



Illinois Extension

MARCH 2022

Connections Newsletter

The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Rock Island County
321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL
(309) 756-9978
Mon-Fri 8am - 4 pm
(closed 12 - 12:30 pm)

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

Mercer County
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

Celebrate a World of Flavors during National Nutrition Month!

Kristin Bogdonas, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator

March is National Nutrition Month® and the theme this year is “Celebrate a World of Flavors”! When you’re getting ready to plan your meals, make sure to incorporate your favorite cultural foods and traditions and also try new foods and flavors from around the world. Healthful eating options span the globe. Plus, many recipes can be modified based on personal food preferences or to accommodate different budgets. Learn more about the DASH eating plan from this National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute publication @<http://bit.ly/3cfTSR3>. You may come across ingredients you’ve never experienced before which will increase the variety of foods you typically eat. Try this Quick Shrimp Gumbo for a taste of Cajun flavor!

These are a few ways you can embrace global cuisines when planning your meals and snacks:

Breakfast ideas:

- Scottish oatmeal topped with fruits and nuts
- A tropical smoothie with milk kefir and frozen papaya or mango
- A Spanish omelet with peppers and onions

Lunch or dinner ideas:

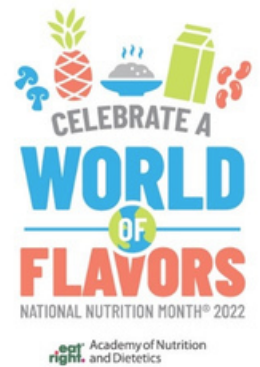
- Gazpacho, a type of cold soup
- Spring rolls, a Vietnamese dish stuffed with proteins and fresh vegetables
- A spicy lentil and vegetable stew, known as Sambar in India

Snack ideas:

- Raw or roasted veggies with hummus or tzatziki sauce
- Toasted pita with baba ganouj, a dip made with roasted eggplant
- Homemade guacamole and salsa with whole-grain tortilla chips

Try to incorporate more herbs and spices in your recipes:

- Curry powder- try in meat and potato dishes
- Fennel- try in fish, salads and pizza
- Ginger- try in sweet desserts/muffins and savory dishes like stir fry
- Cumin- try in rice dishes and soups/stews/chili
- Smoked paprika- try on hummus, potato salad, eggs, popcorn, fish/chicken
- Turmeric- Try in lentil and rice dishes and eggs (pairs well with ginger)
- Oregano- try in pizza and pasta sauces, soups, casseroles and brew it as a tea



Quick Shrimp Gumbo*

Ingredients

- 1 cup quick-cooking brown rice (uncooked)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 teaspoons Cajun seasoning pre-mix
- 1/2 teaspoon ground hot or chipotle pepper
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen bell pepper strips
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 pound frozen cooked shrimp, thawed (optional)
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen cut okra
- Salt and pepper
- Hot sauce



Preparation

1. Cook the rice according to the package directions. While the rice is cooking, heat the oil over medium heat in a Dutch oven or large pot.
2. Add the garlic and onion and sauté for several minutes. Add the Cajun spice and pepper and cook, stirring, for two minutes. Add the pepper strips, tomatoes, beans, shrimp, and broth. Stir and bring just to a boil.
3. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover, and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in the okra and simmer for 5 minutes longer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with the brown rice, and hot sauce on the side.

*Recipe from IL Extension's Eat.Move.Save website

Finding infant formula in midst of recalls & shortages

Jenna Smith, IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator



As a parent, providing safe, nutritious food for your little one is a necessity, but what do you do when the options run low? Many parents of infants are stressed and frustrated as the nation is currently facing infant formula recalls and shortages. On February 17, 2022, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced Abbott Nutrition's voluntary recall on three of Abbott's infant formula brands, including Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare, for possible bacteria contamination. Do not use if your powdered formula meets all these conditions:

- First two digits are 22 through 37 and
- Code on the container contains "K8," "SH," or "Z2" and
- Use-by date is 4-1-2022 (APR 2022) or later

While it may be tempting to make a bottle with a little less powdered formula when your supply is running low, you should always follow the preparation directions on the package, as changing the ratio of formula to water can lead to nutritional deficiencies or other health issues. If you must switch to a new formula due to shortages or recalls, look for a generic version of your baby's usual formula first. If there are no generic versions available, check with your pediatrician before making a switch, particularly if your baby is on a specialized formula.

Also, don't forget to look for signs that your baby is ready for complementary foods around 6 months of age. You'll still need to provide infant formula or breast milk through at least 12 months to meet your baby's needs, but the amount needed may decrease as your baby gets older and eats more solid food. To learn more about feeding your baby complimentary foods, visit Illinois Extension's website: [Feeding My Baby from Cradle to Table](#). The bottom-line is don't panic if you can't find your usual formula. If these options don't work, call your pediatrician to help walk you through it.

