



2017 Impact Report

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION
SERVING DEWITT, MACON,
& PIATT COUNTIES

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Welcome & SNAP-Ed	2
4-H Youth Development	3
4-H STEM	4
4-H Healthy Living	5
Horticulture	6
Master Gardeners	7
Local Food Systems & Small Farms, Master Naturalists	8
Nutrition & Wellness	9
Budget & Outreach	10
Community Partners	11
Extension Offices & Staff	12



A Note from the Director

It is my pleasure to represent a staff of outstanding professionals who strive daily to positively impact the lives of the citizens of DeWitt, Macon and Piatt Counties. The staff does a superb job of developing and presenting educational programs that address issues in

both urban and rural settings.

There is not enough room in this brief format to report on each of the hundreds of programs our staff offered in 2017. Nor is there enough room to report on the substantial impact those programs had on thousands of individuals throughout the counties we serve.

Enclosed in this year’s Impact Report, you will find innovative programming that connects to audiences of all ages. While the educational needs of our communities continually change, University of Illinois Extension has positioned itself to adapt to those changes. Extension prides itself on providing “cutting edge” educational programs rooted in research-based information. The programs in this report only scratch the surface of what is being done in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt Counties.

I hope that you will enjoy learning more about our programs and their impact. In fact, my hope is that you will come and participate in some of our programs in 2018.

Doug Harlan, County Extension Director

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SNAP-Ed

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) works with limited-resource audiences to make healthier choices where they eat, shop, live, play and learn. Through classes and workshops, and by working toward policy, systems, and environmental changes, SNAP-Ed positively impacts the nutrition and activity choices of the people and communities we serve.

SNAP-Ed conducted 768 youth and 121 adult programs in Macon and Piatt Counties in 2017 reaching 5,598 adults and children.



17
K-12 Schools



17
Food Pantries and Food Banks



12
Youth Centers



15
Community Centers



15
Early Childhood Centers



2
Stores or Markets



4-H Members, Groups & Volunteers

The hallmark of the DeWitt, Macon and Piatt Counties 4-H program, our clubs meet over an extended period with a volunteer leader. Members work individually on projects as well as together to practice leadership and service. Members can focus on different projects or work on the same project.

Beyond its clubs, 4-H uses many delivery methods to reach youth with educational experiences. The primary goal for youth participating in 4-H groups is to learn new skills through real experiences. In 2017, some of the 4-H groups focused on nutrition education, STEM activities and college and career readiness.

We know that 4-H programs are only as successful as our volunteer base is strong. We are proud to have volunteers who devote their time and efforts to help our 4-H members always *Make the Best Better*. The 4-H program provides training and assistance to help volunteers provide quality learning experiences to youth.



85
4-H Clubs



542
Multi-Project Club Members



49
Groups



369
Adult Volunteers



200
Youth Volunteers



13 Robotics Clubs

134 Robotics Participants

11 Drone Groups

199 Drone Participants



4-H members tested their robotics skills and their sumobot robots at the Macon County 4-H Show.



Preparing for the Future

Research shows that many youth lose interest in science-related fields before they enter high school. From many estimates, there are more jobs available in science-related fields than new graduates to fill them. The 4-H program introduces youth to opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math, STEM, through a variety of innovative, hands-on programs.

Robotics Clubs

In 4-H robotics clubs, youth learn to design, build and program robots with exciting and hands-on projects. All clubs are invited to participate in the Illinois 4-H Robotics Challenge.

Clubs that won 2017 Robotics Challenge awards:

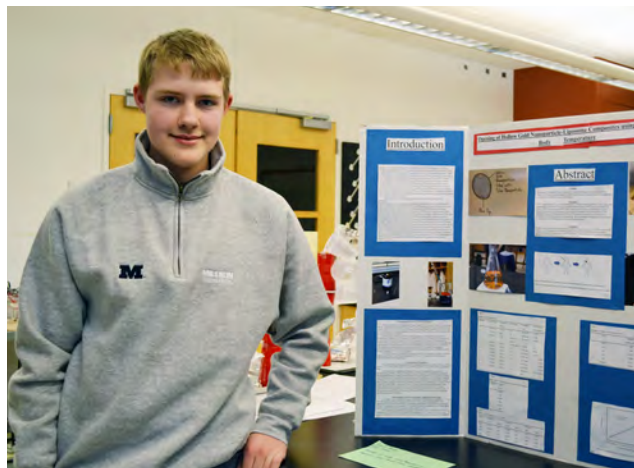
- 4-H SCREAM Sr.
- 4-H SCREAM Jr.
- UltiMat Master Builders

