



**Illinois Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**2021** Addressing Local Needs,  
Solving Global Challenges  
Calhoun, Cass, Greene, Morgan, and Scott Counties



Aaron Dufelmeier  
County Director

## A Message from the County Director

It is an honor for me to share how unique our staff is and to provide you with a sampling of their talents and moments of significance in this report. Our staff know that education is an essential element of both individual success and societal success. We, too, believe that it is our responsibility to serve as the link between the people and the ever-changing discoveries in laboratories at our Land-Grant universities.

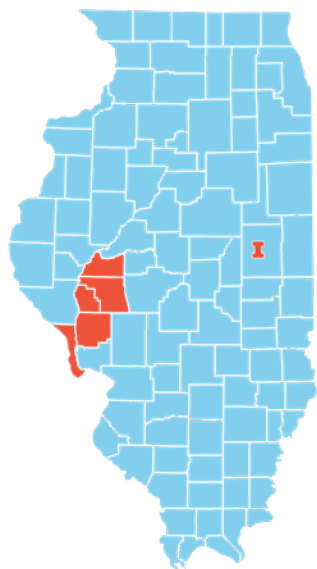
The COVID pandemic still is and truly has been one of the greatest challenges we have had to face. But here's the thing: we could spend our time focused on what COVID has taken away from us and the challenges it has created in our lives, or we can celebrate the successes or outcomes we have experienced throughout

this timeframe. I am a firm believer that the programming success stories highlighted in this report are a direct reflection of our staff's shared passion and purpose to serve our communities. Our Extension team can truly be described as flexible, innovative, compassionate, and resilient.

I am proud to serve as the county director in Calhoun, Cass, Greene, Morgan, and Scott counties, and I encourage you to take a moment to enjoy the highlights of this report. As you reflect upon a sampling of our accomplishments from 2021, I wish for you to be blessed with good health, joy, and success in 2022.

Aaron Dufelmeier  
County Extension Director

# Staff Serving Calhoun, Cass, Greene, Morgan, and Scott Counties



## STAFF

Duane Friend  
Energy and Environmental  
Stewardship Educator

Jennifer Russell  
Community and Economic  
Development Educator

April Littig  
4-H Youth Development  
Educator

Kenneth Johnson  
Horticulture Educator

Michelle Berg  
Agriculture and Natural  
Resources Program  
Coordinator

Dustin Fritsche  
Community and Economic  
Development Program  
Coordinator

Melinda Vortman  
SNAP – Ed Program  
Coordinator

Tina Miller  
SNAP–Ed Community Worker

Therese Wilson  
Office Support Specialist

Georgi Flowers  
Office Support Assistant

Becky Schafer  
Office Support Assistant

Aaron Dufelmeier  
County Extension Director



# Think Global, Act Local

Illinois Extension embodies the land grant mission of University of Illinois, providing applied research and education to address societal grand challenges and local issues.



## Community

Support Strong and Resilient Youth, Families, and Communities

 Connectedness and Inclusion

 Involvement and Leadership

 Thriving Youth



## Economy

Grow a Prosperous Economy

 Economic Vitality

 Financial Wellbeing


 Workforce Preparedness/Advancement



## Environment

Sustain Natural Resources in Home and Public Spaces

 Enhancing and Preserving Natural Resources

 Engagement with Home and Community Landscape



## Food

Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply

 Food Access

 Food Production

 Food Safety



## Health

Maximize Physical and Emotional Health for All

 Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

 Social and Emotional Health

 Healthy and Safe Environments

Look for these icons throughout this report to see how Illinois Extension is meeting these grand challenges at a local level.

## Illinois Extension 2021

# Statewide Highlights

### Outreach Provided

565

Illinois  
Communities  
Served

335

Educational  
Sessions Per Week

84

Online Courses

### Partnerships Supported

6,445

Adult  
Volunteers

278

Community  
Gardens

1,000

School Partnerships

### Learners Engaged

8,000,000

Website Users

14,450

Online  
Course Users

500,000

Educational Program  
Attendees

### Resources Generated

\$14,000,000

Value of Volunteer  
Contributions

\$242,000

Value of Donated  
Garden Produce

Extension leaders meet with local stakeholders to define annual priorities that allow us to respond to evolving and emerging needs and make meaningful progress toward important long-term outcomes. This blend of long-range focus and local accountability is a powerful strategy that ensures we stay true to our mission as we serve communities across the state.





