



**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

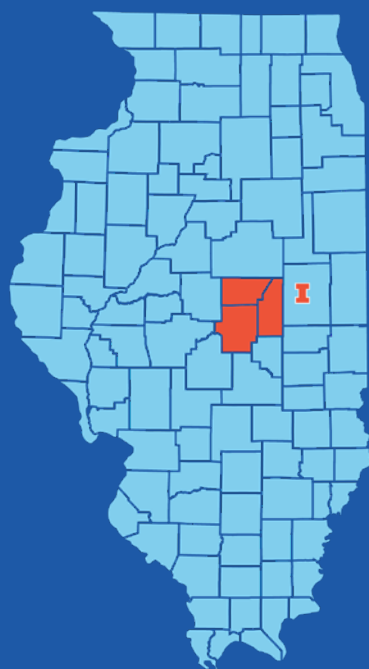


## 2020 IMPACT REPORT

University of Illinois Extension  
DeWitt, Macon, & Piatt 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.



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## 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

It is my pleasure to represent a staff of outstanding professionals who strive every day to positively impact the lives of the citizens of DeWitt, Macon and Piatt counties. To say that 2020 stretched the staff to their limits would be an understatement. While the pandemic has brought many changes to our programming, including the first virtual 4-H fair in our history, it has also brought numerous opportunities for innovation and diversity. I believe the work performed by the staff in our unit truly epitomizes Illinois Extension's motto, "Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives."

Enclosed in this report, you will find evidence of our programs' impact on the region. Extension programming reaches audiences of all ages and addresses the wide variety of community needs in all three of the counties we serve. There is simply not enough room in this report to describe the many innovative and educational outreach programs presented by our staff in 2020, nor the full influence of those initiatives. I hope you will take the time to learn more about our programs, volunteers, and impact.

Thank you for your continued support of Illinois Extension in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt counties.

Doug Harlan  
County Extension Director  
dharlan@illinois.edu

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Harlan".



Tayanna Meyen and Rachel Major share a smile while working on a project during the DeWitt County 4-H Sewing Club.

# The Show Must Go On

The 2020 Macon-Piatt General Projects 4-H Show and 2020 DeWitt-Macon-Piatt 4-H Livestock and Horse Show went virtual for the first time ever due to COVID-19. Youth submitted pictures and videos of their projects, and judges viewed and scored them online. While the pandemic created some unique challenges, there were several positive outcomes. Participation was high, youth submitted high-quality projects and the virtual judging platform allowed alumni from across the country to volunteer.

In the Macon-Piatt General Projects 4-H Show, 51 exhibitors showed 106 projects, while 62 exhibitors showed 247 entries for the DeWitt-Macon-Piatt 4-H Livestock and Horse Show.

## DeWitt - Macon - Piatt 4-H

This year has been like no other for Illinois 4-H programs. 4-H programs in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt counties were challenged to create new, innovative programs to engage community

youth. As traditional, in-person events transitioned to a virtual format, 4-H staff remained committed to delivering the high-quality programs that families have come to expect.

## Growing Our Cloverbud Clubs

4-H Cloverbud clubs are for youth ages 5 to 7. In 2020, virtual Cloverbud clubs were created to meet the needs of families. Virtual clubs function the same as in-person clubs. Members say the pledge, have roll-call, take turns with show-and-tell, and participate in a hands-on learning activity.

While Cloverbuds do not compete at the fair, they may still exhibit by doing a show-and-tell style presentation. Cloverbuds have easily transitioned to virtual programs, and we are excited to continue to watch our Cloverbud members grow!



DeWittCounty4h

MaconCounty4h

PiattCounty4h



## Leadership Program Impacts Teens

4-H members from Blue Ridge schools participated in Teen Teacher training where they demonstrated an ability to set goals, plan and teach hands-on activities. After completing training, Teen Teachers taught afterschool programs with a new topic every six weeks. Although these in-person programs were cut short in March due to COVID-19 restrictions, youth had the opportunity to teach both art and cooking. Incentives for Teen Teachers were provided by the Illinois 4-H Foundation.



92% of Teen Teachers strongly agreed the experience will help them in the future.



87% of Teen Teachers are motivated to influence and impact others because of their 4-H experience.

I really like teaching because it gives me an opportunity to explore what I want to do when I graduate.

4-H TEEN TEACHER



4-H Teen Teacher Corissa Godbee demonstrates the 4-H way to crack an egg during 4-H Teen Teacher training.



