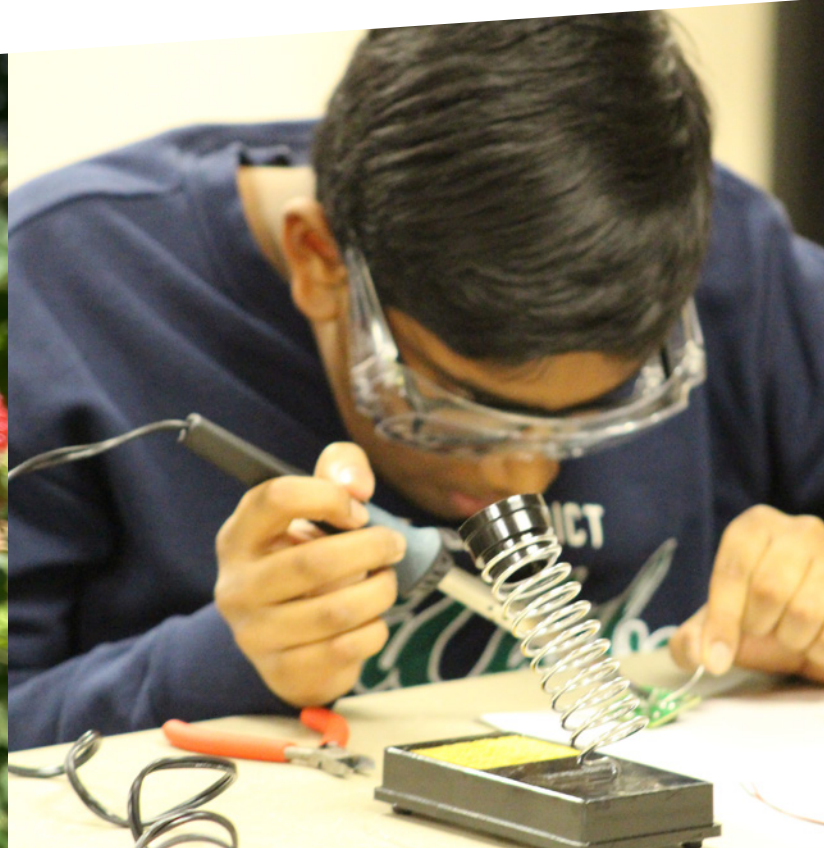




**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

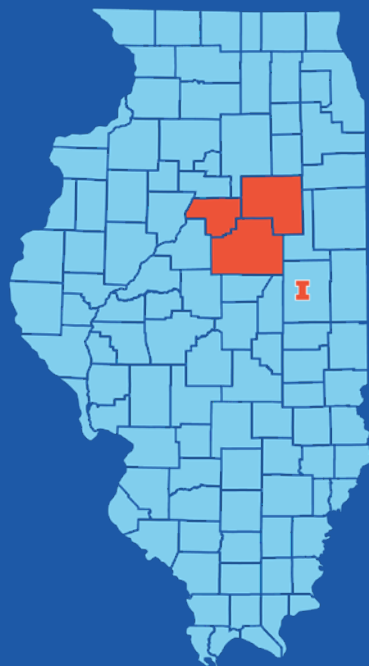


## 2020 IMPACT REPORT

University of Illinois Extension  
Livingston, McLean, and Woodford Counties

# Illinois Extension

University of Illinois Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future. Based in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Extension is the statewide outreach program of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Extension Overview	3
Master Gardeners & Master Naturalists	4
Horticulture	7
Nutrition & Wellness	8
Consumer Economics	10
4-H Youth Development	11
SNAP-Ed & Staff Recognition	15



## A Message from the Chancellor

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is an economic engine and a driver of innovation, deeply rooted in the Illinois prairie and engaged statewide, from Cook County to Cairo. Illinois Extension brings the university to your doorstep. Extension educators live and work alongside you in every county, allowing the university to support local leaders, businesses, farmers, and residents to address grand challenges and everyday problems with practical, research-based solutions. As a youth, my own 4-H experience inspired a rewarding career in agricultural research and higher education. Today, it's an honor to lead this great public university and deepen its commitment to serve the people of Illinois.

Robert J. Jones  
Chancellor, University of Illinois

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Jones'.



