



Master Gardeners led hands-on lessons to help youth explore pollinators and learn about growing fresh produce.

2016 Impact Report

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION
SERVING HENRY, MERCER, ROCK ISLAND
& STARK COUNTIES



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

Extending Knowledge Changing Lives



Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientists Tested the Water Quality of the Edwards River



UI Extension organized small farms tours to local producers who shared best practices with participants.

Extending Knowledge...Changing Lives

University of Illinois Extension is the flagship outreach effort of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, offering educational programs to residents in all 102 Illinois counties. Since it was established in 1914, UI Extension has been an integral part of people's educational experiences. Communities have come to rely on Extension for its practical, research-based educational offerings. Through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work, UI Extension's programs are aimed at making life better, healthier, safer and more profitable for individuals and their communities.



Serving Henry, Mercer, Rock Island & Stark Counties

University of Illinois Extension is divided regionally into 27 units located throughout Illinois. Our Unit 7 serves Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark Counties. Staff includes a county director (Jenny Garner) and 6 educators that offer programs in the areas of 4-H Positive Youth Development (Diane Baker and Cheryl Geitner), Community and Economic Development (Russell Medley), Nutrition and Wellness (Kristin Bogdonas), SNAP-Education (Brad Cirks), and Horticulture and Natural Resources (Martha Smith). In addition, our office is served in commercial agriculture by the UI Agriculture Research Center in Monmouth, IL (Angie Peltier). We partner with the Mercer and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus to offer Agriculture Literacy. We also have Program Coordinators in 4-H, Horticulture & Natural Resources, and Marketing as well as Community Workers in SNAP-Ed to assist in our programming efforts.

2016 Extension Council Members

Extension councils serve in an advisory role cooperating with Extension staff in planning, promoting, developing, implementing, evaluating and financing an Extension program designed to meet the needs, interests, and resources of the local communities

Officers

Chair: Chad Summers, Rock Island County

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* Denotes Youth Member

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University of Illinois Extension partners with the Mercer and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus and the Mercer County Soil & Water Conservation District to bring agriculture outreach to schools, teachers and community.

In 2016, our unit 7 Ag in the Classroom coordinators Teresa Kirwan (Mercer) and Sheryl Solomonson (Rock Island) brought programs to more than 9,800 students in grades K-12 on agricultural topics such as plants and seeds, soils, water, careers, corn, soybeans, wheat, animal nutrition, agricultural products, fiber/clothing, watersheds and much more.

“By getting youth interested in ag and showing them all the ways agriculture is part of our daily lives, they may get inspired to consider a degree in agriculture, food and renewable natural resources,” said Solomonson.



Solomonson coordinates the annual Ag Experience at the Rock Island County Fairgrounds. Teens from Sherrard, Orion and Rockridge FFA helped her teach lessons to over 900 Quad City 2nd and 3rd graders at this year's annual event. Other program highlights include: 4-H Teen Teacher Farm to Table; Summer Ag Institute Teacher Training; WOW Wednesdays at Rock Island Center for Math & Science; Summer Library Programs; and Farm Days at the Village of East Davenport. She reached 4,458 students, 800 teachers and 4,852 community participants in 2016.

Teresa Kirwan coordinates Mercer County Ag Literacy, bringing 205 programs to 5,387 students and 247 teachers in 2016. Some program highlights include: Safety Day Camp at Matherville Intermediate School. Kirwan organized Tony Osborn from the Matherville Fire Dept. to teach fire safety, Sherrard FFA students Abby Pope and Tristin Lukaszewski to teach animal safety, Ann Weber to teach about farm equipment and machinery safety and Tony Baugh, Mercer County Detective, to teach about internet safety and stranger danger.

Insect Investigations: Kirwan led a field trip the UI Extension Master Gardener's Perennial Pollinator Garden at the fairgrounds for insect investigations. The 4th grade and kindergarten classes from Apollo Elementary had a great time looking around the garden for caterpillars and butterflies and making and hanging insect houses as part of their pollinator lesson.



Our Agriculture Education Programs help children, teachers and the general public understand the importance of our agriculture industry and the value it has on our lives!

COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE

Our Unit is served by the Northwestern Illinois Agricultural Research & Demonstration Center, a 320 acre facility in Monmouth, IL

Each year, approximately 50 different applied small-plot research projects are conducted by up to 12 campus-based project leaders and center personnel. Subject matter areas involved in these projects include soil chemistry and fertility, soil management, crop production, weed science, entomology, plant pathology, pest management and environmental quality.

Angie Peltier, Extension Commercial Agriculture Educator, keeps Western Illinois farmers up to date on current topics, including some of the field crops research that is happening at the Monmouth Research Center. For more information on their programs and research, sign up for Peltier's blog: **Hill & Furrow**. It can be found on our website web.extension.illinois.edu/hmrs

Urban Chickens



When the city of Moline started to allow chickens in residential areas, they turned to University of Illinois Extension for educational assistance. In order to get an Urban Chicken (Hen) license, residents must attend training. In answer to this request, two classes were arranged, with the first one held in December 2016.

Master Gardener Training

The 2016 Master Gardener training was offered at UI Extension in Milan, IL with 18 graduating. Several have become involved with current projects as well as introducing new ones. The 2017 training is scheduled for Jan—April at UI Extension in Galva, IL. Here are some of the 2016 projects our 100 active Master Gardeners were involved in:

- Mid-Winter Horticulture Workshop, January—Geneseo, IL
- Nursery School: Lessons in Gardening Symposium, February, Moline, IL
- 6– Week Spring Series of Home Horticulture, Milan, IL
- Flower & Garden Show – Educational display garden, Information booth & Horticulture education presentations, Rock Island, IL
- Bus trip to Chicago Garden Show
- Rhubarb Festival, Aledo, IL
- Grand Opening UI Extension office, Galva, IL
- Pollinator Garden, Aledo, IL
- Pollinator Patch Garden & Camp, Milan, IL
- Harvest of Horticulture: Fall Gardening Workshop, September — Aledo, IL
- Seasonal Horticulture Outreach to Schools in Rock Island & Mercer Counties



Master Naturalists do a fish sampling on the Mississippi River at Andalusia Harbor

Our four-county unit has 34 active Master Naturalists. They support the conservation, management, and interpretation of our region's natural resources.

The Master Naturalist program is a combination of education and service. With the help of local experts, University of Illinois Extension provides the educational support for the program, while the service is often done at a community partner location. Here are some of their 2016 community projects:

Black Hawk State Historic Site – Helped create the River Trail Guide and serve as guides.

Bald Eagle Days—Promoted pollinators and led hands-on activities for youth.

Giant Goose Conservation Club, Atkinson – Created identification name plaques to identify trees along the paths.

Pollinator/native garden – Maintained an organic native garden at the UI Extension office in Milan, IL. They planted the garden using native plants known to attract various pollinators from spring to fall.

Master Naturalist Training

The next training for the Master Naturalist Program will take place in the Fall 2017 at University of Illinois Extension, Milan, IL. For information, contact Tracy Jo Mulliken at (309) 756-9978.

