



Illinois Extension

Bond, Clinton, Jefferson, Marion & Washington counties



Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives

Dear community leaders,

Helping area residents access healthy food options continues to be a priority for University of Illinois Extension. You will see in the pages of this quarterly report exactly how we are doing our part to meet several food insecurity challenges that are facing our communities.

SSM Health has been a valued partner to University of Illinois Extension. With their financial support supplementing our own grant resources, we successfully managed mobile markets from January through July across our five-county unit, serving 3,628 families. Our numerous community partners also provide invaluable resources such as market locations and volunteers. We could not do what we do without our partners and volunteers!

Our SNAP Education program staff hosted **15** Illinois Junior Chef cooking schools this summer, serving **97** children ages 8-13 years. Children learned how to safely prepare simple healthy meals with recipes containing ingredients easily accessible by most families. Many children were eager to apply the skills they learned at home for their families.

Our Master Gardener volunteers planted, maintained and harvested produce from two community gardens, one in Salem and one in Mt. Vernon. By the end of July, they had donated 319 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to local food pantries.

4-H members worked to address food access in their communities with a summer food drive:

- Clinton County – **133** items; donated to Matthew 25 in Carlyle and BCMW
- Washington County – **157** items; donated to Irvington Food Pantry
- Marion County – **41** items; donated to Kinmundy Food Pantry

These numbers represent more than measurable objectives met; they represent real people whose lives are touched by the wonderful, selfless Extension employees, volunteers and partners like yourself. You help us help others do this every day... thank you.

Best,
Jordee Koehler
County Extension Director



Master Gardeners provide education at food pantries

As part of the Growing Together Illinois grant in Jefferson and Marion counties, the community gardens in Mt. Vernon and Salem have shared **319** pounds of fresh produce with food pantries in those communities. In an effort to support greater food access locally, Master Gardeners are also coordinating with our SNAP-Education staff to provide educational videos at area food pantries.

The first videos include how-to instructions on growing produce from seeds. In July these videos were viewed by approximately **136** people in three food pantries. In addition, Extension is providing pantry clients a starter pack with vegetable seed packets, a seed-starting container, step-by-step instructions, and coordinating recipes.



4-H Shows held face-to-face



Despite the challenges and setbacks of 2021, all area 4-H shows were held in person. This is due in large part to the flexibility of 4-H families and staff as we adjusted show dates and locations to meet CDC and University guidance.

Approximately **400** youth across five counties participated in various 4-H shows. More than **130** members exhibited their general projects in Springfield as Illinois State Fair delegates, and another **30+** headed to the Illinois State Fair with animal projects. Champion, Reserve Champion, and Inspire awards were plentiful among our local participants.

Among the special award recipients were Lauren Wolter and Shana Lueking from Clinton County. Both girls received \$1,000 scholarships through the Superior Young Producer program held annually at the State Fair.

Educational program offered with virtual and in-person options

Training offered by SNAP-Education Educator Ashley Hoffman each summer has become a relied-upon way for local school staff to receive their required continuing education credits. School staff had the option of going to the training held at Centralia High School or logging in online.

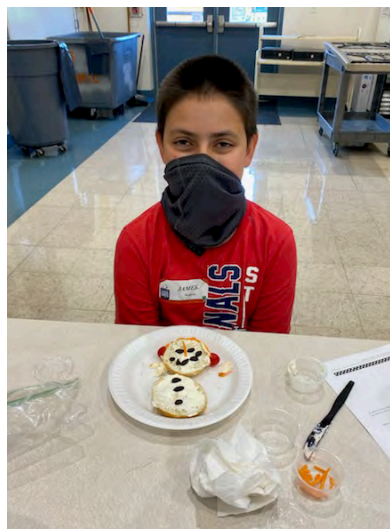
Forty-six participants received six continuing education credits, **11** online and **35** in person. A wide range of topics were covered, including Garden to Cafeteria: A Guide to Using Produce from the School Garden.



Illinois Junior Chefs

Illinois Nutrition Education Programs offered a series of kid-friendly cooking classes throughout the summer for youth ages 8-13. IJC is a great way for children to learn basic cooking skills while having fun!

IJC is offered through Illinois Extension's SNAP-Education program made possible by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Participants learn useful skills like reading a recipe, measuring and mixing ingredients, grating and peeling foods, using knives safely, juicing citrus fruits and cracking an egg. Each day included hands-on learning activities from a cookbook that students get to keep at the end of class. Almost 100 youth participated in the **15** sessions offered by local staff.