## A Message from the County Director

Welcome to the University of Illinois Extension's 2020 annual report for Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties. It is my privilege to lead a team of outstanding staff and volunteers, who provide innovative and diverse educational programming to individuals, businesses, and organizations, to youth and adults, to those with access to many and few resources, in urban and rural settings.

This year was a challenge for all of us as we coped with a global pandemic and had to pivot our lives and work. Our staff met that challenge as we transitioned our programming to a virtual format and increased our efforts to help those in our communities who were hit the hardest. Despite the pandemic, we were able to continue making positive changes within our communities and, in many ways, increase our impact.

Individuals in Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties continued to learn about personal finances, healthy living, nature, productive farms, family life, and parenting. While this report lacks the space to describe each of the lives we have influenced over the past year, we hope that this report provides a snapshot of the work we do and why it matters.

The accomplishments detailed in this report were possible because of the contributions of our local county boards, businesses, private organizations, personal donations, and generous volunteers. Thank you to everyone who makes Extension successful!

Bobbie Lewis-Sibley, MBA, SHRM-CP  
County Extension Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Lewis-Sibley'.





## Extension's Educational Reach



45,501  
Website Views



7,435  
Page Likes (on 9 Pages)



1,099  
Members of 2 Facebook Groups



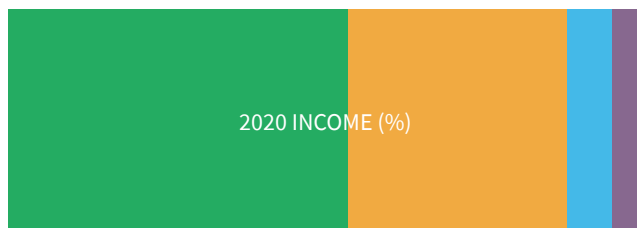
116  
UI Extension YouTube Channel Subscribers



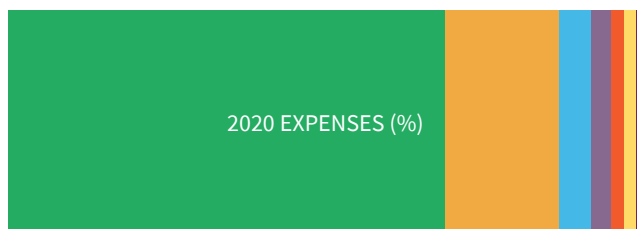
50+  
Radio Interviews (Scheduled Programming)

## 2020 Extension Council Members

Shirley Blackburn	Pam Meiner
Tom Creswell	Emily Schirer
RaeJean Kuntz	Julie Schumacher
Jenny Larkin	Dustin Smith
Libby Larkin (Youth)	Mike Sommer
John Marshall (Youth)	Paul Wilkins
Ed McKibbin	



- 53 Local Sources
- 34 State Merch
- 7 U of I General Revenue Fund
- 6 Self-Supporting



- 69 Salaries
- 18 Rent/Leases/Utilities
- 5 Educational Program Services & Supplies
- 3 Equipment & Maintenance
- 2 Travel
- 2 Office Supplies/Postage/Printing, etc.
- 1 Separation Pool



## LGE Local Government Education

Our local government education programs increased outreach in response to the COVID-19 crisis and developed a critical partnership with the Illinois Office of Broadband's initiative to extend high-speed internet access across the state.



[go.illinois.edu/communitybroadband](https://go.illinois.edu/communitybroadband)

The 2020 Leadership Academy pivoted to a virtual platform, offering county officials online workshops on a variety of topics, including crisis communications, managing economic development initiatives, finding and using data, leadership styles, managing change, ethical considerations, fiscal and economic impacts of COVID-19, and reversing population decline.



[go.illinois.edu/leadershipacademy](https://go.illinois.edu/leadershipacademy)

## Statewide Webinar Reach



37  
Webinars in 2020



1,706  
Reached In Community Involvement  
and Leadership Webinars



926  
Reached in Diversity, Equity,  
and Inclusion Webinars



5,182  
Reached in Economic and  
Financial Stability Webinars



1,115  
Reached in Community Resiliency Webinars

*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.*



<https://go.illinois.edu/LGE>





Master Naturalist Nan Rutledge tries out maple tapping at Sugar Grove Nature Center.