Extension Funding Combines State, Federal and Local Support

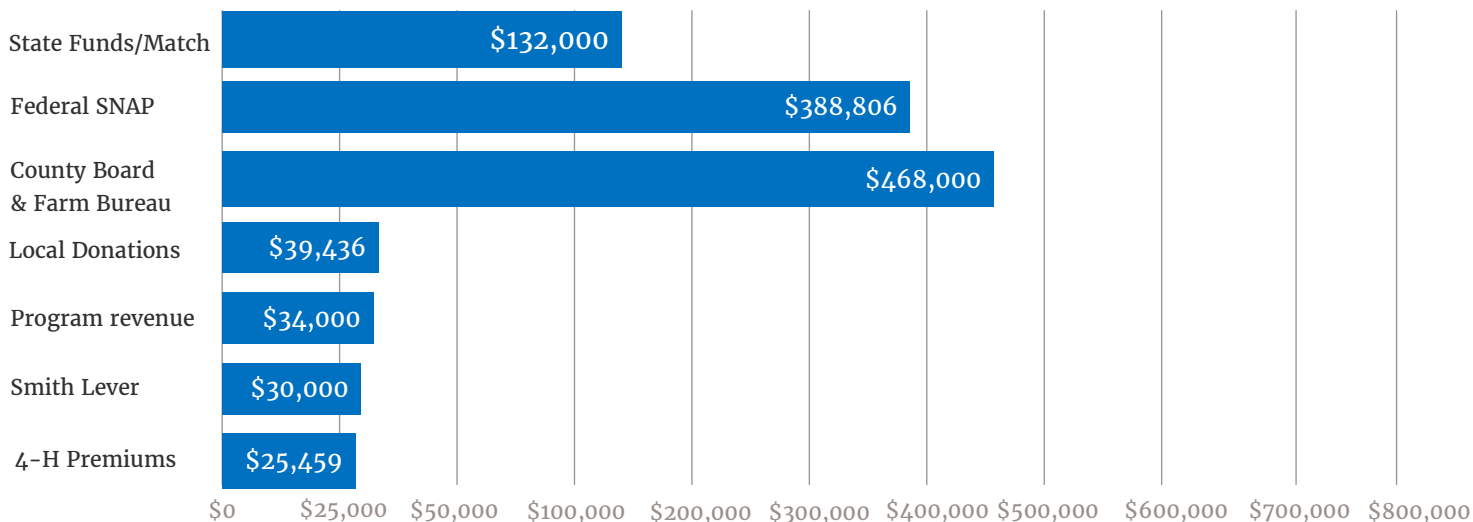
University of Illinois Extension is a three-way partnership, in terms of programming and funding between the State of Illinois, the United States Department of Agriculture and the local counties—Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark. Our SNAP-Ed programs are funded by a federal grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

These partnerships bring hundreds of thousands of programming dollars into our four counties, leveraging local contributions with state, national, and federal support.

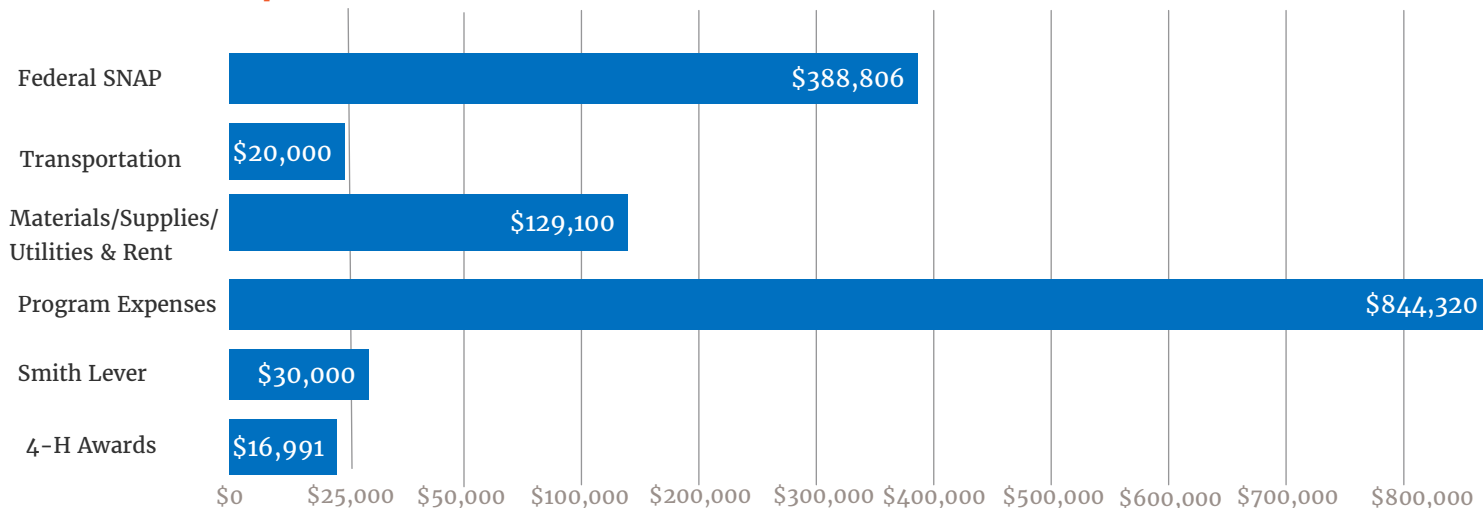
In grants alone, Extension has leveraged over \$143,000 in national, state and local grants to support Extension programs in Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark Counties this year.