Take heed of tornado warnings

Duane Friend, IL Extension natural resources educator:



As prime tornado season approaches, know what a tornado warning means and what to do. The National Weather Service issues a tornado warning under two conditions: rotation is indicated by weather radar, or rotation has been observed by trained spotters. If a warning is issued for the area, it means residents in the warning area are in the projected path. Bulletins often discuss the potential impact damage from the tornado.

What to do during a tornado warning

"First thing to do when a tornado warning is issued for your area is to take cover immediately," Friend says. "Do not go outside to look for the tornado; it may approach quickly with little time to get to safety."

Damage from downed trees and flying debris may also occur. Tornado warnings may include these cautions: "life-threatening situation," "flying debris may be deadly," or "damage is likely to occur to buildings, with complete destruction possible." In extreme cases, tornado warnings may include "catastrophic damage threat."

Understanding tornado paths

Tornadoes' paths are projected paths that sometimes change trajectory significantly.

"During a televised broadcast, a meteorologist often shows the potential path that widens the farther out from the event you get," Friend says. The force of wind also increases exponentially as speed increases.

"This explains why even small objects have such destructive power when traveling at high speeds," Friend says. "While it may be exciting to consider getting video of a tornado to post on social media, getting too close can put your life in danger."



Sign-Up for the EAT.MOVE.SAVE. Healthy Text Program!

Choose ONE of three ways to sign up to get 1-2 text messages per week! *Text message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to unsubscribe at any time.*

Use a smartphone camera to scan and sign-up with an online form.



OR

If you live in Rock Island or Mercer County:
Text "rockisland7" to (833) 369-2916

If you live in Henry or Stark Counties
Text "henry7" to (833) 369-2916

Plan ahead - Register now to attend these Upcoming Webinars

FOUR SEASONS GARDENING | 2022 Spring Webinar Series

Four Seasons Gardening Webinars

Illinois Extension horticulture educators offer a variety of seasonal workshops. Here's what's coming up in March:

Shade Gardening | March 8 at 1:30 PM

Join Andrew Holsinger, University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator, on how to increase color and interest in your shade garden with perennials. Andrew will discuss soil preparation, light levels, design, planting, and maintenance.

Pelleted Seeds | March 29 at 1:30 PM

Pelleted seed? Let's take a look at what, why, where, and how-to of using pelleted seed as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this colorful seed product available to consumers at a garden center, big box store or farming supply center near you. Join Mary Fischer, University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator as she covers the topic of pelleted seed.

Register @ go.illinois.edu/FourSeasonsSpring22 or call Extension at (309) 756-9978.

Return of Large Predators March 10, 1 pm via Zoom

Due to the sightings of cougars, wolves, and even black bears in Illinois, this program is being offered to discuss the animals themselves and the behaviors that may be playing a part in their attempts to return. If you are interested in learning more about these creatures, join Peggy Doty for Large Predators Return...Or Are They? Presenter: Peggy Doty

Register @ go.illinois.edu/everydayenvironment22



Financial Emergency Preparedness | Get Savvy | March 30, Noon via Zoom

Is your emergency plan a box of ramen in the closet? It's a good start, but there are a few more things you might want to consider to round it out. As we're entering tornado season in Illinois, we'll discuss ways to prepare financially for potential disasters and emergencies. Join us on March 30, 2022, to explore financial emergency preparedness tips and tools. Presented by Camaya Wallance Bechard, University of Illinois Extension, and Andrea Pellegrini, University of Illinois Student Money Managing Center.

@ go.illinois.edu/GetSavvyWebinars

Bi-State Conservation Action Network Presents:

Nature is Local Webinar Series Thursdays at Noon March 3, 10 & 17

University of Illinois Extension is partnering with BiCAN to offer a three week lunch and learn series on topics that will help you incorporate native plants in your landscape.

Here are the topics:

March 3: Enrich Your Yard with Native Plants

March 10: Prairie Establishment &

Maintenance Techniques

March 17: BiState Resources and Funding

Register @ go.illinois.edu/NatureIsLocal

Small Farms Winter Webinar Series Thursdays at Noon March 3, 10 & 17

Learn practices to improve production and increase profit of you small farm operation. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, contact Grant McCarty, gmccarty@illinois.edu.



