

# Impacting **I** YOU

"Impacting You" is a monthly report used to communicate University of Illinois Extension programming impacts to stakeholders.

Dear Valued Stakeholder:

Extension plays a vital role in building a strong community by providing services that help solve problems, develop skills, and create a better future for local residents and youth. From reliable information to help businesses weather the economic effect of COVID-19 to activities to help families stay healthy in body and spirit, Illinois Extension remains a trusted source to address the most pressing issues in the state of Illinois relating to food, health, environment, community, and economy.

It is my pleasure to present this brief impact report of the programs and events offered to the residents of Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph and Williamson Counties during this past month.

*Lynn Heins, Extension Director  
Serving Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph & Williamson Counties*

1,699

Total  
Contacts

74

Total Number  
of Programs &  
Events

## High tunnel production allows research to continue year-round

In Jackson County, the demonstration high tunnel provides over 1,000 square feet of indoor growing space to extend the growing season of various crops. The high tunnel has been used to grow various crops, including tomatoes, peppers, kohlrabi, Swiss chard, oats, cucumbers, broccoli, lettuce, leeks, artichoke, bok choy, a variety of herbs, and cut flowers.

Last month, our local foods team was able to do a carrot harvest, which is atypical this time of year. The seven varieties that were planted in late September were not expected to be ready until sometime in late March, but the plants matured much faster than normal due to the warmer temperatures in November and December.



# Youth put livestock knowledge to the test during quiz bowl

Livestock and 4-H go hand-in-hand, and many local youth had a chance to put their skills to the test at the livestock quiz bowl. This annual event is held each President's Day in Perry County though the event is open to all 4-H youth in Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, and Williamson counties.

The morning was filled with fun activities as youth were tested on their knowledge of feed, species, equipment, and meat cuts. This competition was a way to stimulate learning in various livestock topics and prepare those that will showcase livestock at the 4-H fairs this summer.



## Local 4-H members learn how to start seeds

It's never too early to get seedlings started. You just need a few simple supplies and seeds, and you are ready to get growing! In a recent workshop, Extension Educator Katie Bell shared easy and creative ways to use recycled household items to grow vegetables. Franklin County youth created simple seed starters kits using recycled cardboard from around the house, potting mix or compost, and their favorite vegetable seeds. With proper care, these seedlings could turn into great 4-H food projects for the summer fair season!



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