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. 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 Madison, Monroe and St. Clair Counties during this past quarter.

Thank you for your continued
ON THE HORIZON

Monroe:
- April 2: Mo. Co. Livestock Clinic & YQCA Training
- April 9: Mo. Co. Sheep Fest & Sheep/Goat Judging Contest
- April 18: Mo. Co. YQCA Training
- April 29: Mo. Co. 5th Grade Conservation Day
- April 30: Nature Adventures Day @ Baebler Educational Farm
- May 22: Mo. Co. Horse Show
- June 6: Mo. Co. Food Demo Show
- June 14-August 4: Ag Tech Science Camp
- June 25: Mo. Co. Show-A-Rama
- July 24-31: Mo. Co. Fair

Madison & St. Clair:
- April 14: YQCA at Scheve Park, Mascoutah
- April 20: YQCA at Madison County Fairgrounds, Highland
- April 24-June 5: Dog Obedience classes at Got Your Six, Maryville
- April 30: Global Youth Service Day at Turkey Hill Grange, Belleville
- June 12: 4-H Dog Show
- June 25: Madison Food & Clothing Show

We had 13 youth participate in our Cultures & Continents workshop on the Aboriginal people of Australia. They learned dot painting.

We had 14 youth participate in our Cultures & Continents workshop on the Oroqen people of China. They made birch bark picture frames.

We had our 4-H public speaking contest and will be sending 5 youth to the State Public Speaking Contest.

Monroe County

10 youth participated in a canvas painting workshop on February 12.

4-H staff visited two 7th grade classes at Valmeyer school in March to conduct the "Bread Dough Challenge" STEM activity.
Master Chef Jr. for Beginners

Monroe County 4-H youth in 3rd – 5th grade participated in our Master Chef Jr. for beginners SPIN club. This club met for six sessions starting in February and ending in March. Youth had the opportunity to learn valuable cooking skills, food safety and nutrition know-how! Some of their favorite recipes included french toast, taco soup, and ice cream in a bag. Two of our chefs were new to cooking and were excited to have the opportunity to learn basic chef skills along side their peers.

4-H Leader & Officer Training

Unit 22 4-H Leaders and Officers met for a training with the 4-H Educator and 4-H Program Coordinators on Saturday, March 12. In this training, 4-H youth and volunteers experienced activities that can be taken back to their club meetings. They also reviewed and discussed 2022 4-H Award Applications, participated in Officer and Leader discussions, and discussed what Belonging in 4-H looks like in 2022-2023. Many participants reported enjoying the opportunity to discuss relevant topics with 4-H Leaders and Officers. We are looking forward to having more Leader & Officer trainings in the future.
HORSE RADISH GROWERS CONFERENCE
The 2022 Horseradish Growers Conference was held face-to-face on January 27 at the Caseyville Community Center. Growers were introduced to Dr. Kacie Athey, a new Assistant Professor and Faculty Extension Specialist in Specialty Crops Entomology at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Additional topics included the horseradish breeding program led by Dr. Alan Walters, Professor of Vegetable Science at Southern Illinois University- Carbondale; the benefits and implementation of cover crops in a horseradish production system by Nathan Johanning, Commercial Agriculture Educator with University of Illinois Extension (UIE); horseradish nutrition by Dr. Elizabeth Wahle, Commercial Agriculture Educator with UIE, and disease management by Dr. Mohammad Babadoost, Professor and Faculty Extension Specialist in Specialty Crops Pathology at UIUC. Syngenta was also on hand to discuss new herbicides in the pipeline for horseradish, as well as SIHF Healthcare to discuss healthcare services for employees.

PRODUCTION BASICS WORKSHOPS
Local producers and farmers always have questions about general production practices. We hosted two recent programs that addressed local needs.

Lambing 101
Katie Bell, Extension Educator from Murphysboro, visited a local sheep farm on February 1 to present a workshop giving sheep producers the basic information they need to know how to successfully handle lambing season, including all the challenges that a pregnant ewe and newborn lamb may face. One of the highlights of this program was the opportunity for participants young and old to learn how to insert a feeding tube and tube feed a newborn lamb that was not getting adequate nutrition to grow and thrive.