Introduction to Vermicomposting | March 3 | Noon

Learn the basics of vermicomposting, including soil health, building indoor and outdoor vermicompost bins, care for red wiggler worms, and bin maintenance. Crystal Stevens

Mushroom Production | March 10 | Noon

Information to come soon. Michael Hatfield

Getting Started with Backyard Swine | March 17 | Noon

Whether you are looking to raise your own meat or diversify your farming income, pigs can be a great way to get started raising livestock. Swine have a fairly low purchase cost, provide quick return on investment, and require limited equipment to get started. Learn the basics of swine care including selection of animals, nutrition, and fencing. Katie Bell

Growing Great Grapes | March 24 | Noon

Wine vs table? Cordon vs Cane? Growing grapes can be intimidating. Since the plant can live for decades, early decisions will ensure you have greater success for years to come. This webinar will provide you with an introduction of the opportunities that await and the challenge you might face in grape production. Varieties, setup, disease management, and pruning will also be discussed. Grant McCarty

@ go.illinois.edu/SmallFarmsWebinar2022



4-H Workshops & 4-H Special Interest Clubs

University of Illinois Extension has a variety of 4-H workshops and special interest clubs open to youth/teens. Check out the current offerings and sign up to join these hands-on workshops and gain new skills! (Age requirements and fees vary depending on the workshop or club). Here's what's coming up!

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING FOR CPR, FIRST AID, & AED CERTIFICATION

Sat., March 5
Alexis, IL



Basic Life Support Training & Certification, Sat., March 5 Morning Session: 10 am - 1 pm; or Afternoon Session: 2 - 5 pm Alexis Ambulance Service, Alexis IL

GET CERTIFIED! Make a difference in moments that matter! During this 3 hour training you will gain skills that can save a life. Learn how to prepare and respond to emergencies with confidence. Following training, participants must pass a written exam to receive their certification for CPR, AED and First Aid through the American Heart Association. There is a \$15 fee. For youth ages 12 and older. Register at go.illinois.edu/CPRFirstAid or call (309) 756-9978.

4-H Photography 101 Sat., March 12



Photography 101: Sat, March 12, 9:30 - 11 am Rock Island County Extension, Milan, IL

Join this workshop to learn more about the art of photography, lighting, and composition. You'll also discover ways to enhance the photos you take using your cellphone camera. If you want to become more involved in photography, instructor Mike Bisom will help you get started! FREE. For youth ages 8 to 18. Register at go.illinois.edu/Photography101 or call (309) 756-9978.

4-H Put it Up! Freezer Jams & Fruit Leather Workshop March 16



Put it Up: Fruit Leather & Freezer Jam Food Preservation Class Wed, March 16, 6 - 7:30 pm, Rock Island County Extension, Milan, IL

IL Extension nutrition and wellness educator, Kristin Bogdonas will lead this workshop where you will learn how to make strawberry-banana freezer jam and fruit leather. See the process, taste the results, and get a jar of jam to take home. \$10 supply fee. For youth ages 9 to 13. Register at go.illinois.edu/PutItUP or call (309) 756-9978.

Portrait Drawing Workshop for Youth Sat, April 2



Portrait Drawing Workshop Sat, April 2, 10 - 11:30 am, Rock Island County Extension, Milan, IL

Have you ever wanted to draw pictures of your friends and family? You will learn techniques that artists use to make realistic looking pencil and charcoal portraits: shape, line, proportion and shading. We will also work on colorful Picasso-esque portraits. You also get to take home your own starter drawing kit! \$10 supply fee. For youth 8 to 12. Register at go.illinois.edu/PortraitClass or call (309) 756-9978.



Archery Club, Fridays, 6:30 pm, Devil's Glen Park, Bettendorf, IA

Calling all archery enthusiasts. Become a master archer as you get to practice target shooting each week! Learn safety and responsible handling and use. Equipment is provided by Youth Shooting Sports Association, and grants from the 4-H Foundation, NRA, & USA Archery. There is a \$20 fee per 6 week session. (New 4-H members also pay the 4-H enrollment fee of \$20). Open to youth ages 8 to 18. Register at go.illinois.edu/4-HArcheryBettendorf or call (309) 756-9978.



Air pistol/Air rifle Club, Tuesdays, 6:30 pm, Milan Rifle Club, Milan IL

Boost your marksmanship skills as you get to practice each week. You'll also learn firearm safety and responsible handling and use. Equipment and ammunition provided by grants from 4-H, NRA, United Way, Midway USA, and many QCA Outdoor Organizations. There is a \$20 fee per 6 week session (New 4-H members also pay the annual 4-H \$20 program fee.) Open to youth ages 8 to 18. Register at go.illinois.edu/4HAirPistolRifle or call (309) 756-9978.



Lego Robotics 4-H Club, Thurs, March 17, 6 pm, Rock Island County 4-H, Milan, IL

Robots are everywhere in everyday life. Learn to design, build, and program robots in this exciting, hands-on club. This club is open to all youth ages 8 to 18. It (generally) meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Email 4-H educator Jennifer Peterson at jpetersn@illinois.edu or call (309) 756-9978.



