



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Unit 2 Boone, DeKalb, Ogle

Extension Council Meeting

Health & Local Foods Subcommittee

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 6:00 pm

Boone: ____ Mark Schuth ____ Stephanie Meyers

DeKalb: ____ Abigail Hessler

Ogle: ____ Joyce Lewis ____ Melissa Rojas

Staff: ____ Bruce Black ____ Jan Saglier ____ Connie Handel

Public Comment:

Agenda

Meeting start time

1. Welcome/Introductions

Ice Breaker Question: What spring vegetable are you looking forward to planting or having in season?

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

4. Committee Update

Kara Schwietzer left Extension at the end of January.

5. Current projects/programs

- Annual Garden Day for Ogle, Carroll, Lee, and Whiteside Counties- Ready Set Grow: Saturday, March 28 at Sauk Valley Community College. Piloting programming for the whole family at Ready Set Grow this year: Adult track with concurrent session for youth to provide easier access to the event for parents and caregivers.
- Ogle County Master Gardeners had their annual Seed Library Kick-Off on January 31, which is National Seed Swap Day, at Flagg-Rochelle Library. We had 50 participants come through during the two-hour event with included interactive activities, make and takes, tastings and free seeds.
- Boone County Master Gardeners received a Know More, Grow More Grant, for 2026, that will be used to continue the Buchanan Street Gardens. The vegetable garden is a collaboration between the Master Gardeners and 4-H in which the food is given to the local share table food pantry.
- DeKalb County Master Gardeners hosted a Seed Exchange/Giveaway at the DeKalb Public Library on January 31. 95 participants attended the 3-hour, come and go event. The annual Gardener's Pathway gardening conference is set for February 28 at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau. Registration closed on February 14 with approximately 130 participants.

6. Focus for 2026: Any local needs or priorities to address in the upcoming year?

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 26, 6:00 pm

Meeting End Time

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.