Drone Discovery - Science Day

The 2017 National 4-H Science Day experiment was a hands-on engineering design challenge that explored the science behind drones and how they are being used to solve real-world problems. Youth learned about flight dynamics, aircraft types, safety, regulations, remote sensing, and flight control.



Youth learned about remote sensing and flight control as part of the *Drone Discovery* design challenge.



David Bruns, a member of the *Science Explorers 4-H Club*, won a scholarship to Millikin University and competed at the International Science and Engineering Fair for his project on a potential drug delivery system.

SPECIAL INTEREST CLUBS

4-H promotes STEM learning through a variety of short-term experiences focused on a specific topic with Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs. In 2017, DeWitt County had 91 SPIN Club participants and Macon County had 294.

Science Explorers

Macon County 4-H partnered with Millikin University to engage youth with science activities. Twenty French STEM Academy students in third to sixth grades explored science activities, culminating in a special science project and science fair experience. In addition, 12 junior high and high school students met in the Millikin science labs where university staff guided science projects which were presented in a science fair.

Woodworking Workshop

Six youth in DeWitt County learned the basics of safe woodworking and also created a project to exhibit at the 4-H Show.

Science Creation Station

Piatt County 4-H created an experiential science station at the Monticello Family Aquatic Center during a three-week summer program. Youth at the pool could take a quick break from swimming to engage in a 4-H science activity. Activities included building bridges, boats and wind turbines. More than 15 youth participated.



I pledge my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service,
and my health to better living,
for my club, my community,
my country, and my world
4-H PLEDGE

4-H Health Jam

4-H strives to fulfill the conclusion of the 4-H pledge and give youth the information necessary to make decisions about their health. *Health Jam* brings health careers alive for youth in a nine-week program that introduces youth to a variety of health profession careers, engages young people in creative exercise and teaches them how to keep their bodies healthy.

Teams of health professionals come together to share their passion for health. Youth also participate in multiple types of physical activity to help them learn how to increase their daily physical activity.

Participants in 4-H Health Jam:

- Increased their understanding of the relationship between physical activity and personal health.
- Increased their awareness of health profession career opportunities.
- Increased their levels of physical activity to develop habits that reduce the risk of chronic disease.



3
Counties



10
Schools



486
Students

DeWittCounty4H

MaconCounty4H

PiattCounty4H



During the Macon County 4-H Health Jam, Decatur public school students could try different equipment and activities at the DMH Sports Specific Enhancement Center in Decatur.

4-H Food Challenge

The *4-H Food Challenge* took cooking skills to the next level. Youth worked in teams to explore nutrition and create new ways to prepare their favorite recipes while learning the basics of food preparation. During the challenge, youth were given mystery ingredients to prepare a meal within a given time frame while also practicing safe preparation techniques and keeping a clean and sanitary kitchen.

The 102 food challenge participants:

- Increased their knowledge of nutrition and MyPlate.
- Can make a dish healthier using cooking techniques and food ingredients.
- Gained confidence speaking in front of others.
- Learned to work as part of a team.



Virtual Horticulture Education

Besides regular face-to-face programs, the horticulture team provides information to a large audience through print and TV news, radio, social media, and online.



4,636
Facebook page followers



18,000
Subscribers to the horticulture e-newsletter



189,000
Households receive educator Candice Hart's column in Illinois Country Living Magazine



30,500
Views of *Hort in the Home Landscape* blog



389,000
Households reached by WAND *Gardening Moment* and WILL *Mid-American Gardener*



Piatt County Mental Health Center clients made evergreen decor during a holiday workshop.

Mental Health Center

Volunteer efforts with the Piatt County Mental Health Center began in February with participants creating poster boards of their dream gardens. In April, 15 clients brought their gardens to life with a planting day. Potatoes, radishes and other vegetables were planted in container gardens and later used in the kitchen.