## Mastering Safe Volunteerism

Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists were still able to give hundreds of hours to the community this year through at-home volunteer activities and limited project support.

From gardening experiments to reading and researching new topics in horticulture and environmental awareness, our volunteers never stopped giving back. They put safety first and were able to rediscover, expand, and give back to their communities using their training and passion for the environment.

## Master Gardeners



157  
Volunteers



1,818  
Continuing Education Hours

## Master Naturalists



86  
Volunteers



1,055  
Continuing Education Hours



Become a Master Gardener or Naturalist! Program details available at [go.illinois.edu/LMW](http://go.illinois.edu/LMW)





## Growing Vegetables With our Neighbors

Volunteers participated in the newly established Give Back Gardening program. Vegetable gardeners were able to grow extra food for their community in a time of need, donating over 150 pounds of produce to local food pantries.

Master Gardeners also assisted Holton Homes and John Kane Housing residents in their gardens, once CDC restrictions allowed. Fresh vegetables were tended and later enjoyed by the senior residents and their families.



## Never Stop Learning: New Ideas and Resources

Master Gardeners continued to prepare resources and take new steps in their journeys as volunteers.

- Youth Science Committee members created three new youth science lessons/kits: vermicomposting, mason bees, and reptiles.
- Eight Master Gardener trainees completed online Master Gardener training.
- Volunteers contributed to community science activities supporting environmental research, such as I-Pollinate, BeeSpotter, Christmas Bird Count, and iNaturalist.
- Volunteers researched topics, updated and created new speaker's bureau presentations, and hosted virtual garden walks.

## Learn at Home: Backyard Garden Challenges

Volunteers participated in at-home experiments over the summer, sharing results through presentations and articles. Experiments included:

- measuring tomato yield, while using a wall-of-water microclimate;
- using row covers to eliminate pests;
- incorporating natives, herbs, and structures in the garden to attract birds;
- propagating pinto geraniums;
- comparing vigor and productivity of pot vs. ground-planted tomatoes; and
- incorporating edibles in the landscape.

Facebook followers participated in daily backyard garden challenges from unit Facebook pages. Challenges included creating a butterfly puddle and sharing pictures of bulbs blooming in their backyard or neighborhood. Master volunteers contributed to educational efforts by sharing pictures, stories, and tips.



## Keeping Up With Growth

When CDC guidelines allowed, Master Gardeners were able to maintain project gardens, tackling giant weeds and overgrown spaces. These sites are enjoyed by volunteers and community members.

Master Naturalists provided environmental stewardship to their projects and partner sites. They removed hundreds of invasive plants threatening the natural lands.



## Answering the Call Remotely

This year brought many new challenges and opportunities. People were forced to stay at home, many people lost their jobs, and food insecurity around the nation skyrocketed. As a result, many homeowners dug into gardening for the first time. Gardeners were experimenting with new crops, growing more plants, and preserving their harvest to last through the winter. Even though Extension offices were closed to the public, and clients were not able to visit the ever-popular Master Gardener Help Desk, Master Gardeners offered their support and knowledge to the community through the virtual Help Desk. Volunteers answered gardening questions via the phone and internet instead of in-person office visits.

The local horticulture program answered over 500 gardening questions, providing research-based answers to their clients.

Through the virtual Help Desk, Master Gardeners were able to provide Bloomington Homeowners Association with an urban tree selection and maintenance plan, so they could improve the health of the trees in their neighborhood. Master Gardeners also helped identify invasive plants, provided eradication methods, encouraged new gardeners to grow tomatoes in containers on their patios, and taught homeowners how to rejuvenate neglected apple trees.



Volunteers were still able to interact with the public as garden experts through the virtual Help Desk.

## ASK A MASTER GARDENER

**STILL ANSWERING YOUR GARDEN QUESTIONS!**

Reach us three ways  
Leave a message: 309-663-8306 ext. 1218  
Email: [uimg-mclean@illinois.edu](mailto:uimg-mclean@illinois.edu)  
Message us on Facebook!



The Master Gardener Help Desk offered multiple ways to get gardening assistance virtually in 2020.

