.
- Plan ahead! Marinate for 12+ hours to tenderize and reduce cooking time.
- **Have zucchini in your garden?** Try our Zucchini Pineapple Bread recipe at: [go.illinois.edu/ZucchiniPineappleBrd](https://go.illinois.edu/ZucchiniPineappleBrd)
- **It's also National Pickle Month!** Learn how to pickle your produce: [extension.illinois.edu/food-preservation/pickling](https://extension.illinois.edu/food-preservation/pickling)



#### Summer Skin Tips: Stay Hydrated & Protected

- **Hydration is key.** Hot weather increases your risk of dehydration, which can leave skin dry or irritated. Drink water often and enjoy water-rich snacks like cucumbers and watermelon.
- **Protect your skin.** Use broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen daily—even on cloudy days—and reapply every two hours if swimming or sweating. Don't forget spots like ears, feet, and the back of your neck!
- **Nourish from within.** Antioxidant-rich foods (like blueberries), omega-3s (salmon, flaxseeds), and vitamin C (citrus, bell peppers) support healthy, glowing skin.
- **Lighten up your skincare.** Choose non-comedogenic makeup, cleanse gently to remove sweat and sunscreen, and moisturize daily. Aloe works well for after-sun soothing.

**Wishing you a joyful July filled with sunshine, safety, and sweet summer memories!**

*Story adapted from Wellness Wake up by Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness educator, past July Breakroom Buzz issues by Illinois Extension FCS team members.*

## 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](https://go.illinois.edu/askthemastergardener).

***We're here to help with your gardening questions!***



## Smart Watering Tips for You and Your Landscape

*Adapted from the July 2022 Outsider newsletter on the topic by Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension horticulture educator*

Midwestern summers are no joke—high temperatures and dry spells can leave both plants and people feeling parched. Knowing when and how to water your landscape can make all the difference in plant health and long-term garden success.



### Water the Right Way:

- **Check before you water.** Just because the soil looks dry on the surface doesn't mean it's dry below. Stick your finger or a trowel a few inches into the soil—only water if it's dry at that depth.
- **Water at the roots.** Direct water to the base of the plant—not the leaves—for efficient absorption.
- **Water in the morning.** Early watering reduces soil evaporation. Water on leaves is allowed to dry during the day, which helps prevent disease.
- **Slow and deep is best.** A slow soak helps water penetrate deeper into the soil, encouraging strong root growth and better drought tolerance.
- **Adjust for the heat.** Most plants need about 1 inch of water per week. When temps climb above 90°F, increase that to 2 inches.
- **Mulch matters.** A layer of mulch around plants helps retain soil moisture and keeps roots cooler. Keep mulch a few inches away from the plant base to avoid rot.

### Lawn Care During Drought:

Cool-season grasses may go dormant in summer heat and turn brown—that's okay! If dry conditions last more than six weeks, water every 2–4 weeks with about ¼ to ½ inch to keep the crowns alive. Mow high (2.5–3 inches), mow often, and use a sharp blade. Hold off on fertilizing until cooler fall weather returns.

### Don't Forget the Gardener!

Protect yourself while protecting your plants:

- Garden early or late in the day to avoid peak heat.
- Take breaks, set time limits, and rest in the shade.
- Drink water before, during, and after working outside—don't wait until you feel thirsty to hydrate.

For more detailed summer watering and lawn tips, visit: [go.illinois.edu/OutsiderWaterIssue](https://go.illinois.edu/OutsiderWaterIssue)



# Summer Webinar Series

**Discover reliable health insights in the Summer Self-Care series**  
**Wednesdays: July 9, 16, 23, 29 Sign up at: [go.illinois.edu/CSS-Summer2025](https://go.illinois.edu/CSS-Summer2025)**

## **Water Wins: Choosing Healthier Drinks for Toddlers to Teens | July 9, 12-1 PM**



Equip the family with tools to make healthier beverage choices every day. Learn to decode labels, spot hidden sugars, and encourage water and natural drinks.

## **Nurtured in Nature: Restoring Wellness for Collective Climate Resilience | July 16, 12-1 PM**



See how reconnecting with land and identity can inspire healing and collective environmental action. Experience how a BIPOC-led initiative nurtures wellness and climate resilience through culturally rooted nature experiences.

## **Easy Steps to Benefiting from Everyday Mindful Forest Bathing | July 23, 12-1 PM**



Tap into the calming power of nature through mindfulness and forest bathing. Learn how these practices reduce stress, lift mood, and support relaxation. Explore research-backed benefits and get simple tips for finding nearby green spaces and building your own mindful outdoor routine.