## Protecting the honeybee is important to the ability of the planet to grow food

The survival of our planet depends on the quality of our water, land, and air. These shared resources must be managed through sustainable practices that support ecological balance. We must take steps now to effectively steward these resources for generations to come.

Extension partnered with the Apple Creek Beekeeping Club to train beginning beekeepers. This 5-part course included the history of beekeeping, honey bee biology, beekeeping equipment, beekeeping through the seasons, and products from the hive. There was also a hands-on hive day where participants learned to work with the different tools used in beekeeping and observe an active hive.



Many of the 16 participants had never kept honeybees before or had just begun keeping bees, so they capitalized on the knowledge of members of the Apple Creek Beekeepers and the local Apiary Inspector with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

All participants gained a deeper understanding of beekeeping and plan to use some of the information presented. More experienced keepers also indicated practices they would change because of the course information.



7,119

Natural Resources Participants



141

Natural Resources Educational Learning Sessions





# Buggy effects of insects on cover crops



In a 2-year study with University of Illinois, Extension studied the impact of insect populations in cover crops and immediately after planting. Unit educators Ken Johnson and Duane Friend initiated the statewide study with Nick Seiter, Extension entomology specialist, in western Illinois fields.

Rye cover crops have great potential as a tool for reducing soil erosion and nutrient losses. While insect management is usually not a factor in the decision to use a cover crop, these systems could alter pest management by favoring certain pests. Similarly, beneficial insects could be favored by cover crop systems. Previous studies have demonstrated both of these potential results in other states and production systems.

The study has three objectives: 1) assess the impact of a rye cover crop on pest and beneficial insect populations; 2) determine the effect of cereal rye termination timing on early season pest management in corn; and 3) determine the effect of cereal rye termination timing on early season pest management in soybean.

While there are certain insect pests, such as armyworms, that are more abundant in fields that follow a rye cover crop, the results to date indicate that economic damage from insect pests in rye cover fields is infrequent. In several cases, some sub-economic increases (or decreases) in insect damage following a cover crop have been observed, but these differences have not been consistent or frequent.

Whether large commercial agriculture operations, small farms, or community and backyard gardens, the future of our food supply relies on use of practices that boost production and capacity. Growers at all levels benefit from effective, efficient, and sustainable approaches to cultivating produce, crops, and livestock that feed their families, communities, and the world.

“Farmers should consider additional scouting in fields that follow a rye cover crop early in the season, especially for armyworms in corn,” Seiter says; “however, the additional risk of insect pest problems resulting from using a rye cover crop appears to be relatively low in Illinois, especially in soybeans.”

Additional field experiments planned for 2021 will help further quantify this level of risk. The unit will also participate in a national study evaluating the impacts of rye termination timing on insect, disease, and weed management. In addition, Extension will conduct research to evaluate cover crop species blends and residue management practices for slug management.



Ken Johnson: [kjhns@illinois.edu](mailto:kjhns@illinois.edu)  
Duane Friend: [friend@illinois.edu](mailto:friend@illinois.edu)

## Keep your ponds healthy

Pond owners want to know how to manage plants and weeds, stock fish, and general pond maintenance. Extension Educator Duane Friend makes Individual pond site visits, helps pond owners via phone and email, and provide helpful tip on fact sheets. More than 150 people attended a statewide online webinar in March. The video has been viewed by more than 550 people through the end of June.



Watch this webinar on YouTube  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4kQMyFlwGU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4kQMyFlwGU)



## Extension impacts local leaders during Local Government Education series

As local leaders make decisions on projects funded by local, state, and federal grant dollars and identify infrastructure projects (water, sewer, lighting, streets and broadband needs for students, families, businesses, and first responders) accessing information becomes extremely important. Over the past year, University of Illinois Extension developed a series of webinars that help local leaders stay current on a host of issues.

Topics included:

- Illinois Office of Broadband Programming and Resources
- Corn Belt Ports
- Geothermal Energy
- A Housing Toolkit for Rural Illinois
- TIF Tax Increment Financing for Small Business Development
- SMART Growth for Rural Communities
- Hope, Health, and Healing: Addressing Poverty in Your Community
- ARPA American Rescue Plan Act
- Creating Age Friendly Communities
- Workforce Investment Opportunity Area
- New Approaches to Rural Substance Use Disorder Services

Economically resilient communities are built on a solid foundation with plans for growth, plans for responding to emergencies and disasters, and innovative approaches to promote economic vitality.