I had several opportunities to talk to Help Desk clients this summer. They were very appreciative of the service being offered.  
ELAINE YODER, MASTER GARDENER,  
CLASS OF 2011

## Remote Help Desk Accepts Challenges

Master Gardeners continued to be a great community resource for gardening information and helped solve many gardening challenges despite new restrictions. In fact, the switch to virtual assistance led to a more streamlined process for answering questions, while creating more personal relationships with the community and increasing the potential for learning in each interaction.

Master Gardener volunteers will maintain their online presence in the future, even after their return to in-person operations.

Master Gardeners contributed 209 hours to the virtual Help Desk during the 2020 growing season.



Master Gardener Help Desk information can be found at [go.illinois.edu/LMW\\_MG](http://go.illinois.edu/LMW_MG)





Volunteers and community members donated many hours of work at The Refuge Food Forest.

# Community Effort Boosts Food Forest

Community members continued to help meet maintenance needs at The Refuge Food Forest by sharing tasks and accomplishments on the public Facebook group. Extension staff performed regular scouting, shared photos, and described needs so that volunteers could work independently and avoid gathering in groups. Individuals and families from the community worked to help control weeds and overgrowth, providing much-needed support for the project.

The return to school in the fall brought the opportunity to work with students from Bloom Community School. Each week, Extension staff cultivated a rich learning experience for Bloom middle schoolers, who shared the labor, developing leadership

and cooperative skills in the process. The students concluded their seasonal service learning in November by providing Extension with a detailed list of accomplishments, as well as remaining needs to ensure the public's return to a healthy and productive Refuge Food Forest in future seasons.

A conversation overheard at The Refuge Food Forest:  
Visitor: "The first rule of the Food Forest is..."

Staff Thoughts: I couldn't resist pausing to listen when I heard a woman say this to a small child last week. And I couldn't be happier with the way she finished the sentence.

Visitor: "...never pick berries that aren't ripe yet."

The hard work, patience, and time of the crew and visitors keeps The Refuge Food Forest growing.



Learn more about the Refuge Food Forest through the Facebook Group @TheRefugeFoodForest





Fill Your Pantry with Tomatoes was part of the Health at Home series in 2020.

# Health and Preservation at Home

Nutrition and Wellness Educator Jenna Smith joined forces with her fellow educators across the state to offer the Health at Home webinar series. These virtual sessions made their way into many tri-county homes, but also provided opportunities for thousands of people from across the United States to join.

Health at Home included four different series, totaling 23 sessions. The Science Behind Popular Eating Trends had 206 attendees, and Fill Your Pantry with Tomatoes had 309 attendees. Since airing live this summer, many people have viewed the recordings and downloaded the resource guides for their own kitchens.

Grocery stores were struggling to keep some items in stock, and I think this made people think more about their food sources and their abilities to grow and preserve their own food.  
JENNA SMITH, U of I Extension Educator

With the sudden surge in food preservation interest, Smith and other nutrition and wellness educators saw a need for preservation education, including research-based guidelines and safety tips. These webinars served as an alternative for in-person workshops that would have been provided locally, but would not have had such a wide reach.

The Fill Your Pantry: Home Food Preservation webinar series had a total of 2,380 participants with 1,800 unique participants attending multiple sessions. The team showed they could respond quickly to adapt programming to meet the needs of home food preservers.



Get healthy at home. Access recorded presentations at [go.illinois.edu/NutritionandWellness](https://go.illinois.edu/NutritionandWellness)





## Assessing Diabetes Clinics

University of Illinois Extension offers the only diabetes support group in Woodford County. For those living with prediabetes or diabetes, it is vital to have a safe place where they can share their experiences and learn about ways to manage their diabetes.

I attend these sessions because my husband has been prediabetic for about 10 years and now has type 2 diabetes. I want to improve our meal plans and help him to stay as healthy as possible.

DIABETES CLINIC PARTICIPANT

In January, the Livingston, McLean, and Woodford nutrition and wellness team, Jenna Smith and Rachel Benn, distributed surveys to gather impact data from the previous year's class participants.