Duane and Pam Runyon are DeWitt County's 4-H Leaders of the Year.

## Leaders of the Year

Duane and Pam Runyon have served as leaders of the Helping Hands 4-H Club in DeWitt County for 20 years. Their family legacies in 4-H reach even farther with each of them tracing back four generations of 4-H members and leaders. It's a heritage that makes them both very proud.

### *Why do you continue to volunteer?*

"Duane and I both enjoy working with families in our club to help raise and mold young 4-H'ers into young leaders throughout their 4-H years. 4-H teaches kids how to be leaders in their club committees, their community, and future jobs they will hold."

### *What do you like best about being a 4-H leader?*

"We both enjoy seeing the kids grow and mature in their projects. Building their confidence in becoming leaders by holding offices in the 4-H program will help with their future endeavors. We are proud and excited to be able to be a part of that. 4-H is a family-oriented program and we encourage anyone that wants to join to do so."



# 4-H Fights Hunger in the Community

Feeding America estimated that more than 54 million Americans (including 18 million children) would experience food insecurity and hunger in 2020, due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

As part of Hunger Action Month in September, Macon County 4-H partnered with the Mt. Zion Food Pantry and Salvation Army to hold a food drive for local families in need. Non-perishable food items were accepted at the Macon County 4-H Extension Office via contactless drive-thru drop off.



2,000  
Pounds of Food Collected



200  
Families Assisted

## Kids Build STEM Skills

Macon County elementary and middle school students interested in coding learned how to create videos and games using SCRATCH in a virtual program called Kids Code. Youth created public service announcements for a topic they were passionate about using this new ability. Over 25 students attended this workshop and improved their coding skills.

## 4-H Prioritizes Family Time

Macon County 4-H “made the best better” by connecting with families through innovative, virtual content. Virtual family fun nights provided an opportunity for families to connect and engage with 4-H, other families and community members. More than 20 families participated in crafts, games, prize drawings, and other activities via Zoom — all from the safety and comfort of their own homes.

## Your Thoughts Matter

University of Illinois Extension 4-H hosted a six-part online series for youth ages 13 and older. This state-wide program was facilitated by local Extension offices, and helped teens learn how to define mental health, talk about it with family and friends, and help themselves and others. A group of 4-H educators served as facilitators and leaders of the discussion. Your Thoughts Matter reached more than 70 youth across the state.

## Cooking Challenge Involves Families

The 4-H Family Food Challenge was all about family, creativity, attention to detail, healthy competition, and fun! Families had the opportunity to compete against other families in this cooking competition. Each group was given a basket of mystery ingredients and encouraged to create appealing and delicious meals together. More than 20 families participated in the challenge, engaging over 35 youth participants.

I liked the challenge of coming up with a new recipe. I would definitely do another challenge!

FAMILY FOOD CHALLENGE PARTICIPANT



MaconCounty4h



MaconCounty4h



## 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-Education 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

*In the spring, we heard from community agencies that many families were struggling to find ingredients at the store for meals. We provided printed copies of the Healthy Substitutions for Common Ingredients resource to help families create meals with the items already in their pantries.*

STACI COUSSENS, SNAP-ED EDUCATOR



18  
K-12 Schools



9  
Early Childhood



13  
Agencies or  
Community Centers



6  
Emergency  
Food Sites



## Gardens Assist Food Pantries

Extension-supported food donation gardens in Monticello donated 563.6 pounds of produce to local food pantries. Recipients included Monticello Methodist Church, Monticello and Bement Christian Church and Faith in Action, which specifically serves seniors.

With these donations, in addition to other food donation gardens and Master Gardener private plots in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt counties, our unit donated a total of 4,680 pounds of produce to local food banks and pantries in 2020.

## Master Gardeners Receive Awards

Our incredible DeWitt/Piatt and Macon County Master Gardeners swept every category in the 2020 state awards. We are proud of their hard work and dedication to the success of our programs.

### Outstanding Master Gardener

DeWitt/Piatt: Anna Kaczmarek

Macon: JC Nashland

### Sustained Excellence

DeWitt/Piatt: Jane White

Macon: Doug Antonelli

### Teamwork Award

DeWitt/Piatt: Allerton Welcome Garden

Macon: Monarch Madness



Horticulture Educator Sarah Vogel leads Master Gardeners during the tree walk.