**2,642**  
Economy Program Participants



**30**  
Economy Educations Sessions



Watch the Local Government Education videos  
[go.illinois.edu/gov21](https://go.illinois.edu/gov21)



As COVID-19 continued to impact governments, businesses, and communities, Illinois Extension's Local Government Education program increased its outreach aimed at economic investment and community vitality, workforce development, leadership, policy, equity, and resiliency. By partnering with state leadership and organizations in Illinois, the Illinois Extension Community and Economic Development team has provided outreach aimed to help local governments and residents build capacity to strengthen their communities and organizations and improve public services.



Access past and future programs  
<https://go.illinois.edu/LGE>

## Statewide Webinar Reach



**60**  
Webinars in 2021



**2,003**  
Individuals Learned about Leadership, Public Service, and Community Involvement



**1,094**  
Individuals Learned about Meeting Needs of Diverse or Vulnerable Populations



**3,955**  
Individuals Reached in Economic and Financial Stability Webinars



**1,043**  
Reached in Economic Vitality and Community Resiliency Webinars

## Community-Driven Broadband Reach



**1,228**  
Community Leaders Educated on Broadband Expansion Opportunities



**714**  
Participants Educated on Obtaining Funding and Needs Assessment



**416**  
Individuals Reached on Broadband Project Management

*The University of Illinois Extension's community and economic development team helps communities build capacity for creative and informed decision-making to enhance their quality of life.*





## A C Central school staff learn how poverty impacts families

Financial instability can negatively affect physical, mental, and social health and can ultimately lead to bankruptcy. Illinois Extension supports financial wellbeing tools for all ages and stages which helps improve self-sufficiency, reduces the need for communities to provide support services, and creates opportunities for individuals to protect and build wealth.

Poverty is a struggle no matter how hard you try to fight it: mentally, physically, and emotionally.  
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

In August, nearly 40 staff members at A C Central attended the Poverty Simulation facilitated by University of Illinois Extension. Teachers experienced living at the poverty level and then explored available resources for students and families. "I'm going to be more aware of the community's tools and resources provided," one educator says.

I did not fully understand how scary poverty was.  
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



## Extension continues helping businesses impacted by COVID-19

University of Illinois Extension reached out to units of local government, shared resources explaining available grants, and aided municipalities on developing a framework necessary to accept grant funding. Over \$460,000 dollars benefited 54 businesses in the region during the grant funding cycle.

"The Jacksonville area greatly benefited from the DCEO City Economic Support Grant program last December as we brought over \$387,000 into the community for 40 businesses," says Lisa Musch with the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce. This is due, in large part, to communication we received from our U of I partner Jennifer Russell. She continued to follow up and share information from other communities as the process moved forward in a very short timeframe. Without her communication, we would not have been able to apply for and roll out this grant."

We are very grateful for this partnership with U of I Extension and Jennifer. She continues to keep us informed on new additions to the ever-changing grant landscape and to share ideas of how they might apply to our community.  
LISA MUSCH,  
JACKSONVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## Greene County becoming food desert

With the loss of two grocery stores in May of 2021, Greene County was quickly becoming a food desert leaving families without access to local grocery items. Extension organized and facilitated the Greene County Grocery Taskforce. This group of concerned citizens, economic development members, and local agencies address grocery issues affecting residents.

More than 500 residents responded to an Extension survey to capture the needs of residents. With results compiled, local and county government continue to look for local grocery store options in Greene County.

## Cass County opportunities spotlighted

Jonathan McGee, deputy director for regional economic development for the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity visited Cass County as part of his tour of the state. Aly Grady, regional economic development representative for the central region also attended. Extension program coordinator Dustin Fritsche, economic development director for Cass County, coordinated two stops: the Sunrise FS Virginia plant and JBS.

The Sunrise FS tour focused on the chemical mixing building and dry fertilizer building. Productive conversations were held with Sunrise FS staff and Cass County engineer Tim Icenogle regarding the road infrastructure surrounding the Virginia plant.

