

NEWSLETTER

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Find us on Facebook!

DECEMBER 2020

This has been a unique year for all of us. I appreciate the fact that so many of you have stayed engaged in the Master Naturalist program in spite of our activities being very restricted, and hope that we can resume normal activities at some point in the coming year. Remember that no volunteer hour requirement is in place for 2020, and 2021 will be adjusted as well. I hope you will continue to find continuing education offerings throughout the winter months, either from Extension or other organizations. A few are included in this newsletter.

Our face to face programming is on hold for the winter and spring. As a unit, we will be holding some online programming and hope to remain in contact with our usual audience through those opportunities. I do have confirmation from one of my speakers from Winter Trails and Naturalist Tales (cancelled last March) that she will do her presentation virtually for us. Please remember to refer to our website for up to date programming information.

In January, we will be working to put together a directory of Master Naturalists, as requested at the meetings a couple weeks ago. Over the winter, we will be discussing the Native Plant Garden that is located behind the office. Ginnie Watson has led that project for years, and we'd like to get additional Master Naturalists involved. We hope to see it used to provide educational programming for youth as well as to serve as a demonstration garden. If you are interested in helping, please let Tammy know. Look for information about an informational meeting in the new year.

I wish you all a very wonderful holiday season. Stay in touch with us and call with questions or concerns. We are here to help. Your involvement with the program is very much appreciated and the impact made on the community is something I share each spring as I seek continued funding from the Winnebago County Board.

Be well,

Margaret



NEWSLETTER

VOLUNTEER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS

Please continue to enter your hours in VCMS at:

https://volunteer.extension.illinois.edu.

If you have any trouble entering hours please let Tammy know and she will help you. If you would like help entering your hours, Tammy is more than happy to enter them for you.

ANNUAL AGREEMENT

Every year Master Gardener's and Master Naturalist's are required to read, sign and date an annual agreement. This form will be emailed to you. Please print it, read it, and email it back to Tammy at tbene@illinois.edu or regular mail to:1040 N. 2nd St. Rockford 61107.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All volunteers are required to have background checks done every five years. We want to make you aware of a new company that is handling our background checks. The new company is Sterling Volunteers. When it is time for your recheck, you will receive an email from Sterling Volunteers inviting you to complete your profile. Please click on the link provided in the email. Tammy will email you beforehand to let you know to expect an email from Sterling Volunteers.





JANUARY 7-8, 14-15, 21-22, 2021

Trees are a valuable asset to nature, but they are often overlooked in urban settings. Trees cool buildings with their shade and clean the air and water through filtration. However, urban trees must withstand pollution, poor soils, limited legroom for roots, and pressure from insects and disease, and their health and cultural requirements are not considered or monitored.

Bring nature back to your urban area with the help of the University of Illinois Urban Tree Conference. The six-day, 18 session virtual conference will cover all aspects of urban tree planning, implementation and management.

REGISTER: go.illinois.edu/UrbanTreeRegistration

COST: \$10 per day, \$50 for the entire program.

TIME: 9 AM - 12:15 PM

How Does Landscapes Design Impact Health & Well-being Noon - 1 PM, January 7, 2021

William Sullivan, PhD, Professor and Wadsworth Head of Landscape Architecture at University of Illinois has examined this question by measuring the impact of urban design on a person's ability to recover from stressful experiences, the influence that views from high school classrooms have on a student's capacity to learn, and the effect that urban green spaces have one's physical activity, mental health, and relationships with others. In these studies, he assessed people's hormones, heart rates, brain waves, psychological states, and ability to pay attention. He has found that regular contact with urban green infrastructure—places with trees, grass, rain gardens, and the like—has profound, positive impacts for individuals and communities. These urban green spaces need not be large or pristine to convey a variety of broad-ranging out-comes. They must, however, be easily accessible from a person's home or workplace. Dr. Sullivan has shared his findings with scientists, designers, planners, and policymakers in an effort to create healthier communities where people can thrive.

Children & Nature Noon - 1 PM, January 14, 2021

Andrea Faber Taylor, PhD is a Teaching Assistant Professor in the Department of Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her research examines child development in the context of nature and green-spaces to support healthy functioning and future stewardship of the earth. She is advancing our understanding of the importance of nature experiences in human development. She teaches a course on this topic and courses about sustainable home gardening, small fruits, and herbaceous perennials with an emphasis on planting design to support pollinators and other beneficial species

To register, please click the link below:

Register here for these programs in the series





When Your Nearest Neighbors Aren't Human: Gardening in the Air

Whether you live in a small community or a larger urban setting, wildlife is a part of your everyday life, but some species may wear out their welcome. These animals have adapted to be your neighbor because humans have the tendency to provide exactly what they need. Others need our help to survive due to the pressures of a forever-changing environment. Learn how to enhance and coexist with wildlife on your property as well as the legalities for removing animals.

Register online by January 27.

Presenter: Peggy Doty, Energy and Environmental Stewardship Educator, University of Illinois Extension

This program is part of **Gardening in the Air**, a virtual series offered January 30 and February 6 and co-hosted by <u>University of Illinois</u> <u>Extension</u> and <u>Iowa State University Extension</u>.