- 85% reported that their Hemoglobin A1C level decreased since attending Diabetes Clinic and, of those people, 85% attributed some of that decrease to the knowledge gained at Diabetes Clinic.
- 75% had lost weight since attending Diabetes Clinic and, of those people, 100% attributed some of that weight loss to attending Diabetes Clinic.
- 78% strongly agreed and 22% somewhat agreed that their diabetes knowledge had increased.
- 78% strongly agreed and 11% somewhat agreed that they made better diet and eating choices.



Diabetes clinics began in-person, but later moved to recorded sessions that still encouraged clients to meet their health goals.



Meal planning was essential in diabetes clinics and while essential workers in schools packed youth lunches.

I have lost 40 pounds and brought my blood glucose (Hemoglobin A1C) from 9.2 to 6.8. I walk 3 1/2 miles when the weather permits.

DIABETES CLINIC PARTICIPANT

When it was no longer safe to hold in-person diabetes clinics due to COVID-19 restrictions, Smith and Benn continued this valuable service by transitioning to recorded PowerPoint presentations. The program pressed forward with vigor, encouraging individuals to reach their goals, while prioritizing the health and safety of the participants.

## Supporting Essential Workers in Schools

School nutrition employees have superhero hearts for feeding our schoolchildren during a challenging year. From summer feeding programs to drop-off lunches, they ensured that youth continued to receive nutritious school meals.

These employees are required to complete a designated number of training hours each year to maintain their state credentials. That requirement did not change in 2020, despite the obvious obstacles to classroom training. Smith redirected in-person programs to an online format where she provided training to 37 school nutrition professionals in all three counties.



Find recipes that are simply nutritious, quick, and delicious at [go.illinois.edu/SimplyNQD](https://go.illinois.edu/SimplyNQD)





## Money Mentors Grow Online

The University of Illinois Extension's Money Mentors program trains volunteers to work one-on-one with people who seek help with financial goals, such as paying down debt, building spending plans, saving for dreams, and organizing their finances. At the beginning of the pandemic, changes were made to offer free and confidential financial mentoring and coaching online to individuals interested in working with a mentor. This digital push resulted in increased program participation.

Local mentors worked virtually with mentee participants on setting financial goals, creating spending plans, and managing spending and credit. We paired more than 15 mentors with participants for virtual mentoring during the summer and fall.



The Money Mentors program successfully adapted new mentor training and financial counseling sessions to a fully digital platform, resulting in program growth.

## Podcast Celebrates Anniversary

The Family Financial Feuds podcast, hosted by Illinois Extension consumer economics educators, celebrated its second year of continuing listenership. Throughout the year, the team covered topics that focused on debt repayment, helping children develop healthy money habits, and making big financial decisions, among others. Other 2020 episodes included:

- Make a Dent in Your Debt
- Grow Your Kids' Money Skills
- Finances — How You Coping?
- Housing & Refi: — Is It for You?
- Weathering the Storm — Earthquakes, Tornadoes, and Ice Storms, Oh My!



The podcast logged more than 1,250 listens for the year. Find the collection at [Soundcloud.com/FamilyFinancialFeuds](https://soundcloud.com/FamilyFinancialFeuds).

## Educator Earns National Honors

The University of Illinois Extension consumer economics program works to provide relevant, up-to-date, and objective information to our communities. Our work goes beyond providing individual programs; we work to develop long-lasting, effective, and ongoing opportunities to connect with our community partners and members. We often use data from our local projects in presentations at national conferences demonstrating the impact of our work.

Consumer Economics Educator Camaya Wallace Bechard received an Outstanding Consumer Financial Information (Poster) Award for her presentation, "Using Needs Assessments to Support Financial Literacy Programs in Non-Profit Agencies." The award is one of only five annual recognitions from the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE).



Keep up with consumer economics on their blog at [go.illinois.edu/FearlessFinancialFuture](https://go.illinois.edu/FearlessFinancialFuture)





# Butterfly Program Takes Flight

The University of Illinois Extension's Livingston County 4-H staff transitioned the annual spring butterfly program, traditionally an in-school activity for pre-K through 5th grade, into a virtual experience in order to stay connected to area youth during the stay-at-home order. Students virtually adopted caterpillars, then watched life change on a screen. Educational resource activities were available for teachers to use with their students in April and May.

In addition to reaching schools throughout Livingston County, the program was shared statewide. The 4-H Butterfly Adventures program consisted of 18 episodes made available

From caterpillar to butterfly right before our eyes; it is an adventure that life provides for all of us — we just have to look!