# Master Gardeners Identify Trees

Tree-related inquiries make up a large percentage of the questions that come into our Master Gardener Help Desk. To better equip the volunteers with practical and applicable information, Horticulture Educator Sarah Vogel led active Master Gardeners and a few trainees on a tree identification walk through Fairview Park in Decatur. They studied the morphology of over 20 species and learned how to identify trees by their leaves and other characteristics. The group also discussed prominent biotic and abiotic issues specific to each species.



15

New Master Gardener Trainees



111

Master Gardener Volunteers in DeWitt, Macon & Piatt Counties

## Promoting Pollinator Awareness

Monarch Madness, a free, award-winning annual event promotes the importance of monarch butterflies as pollinators and spreads awareness of dwindling monarch populations. The program, planned by the Master Gardener committee, was presented virtually this year, which allowed teachers and their students to participate for the first time. The program included a keynote speaker, crafts, activities, and a pre-recorded tag and release of real monarch butterflies. Event packets were mailed to more than 200 program participants.

## Virtual Training and Assistance

In 2020, much of our programming went virtual due to circumstances beyond our control. Faced with the challenge of identifying new ways to serve our communities, Extension staff and volunteers rose to the occasion. When Master Gardeners could no longer staff the phones at the Help Desk, a heavily relied upon community resource, they quickly pivoted, with support from Extension staff, to answering questions via email. Master Gardener fall training was presented via Zoom. Horticulture Educator Sarah Vogel and Local Foods Educator Doug Gucker came together to provide a Virtual Help Desk and jointly presented Anything Grows, a web series offering gardening and landscape assistance. It may not have been business as usual, but with creativity and dedication, Extension continues to move forward.



[go.illinois.edu/dmp/master-gardeners](https://go.illinois.edu/dmp/master-gardeners)



Second Saturday Birdwatching

# Master Naturalist Projects

Our Glacier's Edge Master Naturalists found ways to stay active and engaged in the current world of social distancing and masks. The group volunteered at the Macon County Conservation District, Scovill Zoo and Allerton Park.

Second Saturday birding events were extremely popular this year and attended widely by both Master Naturalist volunteers and other local bird enthusiasts.

This year's project was to build and install little free libraries filled with nature books and field guides at the beginning of trails in Allerton Park and Rock Springs Conservation Area. The library for Allerton's Buck Schroth trail was completed and installed, and the second lending library is near completion.

Fall Master Naturalist training was virtual this year, which led to an increase in attendance. Field trips to Scovill Zoo and a caravan-style geology tour supplemented the online classes.



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

## Educating the Community

Before the transition to virtual learning, several programs were delivered to the community on the topics of beekeeping, pesticide application and the importance of planting native trees.

**Best Practices for Beekeeping** focused on the importance of timely visual inspections of the hive and the colony's health. This, coupled with periodic varroa mite testing and treatment, is the key to success in beekeeping. This in-person program was attended by 28 community members.



75% of participants plan to incorporate hive inspections into their management practices

**The shift to virtual learning began with Basics of Sheep and Goat Production.** This program provides an overview of pastures, forages, small ruminant nutrition, and internal parasites. To date, 445 people have viewed this presentation live, or on YouTube.

Extension educators deliver important and relevant information to local commercial grain and livestock farmers through the Out Standing in the Field podcast and the Acres of Knowledge blog.



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



## Eating for Your Heart

**Eating For Your Heart**, a cooking series held at the beginning of 2020, consisted of six classes in a variety of locations throughout DeWitt and Piatt counties. Participants learned about four dietary aspects of heart health — fat, sodium, fiber, and added sugar — in addition to how to shop for and prepare heart healthy meals. They gained hands-on experience by cooking a nutritious lunch or dinner meal in class.



54

Adult and 5 Youth Participants



91%

Plan to Make at Least 1 Recipe at Home



37%

Plan to Take Action



94%

Learned New Information

## Yes! You Can: Preserving Safely

Over the summer, 57 individuals attended the local **Yes! You Can** webinars on food preservation. Topics included water bath canning for jams and jellies, tomatoes and tomato products, pickles and pickled products, and pressure canning basics.

I used my iPad to watch the presentation of Jams and Jellies on my TV. My husband enjoyed your session and learned a few things.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, YES! YOU CAN

## Get Fresh and #CSAMonday

Since 2018, our unit has showcased recipes and tips on food storage and preservation for community members who have purchased community-supported agriculture (CSA) farm shares through the Get Fresh program.

In 2020, **Get Fresh** focused on reaching participants at home. Farmer interviews and #CSAMonday tips were shared on social media from June through early September. Across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, 34 posts reached more than 5,000 individuals and had over 1,300 engagements.

