



EXTENSION
IN ACTION 

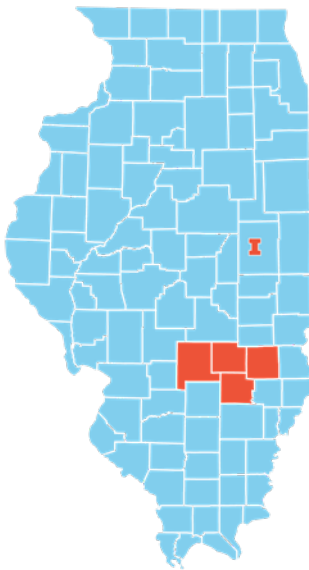
Serving Clay, Effingham,
Fayette, and Jasper Counties

ILLINOIS EXTENSION 2022





Carl Baker
County Director



A Message from the County Director

Albert Einstein once said, “Commit yourself to lifelong learning. The most valuable asset you will ever have is your mind and what you put into it.” Our learning journey never ends; it continues with each passing day.

University of Illinois Extension remains committed to delivering educational programs that are timely, relevant, reliable, and responsive to the lives of individuals and families that live and work in our communities. It is exciting to be back delivering Extension programs in person.

With each year there are challenges, and with each year we make changes and adapt to those challenges. During the year, we learn from those challenges, we compensate and move forward. We continue to offer non-traditional programs throughout our communities to help meet the needs of our four-county region. Our goal at Extension is to be a community partner that the public can turn to for answers and trust the sound research data.

Our volunteers play a significant role in the programs we deliver: 4-H club leaders, Extension Council, Master Gardeners and Master

Naturalists, 4-H exhibition superintendents, and Home and Community Education members. These volunteers give their valued time, their resources, and their expertise so that others may learn from their knowledge. For your dedication, we thank you.

Extension is ever thankful for the local support from our county boards, farm bureaus, 4-H and Extension foundations, home and community education associations, individuals, and businesses. We are excited about the coming year and the programs we will be delivering.

I encourage you to visit our website at extension.illinois.edu/cefj for programs and events, news releases, and research-based information you can trust.

We look forward to our continued partnerships as we build for the future and are excited about creating new partnerships and programs in 2023.

Carl Baker
County Director



Illinois Extension Makes an Impact

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's land grant mission thrives each day through Extension's programs, resources, knowledge, and dedicated staff that are responsive to five grand challenge themes:



Community:
Support Strong and Resilient Residents



Economy:
Grow a Prosperous Economy



Environment:
Sustain Natural Resources at Home and in Public Spaces



Food:
Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply



Health:
Maximize Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health

2022 Engagement

Extension leaders, staff, and stakeholders define priorities that create meaningful, mission-centered outcomes throughout the state:

643 Communities Served	720K+ Program Attendees	14.5M+ Webpage Views	22.9M+ Social Media Impressions	900K+ YouTube Views
488 Educational Sessions/Week (25K+ Annually)	95 Online Courses Accessed by 12K+ People	7,062 Local Government Education Webinar Reach	1,807 4-H Clubs	178,341 4-H Affiliations

Partnerships

Resource Generation

5,941 Program Volunteers	269 Community Gardens	1,030 School Partners	\$15,732,391 Value of Volunteer Contributions	\$223,639 Value of Donated Garden Produce
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Illinois Extension helps provide nearly 25,000 meals through Deer Donation program

The Illinois Deer Donation program provides a lean source of protein (venison) to low-income and food insecure families in east-central Illinois. This program launched October 1 during the 2022-2023 hunting season and connected meat processors, hunters, and food pantries in 12 counties: Clay, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Macon, Moultrie, Piatt, and Shelby.

More than 7,500 pounds of ground venison has been donated to 37 food pantries at no charge and provided 30,052 nutritious meals. Fifty-seven hunters donated a deer to the program.

“We are so grateful for the deer meat,” says Vicki Kight of Enduring Freedom’s Ministries Food Pantry. “We didn’t receive our normal meat delivery that we usually get, so it was great to have meat to provide to our clients today.”

External fundraising brought in \$34,600 from local grants and monetary donations and was used to reimburse meat processors \$100 per deer for their time and effort. The Lumpkin Family Foundation awarded \$25,000 to the Illinois Deer Donation program to help reimburse meat processors. Whitetails Unlimited national and local chapters donated \$6,000 toward the program. Area Walmart locations donated \$2,250. Small monetary donations from local businesses also contributed towards the total amount.