Extension leverages funding through county board matching dollars by the State of Illinois.

2016 Income



2016 Expenses



4-H Members in Action



2015/2016 Stark County Officer team
Emma Webster, Kaley Rouse,
Tyler Dorsey, Samantha Wall,
Brock Stotler, & Abby Stotler.

Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientists
study the Edwards River.



Josh Kuznetsov and Brendan Parisot
are part of our 4-H Teen Teachers
who share nutrition and agriculture
programs to our community.



Rock Island County 4-H Teen Hunger
Ambassadors are ready to welcome
guests to one of their
free monthly community meals.



Annawan All Stars members Bailey
Roselieb, Fayth Koning-Park and
Jaidyn Miller await customers at the
Henry County 4-H Food Stand.



Mercer County 4-H members organized free community meals and
educational PSAs to help address food insecurity in their community.



Youth of our hard-working Military Families enjoyed a week of summer
camp and 4-H activities at Camp Abe Lincoln.

4-H SPECIAL PROJECTS

4-H Citizen Scientists

The Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientist partnered with Living Lands and Waters and the Illinois River Watch program. They focused on clean-up, testing and monitoring the Edwards River. They were the first group to have ever collected samples and data on the Edwards River, making this project even more exciting for our Citizen Scientists. They are honored to be part of this groundbreaking endeavor and look forward to presenting any and all findings to the 4-H Citizen Scientist's partners and community members.

Military 4-H

Rock Island County 4-H continues its relationship with the Rock Island Arsenal with strong 4-H programming for youth both on and off the installation. They serve nearly 150 youth with programs in visual arts, gardening, cooking, technology, woodworking and various other projects. 4-H also assists with Military Kids Camp at Camp Abe Lincoln each summer. This year's camp was attended by 75 campers and funded by Modern Woodmen of America and the Bechtel Trust. 4-H was a lead partner in coordinating special activities and educational experiences for campers.

4-H Tech Wizards – STEM Programs

Nearly sixty Rock Island County youth are involved in our 4-H Tech Wizards programs with weekly sites in partnership with Glenview Middle School in East Moline and the Martin Luther King Center in Rock Island. The youth meet with mentors weekly to engage in hands-on STEM programming which has included coding and computer programming, 3D printing, sewing and embroidery, properties of water, wind energy, the science of sound, and much more.

Illini Summer Academies

16 teens from the metro Quad Cities area participated in 4-H's Illini Summer Academies at the University of Illinois in June. Teens participated in a variety of academies including: astrobiology, chemistry, creative writing, electrical & computer engineering, entomology, molecular & cellular biology. Four teens from our unit served on the 2016 planning committee for this state program.



4-H Shooting Sports Program Continues to Grow

Many area youth participate in our 4-H Shooting Sports program which covers archery, air rifle, shotgun and hunting/outdoor skills in all of our four counties. Most recently, three adults have been certified in the area of pistol. We now have twenty instructors and four county coordinators for our unit to offer this tremendous program. This past year over 250 youth participated in our shooting sports programs. It is one of the fastest growing programs in Illinois 4-H.



Mercer County 4-H Shooting Sports members exhibit the skills and mastery they learned over their 8 weeks of training.

This past year we had one of our youth, Naythan Jones, participate at the National 4-H Shooting Sports Championships in Grand Island, Nebraska. He was in the shotgun competition, shooting 100 rounds in three areas of shotgun. Congratulations to Naythan for placing 3rd individually and 3rd in sporting clays. The Illinois team was coached by Bill Peterson from Rock Island County and placed 14th overall.

The NRA Foundation granted us six Crosman Challenger air rifles last year which amounted to \$3,800. In addition, the Illinois 4-H Foundation provided \$1,835 dollars to help with the additional supplies we needed. Many thanks to these organizations for providing funding for our 4-H Shooting Sports program.