BUTTERFLY ADVENTURES TEAM

on multiple platforms, including Facebook and YouTube. Facebook reached 18,997 impressions, over 1,546 minutes of video watched, and engagements that included 247 post shares and 267 additional clicks, comments, and likes.

Butterfly Adventures was featured by National 4-H in an issue of their 4-H at Home national newsletter, recognizing Livingston County 4-H for its creativity and adaptability.

The YouTube playlist is still available to access. It has received over 3,200 views and is a great way for anyone to experience the magical transformation from caterpillar to butterfly.



Butterfly Adventures Playlist: <https://bit.ly/3cAYnCx>





# Working Together to Keep Learning

STEAM-at-Home bundles were created, packaged, and distributed to more than 3,000 Livingston, McLean, and Woodford County youth this summer to encourage exploration and play while at home. The horticulture, 4-H, STEAM in the classroom, and nutrition and wellness teams partnered with area food pantries, schools, lunch drop-off programs, libraries, and community organizations to assist with distribution. Educational kits encouraged learning without electronics through activities like sugar counting and garden explorations. Distribution sites included:

- Bloomington-Normal Boys & Girls Club (150 kits)
- Bloomington School District 87 (300 kits)
- Unity Community Center (85 kits)
- Livingston County Boys & Girls Club (225 kits)
- Woodford County Youth Groups — libraries, food pantries (826 kits)
- Rader Family Farm's Sunflower Festival (250 kits)
- Children's Discovery Museum's Day of Play (1,000 kits)
- Heartland Head Start - McLean County (187 kits)



Extension programs came together to fill these bags with activities for youth in pre-K through 12th grade.



Find out more about 4-H by visiting [go.illinois.edu/LMW4H](http://go.illinois.edu/LMW4H)



## Livingston, McLean, and Woodford 4-H



1,621  
Total Club Members



123  
Total 4-H Clubs



282  
Total Adult Volunteers

## Unity Adapts to Changing Needs

In early March, youth were jumping off the bus and heading into the Unity Community Center after school; two weeks later, they were doing remote learning at home. Despite the rapid change, Unity staff never let the learning stop. They worked as a team to find new, creative ways to accommodate the needs of students and keep the activities, resources, and smiles coming.



Unity Community Center and program partners worked together to create new teaching materials, including kits that could be picked up and completed at home.

## 2019-20 Unity Enrollment



48 Students

87% Black or African American

10% Caucasian

3% Two or More

1% Hispanic

99% Non-Hispanic

37% Male

63% Female



The community can access the Little Free Library and the Little Free Pantry at the Unity Community Center.

# Addressing Food Access

The University of Illinois Extension's Unity Community Center addressed food access, one of Extension's grand challenges, at a time when the community's need for assistance was greater than ever, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through a collaboration with United Way McLean County, evening meals were provided to families and local community members at the center. Volunteers from the Boys & Girls Club and the Eastview Community Outreach program joined the effort by distributing the meals. Over 10,000 meals were distributed between April 1 and June 1.

A Little Free Pantry was set up in front of the building to serve the community surrounding Unity. The pantry is restocked two to three times per week with non-perishable food. Other community members often add food to the pantry to support their neighbors in need.

COVID-19 brought a significant challenge to addressing food insecurity in North Normal and throughout McLean County.

UNITY STAFF

Fresh produce is essential to a healthy lifestyle. Garden in a Bucket kits were also distributed to Unity's 15 families, totaling 70 individuals. The kits provided a bucket and soil, plus tomato, pepper, and basil plants with instructions for how to grow the plants in a 5-gallon bucket.



