



**Illinois Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**2021** Addressing Local Needs,  
Solving Global Challenges  
Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, and White Counties



Angie Messmer  
County Extension Director

# Staff Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, and White Counties

## A Message from the County Director

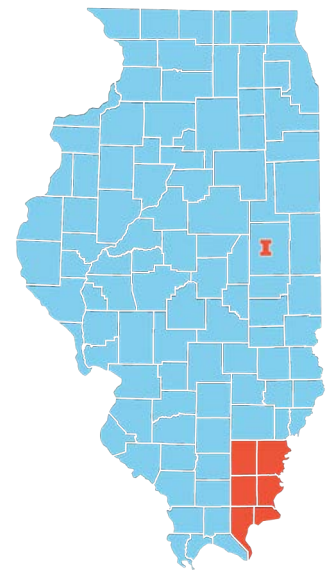
I have always heard the expression “Time flies when you’re having fun,” and I can attest that 2021 flew by. As we looked beyond the continued challenges of returning to “normal,” there was so much fun, excitement, and growth that took place over the last year. While we were still faced with restrictions and guidelines, all the staff in this Extension unit worked to ensure programs were delivered in the most enjoyable way possible. Virtual programming continued along with many in-person opportunities. This report provides a snapshot of what was accomplished in 2021.

Please take a moment to reflect on the programs and events of the last year. I am proud to work with this outstanding team and to witness their unwavering determination to serve our communities through 4-H Youth Development, SNAP-Ed Nutrition Education,

Agriculture and Natural Resources, Small Farms and Local Foods, and Community and Economic Development. As we move into 2022, we will do so with an optimistic outlook for what lies ahead. We are prepared to meet the needs of communities and to pivot, if needed, to ensure continued programming. We will pull together, continue our traditions and make memories for years to come.

I want to thank the volunteers, county boards, 4-H and SNAP families, and our communities for your support of Extension and Dixon Springs Ag Center. You make everything we do possible through your support and participation. We look forward to working with everyone in the coming year.

Sincerely,  
Angie Messmer, County Extension Director -  
Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, and  
White Counties and Dixon Springs Ag Center



# Think Global, Act Local

Illinois Extension embodies the land grant mission of University of Illinois, providing applied research and education to address societal grand challenges and local issues.

## Community Support Strong and Resilient Youth, Families, and Communities

- Connectedness and Inclusion
- Involvement and Leadership
- Thriving Youth

## Economy Grow a Prosperous Economy

- Economic Vitality
- Financial Wellbeing
- Workforce Preparedness/Advancement

## Environment Sustain Natural Resources in Home and Public Spaces

- Enhancing and Preserving Natural Resources
- Engagement with Home and Community Landscape

## Food Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply

- Food Access
- Food Production
- Food Safety

## Health Maximize Physical and Emotional Health for All

- Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
- Social and Emotional Health
- Healthy and Safe Environments

Look for these icons throughout this report to see how Illinois Extension is meeting these grand challenges at a local level.

## Illinois Extension 2021 Statewide Highlights

### Outreach Provided

565 Illinois Communities Served	335 Educational Sessions Per Week	84 Online Courses
--	---	----------------------

### Partnerships Supported

6,445 Adult Volunteers	278 Community Gardens	1,000 School Partnerships
------------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------

### Learners Engaged

8,000,000 Website Users	14,450 Online Course Users	500,000 Educational Program Attendees
----------------------------	----------------------------------	---

### Resources Generated

\$14,000,000 Value of Volunteer Contributions	\$242,000 Value of Donated Garden Produce
---	---

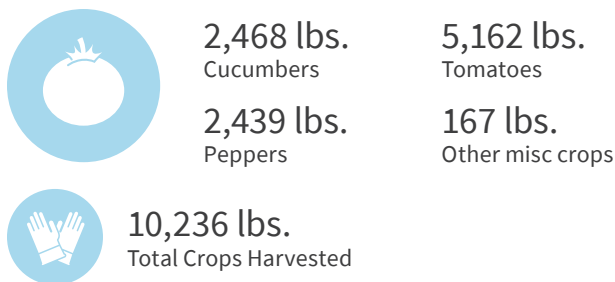
Extension leaders meet with local stakeholders to define annual priorities that allow us to respond to evolving and emerging needs and make meaningful progress toward important long-term outcomes. This blend of long-range focus and local accountability is a powerful strategy that ensures we stay true to our mission as we serve communities across the state.