### STORAGE TIP

Wrap unwashed produce in food-safe plastic bags or put in food-safe containers that are large enough to allow airflow.



..... get .....

# FRESH



Illinois Extension



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



## Community Partners & Sponsors

4-H Memorial Camp	DeWitt-Piatt Bi-County Health Department	New Salem Baptist Church
A Small Hand – Piatt County Cares	Double D Farms	Northeast Community Fund
ABC Preschool	DOVE, Inc.	Argenta-Oreana Elementary
Agriculture Watershed Institute	East Park Baptist Church	Oxford House
Allerton Public Library	Exelon	Piatt County Farm Bureau
Allerton Park & Retreat Center	Faith in Action	Piatt County Journal-Republican
Anna Waters Head Start	Family Community Resource Center	Piatt Mental Health Center
Archer Daniels Midland	Farm Progress Show	Piatt County SWCD
Argenta-Oreana School District	Farmer City Public Library	Pipe Dreams Studio Theatre
Baby TALK Early Head Start	First Christian Church, Monticello	PrairieErth
Bement Chamber of Commerce	First Baptist Church	Primrose Retirement Community
Bement Public Library	First Mid-Illinois Bank, Monticello	Reasonable Services Food Pantry
Bement School District	First National Bank, Clinton	RFD Radio Network
Bergie's Place	First State Bank, Monticello	Richland Community College
Blue Mound Memorial Library	Forsyth Public Library	Richland Workforce Consortium
Blue Ridge School District	Fox Run Farms	Rural King
Blue Ridge Township Library	Good Samaritan Inn/Mercy Gardens	Salvation Army
Boys & Girls Club of Decatur	Girl Scouts	Southern Piatt Record-Herald
Bushel and Peck Wild Flowers	Girl Scouts of Clinton	South Macon Public Library
Bryant Cottage	The Herald & Review	Spring Creek Apartments
C.H. Moore Homestead DeWitt County	Hertz Farm Management	State Bank of Bement
Carriage House Apartments	Homework Hangout	Take Off Pounds Sensibly
Caterpillar	Hope Welty Public Library	Topflight Grain Co-operative
Central Illinois Aerospace	Illinois Association of Home and	Triple M Farm
Cerro Gordo School District	Community Extension	U of I Plant Biology Greenhouse
Chi Xi Omega	Illinois 4-H Foundation	The Vault
Cisco Community Center	Illinois Public Media	Vespasian Warner Public Library
City of Monticello	Kirby Medical Center	WAND TV
Clinton Community School District	Lake Fork Sportsman Club	Warner Hospital and Health Services
Clinton Journal	Macon County 4-H & Extension Foundation	Water Street Mission
Clinton Community YMCA	Macon County Ag in the Classroom	Waynesville Township Library
Connie's Country Greenhouse	Macon County Conservation District	WCIA TV
County Market	Macon County Fairgrounds	Webster-Cantrell Hall
Country Journal Publishing Co.	Macon County Farm Bureau	Wee Folks Daycare
Crossing Healthcare	Macon County Obesity Prevention	Weldon Public Library
Decatur Day Care Center	Coalition	Weldon Springs State Park
Decatur Housing Authority	Macon County SWCD	WHOW Radio
Decatur Park District	Macon Resources, Inc.	WILL Urbana
Decatur Public Library	Maddox Sweet Corn Farm	Wild Ones, Illinois Prairie Chapter
Decatur Public Schools	Maroa Public Library	The Woods Apartments
Decatur Public Schools Foundation	McGrath Plants and Produce	WPXN Radio
Decatur Family YMCA	Meridian School District	Youth with a Positive Direction
Decatur-Macon County Opportunities	Millikin University	
DeWitt County 4-H Foundation	Mothers of Preschoolers	
DeWitt County Coalition	Monticello Christian Academy	
DeWitt County Farm Bureau	Monticello Farmer's Market	
DeWitt County Friendship Center	Monticello School District	
DeWitt County Housing Authority	Moundford Food Pantry	
DeWitt County SWCD	Mt. Zion District Library	



## Online Outreach



30  
Educational Blogs



3,536  
Followers of 6 Facebook Pages



297  
Hours of Video Watched



5,990  
Recipients of 93 Extension and 4-H Newsletters



28,057  
Website Views

Extension reached out to the community through our website, e-newsletters, videos, social media, and the Out Standing in the Field podcast. This outreach was vital for delivering research-based, relevant information throughout 2020.

