



Illinois Extension

The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

FEBRUARY 2024

Connections Newsletter

Henry/Stark Counties

358 Front St. Galva, IL
(309) 932-3447
Tues, Wed, Thur. 8 am - 4 pm

Mercer County

910 13th St. Viola, IL
309-513-3100
Tues, Wed, Thur. 8 am - 4 pm

Rock Island County

321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL
(309) 756-9978
Mon-Fri. 8am - 4 pm

Visit our website: extension.illinois.edu/hmrs

Prioritizing Heart Health in February

Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness educator

February is not only a month marked by the exchange of roses and chocolates; it is also Heart Health Month, dedicated to emphasizing the importance of nurturing the organ that keeps us ticking. Beyond the strides made in medical science, there are significant lifestyle choices we can make to ensure a robust and joyful heart.



Here are six tips for a heart-healthy lifestyle:

- 1) Choose Heart-Healthy Foods:** Opt for a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Use unsaturated fats like olive oil and limit saturated and trans fats found in processed and fried foods.
- 2) Stay Active:** Aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise weekly. Find enjoyable activities like brisk walking, cycling, or swimming to make staying active a sustainable part of your routine.
- 3) Manage Stress:** Reduce stress with activities like meditation, deep breathing, yoga, and positive social interactions. Cultivate relationships for emotional well-being.
- 4) Address Smoking and Drinking:** Quit smoking to improve heart health. If you drink, do so moderately, as excessive alcohol can contribute to heart-related issues.
- 5) Know Your Numbers:** Regular check-ups for blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar help reduce heart disease risk. Manage blood glucose levels, especially if you have diabetes. Get a free blood pressure screening at our Winter Wellness event (see page 4 for details.)
- 6) Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Adopt a heart-healthy diet and stay active to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight, especially around the waist, increases the risk of heart disease.

Celebrate Heart Health Month by integrating these tips into daily routines for a lasting impact on heart health. Small, consistent changes today can lead to a happy heart and a longer, healthier life.



SWEET HEARTS CANNING CLASS TUES FEB 27, 2 - 3:30 PM ILLINOIS EXTENSION, MILAN, IL

In celebration of Valentine's Day and Heart Health Month, we invite you to join us for a hands-on experience where we'll be creating the perfect fusion of decadence and health – Chocolate Cherry Jam! This is a canning workshop showcasing both the steam canner and the new Presto Precise® digital pressure canner. Kristin Bogdonas, Illinois Extension nutrition and wellness educator, will guide you through the step-by-step process to ensure your jam-making experience is both enjoyable and successful.

You'll have the chance to roll up your sleeves and get hands-on with the canning process. From preparing the ingredients to sealing your jars, you'll be an artisan in the making. Two recipes will be made at this workshop including chocolate cherry jam and a low-sugar variety, cherry vanilla jam. Limited spaces are available so secure your spot and register today! Cost is \$5/person. Register at go.illinois.edu/SweetHeartCanning

Nursery School: Lessons in Gardening

Sat, February 10 | 8 am - 3 pm
The Vibrant Arena at the Mark
1201 River Drive, Moline, IL

Stay updated on the latest gardening trends and climate-smart practices at Nursery School: Lessons in Gardening, a day crafted by University of Illinois Extension horticulture professionals and Master Gardeners.



Register by Feb 5 at <https://go.illinois.edu/NurserySchool2024>

Don't miss this opportunity to bloom with knowledge and get inspired!

- **Gain horticultural insights**, across three exciting topic areas: Ornamentals, Edibles, and Nature.
- **Kickoff the day with a Keynote:** "This Isn't Your Grandparents Gardening Weather" by Duane Friend, Climate Change Specialist.
- **Choose from a variety of workshops including:** AAA Winners, Seed Starting, Beneath the Canopy Explorations, Organic Vegetable Gardening, Climate/Weather Tools for Gardening, Culinary Herbs, Owls, Native Plants, and New Plants for 2024!
- **Refuel with a taco bar lunch buffet** (included).
- **Shop:** Explore our vendor area for garden-inspired gifts, crafts, and plants.
- **Tickets are \$70 person.** Registration closes February 5.



Duane Friend

SPRING SERIES OF HOME HORTICULTURE MONDAYS APRIL 8, 15, 22, 6 - 8 PM, HOLIDAY INN, ROCK ISLAND, IL

Join us to explore a variety of interesting topics from local horticulture and environmental experts. The cost is \$10/night, \$25/series.

Register at: go.illinois.edu/SpringSeries24



Monday, April 8, 6 - 8 PM Birds of Prey

Jill Schmidt Naturalist, Clinton County Conservation

Amazing eyesight, sharp talons, and a keen sense of flight allow birds of prey to be the ultimate hunters from the sky. Get a closer look at the variety of raptors that live in Iowa, and see two live raptors!

Is Your Tree Normal? Unveiling Challenges for Effective Tree Care

Scott Carlson, Lead Instructor for Iowa Arborist Consulting

Explore challenges with trees due to improper care, including erroneous planting and neglect. Learn about addressing structural needs, avoiding haphazard pruning, and understanding how trees respond to injury and decay for better care practices.

Monday, April 15, 6 - 8 PM Oh Baby, Watch Me Grow!

Cindy Descamps, owner of Seeds and Stems Homegrown

Discover the methods professionals use to propagate plants in spring nurseries. Learn about plants that can't be propagated at home and what to do with your new plants once they start growing.