## Dixon Springs studies food production practices

Bronwyn Aly, local foods educator; Julie Zakesag, gardener; and Jennifer Warren, ag and natural resources program coordinator; have continued research and demonstration projects for the 2021 season in the high tunnels in the Local Foods Area at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center. Research and demonstration trials for the 2020/2021 growing seasons include: growing winter vegetables (lettuce, spinach, kale, and carrots); tomato fertility study focusing on potassium application timing; observations and sampling of hemp varieties; and hydroponic production of cucumbers, herbs, raspberries, and strawberries. Weekly harvest data has been collected from tomato, bell pepper, cucumber, and strawberry trial plots from April through the middle of September. This information will be shared at state and regional specialty crops conferences and schools during the winter meetings in 2022.

During the 2021 growing season, the team harvested 10,236 pounds of crops from research and demonstration plots:



Just over 3,300 pounds of the produce harvested from the high tunnels at DSAC was donated and distributed to various community organizations, programs, and individuals in need within the unit and beyond. Produce was also sold to various wholesale outlets, generating \$1,949.26 in sales.



This photo highlights dead aphids from predatory insects in the high tunnel at DSAC.



## Research: Controlling insect pests in high tunnel vegetable production using biological control

The first year of high tunnel insect pest research, *Sustainable Insect Control In High Tunnel Vegetable Production Through Biological Control*, was completed, with funding from the Extension Collaboration Grant program.

Bronwyn Aly is working with Extension entomologist Dr. Kacie Athey on this applied research project, studying the use of natural predator insects as a biological control option against insect pests within high tunnel production systems. From a survey of fruit and vegetable high tunnel producers conducted in 2017, insect management was ranked as a high priority research need. This project will focus on biological control options for thrips, aphids, and spider mites, three major insect pests within high tunnel production systems.

Instead of applying pesticide to control insect pests, beneficial predator insects were released in the high tunnels throughout the growing season, and various types of data was collected, including insect sampling to identify what insects are present in the high tunnels, insect collection and gut analysis to determine what insects are eating, insect counts to measure if the released benefit predator insects were staying in place or relocating outside of the high tunnels, and tomato and pepper fruit quality and yield data.



Beneficial predator insects were “applied” to hydroponic strawberry plants infested with two-spotted spider mites. This particular predator insect is another type of mite, nearly microscopic in size, and shipped in a sawdust media to help with dispersal during “application.” The sawdust is sprinkled over the top of infested plants, and the predator mites search out their primary food source, two-spotted spider mites, thus reducing the insect pressure damaging the plants.



## Section 25 FFA Horticulture Plant Judging Contest hosted

The unit ag and natural resources team hosted the Section 25 FFA Horticulture Plant Judging Contest at DSAC in mid-March. All of the plants in the contest were grown and housed in the greenhouse at DSAC. The Pope County FFA sponsor, Wade Swinford, and Pope County High School FFA members set up the judging area and provided the test to each of the eight schools that sent representatives to compete.



## Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteer in communities

In 2021, unit Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers stayed busy. The pandemic limited some activities and affected the comfort level of some individuals in settings where they would normally volunteer.

Despite those obstacles, seven Master Gardeners collectively logged 227.5 volunteer hours and two Master Naturalists logged 82.5 volunteer hours. These volunteers participated in community projects, including donation gardens, seed libraries, and youth education classes. The small group of Master Gardeners is slowly growing, with two additional participants completing the online training course in 2021. They began attending the monthly meetings to help identify and plan future projects. We are looking forward to more opportunities in 2022!