The project has received abundant support from some key partners across the state of Illinois.

“We feel this would be a great asset to our partner food pantries as meat has long been a highly requested item for distribution,” says Emily Yoder, Eastern Illinois Foodbank. “We rely heavily on

The Illinois Deer Donation Project is so timely and needed right now. The continued disruptions in the global supply chain are negatively impacting the emergency food system and our network’s ability to continue providing the most nutritious foods, such as protein products. As food banks and food pantries are challenged with higher demand, limited supply, and increasing costs, fresh venison received through this program will be an invaluable addition and welcomed option for Illinois neighbors in need.

Steve Ericson,
Executive Director of Feeding Illinois



Demi Striglos with the Deer Donation program delivered 50 pounds of venison and shared venison recipes with the Standing Stone/Carpenters Table food pantry in Charleston in early December. Photo credit Standing Stone Community Center

donations for this category since 70% of our protein inventory has been donated. We look forward to continuing to work with the University of Illinois Extension SNAP-Education program to offer the support they need to make this program a success.”

The Illinois Deer Donation Program is a full circle program. The meat is donated to local food pantries. SNAP-Education staff then provide nutrition education focused on venison, including recipes, taste testing demonstrations, food safety information, and cooking utensils. Food pantry guests are provided resources to properly include the venison in a nutritious meal.

The Illinois Deer Donation Program continues to market the program through media outlets throughout eastern Illinois.

It’s a great source of protein for families, especially big families. With the cost of groceries increasing nearly 13.5% from this time last year, it is important to have a lean source of protein available in food pantries. Pantries are really struggling with getting meat right now. This is an opportunity for hunters to help their communities while doing something they enjoy and supporting local small businesses.

Pantry Executive Director

SNAP-Ed works with Mental Health

This year, Extension SNAP-Ed staff in Effingham County partnered with Heartland Human Services to provide nutrition programming in coordination with its community integration services. Heartland Human Services is a mental health facility. It provides counseling services to the area.

Participants who attended the nutrition classes taught by Illinois Extension included clients living in Heartland Human Service's residential program and community members who live independently and benefit from added support.

Illinois Extension taught weekly classes with the participants from October to December. The Healthy Cents curriculum focuses not only on healthy eating, but also making the most out of their food dollars to save money. Participants learned valuable information on menu planning, food budgeting, shopping tips, healthy substitutions, portion sizes, eating healthy away from home, food wants versus food needs, community resources, and healthy snack ideas.

"I love when you come; I always learn so much," a participant says. "I feel like I can start eating healthier now."

Junior Chef comes to YMCA

Family YMCA of Fayette County teamed up with Illinois Extension to bring the Illinois Junior Chef program to its summer camp participants. The campers learned basic cooking skills, such as measuring ingredients, mixing techniques, and cutting. All the kids had fun not only learning the skills but also preparing recipes, such as tic tac taco mix, that they could taste test. Students received a certificate, cooking utensils, and a cookbook so they can continue to grow their love of cooking.



Elizabeth Hartke and intern Kourtney Cordes explain the Illinois Junior Chef Cooking School program to the participants from the Fayette County YMCA

Extension reinforces healthy choices

Several curriculum are used by Extension SNAP-Ed staff with grade school and junior high youth: OrganWise Guys, BEPA2.0, Healthy Kids Out of School, and Serving Up MyPlate. With hands on activities, students learn why they should eat healthy and get plenty of physical activity. Students have been spotted helping their families make healthier choices while grocery shopping. Eat. Move. Save. walk-by booths are used to promote different nutrition topics and recipes to participants of the Clay County Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry.



Students check out Organ Andy and the OrganWise Guys after the introduction lesson.



7
Partnerships with K-12 Schools



3
Partnerships with Early Childhood Centers



6
Partnerships with Emergency Food Sites



7
Partnerships with Other Types of Organizations



397
Nutrition Education Classes



4,247
Total Estimated SNAP-Ed reach



Students tested their flying skills in a flight competition during a recent drone program offered by Illinois Extension. They flew their drones through and over obstacles.

Let's fly away!

Youth in Effingham and Fayette counties have hands-on experiences with drones, thanks to a new Illinois Extension program.

The drone program was such a popular and unique experience for our Summer Camp participants that the kids talked about it for the rest of the summer!