## **The Empowered Woman: Research-Based Exercise and Nutrition | July 30, 12-1 PM**



As women enter midlife, their bodies and needs evolve, along with the strength and wisdom to shape their own well-being. This session explores evidence-based strategies to boost vitality, support longevity, and embrace wellness through movement, nutrition, and self-care. We'll also discuss natural changes in skin and hair and share tips to help you thrive at every stage of life.



## **Branch out into summer learning with free Forestry Stewardship Series**

Explore the health benefits urban trees provide, the importance of the state's oldest trees and how to care for them, how to design and install a firebreak for safe and effective prescribed burns, and what new invasive species are heading toward Illinois and how to manage them. Sessions in this four-part live webinar series are free and available online from 2 to 3 p.m. on Wednesdays starting July 9.

Sign up for one or all of the sessions to get the access link at [go.illinois.edu/ForestryStewardship](https://go.illinois.edu/ForestryStewardship).

### **• July 9 – Urban Trees: A Matter of Life and Death**

Discover how urban trees positively impact human health through recent research findings.

### **• July 16 – Legacy Trees**

Learn about the ecological, historical, and cultural importance of Illinois' oldest trees and how to care for them.

### **• July 23 – Firebreak Design Basics**

Explore best practices for creating safe and effective firebreaks during prescribed burns.

### **• July 30 – Emerging Invasive Species**

Get to know invasive species on the rise in Illinois, how to identify them, and strategies for control.



# 4-H Fair Shows & Extension Events

## Mercer County 4-H Shows July 7-12, Aledo, IL

Mon, July 7 – General Project Judging, 8:30–11 am

Tues, July 8 - Poultry Show, 8 am, Rabbit Show, 10 am, Sheep Show, 4 pm

Thurs, July 10 – Swine Show, 9 am, Goat Show, 2 pm, Jr. & Sr. Master Showmanship Contest, 3 pm

Fri, July 11 – Dairy Show/Beef Show, 9 am, Mercer County Youth Livestock Auction, 6 pm

Sat, July 12 – Dog Obedience & Showmanship, 9 am

Sun, July 20 – 4-H Horse Show at 4K Plus Arena, Viola, IL, 9 am



## Rock Island County 4-H Shows July 12-18, East Moline

Sat, July 12 – General Projects Judging, 9 to noon, Dog Obedience Show, 4 pm

Mon, July 14 – Dog Fun Show, 6 pm

Tues, July 15 – Horse Fun Show, 10 am; Dairy Show, 10 am, Poultry Show, 2 pm

Wed, July 16 – Horse & Pony Show, 9 am, Sheep Show, 3 pm

Thur, July 17 – Swine Show, 8 am; Bucket Calf/Breeding Beef/Steer Show, 9 am; Horse & Pony Show 9 am; Master Showmanship, 12:30 pm; 4-H Members Ag Championship Games, 3 pm

Fri, July 18 – Goat Show, 10 am; Rabbit Show, 2 pm Livestock Auction for 4-H members, 6 pm



## Stark County Jr. Fair July 24-28, Wyoming, IL

Fri July 25 - Pee Wee Swine Showmanship, Jr. Fair Swine Show, and 4-H Swine Shows, 9 am

Sat. July 26 - Pee Wee Goat/Sheep Showmanship, Jr. Fair Goat & Sheep Show, and 4-H Goat & Sheep Show, 1 pm; PeeWee Poultry Showmanship, and Poultry Show, 3:00 pm; PeeWee Rabbit Showmanship, and Rabbits & Rodents Show, 3:30 pm

Sun July 27 - PeeWee Cattle Showmanship, 10 am; Bucket Calf and Dairy Show, 10 am: Jr. Fair Beef Show, and 4-H Beef Show, 11 am

Mon July 28 - Horse & Pony Show, 9 am; 4-H Awards Ceremony, and Jr. Fair Awards Ceremony, 6:30 pm; Stark County Sale of Champions, 7 pm



## Farm in the Park Aug 5, 11 am - 1 pm, Galva, IL

Bring your family for a fun day exploring agriculture, horticulture, and healthy living with Illinois Extension, SNAP-Ed, and 4-H.

Join us at Veteran's Park (across from our office) for these fun activities:

- Free Petting Zoo
- Kids Crafts & Activity Stations
- Interactive Games & Prizes
- Health, Wellness, Horticulture, & Agriculture Resources
- Come for lunch: Buy a hot dog, chips, applesauce, cookie, and drink for \$5.

We look forward to seeing you there!