## 2021 Master Naturalist and Master Gardener impact



310

Volunteer hours reported



\$8,800

Value of volunteer time put back into local communities



Discussion on the different components involved in the no-till tomato and pepper research conducted at Baebler Education Farm

## 2021 Southern Illinois Summer Twilight Series highlights production practices



The Southern Illinois Summer Twilight Series completed its seventh year of on-farm meetings at four locations in 2021, including Flamm Orchards in Cobden, Dixon Springs Agricultural Center in Simpson, Baebler Education Farm in Waterloo, and Bauman Family Farm in Buncombe. Crops and production systems highlighted during these meetings included strawberry plasticulture production and variety observations, high tunnel vegetable production and biological insect pest control options, no-till tomato and pepper research update and equipment utilized in no-till vegetable production, and rotational grazing techniques for small scale cattle production. Seventy-seven participants attended the 2021 meetings, bringing the total attendance for all seven years to 716. These meetings create an opportunity for participants to see various on-farm production and marketing practices from local fruit, vegetable, and livestock farms across the southern Illinois region, as well as set-up a networking environment for farmers, Extension educators, and agriculture professionals to interact.



Networking on the wagon ride back from the strawberry patch at Flamm Orchard.



# 4-H is Growing True Leaders

4-H youth programs are empowering and preparing Illinois youth for success both now and in the future.




## Opportunity4All

Advancing the mission for all youth in Illinois to be empowered and prepared for success.



As COVID-19 continued to impact governments, businesses, and communities, Illinois Extension's Local Government Education program increased its outreach aimed at economic investment and community vitality, workforce development, leadership, policy, equity, and resiliency. By partnering with state leadership and organizations in Illinois, the Illinois Extension Community and Economic Development team has provided outreach aimed to help local governments and residents build capacity to strengthen their communities and organizations and improve public services.

 Access past and future programs  
<https://go.illinois.edu/LGE>

## Statewide Webinar Reach



## Community-Driven Broadband Reach



*The University of Illinois Extension's community and economic development team helps communities build capacity for creative and informed decision-making to enhance their quality of life.*



## Explore 4-H, rediscover your back yard

Pope/Hardin 4-H held a fun summer series for youth and families called Explore 4-H: Rediscover Your Back Yard. It was an opportunity for youth to explore the outdoors and see what is available at their fingertips. Youth were able to go on a hike, learn about kayak safety, join in rock painting, and learn about local wildlife. They also participated in a nature scavenger hunt that was full of fun riddles about nature.



Rock Painting - Pope County 4-H'er Ella Aly taught youth how to turn items from nature into art.



Led by Bronwyn Aly, local food systems/small farms educator. Bronwyn took everyone on a hike in the Shawnee Forest, focusing on hiking safety and the overall importance of keeping the trail clean.



Southern Illinois offers many beautiful places to hike, including a beautiful hidden gem called Sand Cave. Sand Cave, tucked away in rural Pope County, Illinois, is not only full of beauty but also full of history. Bronwyn Aly led 4-H members from five counties on a hike to Sand Cave. Participants then listened to a lesson about the cave and surrounding area and enjoyed a picnic lunch.



Kayak Safety – Led by Robin Mizell – Robin taught the youth about water safety while in a kayak, including what to do if you flip. He also taught about sun safety while on the water. Youth learned overall safety from the moment they step foot in a kayak to the moment they finish the adventure.

## Hamilton County 4-H

Hamilton County 4-H members, leaders, parents, and volunteers stepped up to the challenge to keep 4-H alive and well in very difficult circumstances.



Extension provided afterschool classes at the GIFT Garden on days youth were dismissed early. Twenty-eight youth attended, and seven Teen Teachers taught lessons on gardening and food insecurity, painted crosswalks and the garden shed, played games, did homework, and simply had fun. During the winter, classes were held in the courthouse basement, and youth learned about robotics, weaving, refinishing furniture, STEM, crafts, candle making, sewing, cooking, and candy making. Extension partnered with the Ag in the Classroom instructor who came weekly to present a lesson. It also worked with the local Chamber of Commerce and the City of McLeansboro on painting projects.