Learn more about the Unity Community Center  
[go.illinois.edu/Unity](https://go.illinois.edu/Unity)





## 4-H Shows Go Virtual

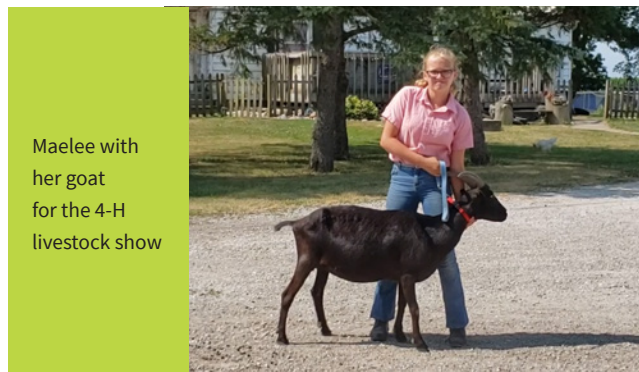
In an effort to keep participants safe and adhere to COVID-19 guidelines, University of Illinois Extension made a statewide decision to move all of the county 4-H shows to an online platform instead of holding the traditional, in-person events. The focus was on managing the safety of event participants, volunteers, and the communities where these events take place, while still providing an opportunity for our youth to showcase their hard work from the 2019-20 4-H year.

### Livingston County 4-H Show

Maelee Palmer (10 years old), a member of the Waldo Peppy Clubbers 4-H Club, participated in the Livingston County virtual fair and had this to share about the experience:

“Online 4-H was a little crazy, but it always is around the time of the fair. I find that it was a little better at home because I felt a lot more comfortable at home than I do at the fair. I missed not being able to have the fair’s food and the fun activities, but overall it was fun this year, like it is every year!”

Livingston County 4-H had 72 youth exhibit 250 projects.



### McLean County 4-H Show

The Moran family, whose kids participated in the McLean County virtual fair, had this to share about their show experience:

Nathan Moran (10 years old) said, “I felt that the experience of doing 4-H online was very well put together. They got back to us pretty quick with our ratings. They also told us what to improve on in the comment section, which was very helpful. I missed going in person, but this was still great. My favorite classes were floral arrangement and dog costume class. Those two are my favorite because they both have a lot of creativity involved.”

His sister Holly (8 years old) stated, “It was very fun. There were a few things that didn’t go as smoothly as in person, but with the virus closing lots of places this gave us something fun to do.

It also showed us that even if one thing goes bad, like COVID, that not everything else has to go bad, too. I really liked string art and the dog costume class.”

Their mom shared, “As a parent, it still brought a lot of joy to our family. The system worked really well. I asked lots of questions and the 4-H team was always ready and willing to help out. It was my daughter Holly’s first year showing and we were so thankful she was still able to show!”

McLean County 4-H had 267 youth exhibit 1,108 projects.



### Woodford County 4-H Show

Ella Newcomb (16 years old), of the Eastside Producers 4-H Club, who participated in the Woodford County virtual fair, had this to share about the experience:

“This year for the 4-H fair I exhibited many of the same projects that I have done since the beginning of my time in Woodford County, as well as a couple new ones like public presentations. Obviously, the fair wasn’t the same this year and that looked different for each project, but I think the virtual show went very well this year and I still benefited from the experience in the sense that I learned about my projects and I got a lot out of the judges’ feedback.”

Woodford County 4-H had 114 youth exhibit 327 projects.





## SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION

SNAP-Ed works with Illinois families in need to make the healthier choice an easier choice. Through classes, workshops and collaboration with community partners to adopt research-based solutions encouraging healthier nutrition and activity choices, SNAP-Ed positively affects families and communities.

### In 2020, SNAP-Ed virtual education and resources:



Addressed community partner needs by providing resources and collaboration opportunities



Provided live, virtual classes families could join from their own phone, tablet, or computer



Distributed print materials to families on topics such as recipes made with common pantry ingredients



Increased reach via social media, text, and e-news with relevant nutrition and activity information



Created a new community food resource map, Find Food Illinois, on the Eat. Move. Save. website

*Early in 2020, during a food distribution at Unity Community Center, I shared two recipes using blueberries on the same day blueberries were provided to clients. At the next distribution, a woman told me she made and enjoyed the blueberry overnight oats recipe. She said, "They were so easy to make!"*

BETH KRAFT, SNAP-ED COMMUNITY WORKER

### SNAP-Ed Community Partnerships



18  
K-12 Schools



1  
Store or Market



9  
Early Childhood



10  
Agencies or Community Centers



9  
Emergency Food Sites

## Staff Earn State Extension Recognition



Sara Attig, Livingston County 4-H program coordinator, was honored for creative and dedicated work in support of Extension programs. Attig received the Program Support Excellence Award for her attention to detail,

extensive job knowledge, and unmatched reliability. Her passion and creativity were highlighted this year when the spring butterfly school program was at risk of cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attig successfully transitioned the in-person program to a virtual experience, in order to reach area youth during the stay-at-home order. Her efforts garnered the attention of the National 4-H Council, which highlighted the program on its website.