Targeted emails notifying blog subscribers of new posts and a Nutrition & Wellness monthly newsletter were added to our outreach.

## 2020-2021 Extension Council Members

Janell Baum-Thomas, DeWitt County

Jo Bauer, Macon County

Stephanie Block, DeWitt County

Nancy Derby, Macon County

Kathi Drozs, DeWitt County

Morgan Drozs, DeWitt County

Corissa Godbee, Piatt County

April Gum, DeWitt County

Zach Howell, DeWitt County

Dale Lattz, Piatt County

Trinity Mata, Macon County

Tayisha Nelson, Macon County

Kristi Pyatt, Piatt County

Katie Sellmeyer, Macon County

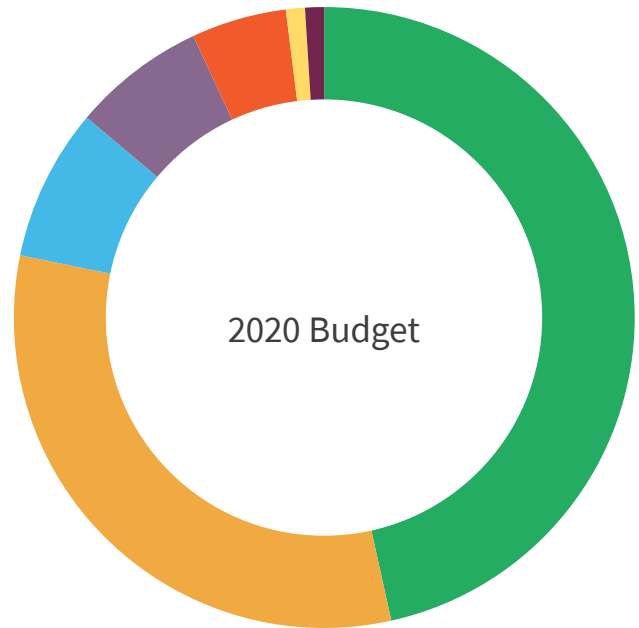
Ray Spencer, Piatt County

Robin Stapf, Piatt County

Ben Suckow, Macon County

Jennifer Suckow, Macon County

David White, Piatt County



<span style="color: green;">●</span>	\$713,022	County Board
<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	\$481,034	State County Board Match
<span style="color: blue;">●</span>	\$125,000	Program Income
<span style="color: purple;">●</span>	\$107,324	State Income
<span style="color: red;">●</span>	\$81,450	Gifts/Donations/Grants
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span>	\$27,030	Local Sources
<span style="color: brown;">●</span>	\$26,402	4-H Premiums

\*No federal funds were budgeted for use in 2020



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## EXTENSION STAFF

### County Extension Director

Doug Harlan

Beth Miglin, Horticulture

Jenna Ward, 4-H Youth Development

Olivia Warren, 4-H Youth Development

Jan Wenke, 4-H Youth Development

Charles Young, 4-H Youth Development

Sarah Vogel, Horticulture

Community Workers

Tamera Buse, SNAP-Ed

Marisa Capps, SNAP-Ed

Kellie Marlow, SNAP-Ed

### Business Administrative Associate

Peggy Fear

### Program Coordinators

Lindsey Burden, 4-H Youth Development

Rachel Davidson, 4-H Youth Development

Julia Duncan, Horticulture

Dena Hyde, Agriculture

Maria Lightner, Marketing and

Communications

### Educators

Jamie Boas, 4-H Youth Development

Staci Coussens, SNAP-Ed

Doug Gucker, Local Food Systems and

Small Farms

Trinity Johnson, 4-H Youth Development

Caitlin Mellendorf, Nutrition and Wellness

### Office Support

Laura Crider, Macon County

Jeralee Funk, Piatt County

Stacy Ann Nichols, DeWitt County

Diana Tibbs, DeWitt County

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## OFFICE INFORMATION

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## ONLINE



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[@uie\\_DMP](https://twitter.com/@uie_DMP)



DeWitt, Macon &  
Piatt Counties



[/UIExten\\_DMP](https://www.instagram.com/UIExten_DMP)



[/uofiextenDMP](https://www.pinterest.com/uofiextenDMP)

Cover photos: (top left) Trinity Johnson, 4-H educator, poses with 4-H members during International Day; (top right) a young naturalist looks on as Master Gardeners tag a monarch butterfly; (bottom left) Master Naturalist fall trainees stop for a photo during the caravan geology tour; (bottom right) a DeWitt County Cloverbud proudly displays a show award.

# 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.