Forage Production 101
Making hay can be a challenge. The weather, drying, and storage are big factors and some are outside of a farmer's control. When you are establishing your hay crop; what plant species are best? When and how to plant it? How do you manage pests? These questions and so many more were addressed by Extension Educator, Travis Meteer, at the Monroe County Extension Office on March 31. This topic sparked an engaging discussion around forage production among the participants and they were able to take away new concepts to apply to the forage crops on their farms.

ON THE HORIZON
July 11: Southern Illinois Summer Twilight Series, Feather’s Farm, Waterloo
July 14: SIU Belleville Research Center Field Day
September 1: Pumpkin Field Day, Eckert’s, Belleville
Master Gardener and Master Naturalists hosted educational programs for homeowners and volunteers this winter. Weekend Gardener was held virtually on March 5. Participants learned about I-Pollinate, a Citizen Science Project, Extending the Growing Season Utilizing High and Low Tunnels, Growing Fruit in Containers, and Adding Color to the Landscape. The Color of Spring workshop was held March 26 in Waterloo. Participants learned about fertilizers and composting, beneficial insects, and selecting trees for the landscape. Participants surveyed said they plan to incorporate many of the ideas discussed during the program including adding more native plants to the landscape to support pollinators and using tunnels to start fall vegetables this year.

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ON THE HORIZON

April 23: Fairmont City Earth Day Pop Up Event

April 30: Nature Adventures Day at Baebler Educational Farm, Waterloo

May 13: Cahokia High School Community Garden Open House

June-September: Master Gardener Online Training

June 3 & 4: Gardens in Bloom Garden Tour, Belleville/Swansea

June 10 & 11: Madison County Garden Tour, Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

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GATEWAY GREEN INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

The Gateway Green Industry Conference successfully returned to a face-to-face format March 9 at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville. This included 16 presentations across six breakout sessions throughout the day-long program. The target audience for this program was green industry professionals like arboriculture, parks and recreation, and landscape maintenance. Continuing education units were approved by four partnering professional agencies and were made available immediately following each session, giving green industry professionals an opportunity to receive up to six hours of continuing education towards maintaining their professional certification.

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MASTER GARDENER WINTER TRAINING

The Unit is training more Master Gardener volunteers. There are six enrolled in the hybrid classroom training and five enrolled in the online training. Topics include botany, soil, insects, vegetables, fruit, flowers, and trees. Winter training will conclude in May, and the volunteers will begin internships at Unit projects.
LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS & SMALL FARMS

Madison, Monroe and St. Clair Counties
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YOUTH PROGRAMMING
Youth programming continues at the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Center after school program. In February and March, activities revolved around seeds and germination. They dissected seeds, ate edible seeds, made seed art, and explored beans, corn, and microgreens at various stages. They also started planning and planting in the outdoor garden beds. The pictures below show the 1st grade students designing individual square feet of a garden and arranging them to fill the plan for one of the raised beds.

LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES
The federal USDA and EPA partners have officially turned over the Local Foods, Local Places project and action plan to the East St. Louis community. The local coalition, Make Health Happen, hosts regular subcommittee meetings of community members and stakeholders to drive implementation of the program.

During the past quarter, the members have added and promoted the social pinpoint map created, have met with the owners of Neighbors Market and Bond Avenue Fish & Poultry to explore food access issues, and have begun planning the Juneteenth Block Parties (health fairs) around East St. Louis.

Extension will also be hosting a workshop series at various gardens throughout East St. Louis inspired by the LFLP action plan. The workshops will occur one Saturday per month from 10 a.m. to noon. The first three will take place at the Jones Park Garden and Greenhouse across from the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Center.

ON THE HORIZON
April 9th ESTL Garden Workshop
May 21st ESTL Garden Workshop
June 17th & 18th: Juneteenth Block Parties
June 18th ESTL Garden Workshop
Contact Grace at gracem@illinois.edu for more information
School Wellness Success Stories!
We have partnered with Madison School District and Bethalto School District Food Service Staff and head chefs to provide them with a professional development opportunity, which was focused around leadership in the cafeteria as well as effective teamwork and conflict resolution. This was a very successful educational program, and we look forward to implementing this training in additional schools.