Erin Estes, office support specialist serving Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties, was honored for her dedicated and conscientious program support. Estes received the Office Support Excellence Award

in recognition of efforts contributing to the success of Extension programming. Estes supports multiple program areas in her unit where her work ethic and attention to detail is highly valued by her colleagues. Her unwavering passion for Extension programs and the communities she serves makes her a true ambassador for Extension and its myriad programs.



Five University of Illinois Extension employees serving Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties were recognized for their collaborative work addressing a priority issue with an Interdisciplinary Unit Team Excellence Award. Team members include:

- Kelly Allsup - *Horticulture Educator*
- Rachel Benn - *Nutrition and Wellness Program Coordinator*
- Brittnay Haag - *Horticulture Educator*
- Jenna Smith - *Nutrition and Wellness Educator*
- Reid Young - *Ag and Natural Resources Program Coordinator*

The team worked collaboratively to address food access, food safety, and food production. The team developed two new programs: Backyard Gardening and Garden in a Bucket. With an intentional focus on gardening, the team reached new and underserved audiences, elevating the capacity for families to grow, prepare, and access food locally.



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## EXTENSION STAFF

Bobbie Lewis-Sibley	County Extension Director
Sara Halihan	Business Manager
Kelly Allsup	Educator, Horticulture
Camaya Wallace Bechard	Educator, Consumer Economics
Katie Buckley	Educator, 4-H Youth Development - McLean
Alcha Corban	Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Livingston & Woodford
Nick Frillman	Educator, Local Food Systems and Small Farms
Brittnay Haag	Educator, Horticulture
Jenna Smith	Educator, Nutrition and Wellness
Sara Attig	Program Coordinator, 4-H - Livingston County
Rachel Benn	Program Coordinator, Nutrition and Wellness
Laura Holland	Program Coordinator, 4-H - Unity Community Center
Sky Holland	Program Coordinator, 4-H - Unity Community Center
Kaitlyn Prehoda	Program Coordinator, 4-H - McLean County
Elizabeth Repplinger	Program Coordinator, Agriculture and Natural Resources
Afiwa Tete	Program Coordinator, 4-H - Unity Community Center
Blaine Troyer	Program Coordinator, 4-H - Woodford County
Wren Woodburn	Program Coordinator, 4-H - McLean County
Reid Young	Program Coordinator, Agriculture and Natural Resources
Beverly Branz	Community Worker, Illinois Nutrition Education - Livingston
Beth Kraft	Community Worker, Illinois Nutrition Education - McLean
Jenna Braasch	Publicity and Promotions Specialist
Rosemarie Carter	Office Support Assistant - McLean County
Cindy Kinate	Office Support Assistant - Livingston County
Samantha Klumb	Office Support Assistant - Woodford County
RaeJean Kuntz	Office Support Assistant
Erin Estes	Office Support Specialist

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## OFFICE INFORMATION

### McLean County Extension

1615 Commerce Parkway  
Bloomington, IL 61704  
(309) 663-8306  
Fax: (309) 663-8270

### Livingston County Extension

1412 South Locust Street  
Pontiac, IL 61764  
(815) 842-1776  
Fax: (815) 842-6547

### Woodford County Extension

109 East Eureka Avenue  
Eureka, IL 61530  
(309) 467-3789  
Fax: (309) 467-6034

### Unity Community Center

632 Orlando Avenue  
Normal, IL 61761  
(309) 862-4041

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## ONLINE



/UofIExtensionLMW



go.illinois.edu/LMW



/UIExtensionUnit12

Cover photos: (top left) Blackberries ripening at The Refuge Food Forest; (top right) a McLean County 4-H member creating a soldering project during a workshop; (bottom left) a 4-H member explores virtual reality at the Unity Community Center; (bottom right) a youth examines the pruning site on a plant.

# Illinois Extension

## College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

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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.

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