JBS is Cass County's largest employer. JT Hopkins, plant manager, discussed plant operations, future expansions, and the Hometown Strong Program which has resulted in a variety of improvements and programs sponsored by JBS in the Beardstown community. These improvements include a massive effort to increase available housing in the community through investment in land and infrastructure.



## Glimpse into the real world of living

Welcome to the Real World introduces young people to the ideas of budgeting, paying bills, and choosing careers. The program is an active, hands-on activity that gives young people the opportunity to explore careers and make lifestyle and spending choices similar to those faced by adults. Youth receive a monthly salary based on today's career earnings, then walk through a month of typical expenditures, such as rent, car payments, groceries, and recreation. More than 200 youth participated from the following schools: Winchester, Bluffs, Meredosia, Triopia, Virginia, and Franklin.

Thriving youth are the core of healthy, robust communities. Illinois Extension's mentorship-based youth development model focuses on social competence, academic success, career development, and community connection. The 4-H experience creates opportunities and environments for all youth to thrive now and in the future. Share the 4-H experience with families you know.



564  
4-H Club Members



Learn More About Joining 4-H  
[extension.illinois.edu/ccgms/4-h-youth-development](https://extension.illinois.edu/ccgms/4-h-youth-development)



## 4-H is Growing True Leaders

4-H youth programs are empowering and preparing Illinois youth for success both now and in the future.



131,628  
Youth Affiliations



6,192  
Adult Volunteers



1,597  
Clubs



47,556  
Fair Exhibits



2,159  
Programs



2,257  
Youth in Leadership Projects & Programs

## Opportunity4All

Advancing the mission for all youth in Illinois to be empowered and prepared for success.



24%  
Minority Members



12%  
Hispanic Members



788  
Virtual Programs



142  
New Program Sites







### LUKEMAN GARDEN & EDUCATION CENTER

A groundbreaking was held for the University of Illinois Extension Lukeman Garden & Education Center located at Lincoln and Morton Avenues on property donated by Judy Lukeman Williams, Thomas Lukeman, Tom Williams, and Kelly Clancy. This outdoor education space will provide educational opportunities for community members emphasizing research-based horticulture concepts and best practices for fruits and vegetables production, care and maintenance of trees and ornamental plants, and native plant demonstration plots. The Lukeman Garden will also provide volunteer opportunities for Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, 4-H members, and volunteers, as well as the community.



### EXTENSION EXPANDS LOCAL REACH WITH STATEWIDE WEBINARS AND VIDEOS

On line Extension webinars have continued to show great interest. Duane Friend, Extension educator, taught 193 people about severe weather, covering the types of thunderstorms, lightning and tornadoes along with severe weather safety.

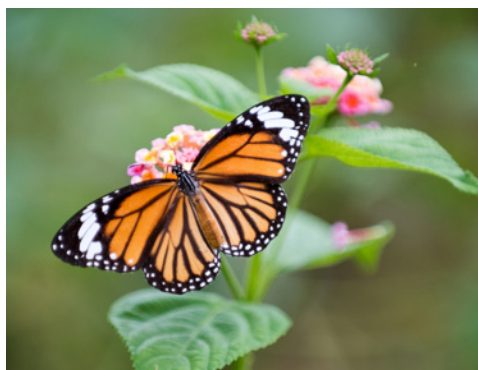


Ken Johnson and Duane developed a YouTube video on basic hydrology for virtual conservation day/Earth Day school events. Using a stream model, the video demonstrates how a river forms, what occurs if a river is straightened, development of flood plains and oxbow lakes, and the use of levees for flood control. The video was developed at the request of the Army Corps. of Engineers that host a large Earth Day event each year.



### MASTER GARDENERS EXPAND TRAINING, OUTREACH

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners are a special group of people who all have a common interest – a love of gardening and the desire to share that knowledge with others. The program aims to give intensive horticultural training to individuals who will, in turn, “Help Others Learn to Grow.” In 2021, a hybrid Master Gardener training option was started. This training used a flipped classroom model where participants reviewed resources and watched videos on a given topic before participating in the weekly live sessions. Classes covered a wide range of horticultural topics, including botany, soils, woody and herbaceous plants, fruits and vegetables, insects, and plant diseases. Eight participants completed the training, and six have decided to continue with the program to become Master Gardener interns. They join 17 other Master Gardener volunteers in the unit in providing horticultural outreach to residents and communities in Calhoun, Cass, Greene, Morgan, and Scott counties.