There was a surge of youth programming in DeWitt County with six *Junior Master Gardener* classes, three programs at the Clinton Summer Free Lunch site and two at Clinton Elementary School reaching 450 youth.

Allerton Park Partnership

Four community presentations – *Eco-Dyeing*, *Rain Gardens*, *Cut Flower Gardening* and *Wreath Making* – took place at Allerton Park & Retreat Center in Monticello through an ongoing partnership. One was taught by a Piatt County Master Gardener and three by horticulture educator Candice Hart.

Many of the workshops sold out quickly and brought attention to horticulture programming.

Rock Springs Heritage Garden

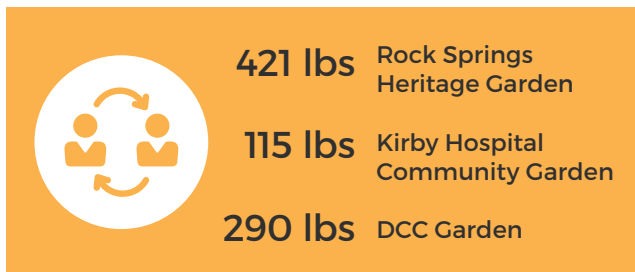
A team of Macon County Master Gardeners maintain the Heritage Garden at Rock Springs Nature Center, which is a part of the homestead Prairie Farm. A variety of heirloom and organic seeds are planted to replicate a typical 1860s family garden. The garden, often featured in nature center programming, portrays life in that time period. The produce is donated to food banks and shared with visitors.

Educational components are provided at large events hosted at the nature center such as *Festival of Spring*, *Prairie Festival* and *Monarch Madness*. Visitors can also tour this popular garden with a Master Gardener during weekend open house days.



From Garden to Food Pantry

The Master Gardeners maintain three vegetable gardens in Macon and Piatt Counties and donated 826 pounds of produce to food pantries in 2017.



- **Rock Springs Heritage Garden** – Every year, thousands of people visit this replica of an 1860s family garden at the Macon County Conservation District's Trobaugh-Good Homestead.
- **Kirby Hospital Community Garden** – This garden grew from eight public plots its first year in 2016 to 15 plots in 2017. Kirby supplements its café menu with garden produce, while three Master Gardener plots provide a variety of vegetables and herbs.
- **Decatur Correctional Center for Women** – A SNAP-Ed partnership allows produce to be donated to a local food pantry via the Growing Illinois Food Access Allocation initiative.

Macon County

Five Macon County residents graduated from Master Gardener training in 2017, bringing the total active gardeners to 105. Most of these volunteers serve in various community gardens, display gardens, and educational programs and committees.



Piatt & DeWitt Counties

Four Piatt County and one DeWitt County resident graduated from training in 2017, bringing the total Master Gardeners to 21. Their projects include the Kirby Community Garden, a new and highly visible pollinator pocket garden, and the first Piatt County Master Gardener Garden Walk will be in 2018.



A young participant holds a caterpillar raised by a Master Gardener at the third-annual *Monarch Madness* where butterflies were captured and tagged.

Decatur Correctional Center

A pilot program providing Master Gardener training at the minimum security Decatur Correctional Center for women in Macon County began in 2017. Six women were chosen by the facility to take the 10-week class. There were many obstacles to overcome. Some of the barriers included using outdated electronic equipment, rarely getting a full day of instruction in and women missing portions of class for various reasons. However, the women dedicated themselves to their studies enthusiastically and five passed the class.

The prison has a greenhouse, an on-site vegetable garden as well as pollinator and shade gardens. Two grants, from the state Master Gardeners and the SNAP-Ed/Master Gardener collaboration, provided the correctional center with a worm composter and gardening and greenhouse supplies.

The new Master Gardener interns have been busy answering gardening questions from staff and other inmates using provided research-based information. More than 25 women are on a waiting list for the 2018 class.





Farm Tours & Farm-to-Table Dinner

The Local Food Systems and Small Farms program led Macon County farm tours for 35 adults in 2017. Evaluations showed continued interest in these types of tours and an interest in people wanting to buy more locally grown foods.