During summer, activities included summer gardening, arts, and cooking classes. There were 54 participants and six Teen Teachers. Tuesdays, youth had weekly art classes; Wednesdays youth worked in the garden; Thursdays were cooking days. The weekly local farmers market began in late June. Unsold produce was used to teach youth how to wash, cook, can, and freeze. Youth made jams and jellies; canned green beans; and froze corn, salsa, pickles and okra. They cooked stir fry, muffins, breads, salads and stuffed peppers. The rest of the produce was donated to the local food pantry or distributed for the Hungry Hearts lunches.

So many youth enjoyed the 4-H experience that Teen Teachers started an afterschool art club at Dahlgren School for third through sixth grade. In addition, local Home and Community Education Association members started an afterschool sewing club, teaching youth the basics of sewing, mending, machine care, measuring, and cutting. Each week they left with a completed project.

Although 4-H looks a little different, the program is still providing opportunities for teaching life skills to the youth of Hamilton County.



Finished Sewing Projects



## Gallatin 4-H

Gallatin County 4-H focused on health and wellness topics in 2021. Eighteen youth attended summer cooking classes. The series was a resounding success! The 4-H cooking curriculum guided youth as they explored new cooking skills. With the addition of physical activities, the course helped youth learn and adopt healthy lifestyles. Participants worked together on their dish, as they took turns with each step and cleaned their space and tools.

Each session focused on a specific cooking skill. Youth learned how to measure correctly. They explored the difference between sifted, packed, and a standard cup of dry material and the importance of letting fluids settle once measured. They also practiced knife skills and practiced chopping, dicing, and mincing on tomatoes, cucumbers, turnips, cabbage, zucchini, broccoli, and onions for stir fry. Dixon Springs Agricultural Center and Junction Produce donated the produce. It was an excellent opportunity to introduce youth to using fresh vegetables.

In addition to stove safety, youth learned meat safety protocol as each tried different chicken recipes, following appropriate steps to prevent cross-contamination and cooking meat to the appropriate internal temperature. Participants used a Caribbean jerk marinade, lemon pepper seasoning, and plain salt and pepper to season their chicken tenders. Each participant had the opportunity to try each style of chicken and discuss what they liked best and why.

For the Taco Tuesday lesson, youth learned the differences in ground beef fat ratios, how to cook ground beef, drain the fat safely, and follow directions for adding spices.



Cooper earned an Illinois 4-H State Fair Champion medallion for his Animated Film project "The Fight for Freedom."



Murphie's 4-H Cooking 301 project, the Rich White Cake recipe, along with her experiment about butter, earned an Inspire Award at the Illinois State Fair. Inspire awards are presented to projects that judges find creative, unusual, engaging, and inspiring.



## Saline County 4-H

Saline County 4-H began the year with uncertainty, but by summer activities were almost normal.



The 4-H Federation received a Farm Credit Community Improvement Grant. The group distributed photo canvasses to area nursing homes and assisted living facilities to cheer residents who may have suffered feelings of loneliness due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Stephanie Susie taught a unit-wide photography workshop and a photo contest was held. The canvasses were printed and delivered to six county facilities. Staff reported that the photo collages brought happiness to residents.

Saline County 4-H had successful summer 4-H shows and exhibitions and an excellent in-person 4-H Achievement Night with the theme "Find Your Spark in 4-H!"

More than 100 attended the 4-H Fall Party which included a wiener roast, famous scavenger hunt, and hayride. More than 250 pairs of socks were collected and donated to the Christian Community Compassion Center.



4-H club leader Tim Arnold and his family reworked the 4-H wagon, allowing 25 member to walk in the Harrisburg Christmas Lights Parade. 4-H is thriving in Saline County. We can't wait to see what 2022 brings!





## White County 4-H

The White County 4-H G.I.F.T. Garden (Growing Illinois Food Together) volunteers teamed up with the University of Illinois Extension SNAP-Ed program to raise more than 700 pounds of produce for the Growing Together Illinois grant program during the 2021 gardening season.