Sessions will be hosted using Zoom at 9 a.m., 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Central Standard Time. Participants may register for a single session or the entire series. Sessions are free to attend, but a donation is appreciated. Access links and handouts will be provided upon registration.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in programming, please contact Martha Smith at smithma@illinois.edu. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for the requested accommodation. Some programs will be recorded. If recorded, closed captioning for requested programs will be honored after the event.



Waste to Renewable Energy

Anaerobic digestion technology is used as a solution to divert food waste from the landfill. Farmers also utilize the technology to capture methane emissions associated with the management of liquid manures. Join University of Illinois Extension Environmental and Energy Stewardship Educator Ashley Belle to learn how renewable energy is produced from organic waste materials. This webinar will cover the digestion process, steps for operating optimal digestion systems, and the current status of agricultural anaerobic digesters in the US. Register at: go.illinois.edu/WasteToEnergy Presenter: Ashley Belle

The Series

The Everyday Environment Webinar Series is offered by <u>University of Illinois Extension's Energy and Environmental Stewardship</u> Team, and focuses on a different environmental topic each month. These webinars will both provide new information on natural resources and help you learn how to make small changes in your lifestyle to have a positive impact on the environment. There is never a shortage of new things to learn about your everyday environment!

Registration is free. Please register for each individual webinar you are interested in attending at their respective registration link. Webinars are held on the second Thursday of the month at 1 p.m. Central Time. Other webinars in the series:

Radon: Is it Still an Issue? January 14 | 1 PM CT

January is <u>Radon Awareness</u> month. Radon awareness, testing, and mitigation for homes has been discussed from many years. Why are we talking about it now? Is radon still an issue of concern in Illinois homes? Join EES Educator Stanley Solomon to learn why radon should still be a concern for Illinois residents. As the leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers, radon continues to be the odorless, radioactive gas silently sneaking into many homes. Register at go.illinois.edu/radon. Presenter: Jay Solomon

Severe Weather March 11 | 1 PM CT

Spring brings severe weather back to Illinois and the Midwest. Thunderstorms pack high winds, heavy rain, lightning, and potentially tornadoes. To learn more about these phenomena, join Extension Educator Duane Friend as he discusses types of thunderstorms and how they form, forms of lightning and what research is learning about lightning, and current research in tornadoes. Register at: go.illinois.edu/storms Presenter: Duane Friend

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To stay up to date on all of our programs, visit our web page: extension.illinois.edu/jsw and follow us on Facebook @UnitOneExtension and YouTube

Jo Daviess County 204 N Vine, Elizabeth 815-858-2273

Happy Holidays!
Staff will be on break December 24- January 3.
Normal work schedules resume on Monday January 4, 2021

Stephenson County 2998 W Pearl City Rd, Freeport 815-235-4125

Winnebago County 1040 N Second St, Rockford 815-986-4357



Home Energy Checkup Webinar

Fruit Tree Pruning: The "Older Neglected" and the "Just Planted"

January 20, 2021 - Noon - 1:30 PM January 26, 2021 - 6:00 - 7:30 PM \$5 Registration Fee

This course will go over the basics of fruit tree pruning, steps to take to get started, and guidance on pruning trees that have never been pruned to those that have just been planted in 2019. This year's fruit tree pruning classes will be held virtual, using the zoom platform. "While you might think that you cannot learn to prune using a virtual format, Grant has developed a color-coded system for teaching people how to prune that works really well to help you understand what to prune and what to leave behind.

<u>January 12, 2021</u> 6:00 PM

Plan to join Extension
Educator Jay Solomon for
"Home Energy Checkup with
a northern Illinois perspective"
an interactive webinar to learn
some easy ways to approach
identifying energy saving/
cost saving opportunities in
your home.





Certified Livestock Manager Training
Wednesday, January 20, 2021
Friday, January 29, 2021
Tuesday, February 9, 2021
Thursday, March 4, 2021
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
\$40 Registration Fee per person

According to the Livestock Management Facilities Act (LMFA), livestock facilities in Illinois that house more than 300 animal units are required to have at least one certified livestock manager. Four webinars (virtual workshops) will be offered. You must attend the whole webinar (about 4 hours) to be eligible for your certificate. After the webinar, those with over 1,000 AU will be required to log in and take the 40-question online test in lieu of the IDoA's paper-based test.

Online training is also avaiable at go.illinois.edu/CLMT

Radon: Why Is It Still an Issue

January 14, 2021 1:00 PM

\$5 Registration Fee

Join EES Educator Stanley Solomon for this webinar to learn why radon should still be a concern for Illinois residents. As the leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers, radon continues to be the odorless, radioactive gas silently sneaking into many homes.

GARDENING QUESTIONS?

Our Master Gardener Helpline is open and ready to help. Fill out our online form to help us serve you better. Or call us with your question.

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, email uie-jsw@illinois.edu. Early requests are encouraged to allow time to meet individual requests.