We also held an on-farm dinner in rural DeWitt County for 27 people. During dinner, the two partner farmers from Triple M Farm and Double B Meats explained how the meal's food was raised. Everyone who attended the dinner said they learned something new about how food was produced.



UIExtenDMPLocalFoodSmallFarms

BEGINNING BEEKEEPING

82%
of participants
said they now
know how to
install bees in
a new hive

Back to Basics Series

- *Fibers and Spinning* was a very successful class with 36 adult and youth participants and a waiting list to attend. Participants learned about how to process animal fleece for spinning.
- *Pruning Your Home Orchard* was taught completely indoors for the first time due to the cold temperatures and relied on a time-lapse video of the educator pruning a fruit tree to show the entire process to the class.
- *Beginning Beekeeping* showed 26 adults and youth the importance of preventative beehive management and how to install bees into a new hive.
- *Basic Fermentation* covered the importance of fermentation in food preservation, how it adds value to produce and basic fermentation.

Glacier's Edge Master Naturalists

On April 1, the Master Naturalists led an *Invasive Species Control Day* in Macon County with 40 community volunteers clearing bush honeysuckle. A local Natural Resources specialist spoke at the annual meeting about invasive species solutions for landowners and participants built an herbicide applicator. The Master Naturalists also co-sponsored the four-part *Audubon Raptor Series* with 80 people attending. *Going Native*, the Annual Carloyn Mason Education Event, took place in April.



UIExtensionDMPmn



14
New Master
Naturalists



60
Active & Intern
Volunteers



2,374
Volunteer Hours
Logged



\$57,000
in Donated
Community Services



1/2 Acre
Cleared of Invasive
Honeysuckle

Ag Answers TV Segment

As part of a new outreach effort, we are featured twice a month on WCIA-TV on the Friday morning show in a segment called *Ag Answers*. After 23 on-air interviews, we are becoming known for our quality agricultural and environmental programming in Central Illinois.



PODCAST
Out Standing in the Field



@soilwaterDoug



ABCs of School Nutrition

With a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education, staff around the state are working with food service staff in schools. We provide continuing education training credits required by the USDA and provide technical assistance to schools on grants, trying new programs, such as *Breakfast in the Classroom*, and other areas.



33

Teachers and food service staff received in-person training



2

Schools completed *Smarter Lunchroom Movement* assessments



24%

How much tray waste decreased after a new food seasoning was introduced



\$100

Worth of kitchen supplies for the school that won the #MealoftheMonth contest

“I love cooking classes and go to as many as possible!”

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Being Food Safe - Certification

Food safety is vital whenever food is being prepared and served, whether at home or to the public. For individuals handling food and overseeing food production, training to get the Food Service Sanitation Manager Certification is often required.

Extension teaches the course and delivers the national exam needed to certify students. The course and exam was offered to the public and Extension staff in the DeWitt, Macon and Piatt Counties as well as Effingham County by request.

- **44 students** attended the eight-hour course.
- **91%** passed the test the first time they took it.

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Mt. Zion Library was one of several libraries in Central Illinois that hosted hands-on workshops such as salsa making.

Library Tour - Salsa to Food Science

The Nutrition & Wellness program toured libraries in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt Counties to teach cooking and food science activities to 93 adults and 66 youth.

From salsa to cheese making to food science and more, participants practiced their cooking skills and made connections with how science changes our foods into tasty, and sometimes not tasty, recipes.

Recipe Videos



6 Videos

3,244 Views

1,318 Minutes Watched

Moving into digital content, the Nutrition & Wellness program filmed six recipe videos using whole grains and slow cookers. Videos were shared on the educator's blogs and social media accounts.