Hunger and Health Conference
On March 17, U of I Extension and SNAP Education held the Hunger & Health Illinois Regional Conference in Springfield, IL, for food pantries across Illinois to learn about SNAP-Ed resources, food pantry set-up, Find Food IL, and more. At the end of the conference, a select few pantries were awarded for their work in mitigating food insecurity and hunger. Our very own Marla Goodwin and Jeremiah's Food Pantry won the Innovative Food Pantry Programming Award for the amazing work they do in East St. Louis to make health happen.

Success Stories!

New Year Resolution
While presenting OrganWise Guys at a kindergarten class at Gilson Brown in Godfrey, there was a list of New Years’ Resolutions on display. Two of them were "To Drink More Water". The other was "To Drink More Milk". A student shared their mom was giving them more water at meals, and another shared he is drinking more milk to make his bones strong and healthy as Calci!

National School Breakfast Week
With an Eat Move Save booth, we encouraged the students at Bernard Elementary school to eat their breakfast and drink their milk. Due to the fun activities, the number of students who ate their breakfast and drank their milk increased that week. Students shared "I will eat my breakfast because it will give me energy throughout the day and feeds my body to grow!"

SNAP-ED DIRECT NUTRITION EDUCATION

Updated SNAP-Ed Food Policy Guidelines
As the team worked on increasing their in-person program offerings and begin working towards summer opportunities, we would like to announce that the SNAP-Ed team will return to all pre-pandemic best practices. The team is excited to offer taste tests, food samples, and food demonstrations as they were able to before the pandemic. If you are interested in booking a summer program, please feel free to reach out to our SNAP-Ed Extension Program Coordinator, Rima Abusaid, at rabusaid@illinois.edu.

Updated SNAP-Ed Food Policy Guidelines

Success Stories!

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WE ARE MOVING

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) will be moving from 1265 N. 89th Street, East St. Louis Ave. to 2051 Lynch Ave, East St. Louis IL 62204 on April 8, 2022. EFNEP will continue to serve Madison and St. Clair Counties.

Questions? Please reach out. Phone: 618.397.4973 or email Lb3@illinois.edu

GEO Group

Demonte A. (in the photo below) insisted that he was not going to cook and that everyone was going to cook for him.

On February 22, 2022, we prepared Smothered Chicken, one of our Eat Move Save recipes. This was Demonte’s first time cooking and, as you can see in the photo below, he was enjoying himself. He went from wanting everyone to cook for him to becoming a bonafide chef.

It’s always a joy to see participants smile. It’s also good to hear how they look forward to class. It makes me feel good to know that they do not like to miss class. Their response to missing the class is priceless.

- Chastidy Wilson, Community Worker

SUCCESS STORIES

I love the food and nutrition classes that EFNEP provides for me and my family. The Community Worker has taken pride in her teaching. She is very patient and caring about special needs children. I refer her to many of my family, friends and colleagues.

- Tracy, Participant

The Nutrition Education Program has been a blessing to my family. I am provided a wealth of knowledge on the benefits of eating a balanced meal and ways to save money and stay within budget. And how to make recipes that are very good and cost-efficient. I love the classes and will refer them.

- Brianna, Participant

A mother of three at the Good Samaritan House in Granite City, Illinois, credits the information from EFNEP has given her alternative recipes to deal with her morning sickness.

- Gestavia Peeple, EFNEP Community Worker

SUMMER YOUTH COOKING SCHOOLS 2022

Each year, EFNEP reaches hundreds of youth in both Madison and St. Clair Counties through the Summer Youth Cooking Schools Program. Last year the cooking theme was "Eating around the Globe". This year’s theme is "Dinner and a Movie".

This interactive program teaches culinary skills, cooking terminology, nutrition education, and the importance of physical activity.

If you are interested in being a Summer Youth Cooking School host site, call us as 618.397.4973.
Thank you for your continued support of Extension and our communities!