



The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Rock Island County
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(309) 756-9978
Mon-Fri 8am - 4 pm
(closed 12 -12:30 pm)

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358 Front St. Galva, IL
(309) 932-3447
Mon, Wed, Fri 8 am - 4 pm
(closed 12 -12:30 pm)

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910 13th St. Viola, IL
(309) 871-5032
Tues, Wed, Thur. 8 am - 4 pm
(closed 12 -12:30 pm)

Visit our website: extension.illinois.edu/hmrs

Cultivate your own “blue zone”

Kristin Bogdonas, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator

Six in ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease, such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and stroke. These and other chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability in America, and they are also a leading driver of health care costs. The current average lifespan for those living in the U.S. is 78.7 years. For the longest lived country of Japan, the average lifespan is 84 years.

Unfortunately, the longer you live the greater your risk of developing one or more chronic diseases. With that said, there is good news. While genetics, to some extent, can determine your lifespan (20-30%) and susceptibility to these diseases, it is your lifestyle that has a greater impact.

Lifestyle is the way a person lives their life. It’s a culmination of your beliefs, values, daily behaviors and habits. Understanding how lifestyle impacts your lifespan and the quality of your life is truly the key to aging well.

A study by the Harvard T. H Chan School of Public Health looked at the impact of healthy habits on life expectancy and found five areas that significantly impact the risk of premature death. These include:

- Eating pattern/diet
- Level of physical activity
- Body weight
- Smoking status
- Alcohol intake



We know from research and experience that our health behaviors can be influenced by the environments where we live, learn, work and socialize which bring us to the “blue zone” concept. This is a non-scientific term given to geographic regions in which communities have very low rates of chronic disease and live longer than anywhere else in the world. These locations are: Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy ; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece; Loma Linda, California. They have high rates of people living well into their 90’s and 100’s (centenarians).

What can we learn from them?

Commonalities of blue zone eating patterns include:

1. High intake of nutrient-dense foods
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Whole grains
 - Plant proteins
 - Herbs and spices
2. Moderate protein
 - Fish and seafood
 - Lean meats
3. Healthy fats
 - High intake of unsaturated fats
 - Rich in omega-3 fats
 - Low intake of saturated fats

****Emphasis is placed on whole foods rather than processed foods and snacks****

Common lifestyle behaviors in the blue zones:

- Natural movement
- Sense of purpose/faith
- Healthy stress management
- Relationships and social involvement

Despite where we live, we can all strive to adopt more of these lifestyle habits which can add years to our life and life to our years. Each healthy habit can add two years to your life expectancy!

For more healthy living tips, visit go.illinois.edu/HealthyLifestyles





Designing a garden for kids? Give it a theme!

Kelly Allsup, Horticulture Educator, Illinois Extension

Many of today's youth lack a connection with nature or an interest in gardening or growing their own food. One of the best ways to encourage an excitement for gardening is by creating a themed garden. A child's hands-on, experiential learning style can be encouraged in a themed garden, especially if it's a garden they help create. Inspiration for the garden's theme can come from many things: a favorite food, color, or animal; a story – even a historical event! The options are endless, and the result is most exciting when the kids decide.

A children's dream garden may not fit the vision of your ideal adult garden. Gardens for young minds should excite the imagination with enchanting plants, unusual textures, and tremendous material variety while remaining safe, and most importantly, fun! When properly designed, it will encourage discovery, exploration and independence—sometimes this means digging in the soil. If created with children in mind, this will be a garden they can proudly call their own, where new discoveries are made every day.

And most importantly, their garden should instill a love of nature that will grow into a lifelong respect for the environment.

When designing a garden for children, remember to consider scale: view the garden at child-size, mimic small hands and scurrying feet. Re-evaluate common plant selections when planning the garden. Ensure they are safe for handling and contain low levels of toxic compounds. Children explore with all five senses and may be more exposed to oils or plant secretions than an adult.

If your outdoor space doesn't allow for a garden, take the ideas and miniaturize them for a container or a set of containers—perfect for a patio. Or even bring it indoors with dish gardens or terrariums. Giving kids a space to interact with plants and grow something is empowering.

Themed Garden Ideas:

- Animal Garden
 - To invigorate the imagination, include plants like lamb's ear, snapdragons, tiger lily, or catmint in your animal-themed children's garden.
- Learning Garden
 - An alphabet garden can help teach kids their ABCs in a fun way; include plants to cover all 26 letters of the alphabet. A rainbow or painter's palette garden can teach colors and varying shades.
- Heritage Garden
 - Heritage gardens allow us to recreate the stories of our ancestors while passing them along to our children and grandchildren. Plant some family heirlooms or introduce your child to a different culture and the plants they grow.



Researchers call on backyard scientists to help save pollinators

Kelly Allsup, Horticulture Educator, Illinois Extension

Fluttering quietly and steadily from flower to bloom, butterflies, bees and other pollinators do the hard background work of fertilizing flowering plants, fruits and crops. But these unsung heroes are in danger. Studies have shown an estimated 40% of insect species, including the monarch butterfly, are at risk of extinction in the coming decades, driven primarily by habitat loss.

Now, there's a way for backyard gardeners in rural and urban areas to help. For the fourth year, Illinois Extension is calling all lovers of bees, butterflies, and other pollinators to join scientists for the community research project I-Pollinate.

Monarchs are one of the species being monitored in the community scientist I-Pollinate project.

Using at-home flower gardens either in the ground or in containers, I-Pollinate volunteers of all ages can observe pollinators and submit data to help track their distribution and habitats.

Volunteers will spend time outside, often with friends and young family members, learning about scientific research, plants, and pollinators.

Researchers have three projects the public can join.