Community Partners & Sponsors

4-H Memorial Camp
 ABC Preschool
 Agriculture Watershed Institute
 AHW LLC
 Allerton Library
 Allerton Park & Retreat Center
 America in Bloom, Decatur
 Anna Waters Head Start
 Archers Alley
 Archer Daniels Midland
 Baby TALK Early Head Start
 Barclay Public Library District
 Bement Chamber of Commerce
 Bement School District
 Blain's Farm & Fleet, Decatur
 Blue Ridge School District
 Blue Ridge Township Library
 Boys & Girls Club of Decatur
 Brown & Brown Farms
 Bryant Cottage
 Carriage House Apartments
 Caterpillar
 Catholic Charities
 Central Christian Church Preschool
 Central Illinois Aerospace
 Cerro Gordo Library
 Cerro Gordo School District
 Children's Museum of Illinois
 Cisco Community Center
 City of Decatur
 City of Monticello
 Clarkson Grain
 Clinton Community School District
 Clinton Journal
 Clinton Community YMCA
 Connie's Country Greenhouse
 County Market
 Country Journal Publishing Co.
 Creative Kids Daycare
 Crossing Healthcare
 Decatur Aerocommanders R/C Club
 Decatur Area Arts Council
 Decatur Christian School
 Decatur Civic Center
 Decatur Correctional Center
 Decatur Housing Authority
 Decatur-Macon County Senior Center
 Decatur Memorial Hospital
 Decatur Park District
 Decatur Public Library
 Decatur Public Schools
 Decatur Rehab Center

Decatur Family YMCA
 DeWitt County 4-H Foundation
 DeWitt County Coalition
 DeWitt County Farm Bureau
 DeWitt County Friendship Center
 DeWitt County HCE
 DeWitt County Housing Authority
 DeWitt County SWCD
 DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department
 DOVE, Inc.
 East Park Baptist Church
 Evergreen FS, Inc.
 Exelon
 Faith in Action
 Farm Credit Illinois
 Farm Progress Show
 Farmer City Public Library
 First Christian Church, Monticello
 First Mid-Illinois Bank, Monticello
 First National Bank, Clinton
 First State Bank, Monticello
 Fox Run Farms
 Garden Club of Decatur
 Good Samaritan Inn/Mercy Gardens
 Herald & Review
 Hertz Farm Management
 Illinois Association for HCE
 Illinois 4-H Foundation
 James Millikin Homestead
 Kids-N-Fitness, Decatur
 Kids Castle Learning Center
 Kirby Medical Center
 Lake Fork Sportsman Club
 Little People's Prep School
 Macon County 4-H & Extension Foundation
 Macon County Ag in the Classroom
 Macon County Conservation District
 Macon County HCE
 Macon County Fairgrounds
 Macon County Farm Bureau
 Macon County Obesity Prevention Coalition
 Macon County SWCD
 Macon Makers
 Maddox Sweet Corn Farm
 Main Street Church of the Living God
 Maroa Forsyth School District
 Millikin University
 Monticello Farmer's Market

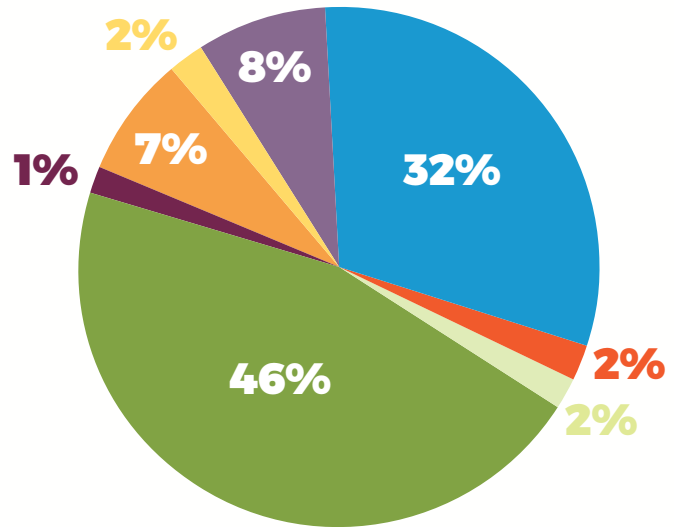
Monticello School District
 Monsanto, Illiopolis
 Mt. Zion District Library
 Macon Resources, Inc.
 New Life Pregnancy Center
 New Salem Baptist Church
 Nord Farms
 Northeast Community Fund
 Old King's Orchard Community Center
 Oxford House
 Philanthropic Education Organization of Decatur
 Piatt County Farm Bureau
 Piatt County HCE
 Piatt County Journal-Republican
 Piatt Mental Health Center
 Piatt County SWCD
 PrairiErth
 Premier Cooperative, Inc.
 Richland Community College
 Rotary Club #180
 Rural King
 Salvation Army
 SNAP-Ed
 Southern Piatt Record-Herald
 Soy Capital Bank
 Spring Creek Apartments
 St. Mary's Hospital
 St. Paul's Early Learning Center
 State Bank of Bement
 Tate & Lyle
 Topflight Grain Co-operative
 Thistlebrae Farm
 Timberview Alpacas
 Triple M Farm
 U of I Plant Biology Greenhouse
 Vespasian Warner Public Library
 WAND TV
 Warner Hospital & Health Services
 Warrensburg-Latham School District
 Water Street Mission
 Waynesville Library
 WCIA TV
 Wee Folks Daycare
 Weldon Library
 Weldon Springs State Park
 WHOW Radio
 WILL Urbana
 Wolfe Orchard
 The Woods Apartments
 Youth with a Positive Direction