If you are interested in becoming a certified instructor, please contact Cheryl Geitner at (309) 932-3447 or email cgeitner@illinois.edu

Youth Excel in State Award Selections

In our counties of Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark we have had great success in youth completing and interviewing for state awards. Chosen this past year were the following teens.



Winners from Unit 7 who received State Recognition from IL 4-H from left, Courtney Wiedenmann, Shelby Ledbetter, Clare VanSpeybroeck, Brandi Welch and Kaley Rouse.

State Award Winners with a \$1,000 scholarship

Communications: Shelby Ledbetter – Rock Island
Community Service: Kaley Rouse – Stark
Leadership: Clare VanSpeybroeck – Rock Island
Project Mastery: Courtney Wiedenmann – Mercer

4-H Leadership, Citizenship & Professionalism

Brandi Welch – Mercer
Courtney Wiedenmann – Mercer
Shelby Ledbetter – Rock Island

Legacy of Leadership & a \$1,000 scholarship

Shelby Ledbetter – Rock Island
Courtney Wiedenmann – Mercer

State 4-H Key Award for Community Service

Brandi Welch – Mercer
Courtney Wiedenmann – Mercer

All of these teens have been tremendous leaders in their 4-H programs as well as in their communities. 4-H is a great opportunity to learn leadership life skills like public speaking, organizing events, decision making, and community service. We applaud all of these youth for their outstanding accomplishment and for making the best better! These teens were recognized at the Illinois 4-H Recognition Event in November in Champaign.

SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs

Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP Ed) teaches people about the importance of making healthier food choices and how to manage their limited resources to best provide for their families. Our SNAP-Ed educator, Brad Cirks, works with community agencies, schools, and food pantries on making policy, systems and environmental changes. These changes focus on creating a healthier environment where nutritious choices are made easily. UI Extension SNAP-Ed Community Workers also direct education programs to youth, adults and senior citizens.

2016 Program Highlights



Teen Ambassadors at the Boys & Girls Club in Moline, IL presented a Health Carnival in July for their community.

Cirks engaged youth in Rock Island, Henry, and Mercer Counties as Teen Ambassadors whose goal is to increase student, faculty, and community awareness of healthy policy, systems, or environmental changes that can take place in a school or community setting. He guided each group through steps to help them collaborate on a community project, with examples of Teen Ambassador projects listed here:

- ⇒ Talking to residents at a senior living facility about healthy eating, making healthy smoothies for them, and engaging in physical activities with them.
- ⇒ Hosting fruit and vegetable taste testing events and making signage to promote healthy eating at elementary and middle schools.
- ⇒ Hosting a community carnival for local Hispanic youth.

Cirks also gave Wellness Workshops to students, staff, and community members at Washington Junior High, Edison Junior High, and Rock Island High School. Topics included: Focusing on My Plate; Fast Food Restaurant Info & Traps; and How to Properly Read Food Labels.



Smarter Lunchrooms

Cirks worked with Bogdonas to give trainings to school lunch personnel

including food service directors from Rock Island, Henry, and Mercer Counties. They also took school lunchroom assessments at six area schools which analyzed the atmosphere of the lunchroom; healthy food promotion; and increasing sales for reimbursable meals. Once the schools receive their evaluation, it is up to the lunchroom to make the needed, low-no cost changes that will decrease plate waste and improve participation in the school lunch program.

Cirks also teamed up with Bogdonas on the *Cooking for the Health of it!* project with refugees and immigrants. In the third phase of the program they will be training some of the refugees to be *Wellness Ambassadors*, where they will share their knowledge with others in their community.

SNAP-Ed Outreach Programs

SNAP-Ed Community Workers from Unit 7 also teach nutrition and wellness programs to youth and senior citizens at schools and through community partner agencies. In 2016, unit 7 Community workers visited 105 sites and directly worked with 23,257 youth (ages 5-17) and 8,106 adults.



SNAP-Ed Community Workers teach people using or eligible for SNAP about good nutrition, how to make their food dollars stretch further and the benefits of being physically active.