Rusty Patched Bumblebee: Quad Cities Contributions to Recovery

Lauren Larson, Wildlife Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service

The federally endangered rusty patched bumblebee has been frequently spotted in our area, providing local biologists with an opportunity to study them. Explore the findings and ongoing conservation efforts related to this species.

Monday, April 22, 6 - 8 PM Homegrown Bouquets: Growing a Cut Flower Garden

Emily Swihart, horticulture educator, Illinois Extension

Experience the delight of homegrown bouquets! Learn to cultivate a beautiful cut flower garden, gaining the skills to select, plant, and care for species that come together to create stunning bouquets.

New Plants: Trying Them, Introducing Them, and Mixing with Our Favorites

Shanna Schneiter, greenhouse owner, and grower

Annually, glossy catalogs unveil the upcoming season's new plant selections. Shanna will discuss how these fresh offerings, ranging from bedding plants to garden varieties, can add excitement to both landscapes AND dinner plates!



FOUR SEASONS GARDENING

Get insect updates and explore the power of rain gardens with these winter Four Seasons Gardening webinars:

Insects to Know: Spotted Lanternfly and Periodical Cicada, Feb 13, 1:30 PM:

In 2023, the first spotted lanternfly in Illinois was identified in Cook County. In spring 2024, a large brood of periodical cicadas are set to emerge in Northern Illinois, making it a big year for insects! Learn about the biology of these insects and what their arrival means for gardeners and farmers.

Register at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasonsInsects



Rain Garden Essentials: Design, Build, Plant

March 5, 1:30 PM:

Discover the power of rain gardens, which act as nature's filter by slowing storm water runoff, reducing soil erosion, and relieving strain on storm water systems. Gain insights into the principles of rain garden construction and design, ensuring that your garden not only enhances the beauty of your space, but also contributes to the health of the environment.

Register at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasonsRainGarden



Learn how to make the most of your financial resources with Get Savvy Webinars.

Register at go.illinois.edu/GetSavvy2024.

Steps to Investing: What to Know | February 7, Noon

In this session, we will explore new trends in the securities world and discover new insights as we cover the basics of investing for beginners.

Nurturing Foundations Series

Thurs, Noon - 1 pm: Feb 8, 22, March 7, 21,

Register for this free program at:

go.illinois.edu/NurturingFoundations

Learn tips for a healthy pregnancy, toddler nutrition

Nurturing Foundations series is your guide to a healthy pregnancy and toddler nutrition!

Series kicks off Feb 8 with Eating Healthy During Pregnancy: What To Do When Eating for Two.

Perfect for outreach professionals, community health workers, healthcare providers, and parents.



4-H Cloverbud Academy

Saturday February 24 | 9am - Noon

Western Illinois University, Moline, IL

Register at go.illinois.edu/4-HCloverbud2024

or call (309) 756-9978.

Ignite Your Child's Curiosity at 4-H's Cloverbud Event!

Calling all youth ages 5 to 7 to "Learn by Doing!"

Embark on a thrilling adventure of hands-on learning with 4-H - where education meets excitement! Young learners can join us for a fun morning filled with interactive workshops! Youth will rotate through 5 topic areas:

- Gardening:** Nurture a love for nature as they explore the wonders of plants.
- STEM Extravaganza:** Unleash their inner scientist as they concoct a slime creation.
- Arts & Crafts:** Foster creativity making a unique art project to take home.
- Food & Nutrition:** Craft tasty treats while learning about the importance of nutritious choices.
- WQPT PBS Kids:** Dive into the world of PBS Kids where fun and learning come together!



4-H Cloverbuds is an exploratory program for ages 5-7 that helps promote healthy positive youth development. It is a great launchpad into 4-H.

University of Illinois Extension and
Black Hawk State Historic Site present...

Winter Wellness Family Event

Sat, February 17, 10 am - 1 pm

Watch Tower Lodge

Black Hawk Park, 1800 46th Ave. Rock Island, IL.

Join us for the perfect winter day escape into health and wellness at our 3rd annual FREE Winter Wellness Family Event! Engage in lessons from Blue Zone regions where people live longer and experience higher well-being.

Here's what's planned:

Blue Zone Bowls:

- Sample ingredients from Blue Zone diets as you build your own flavorful bowl to eat. Warm up with a selection of hot tea and cocoa.
- Win a Blue Zone Bowl Kit: Complete an activity sheet for a chance to take home a meal kit.

Health Checks from Unity Point

- Nurses will be on hand offering diabetes assessments, blood pressure screenings, health resources, class information, giveaways, and more.

Crafts & Community: Social Connections are key to longevity!

- Engage in hands-on crafts as you socialize with friends at the event.
- Enjoy classical guitar music by local musician Jeffrey Davies.

Interactive Stations:

- Learn to reduce food waste and create eco-friendly cleaning products.
- Dive into heart-healthy practices and nutrition with Blue Zones lessons.
- Grab a free 2024 Eat.Move.Save recipe calendar from SNAP-Ed.

Kids' Activities:

- Hands-on activities for youth from 4-H and AOK Childhood Network.
- Get active at the kids indoor obstacle course.
- Capture memories at the selfie station.

Explore History:

- Visit the Hauberg Museum to learn about Sauk and Meskwaki (Fox) Indians.

Don't miss this fun-filled day of wellness for all ages!
Details @ go.illinois.edu/WinterWellness

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.
If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, contact (309) 756-9978.



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL
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