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I Made That!! Baking Month Education Kit

Register by January 12, 2021 \$5 Per Kit

This project is ideal for families to do together or for any youth with cooking experience. We will be putting together educational cooking kits - designed to inspire the inner chef and help youth gain confidence while working in the kitchen. Youth will learn to bake yeast bread and how to make modifications to fit their family's needs.



Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference

Thursday, February 18 (Fruit Track) 1:00-3:30PM Thursday, February 25 (Vegetable Track) 1:00-3:30PM 1:00 - 3:30 PM

With additional sessions on Fridays in February.
Friday, February 12Hard Cider Production
Friday, February 19Pumpkin Varieties
Friday, February 26High Tunnel Production Updates
12:00 - 1:00 PM

This conference attracts commercial vegetable and fruit growers from farms in Illinois and Wisconsin, all of whom sell to small and/or wholesale markets, in order to provide them with updated production-related information from Extension specialists at the University of Illinois.

The cost for the entire program (Thursday and Friday sessions) is \$20. Participants may also register just for Thursday sessions (\$10) or Friday sessions (\$15). Participants will receive access to the live presentations, handouts, and YouTube recordings of the sessions.



4-H Virtual Officer Training

January 23, 2021 - 9:00 - 11:00 am

Be your clubs Superhero. We encourage all officers from every club in Jo Daviess, Stephenson and Winnebago counties to attend. Don't have an office?? Don't worry this training is for everyone interested in being an officer now or in the future.



4-H & Farm Bureau
Public Speaking
Training

January 9, 2021 9 - 11:00 am

4-H and Farm Bureau are teaming together to sponsor a public speaking training via Zoom for all interested youth wanting to enhance their public speaking skills.



2021 Northwest Illinois

Grazing Conference

6:30-8:00 pm

March 3:
Pasture Ecology and Soil
Health for Grazers

March 10:

Be Creative, Identifying
Alternative Grazing
Opportunities

March 17: Extending the Grazing Season

March 24:
Putting the Grazing Pieces
Together

The theme for this year's conference is "Reinvigorating Pastures and Expanding Grazing" which will be brought to you via Zoom.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT EXTENSION

HOME ENERGY CHECKUP WEBINAR

With winter setting in once again, we all have that feeling of dread when the electric bill arrives each month: How high will it be this time? We used how much electricity? Maybe it is time to gain a better understanding of how you use energy in your home and look at some simple changes to help reduce that bill. With understanding of where the energy is used, you can make informed decisions about low and nocost management improvements in your home energy efficiency.

Plan to join Extension Educator Jay Solomon for "Home Energy Checkup with a northern Illinois perspective" an interactive webinar to learn some easy ways to approach identifying energy saving/ cost saving opportunities in your home.

"Every home and family have a unique energy use pattern. Understanding where energy is used in your home is the best way to find cost and energy saving opportunities." Solomon suggests. "There are often groups of small changes and modification that can add up to big savings, without a lot of expense to home or appliances."

WHEN: Tuesday, January 12

TIME: 6PM-7PM

REGISTRATION: https://extension.illinois.edu/jsw.





WHAT'S HAPPENING AT EXTENSION

2021 DRIFTLESS REGION BEEF CONFERENCE

LEAD OFF SPEAKER: Dr. Frank Mitloehner, Livestock and Climate Change

The upcoming virtual Driftless Region Beef Conference will feature Dr. Frank Mitloehner, a professor and air quality specialist at UC-Davis, as the leadoff speaker. Dr. Mitloehner will discuss greenhouse gases and the sustainability of beef cattle production. His presentation will explain factors of climate change, livestock impacts, and the importance of ruminant livestock in the midst of growing pressures from environmental groups.

Understanding the facts and fiction behind livestock production and emissions is the first step in debunking the myths of livestock and climate change. "Attending Dr. Mitlowhner's presentation via webinar format will give producers an opportunity to learn and equip themselves to engage in a positive discussion of livestock and climate change," said Jay Solomon, Energy and Environmental Stewardship Educator, University of Illinois Extension.

The conference will have two presenters each evening of Jan. 26-28. All three sessions will run from 7 to 8:30pm. Other speakers include Dr. Kevin Bernhardt, UW Madison Division of Extension, who will discuss Building Farm Resiliency for Surviving Volatile Times; and Shawn Darcy, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, addressing What Consumers Say They Need and Want; and Dr. Paul Plummer, lowa State University, discussing Antibiotic Resistance in the Beef Industry; and Dr. Danelle Bickett-Weddle, lowa State University, shares Being Prepared for a Beef Cattle Pandemic/Secure Beef (both cow-calf and feedlot); and Dr. Brenda Boetel, UW Madison Division of Extension, with a 2021 Market Outlook.

Driftless Region Beef Conference sponsors are Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, University of Illinois Extension, and University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension. For more information or to receive a brochure, contact Denise Schwab, Beef Specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach, at 319-472-4739

WHEN: January 26-28. TIME: 7PM—8:30PM. COST: \$15

REGISTRATION: www.aep.iastate.edu/beef/.