

Local Foods and Small Farms

Serving Jo Daviess, Stephenson, & Winnebago Counties



Grant McCarty
Local Foods and
Small Farms Educator

Email: gmccarty@illinois.edu
Phone: 815-986-4357
Skype: 217-244-0697

Grant McCarty works with commercial and backyard growers and producers by providing resources in fruit and vegetable production. His area of expertise includes soils management, organic/sustainable crop production, alternative crops, and general fruit and vegetable production. He further assists stakeholders within the local food system in helping them to expand their operation, adopt new practices, read soil tests, and/or better manage their current production.

Previous and current programs have focused on soil health, cover crops, fruit tree pruning, insect and disease management, alternative crops, IPM, and many others.



Upcoming Events

Joys Spring Gardening Series: Totally Tomatoes and Perfect Peppers

April 28

Freeport, IL

Popular Programs Available

McCarty provides several different resources as well as virtual and in-person workshops to help consumers and producers better understand their role and responsibilities within the local food movement. Some of his more popular programs have included the following:

Fruits on Fridays

Fruits on Fridays explores best production practices for those looking to get started in setting up their own orchard, vineyard, or u-pick operation. In these introduction courses, participants learn the basics of fruit production including tree fruit, small fruits, and other uncommon-unusual fruits.

Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference

Each year, University of Illinois Extension hosts the Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference. Designed for commercial specialty growers, this day-long conference provides updates from Extension Specialists from University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin. New crops, weed management, marketing, and others have been covered in sessions previously to complement campus specialists.

Intro to Fruit Tree Pruning

Since 2017, the Intro to Fruit Tree Pruning class has been offered for backyard growers who have planted trees in the last 5 years or inherited a backyard orchard. Held multiple times during the season, this program is designed to give participants the confidence to prune trees for production and get them back in shape for good summer and fall yields.

Get Growing Webinar Series

With the shift to virtual programming, the Get Growing Series is a 4-week program held in early spring that presents topics related to the upcoming growing season. Past topics have covered the basics of weed management, raspberry production, soil management and tomatoes.

Resources of Interest

JSW Extension YouTube Channel: There are over 40 different educational videos offering advice from fruit tree pruning to gardening basics.
go.illinois.edu/jswyoutube



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Jo Daviess County · 815-858-2273
Stephenson County · 815-235-4125
Winnebago County · 815-986-4357
Visit online: goillinois.edu/jsw