Cucumbers, potatoes, tomatoes, strawberries, and blackberries were harvested and distributed to local food pantries.

Volunteer Master Gardeners also participated in the University of Illinois I-Pollinate program and taught lessons on pollinators to the 4-H summer program participants.



White County 4-H had a successful 2021 G.I.F.T. Garden harvest.



Master Gardeners taught Pollination Lessons during the White County 4-H Summer Program.



<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/ghhpsw>

## 4-H is active



Unit 24 4-H youth and families put their hands to larger service to help those in Kentucky who were impacted by deadly tornadoes. Several families in the unit have firsthand experience with the destruction and recovery that comes with a tornado. 4-H families supported the toy and backpack drive organized by McCracken County Cooperative Extension. We also collected gloves, trash bags, totes, tarps, and bottled water to aid in clean up.



Saline County 4-H club leaders James and Jeanette Bond were honored at the 2021 Achievement Night for their 35 years of service.



U of I Extension Local Foods Systems and 4-H teamed up to present a tent at the September 2021 Golconda Shrimp Festival. In addition to the produce, they had information from other Ag Center departments.



Melting butter for Tex Mex Popcorn seasoning.



After completing the Junior Chefs program, this participant is all smiles. His mother said how proud her son was to show her how he could make eggs all by himself. He is helping more in the kitchen, giving her pointers on food safety that he learned from the program, and choosing to make his eggs for breakfast instead of eating his usual sweetened cereal.

## SNAP-Education holds Illinois Junior Chefs cooking schools



Illinois Junior Chefs Cooking Schools were held at the Pope County Housing Authority Community Room and the White County Extension Office in Carmi. Eight children attended the August lessons in Pope County. Participants learned the importance of eating a healthy diet and many cooking skills, such as knife safety, mixing techniques, and how to measure properly. Tasty recipes included pumpkin pancakes, veggie quesadillas, and eggs o'le.

### SNAP-Education By the Numbers



1,386  
Participants



291  
Sessions



178  
Hours of SNAP-Ed  
Programming



7,242  
Total Estimated  
Reach



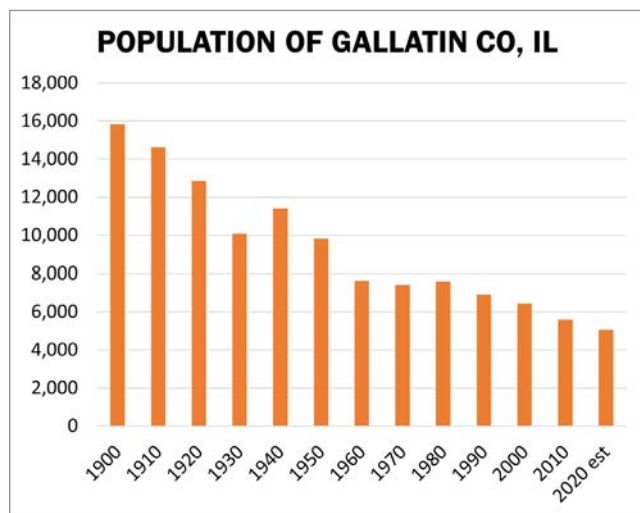
Robin Johnston, long time work program participant in the SNAP-Ed program area and favorite of kids all over Saline County and Unit 24, retired in 2021. We wish her the best.



## HEAT Project improves food access

In a unified effort to increase food access in the region, Extension programs in Southern and Southeastern Illinois launched the Health Equity Achieved Together (HEAT) Project. The project increases the availability of fresh and nutritious food in the impoverished areas of Gallatin County and Cairo.

These rural communities have seen significant population decline, losing up to 85% of their residents over the past century. The closure of grocery stores in these areas has accompanied the population decline. Sixty-five to 70% of the remaining residents live under the SNAP poverty threshold. Over 15% of all residents are considered food insecure, meaning they lack ready access to sufficient amounts of healthy, nutritious food. People often travel 10 to 35 miles for access to grocery stores with a full range of affordable fresh produce, non-processed meats, cheeses, milk, eggs, and other staples.