4-H Summer Food Challenge

The Summer Food Challenge kicked off in early June. It was designed to teach cooking and nutrition basics, while allowing youth to build confidence in the kitchen when there is no recipe to follow.

This activity lasted all summer with a virtual launch, three at-home family cooking sessions, and a finale at the end. Recipe Challenges featured wraps, pizza, stir fry, omelets and members choice.

Parents shared that youth were able to use food from their own garden, and the entire family got involved with "taste testing" family meals together.

Spring Fling goes virtual in 2021

This year's annual Spring Fling event was held as a weekly webinar series during the month of March. Each Thursday, plant and nature enthusiasts were treated to a different hour-long webinar, including landscape trees, the ages and stages of gardening, small fruits for the home garden, and growing herbs.

Following the live webinar, most of the sessions were uploaded to our YouTube channel, where they are growing in popularity. The Ages and Stages of Gardening video now has more than **100** views. You can find Spring Fling and many other Ag and Natural Resources topics on our YouTube Channel [Illinois Extension BCJMW](#).



Mark Your Calendar

September

- 1 New 4-H Year Begins
- 6 Masters' Coffee Break
- 9 Mobile Market-Centralia
- 14 Cover Crop-Zoom
- 18 State 4-H Archery Shoot
- 25 State 4-H Shotgun Shoot

October

- 2 State 4-H Rifle Shoot
- 3 Washington County 4-H Open House
- 3 State 4-H Pistol Shoot
- 3-9 National 4-H Week
- 8 Jefferson County 4-H Achievement Program
- 10 Clinton County 4-H Open House
- 16-17 Junior Leadership Conference
- 22 Marion County 4-H Achievement Program

November

- 7 Clinton County 4-H Achievement Program
- 8 Washington County 4-H Achievement Program
- 8 Washington County 4-H Foundation Pork Chop Dinner



Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development

The University of Illinois Extension is seeking individuals to provide educational leadership for program delivery in Unit 23 (Bond, Clinton, Jefferson, Marion, and Washington Counties). *Master's degree related to subject matter emphasis required. Two positions available.* To view complete job description and apply, visit <https://go.illinois.edu/150842>. Closing date is Sept. 15, 2021. U of I is an EEO Vet/Disabled Employer (<http://go.illinois.edu/EEO>) that participates in the federal e-Verify and background check programs focused on prior criminal or sexual misconduct.

Statewide Programs

Illinois Extension offers a wide range of educational webinars led by experts across the state.

Some that may be of particular interest are:

- Edge of Field Practices: Water Quality Solutions
- End of Summer Planted Fall Vegetables
- The Science of Stem Cells: Fact Versus Fiction
- Cover Crops: Building Your Soil

You can find all of the above programs and many more online at <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/events>.



ADMINISTRATION

Jordée Koehler
County Extension Director
jordeej@illinois.edu



EDUCATORS

Ashley Hoffman
SNAP-Ed Educator
ahoff10@illinois.edu



Chris Lueking
Horticulture Educator
lueking@illinois.edu



MARKETING/COMMUNICATION

Elaine Craver
Marketing & Communications
ecraver@illinois.edu



AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

Gail DeVilbiss
ANR Program Coordinator
devilbis@illinois.edu



Kara Boozer
4-H Program Coordinator
karacox2@illinois.edu



Vicki Enloe
4-H Program Coordinator
venloe@illinois.edu



Amanda Fox Clark
4-H Program Coordinator
abfox@illinois.edu



SNAP EDUCATION

Kristen Buttrum
SNAP-Ed Community Worker
buttrum@illinois.edu



Krystal Pruden
SNAP-Ed Community Worker
kpruden@illinois.edu



Dan Spangler
SNAP-Ed Community Worker
dspangle@illinois.edu



Crystal Ulmer
SNAP-Ed Community Worker
ulmer@illinois.edu



OFFICE SUPPORT

Rhonda Mueller
Office Support Specialist
rmueller@illinois.edu



Alishia Winkler
Office Support Associate
awinkler@illinois.edu



Karen Knox
Office Support Assistant
knoxkar@illinois.edu



Joan Tate
Office Support Assistant
joantate@illinois.edu

Serving Bond, Clinton, Jefferson,
Marion and Washington counties

Extension Business Hours:

Monday-Friday

8 a.m.-Noon & 1-4:30 p.m.

*Walk-in availability may vary depending on location.
Check with your local office for more details.*

SERVICES AVAILABLE:

- Speak to a live staff member when you call your local Extension office
- Order our most popular resources, like Pesticide Safety materials and Farm Record books, either online or by calling the office
- Enroll and participate in 4-H safely
- Find answers to your nutrition, agriculture, horticulture, and natural resources questions
- Receive assistance with plant and insect identification
- Enjoy interesting and informative presentations and webinars from the comfort of your home

We are always hard at work for you!