1. One focuses on planting a study garden to see which ornamental landscaping flowers pollinators are food sources.
2. Another tracks monarch butterfly eggs and caterpillars.
3. The I-Pollinate BeeSpotter project records bumblebee and honeybee sightings to help create accurate distribution maps for Illinois.

Those interested in helping scientists conserve pollinators can learn more about the project at ipollinate.illinois.edu

Volunteers will be trained on how to collect data, with the first collection starting in June.



Who Are You with Money Let's Talk Money Webinar May 5, @ 6:30 PM

Many households experience stress and anxiety about their personal finances. These intense feelings of uneasiness and discontent can lead to misinformation and negative money behaviors. Let's Talk Money is a free 6-week online series to help families begin talking about important financial matters.

Register for the following webinars at
go.illinois.edu/TalkMoney

WHO ARE YOU WITH MONEY? Begin with a Spending Plan May 5 | 6:30 PM

The first step to taking control of your money is matching your values and goals to your financial decision-making. In this interactive workshop, assess who you are with money, and where you want to be in the future.

SECRETS FOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS May 12 | 6:30 PM

Money comes in. Money goes out. Do you have money left for your important goals and wants? Learn the secrets of directing your money to where you want it to go.

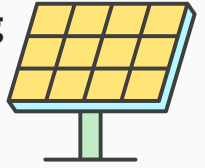
FAIR ACCESS TO CREDIT: How Does that Affect You? May 19 | 6:30 PM

Not everyone has the same access to credit. While consumer laws offer protection from discrimination, this problem still affects many consumers. In this webinar, we will explore some of the challenges of obtaining credit as well as unfair lending practices that create barriers to accessing mainstream credit market.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST DEBT REPAYMENT STRATEGY? May 26 | 6:30 PM

Repaying debt is challenging in the best of situations, and today's economic situation makes it more difficult. Learn tried and true strategies for prioritizing debt repayment and paying it down effectively. Explore options for student loan repayment too.

Geothermal Energy: The Heating & Cooling Renewable Option Webinar | May 12 @ 1 PM



Geothermal energy represents another method of using solar energy. The sun heats the earth's surface, and geothermal systems harvest this energy to heat buildings, equipment, and livestock. During the summer, the systems cool buildings by transferring the heat to the earth. Join us for a discussion of this often overlooked renewable energy, focused on new research and opportunities for use in Illinois.

Presenter: Jay Solomon, Illinois Extension educator, Natural Resources, Environment, & Energy

Register at: go.illinois.edu/everydayenvironment22

Trees & Storm Damage Webinar Wed., May 11 @ 2 PM



Trees are wonderful plants to incorporate into our landscape and have in our communities but what happens when Midwestern weather events threaten the health and safety of these plants? Snow, and ice can weigh heavy on trees resulting in branch failure. Wind events can whip and twist limbs, influencing structural stability of tree canopies. Two diametrically opposed climate events of drought and flooding may not produce immediate symptoms of stress but may emerge over time. We will explore the factors of weather that impact trees and how to respond in the aftermath of a storm to protect people and treat storm damaged trees.

Presenter: Emily Swihart, IL Extension Horticulture Educator,
Register at go.illinois.edu/ForestryWebinars2022

Have gardening questions?

Fill out an Ask the Master Gardener form online
to get your gardening questions answered @
go.illinois.edu/AsktheMasterGardener

Or call the IL Extension Master Gardeners



HORT HOTLINE
217-300-0240



Find Your Healthy Eating Style Today

Free online tips and resources for you and your family

**EAT.
MOVE.
SAVE.**

Healthy Text Program
go.illinois.edu/HealthyText



Monthly e-newsletter
go.illinois.edu/EatMoveSave





4-H Workshops & Events

A delicious way you can support 4-H!



**Cookout to benefit Henry County 4-H at
Fareway, Geneseo
Friday, May 27 11 am to 1 pm,
540 Pritchard Drive**

Make plans to join us for a delicious grilled lunch at the Geneseo Fareway and support Henry County 4-H!

Menu includes:

- Pork Chop Sandwich \$4.00
- Hamburger \$3.00
- Brat Patty \$4.00
- Pork Patty \$4.00
- Brat Link \$3.00
- Hot Dog \$1.50
- Chips 75¢
- Pop/Water 75¢



JUNE KITS EXPLORE:

Icecream in a Bag
Freezer Jam &
Summer Safety for
National Dairy Month



Keep youth engaged with the do-it-yourself kit

Summer is right around the corner, and if you are like many parents, you are wondering how you will keep the kids engaged when school is out. Let us help with the June I MADE That! educational cooking kit.

The do-it-yourself kit is a fun opportunity for youth to learn valuable life skills in the kitchen while building healthy habits. Youth are inspired to tap into their inner chef and get moo-ving in the kitchen for National Dairy Month. The kits feature the June I MADE That! booklet, where youth learn to use fresh summer fruit to make freezer jam and ice cream in a bag. There are also summer safety tips for bug bites, sun exposure, and fireworks. Plus, select ingredients for the recipes.

Register now for this June program offered by University of Illinois Extension and 4-H. Kits are \$5 and will be available for pick-up beginning June 6 at our Extension offices in Milan, Viola, Galva, IL. Register early to reserve your educational kit by calling our office at (309) 756-9978 or at go.illinois.edu/IMadeThatJune Registration deadline is Tues., May 31, 2022.



ONLINE MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

This summer, take your love of gardening to the next level by becoming an Illinois Master Gardener! The online, self-guided course for Illinois residents can be completed anytime day or night.

Course runs June 13- Sept 19

Register before May 16 at

go.illinois.edu/MGOnlineTraining2022