Although reintroducing viable, full-service grocery stores into these target communities is the ideal outcome, the HEAT team is also working to expand food access through increased food pantry operational capacity, exploring the introduction of mobile markets, improving coordination of farmers markets and expansion of healthy food options at existing retail outlets.

The HEAT project is a collaborative effort with local and state elected representatives, residents, and churches and these partners: Tri-State Food Bank, SI Food Pantry Network, Western Illinois University's Institute for Rural Affairs, Southern Illinois Healthcare, Southern Illinois Community Foundation, and Shawnee Community College Foundation.



## Aetna Grant provides refrigerators and freezers for local food pantries



Area food pantries received much needed refrigerators and freezers, thanks to a grant from Aetna and the hard work of the unit's SNAP-Ed staff.

These organizations received refrigerators or freezers:

- Cherry Street General Baptist Church – Carmi
- Hands of Hope Food Pantry – McLeansboro
- Greater Galatia Food Pantry – Galatia
- Heaven's Kitchen – Fowler Bonan Foundation – Harrisburg
- Christian Community Compassion Center – Harrisburg



The Galatia Library "My Plate for My Family" adult class had a great time planting their own pots of basil, parsley, basil and green onions. Pots, soil, and seeds were donated from all around this unit to make lessons in cooking with herbs & spices for reducing fats, sodium, and sugar possible.



Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are on Facebook! Like us for recipes, event pictures and nutrition information.  
[facebook.com/IllinoisNEP](https://facebook.com/IllinoisNEP)



## Dixon Springs Ag Center

Programs provided by Dixon Springs Ag Center remained in a hybrid model for 2021. Each department adjusted to accommodate the COVID environment and provided virtual platforms and in-person programming when possible. COVID mitigation procedures have become normal practice for program delivery and research. The ability to reach a much larger audience through virtual platforms allowed for expanded programming and educational opportunities. The research programs continued at DSAC. Virtual educational opportunities will continue in addition to in person when permissible.

Programs / Events offered at Dixon Springs Ag Center:

- Prescribed Fire Training
- Chainsaw Safety
- Homeschool Ag Tour
- Summer Twilight Series
- Hosted International Interns from Brazil (Animal Science)
- Hosted University of Illinois Grad and Undergrad Interns – 10 week program
- USDA Pesticide Training and Testing
- 4-H programs / Youth High Tunnels



Animal Science, Ag & Natural Resources and Local Foods Systems/Small Farms are located on the grounds of the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center.



1,318

Participants at in-person programming in 2021



6,923

Participants in Virtual Programming in 2021



## Animal Science

The DSAC maintains a herd of 900 cattle. In 2021, they bred over 650 calves, 500 were supplied to the main campus for research, while 150 were raised to enhance the herd at DSAC. They maintain the largest herd of any research facility in our region. DSAC can breed 800 cows in one day through artificial insemination. This allows for consistent and reliable data for reproduction. Students involved in animal science courses at University of Illinois experience applied science technologies through AI, vaccine administration, ultrasound, biopsies, and applied research.

The GrowSafe system has a new location at DSAC which allows for the expansion of projects with cow-calf pairs and increased the support from 150 to 450 animals per trial. The GrowSafe system tracks the feeding behavior and intake from the animals on a daily basis. The data supports the selection of more efficient animals.

Through pasture management, DSAC has been able to transform useless vacant fields to productive pastures. Over 200 acres have been reclaimed and introduced into the rotation for grazing during 2021. This allows for repurposing of DSAC land and an investment in the program. Since 2020, more than 700 acres have been reclaimed for pasture use. The long-term goal is to reclaim the pasture to provide self-sustaining feed production.





## Natural Resources and Environmental Science

Educational programming in the area of natural resources and environmental science expanded its virtual platform and showcased DSAC's resources for demonstration in a variety of programs.

