

# EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

Summer 2022



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## Local women in agriculture inspired and challenged through Annie's Project

Farm women are generating a cultural tide in American agriculture that is moving management, assets, and opportunities to a new wave of farmers across the country. In June 2022, sixteen women completed the Annie's Project course with University of Illinois Extension serving Fulton, Mason, Peoria, and Tazewell counties. They were empowered to be better business partners or sole operators through networks and by managing and organizing critical information.

Annie's Project is a discussion-based workshop that brings women together to learn from experts in production, financial management, human resources, marketing, and the legal field in six sessions over three weeks. Additionally, participants gain even more from questions, sharing, reacting, and connecting with presenters and class members in a safe environment. "It is a fun and relaxed way to learn, and meet other farming women," stated Tara Heath, Extension program coordinator, Annie's Project facilitator, and a fellow woman in agriculture.

Emily Schoenfelder, from the class of 2018 shared, "I am a generation removed from the owners of our family farm. Though I am not active in the daily workings of the business, Annie's Project gave me a basis for understanding the goings-on and decisions being made there. I am more able to thoughtfully engage in farm discussions, and I found the sessions on Commodity Marketing, Legacy Planning, and Leasing especially helpful as our family has navigated new ownership."

"Attorney, Nancy Schell's talk on wills, trusts, and power of attorney, is very important for everyone to know," shared Annie's alumna Deon Maas. "I have shared the handouts from Nancy's presentation with all my friends and family members."

This year's class was a collaboration with Fulton County Farm Bureau and Dunteman & Company Accounting. The program has been offered in Fulton, Mason, Peoria, and Tazewell counties, in partnership with our local Farm Bureaus since 2016. Locally, more than 80 women have completed the course in this time. Nation-wide, Annie's Project courses have successfully reached more than 9,000 farm and ranch women in 33 states.

Extension Program Coordinator and Annie's Project Facilitator Christine Belless reports, "We have received great feedback throughout the years and we continue to expand the program to reach more and dive deeper into topics. Our next 'Inspired by Annie's' workshop is about commodity marketing. We are also looking to host an Annie's Project Level 2."



Photo by Anita Wilkinson | Illinois Extension

*The Annie's Project Class of 2022 joined the ranks of Annie's alumni this summer. Since 2016, U of I Extension has partnered with local Farm Bureaus to offer this program that engages women of all ages as they dive deeper into lessons about ag production, marketing, management, and dynamics.*

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