Financial Report

The 2017 operating budget was \$1.55 million. Extension is funded through a combination of locally raised, county board, state, and federal dollars, which are returned to the community through educational programming.

- \$708,161 County Board
- \$29,730 Local Sources
- \$33,250 Gifts/Donations/Grants
- \$479,629 State County Board Match
- \$125,000 Program Income
- \$36,000 Federal Income
- \$113,510 State Income
- \$25,745 4-H Premium



Individuals Reached

Demographic Group	Total
White	37,296
Black	8,751
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	128
Asian	528
American Indian or Alaskan	27
Some Other Race	215
Two or More Races	1,400
Unknown	2,241

Extension Council Members

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Betsy Barnick | Meggan Holt |
| Megan Barth | Zach Howell |
| Joanne Bauer | Dave Mills |
| Kathleen Bell | Kristy Powell |
| Stephanie Block | Anne Preston |
| Jannell Baum-Thomas | Kristi Pyatt |
| Chuck Fay | Raymond Spencer |
| Renee Fruendt | Robin Stapf |
| Alida Graham | |

Online Outreach

Our mission is to extend knowledge to our communities in a variety of formats, which besides our website and Facebook includes Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube and our *Out Standing in the Field* agriculture podcast which can be found on iTunes.

In 2017, 29 educational videos were shared on social media. The Horticulture and Local Food Systems Small Farms educators led a four-part video series on pesticide use and safety. The adult online learning module *Know How Know More* launched in November with a variety of topics presented across multiple platforms.



1.1 million
Website Views
in 2017



81
Educator
Blog Posts



2,538
Followers of eight
Facebook pages



32,300
Video Minutes
Watched

Extension Staff

County Extension Director

Doug Harlan

Educators

Staci Coussens, *SNAP-Ed*

Doug Gucker, *Local Food Systems & Small Farms*

Candice Hart, *Horticulture*

Caitlin Huth, *Nutrition & Wellness*

Amy Leman, *4-H Youth Development, Metro*

Program Coordinators

Beth Allhands, *Horticulture*

Brittani Garner, *4-H & Youth Development*

Rebecca Hugo, *4-H SPIN Clubs*

Dena Hyde, *Local Food Systems & Small Farms*

Samantha Rusk, *4-H & Youth Development*

Vasthi Schwarz, *Master Gardeners*

Emily Steele, *Publicity & Promotions Specialist*

Courtney Stewart, *Publicity & Promotions Specialist*

Sarah VanRheeden, *SNAP-Ed*

Community Workers

Kim Gibbons, *DeWitt County 4-H Youth Development*

Susan Houska, *Piatt County 4-H Youth Development*

Chandani Kothari, *SNAP-Ed*

Melissa Hilligoss, *SNAP-Ed*

Work Program Participants

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Peggy Mechling, *Macon County*

Office Support Associate

Diana Leischner, *Piatt County*

Office Support Assistant

Lindsey Burden, *DeWitt County*

Christine Doolen, *Macon County*

Diane Dowd, *Macon County*

Diana Tibbs, *DeWitt County*



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University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact the county Extension Office. The Illinois Nutrition Education Program is funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

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