The NRES team maintains an oak-hickory forest management program using different practices to stimulate forest regeneration, as well as maintaining a demonstration site for maple syrup production, as well as alley cropping, and polyculture agroforestry production systems.

The newly established Chestnut tree demonstration site will allow for future research as these trees mature. A conversion of open lands into native pollinator habitat is still ongoing. Extension also maintains cover crop and forage demonstration plots.

Extension continues to work with U.S. Forest Service - Shawnee National Forest to provide complementary trainings and support policies and procedures that enhance best practices and management systems.

To adapt to COVID restrictions and the need for distance learning opportunities, NRES relied heavily on webinar programs and the production of educational videos, both of which were extremely popular and well-received.

### DSAC Partners

The impact of the DSAC programs supported by the state appropriation lies in the continued advancement of practices in beef cattle production, forestry management, and horticulture that lead to diversification of agriculture in the

region, increasing farm income, and allowing small to medium-sized producers to find new opportunities for production and marketing. Ongoing research at DSAC is represented by University of Illinois Extension, the Department of Animal Sciences, and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.

More specifically this research includes observation trials of various vegetable crops in both hydroponic and in-ground, raised bed production systems within high tunnels, beef cattle reproductive physiology, forest ecology, soil health, forestry policy, and invasive species control.

### Extension Specialist

Dr. Teresa Steckler is a state extension specialist located at Dixon Springs Ag Center.

Steckler provides information to local farmers as well as those across the state. The Extension specialist's area of expertise is ruminant reproductive physiology but addresses numerous livestock management and production issues throughout Illinois while maintaining an office at DSAC.



The majority of livestock programming is conducted off-site and includes in-person and virtual platforms. The specialist works with NRES, Animal Science, and Veterinary Medicine on research and programming at DSAC and throughout the state, that focuses on the One Health triad – a paradigm that relates the interdependence among the health and wellbeing of people, animals, and environment.



## Beef Day brings area cattle breeders to Dixon Springs

The annual Dixon Springs Ag Center Beef Day highlights current research and best practices for cattle producers.

The 2021 Beef Day event had 65 in attendance. Teresa Steckler organized the day with Dan Shike from U of I Animal Science Department and was accompanied by animal science students from U of I and SIU to present to participants.

Topics included:

- Yvette Johnson-Walker (UI Veterinary Medicine) presented preliminary data collected at DSAC on the effect(s) invasive plants have on tick populations.
- Joshua McCann (Department of Animal Sciences) discussed injectable vitamins and shipping stress and provided an overview of the I-Belief program with an introduction of the current fellows and their research.
- Dan Shike (Department of Animal Sciences) utilized DSAC heifers to discuss replacement heifer selection and provide an update on beef research at DSAC.
- Kylie Ewing (graduate student, Department of Animal Sciences) discussed grazing management strategies.

The Southern Illinois Beef Association provided grilled ribeye sandwiches along with side dishes for all those who participated.



Scenes from the Summer 2021 Beef Day at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center.



Sandra Ethridge, office support associate at the Dixon Spring Ag Center, retired in 2021 after 13 years.

## Stewardship Week: 32-year tradition continues virtually



When students could not come to us, Extension found a way to go to them. 2021 offered an exciting opportunity to engage youth in conservation education from their classrooms. Stewardship Week, a 3-day conservation education event, has been held at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center since 1990.

Transitioning Stewardship Week to a virtual format was a significant undertaking. Teacher conservation resources, topic-based videos, and classroom educational kits were created for the 616 students who participated virtually. Youth ranged from kindergarten to sixth grade. On average, classrooms spent 12 hours participating in Stewardship Week activities which is more hours than the traditional in-person program.

We look forward to the day we are back in person to host this event, but are glad to continue a long-standing program presented in a new and unique way.



Lily Moore, Pope County 5th grader, shows the Sun Safety Bracelet she made during Stewardship Week.