### MASTER NATURALISTS INCREASE KNOWLEDGE, PLEDGE SUPPORT TO NATURE

Great strides were made in the knowledge of volunteers completing the Master Naturalist training in the five-county unit. Participants say the training prepared them to identify and use research-based sources in the natural resource area. They also indicated a greater awareness of flora and fauna, especially as they exist in the local area. An important part of the Master Naturalist training is the ability to connect with others as they encourage a greater understanding and awareness of the natural world. The new Master Naturalists have already implemented changes at their home and community that were influenced by what they learned in the training. Every participant increased their practical ability to lead environmental stewardship projects in their community.





## Good Growing expands reach in 2021

In response to growing interest in home gardens and local vegetable production, a team of Extension educators have exploded their development of home and community gardening educational content. Ken Johnson, Chris Enroth, and Katie Parker produce blogs, podcasts, videos, webinars, and email marketing under the Extension Good Growing branding. This outreach helps homeowners and communities create sustainable gardens and landscapes which provide beauty, food, and property enhancements.

### The Year in Review



42,000  
Blog page views



16,400  
Total plays on 47 podcasts



3,300  
Total plays on YouTube on 5 how-to videos



1,084  
E-Newsletter subscribers



### Read these popular Good Growing blogs



Buffalo gnats and how to avoid being bitten  
[go.illinois.edu/gnats](https://go.illinois.edu/gnats)



The disadvantages of landscape fabric  
[go.illinois.edu/fabric](https://go.illinois.edu/fabric)



What are those bugs on my milkweed?  
[go.illinois.edu/milkweed](https://go.illinois.edu/milkweed)



How to create butterfly habitat in your garden  
[go.illinois.edu/butterflygarden](https://go.illinois.edu/butterflygarden)



### Rooted in community. Growing through connection.

County Extension offices now have the support of two new program areas — **Agriculture and Agribusiness** and **Natural Resources, Environment, and Energy** — to strengthen the economic viability and environmental sustainability of Illinois agriculture, natural resources, and community natural assets.