4-H Fishing Club, Saturdays, April 23 - May 28, 9 - 11 am, Aledo, IL

Mercer County Fishing Club will start on April 23, from 9-10 a.m. at Central Park in Aledo. Then they will meet at various fishing ponds around Mercer County every Saturday, April 30- May 28, from 9 to 11 am. Pond locations to be announced at the first meeting. Limit of 10 youth. Open to youth 8 to 15 years of age. Pre-register by April 15. Fee is cost of your own supplies, plus \$10 bait fee (club will supply the live bait). New 4-H members also pay the annual 4-H \$20 program fee. Register at go.illinois.edu/FishingClub or call (309) 756-9978.



April's "I MADE THAT!" DIY Cooking Kits features Quick Breads

University of Illinois Extension & 4-H are offering a fun opportunity to build confidence and healthy habits with the April "I Made That!" cooking kit. Learn how to make a variety of quick breads, including drop biscuits, loaf bread, cornbread, and muffins. Discover proper mixing techniques, leavening agents, substitutions, and how to evaluate bread.

After spending time in the kitchen, youth can head outdoors to enjoy all that spring has to offer as they explore and participate in a scavenger hunt to celebrate Move More Month

Register now for this April program. Kits are \$5 and include a back-yard scavenger hunt, a baking guide, quick bread recipes, evaluation tools for your cornbread and muffins, baking powder, poppy seeds, and your choice of a spatula or measuring spoons. They will be ready for pick up beginning April 4 at one of our Extension offices in Milan, Viola, or Galva, IL. Register by March 28 at go.illinois.edu/IMadeThatApril or call (309) 756-9978

Illinois Extension

SPRING SERIES OF HOME HORTICULTURE

Mondays April 11, 18 & 25, 6 - 8 pm, Holiday Inn, Rock Island, IL

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners have put together a great series for home gardeners to explore a variety of interesting topics. Regional experts will share tips on growing and using herbs; growing healthy trees and shrubs; new plant varieties; amazing facts about woodpeckers; carbon storage and soil health; xeriscaping - gardening with minimal water. The series will take place on Mondays: April 11, 18 and 25 from 6 to 8 pm at the Holiday Inn, Rock Island. Each night includes two presenters. The cost is \$10/night, or \$25 for all three nights. Snacks will be provided. Face masks will be required.

Monday, April 11, 6 - 8 PM

Growing Herbs & Ways to add them to Everyday Meals

University of Illinois Extension educators Emily Swihart, horticulture, and Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness

An herb is defined as “a plant or plant part valued for its medicinal, savory or aromatic qualities”. They are used to flavor food, provide fragrance, for medicinal properties and hobbies such as crafting and landscaping. Emily will talk about some of our most beloved herbs and how to cultivate them. She'll also explore a few fringe plants that the adventuresome gardener may want to consider. Kristin will share culinary uses of herbs and provide tips and tricks for incorporating them into our everyday meals.



Favorite Trees & Shrubs that Thrive

Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator

Trees and shrubs are often the backbone of a landscape. With so many sizes, shapes, colors, and characteristics to offer, it's no wonder that we rely on them for so many functions in our landscape. Emily will share some of her favorite species and offer planting and care recommendations so the trees and shrubs in your landscape can thrive.

Monday, April 25, 6 - 8 PM

Soils, Carbon and Climate

Duane Friend, Illinois Extension Energy and Environment Educator



Carbon storage is a hot topic. Some soils contain huge amounts of carbon, mostly in the form of organic matter. Soils also have the ability to store additional amounts of carbon quickly, but can just as easily lose it. Extension Educator Duane Friend discusses why Midwest soils contain large amounts of organic matter, changes that have occurred over the last 150 years, and ways that carbon, in the form of organic matter, can be increased in these soils.

Make Every Drop Count – Xeriscaping

Chris Enroth, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator

Tired of dragging the hose around and hauling buckets of water to parched plants? Then learn how you can incorporate xeriscaping into your home garden. Whether you desire a minimalist landscape approach or crave a lush garden; listen as Chris details design strategies and proper plant selection to minimize your water usage and make every drop count.

Monday, April 18, 6 - 8 PM

From Greenhouse, to Garden Center, to You in 2022

Jeff Johnson from Sunnyfield Greenhouse and Garden Center

Find out about some of the new plant varieties that will be available for your 2022 gardens! Get descriptions and cultural information on many new annuals and perennials available this coming year. Sunnyfield in Galva, Ill are professional growers with over 2000 varieties of annuals, perennials, vegetables and nursery stock.

Register Online at this link:

go.illinois.edu/SpringSeries22

or call University of IL Extension at (309) 756-9978 or scan this QR code:



If you will need an accommodation to participate, contact Tracy Jo Mulliken at tmully@illinois.edu.



Wild About Woodpeckers

Amy Loving, Director of Education at Nahant Marsh

This group of birds have amazing adaptations for excessive hammering, extracting food and more. Learn about the various species of woodpeckers in Illinois, and how to attract them to your backyard.