Halloween Trunk or Treat at the Ag Center



---

### DIXON SPRINGS AGRICULTURAL CENTER STAFF

Joey Parr  
*Building Mechanic,  
Dixon Springs Ag Center*

Stacey Simmons  
*Farm Mechanic,  
Dixon Springs Ag Center*

Sandra Ethridge  
*Office Support Associate,  
Dixon Spring Ag Center*

Jennifer Warren  
*EPC - Ag & Natural  
Resources, Unit 24*

Seth Parks  
*Building Mechanic,  
Dixon Springs Ag Center*

---

### EXTENSION COUNCIL

Kim Bainbridge  
*Hardin County*

Shelley Friend  
*Pope County*

Lisa Miller  
*Hamilton County*

Douglas Patton  
*Hardin County*

Donna Rumsey  
*Saline County*

Natalie Bonnell  
*Pope County*

Holly Healy  
*White County*

Hank Oldham  
*Gallatin County*

Stacy Phillips  
*White County*

Mallory Thompson  
*White County*

Tony Eckert  
*Pope County*

Kate Miller  
*Hamilton County*

Jennifer Parker  
*Hamilton County*

Jimmy Richey  
*Saline County*

Alex Watkins  
*Saline County*

---

### STAFF DIRECTORY

Angie Messmer  
*County Director, Unit 24 and  
Dixon Springs Ag Center*

Julie Zakes  
*Ag Gardener,  
Pope/Hardin County*

Paula Hatfield  
*EPC - 4-H, Hamilton County*

Robin Johnston  
*WPP - INEP,  
Gallatin/Saline Counties*

Bronwyn Aly  
*Educator, Local Foods Systems/  
Small Farms*

Sheila Stamer  
*Office Support Associate,  
Fiscal/Unit 24*

Nancy Lambert  
*EPC - 4-H, Saline County*

Pamela Haywood  
*EPC - SNAP Ed, Unit 24*

Lizz Cooley-Questelle  
*Educator, SNAP-Ed*

Katharine Oglesby  
*Office Support Assistant,  
Hamilton County*

Amy McCarty  
*EPC - 4-H, White County*

Ashley Gilmour  
*Community Worker,  
SNAP - White County*

John Shadowens  
*Visiting Educator,  
Comm./Econ. Development*

Lois Jones  
*Office Support Assistant,  
Saline County*

Kathryn Scates  
*EPC - 4-H, Gallatin County*

Lacey Barnhill  
*Community Worker - INEP,  
Pope/Hardin Counties*

Melissa Wilson  
*Educator, Youth Development*

Sheila Turrentine  
*Office Support Assistant,  
White County*

---





## OFFICE INFORMATION

### Gallatin County

912 S. Commercial St., Suite 4  
Harrisburg, IL 62946  
(618) 252-8391  
Fax: (618) 253-3006  
Monday – Wednesday

### Hamilton County

100 S. Jackson (Courthouse Basement)  
McLeansboro, IL 62959  
(618) 643-3416  
Fax: (618) 643-3206  
Monday – Friday

### Pope/Hardin County

354 State Hwy 145 North  
Simpson, IL 62985  
(618) 695-6060  
Fax: (618) 695-2492  
Monday – Friday

### Saline County

912 S Commercial Street Suite 4  
Harrisburg, IL 62946  
(618) 252-8391  
Fax: (618) 253-3006  
Monday - Friday

### White County

1715 College Avenue  
Carmi, IL 62821  
(618) 382-2662  
Fax: (618) 382-2276  
Monday - Friday

### Dixon Springs Agricultural Center

354 State Hwy 145 North  
Simpson, IL 62985  
(618) 695-2441  
Fax: (618) 695-2492  
Monday - Friday

## ONLINE



[extension.illinois.edu/ghhpsw](http://extension.illinois.edu/ghhpsw)



[/UofIExtensionGHHPSW](https://www.facebook.com/UofIExtensionGHHPSW)



[/localfoodsmallfarmsUofIExtensionsouthernIL](https://www.facebook.com/localfoodsmallfarmsUofIExtensionsouthernIL)

# Illinois Extension

### College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating.  
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.



If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

The Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the US Department of Agriculture by the Director, Cooperative Extension Service, and University of Illinois.