Illinois Extension

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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Contact Us

Bond County Extension
208 Academy
Pocahontas, IL 62275
(618) 664-3665

Clinton County Extension
1163 N. 4th Street
Breese, IL 62230
(618) 526-4551

Jefferson County Extension
4618 Broadway
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
(618) 242-0780

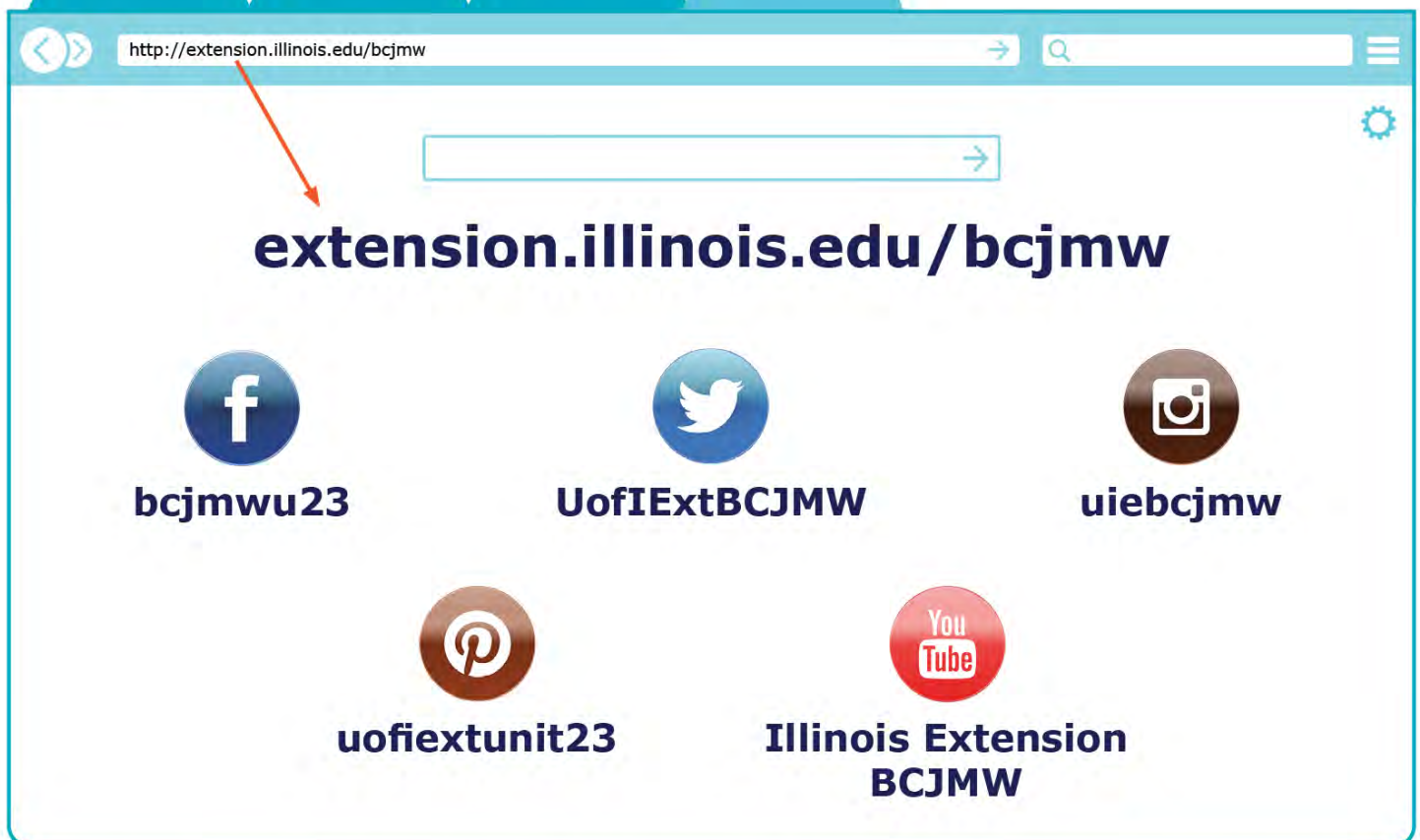
Marion County Extension
1404 E. Main, Rt. 50 East
Salem, IL 62881
(618) 548-1446

Washington County Extension
9623 Wall St.
Nashville, IL 62263
(618) 327-8881

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