12  
Master Gardener  
Volunteers



28  
Master Naturalist  
Volunteers



1,003  
Hours Donated



\$29,451  
Volunteer Value



2  
Community gardens



415  
Expert consultations and  
volunteer information services

### Access to Statewide Programs



262  
Webinar Sessions



282  
New videos and  
Podcast Episodes

### Webinar series and online resources include:

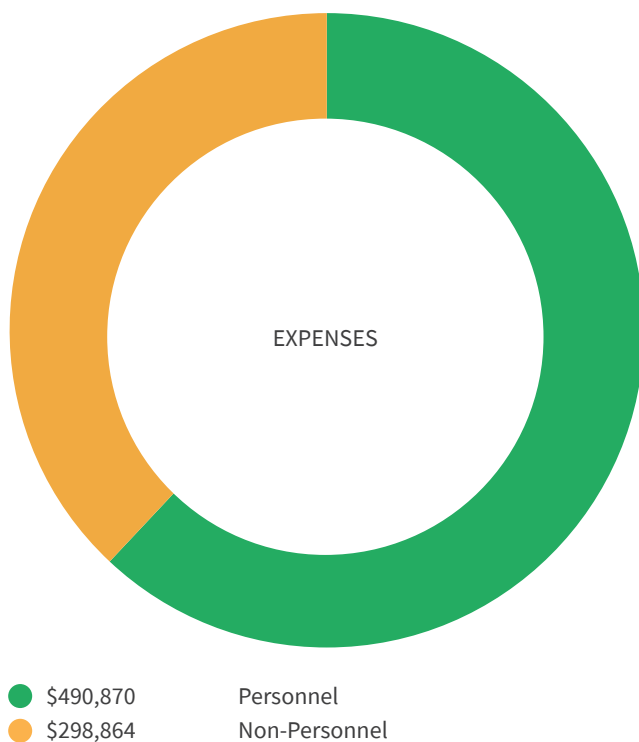
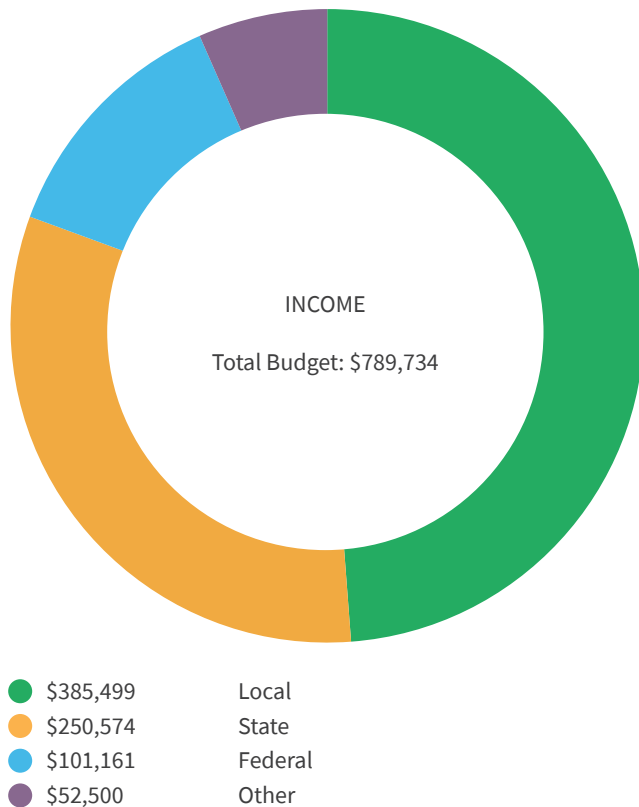
- Master Gardener online training
- Four Seasons gardening webinars
- Small Farms webinar series
- Everyday Environment webinars
- Pesticide Safety Education program
- Certified Livestock Manager training
- Cropflix online CCA education
- Good Growing podcast and blog
- Nutrient Loss Reduction podcast
- farmdoc webinars and farmdoc daily posts
- Teacher resources on pollution prevention, weather & climate, and water quality



Find webinars  
<https://go.illinois.edu/AAB-NREE>



## Local Financial Information



## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION

SNAP-Education works with Illinois families in need to make the healthier choice an easier choice. Through classes, workshops and collaboration with community partners, SNAP-Education positively affect families and communities by using research-based solutions to encourage healthier nutrition and physical activity choices.

### Reach and Impact of SNAP-Education



**4,624**  
Total Estimated Reach



**172**  
Number of Nutrition Education Classes Provided



- 16% Face-to-face
- 84% Virtual or online

To meet the increased need for virtual programming, SNAP-Ed partnered with Grand Avenue Preschool in Beardstown to provide nutrition programming for preschoolers and their caregivers via a closed Facebook group. A bilingual staff member also provided lessons in Spanish. Materials for the lessons were delivered to the school for distribution to families. In total, 145 families participated and engaged with the Facebook group lessons.

### SNAP-Education Community Partnerships



**4**  
K-12 Schools



**3**  
Early Childhood



**12**  
Other Agencies or Community Centers



**4**  
Food Banks and Food Pantries

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**OFFICE INFORMATION: All offices are closed Noon - 1 PM.**

**Morgan County Extension**

104 N Westgate Ave  
Jacksonville, IL 62650  
(217) 243-7424  
Fax: (217) 243-1544  
Monday - Friday; 8 AM - 4:30 PM

**Calhoun County Extension**

818 S. Park, P.O. Box 366  
Hardin, IL 62047  
(618) 576-2293  
Fax: (618) 576-8013  
Tuesday, Thursday; 8 AM - 4:30 PM

**Cass County Extension**

651 S Job  
Virginia, IL 62691  
(217) 452-3211  
Fax: (217) 452-7260  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 8 AM - 4:30 PM

**Greene County Extension**

25 N US HWY 67  
Carrollton, IL 62016  
(217) 942-6996  
Fax: (217) 942-3827  
Monday, Wednesday; 8 AM - 4:30 PM

**Scott County Extension**

401 N. Walnut  
Winchester, IL 62694  
(217) 742-9572  
Fax: (217) 742-3582  
Tuesday, Thursday; 8 AM - 4:30 PM

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**ONLINE**



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[extension.illinois.edu/ccgms](https://extension.illinois.edu/ccgms)

**Illinois  
Extension**

**College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences**

University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating.  
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.



If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

The Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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