



Livingston, McLean & Woodford Extension Quarterly Impact Report

January - March 2019

Ever Hear of a Share Table?

Background: Extension staff conducted three plate waste audits at Prairie Central Elementary School to determine whether colorful new trays decreased food waste. In the report, which was given to the Food Service Director and School Wellness Committee, Extension offered the idea of introducing a share table to further decrease food waste. Share Tables encourage students to drop off prepackaged, unopened food they do not want, and pick up extra food if they are hungry. It is meant to help eliminate food waste and student hunger.

Challenges: Nearly 40% of the U.S. food supply ends up in the trash. At the same time, 40 million Americans, including 12 million children, are food insecure. K-12 schools are important settings where Extension staff can make an impact on food waste and improve child nutrition.

Successes: The school took the suggestion of introducing a share table, ordered two racks, made colorful signs, and placed it in the cafeteria during breakfast and lunch. The staff commented that it has gone over very well and is continuously used. They believe that it has helped decrease food waste.

Photo Caption: Share Tables, like the one pictured right at Prairie Central Elementary School.



4-H Learn & Fun Day sparks imagination & creativity

Nearly 120 youth spent President's Day attending 4-H Learn & Fun Day! Several individualized workshops were available to choose from including dog care, art and sewing projects, flower arranging, robotics, cake decorating, shooting sports, drones, and more. Youth discovered the BIG -M philosophy of 4-H by feeling a sense of **belonging**, **independence** by completing projects and tasks, **generosity** through teamwork and when donating items to create birthday bags later given to local food banks, and finally **mastery** by gaining the confidence in the workshop skills they chose. Youth were excited to share their experiences and projects with family members. Go online at *go.illinois.edu/LMW* to learn more about the 4-H program today!











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From Garden Gates to Dinner Plates

Extension Invites Cottage Food Operators to Review Updates with launch of specialized website.

Extension stepped in to give resources to those interested in selling products at farmers markets. In 2018, under Senate Bill 457, the Cottage Food Operation Law (Public Act 100-0035) expanded the type of foods allowed for sale by Illinois vendors. University of Illinois Extension has the information you need in the newly updated website, "From Garden Gates to Dinner Plates: Illinois Cottage Food Operation Information" at extension.illinois.edu/cottage. Whether interested in starting a cottage food operation or expanding your existing one, it is time to review the updates before this farmers market season begins.

Some of the updates include:

- no cap on gross receipts from the sale of foods
- selling frozen or chilled product, such as frozen cut sweet potato fries, as long as the ingredients are not on the prohibited list
- with some provisions, selling canned tomatoes/tomato product, including canned salsa
- selling pickles and pickled products
- selling home-canned juice or other chilled homemade drinks in sealed containers

Additional questions may be directed to Nutrition and Wellness Educator & Registered Dietitian Jenna Smith by email at jesmith6@illinois.edu or by phone at (309) 663-8306.

Spring has sprung with help from county garden days

Over 300 participants attended Home, Lawn & Garden Day in McLean County, A Day in the Garden Patch in Livingston County and Gardeners' Gathering in Woodford County. Throughout March and April these attendees learned gardening tips, growing cool season greens, landscaping techniques, popular plants and much more!



Saturday, March 2 253 Attendees

Live from Extension These are stories, quotes and experiences live from individuals impacted by Extension.

"As a master gardener I presented a program on Pollination and the Basics of Beekeeping to the Livingston County Country Couples group. This is a group of former 4-H'ers that are well into their 80's and 90's and are still meeting once a month. Each month they have an educational program. They were a very lively audience with lots of questions about bees. One lady came up to me after and said she really learned a lot and used to hate bees, but now she loves them and wants to do all she can to help them! I have a thank you note from the hostess for the night who is 98 years old!" Livingston County Master Gardener

"Several years ago a member of the community from a local ministry asked if we had a simple gardening book they could use in a mission program overseas. He came in again recently to report that the 4-H Gardening book was translated to Spanish and used to begin teaching the basics of gardening in their mission work. The garden project has now spread from one community to several and is growing rapidly! The impact of 4-H gone global in the garden!" - Livingston County Master Gardener & Extension Staff

Keep up with more Extension events @ go.illinois.edu/LMW



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