Ben Frazier, CEO, Family YMCA of Fayette County

Effingham Junior High School students spent three days learning to fly and program drones. Youth connected the similarities of flying and programming the drone to playing video games. After learning the basic of operating a drone, students were challenged an obstacle course. One beginner student finished just two seconds behind the top experienced pilot and was praised by classmates throughout the day.

Youth in third through sixth grades enrolled in the Family YMCA of Fayette County Youth Summer Camp also learned the basics of flying a drone.



Mary Fischer and Nicole Haverback give instructions on programming drones.

Before taking flight, they were taught the difference between a drone and an UAV and rules and laws they must follow when flying them.

Youth learned the different parts of the drone, how to connect to the iPads, and how to use the remote controls. The connection to video games was once again quickly made. Students learned how to launch and land the drones, as well as move them through designated areas. YMCA CEO Ben Frazier joined in and challenged campers to precisely land their drones to win prizes. That's when the competition heated up. Almost all youth were able to land in the designated target. The cheering and excitement throughout the gym was infectious.



Youth in both counties discussed how drones are used in real world settings, different career paths involving them, and how they are used in agriculture to help preserve soil and water quality and the environment.



Students learned how to launch and land the drones, as well as move them throughout their designated areas.

The Family YMCA of Fayette County greatly appreciates the long-time partnership with University of Illinois Extension and 4-H. We see their programs and services as a worthwhile investment into the community and welcome them as a part of what we do at the Y.

Ben Frazier, CEO, Family YMCA of Fayette County



Residents at Heritage Woods enjoy the lush raised beds of zucchini growing at their facility.

University Extension offers a kaleidoscope of programs

From bouquets to urban tree health, Illinois Extension offers educational and recreational programs for everyone. Participants may learn how to create beautiful fresh-flower hand-tied spiral bouquets one day, then learn to spot and identify potential problems with trees in their yards and communities on another day.

A flavorful array of programs is offered by Illinois Extension at local libraries, such as herb gardening, bees and honey, tea production and harvesting at the only commercial tea plantation in the US, to everyone's favorite, cacao, or in other words, chocolate! Participants enjoy learning about plants, insects, beverages, and snacks often taken for granted.

Giving back to communities and individuals is a rewarding function of Illinois Extension. From planting raised beds to creating inviting views outside the dining room at an assisted living facility, Illinois Extension is there to entice visitors to linger and enjoy the plants and flowers. If being a volunteer is a current or future goal, consider joining the growing ranks of local Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. Learn to grow produce, identify good and bad bugs, use current best practices in horticulture, and know the history and diversity of the natural environment across the state.

Vandalia's Little Community Garden celebrates 20 years

In 2022, Fayette County Extension Master Gardeners celebrated the 20th anniversary of Vandalia's Little Community Garden. After 20 years, the garden continues to impact the lives of many. In celebrating the success of the Little Community Garden, over 100 people came out to tour the gardens and see the growth over the years. The garden was originally home to vegetables and has expanded to include an herb garden, native plants garden, flower garden, and a pollinator garden.

A garden that started out as a hobby and passion for the remaining original gardeners, Sid File and Jennie Grimsley, has grown into a vital commodity for the food pantries and assisted living communities in Fayette County. The Little Community Garden grows fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers for people of Vandalia and the surrounding communities of Fayette County. It generates an average of 2,800 pounds of fresh produce annually. In 2021, a record 3,057 pounds of produce was harvested by Master Gardeners.

During the 20 years, Master Gardeners have come and gone, but the garden has remained a staple. With the help of the City of Vandalia and generous financial supporters, they have added fencing, irrigation, and a pavilion for hosting educational programs. In 2022, a solar power generator was secured to provide electricity to the pavilion. Most recently, Darcy's Memorial Garden was added to the 2.5-acre location. Darcy's garden encompasses the pavilion for visitors to see when visiting the garden.

The Master Gardeners of Fayette County continue to offer tours and educational programs at Vandalia's Little Community Garden.



Master Gardeners pose for a quick photo at Vandalia's Little Community Garden's 20 year celebration.



A member of the Midnight Riders 4-H Club chose moss and colorful stones to decorate their air plant.

Grow plants in new ways!

Youth throughout Clay, Effingham, Fayette, and Jasper counties participated in terrarium workshops. Kasey Kemme, 4-H youth development educator, taught participants the difference between air plant and succulent terrariums. Youth learned what to include in their terrariums and how to care for them at home.

Youth chose the containers, either a round dish or an ice cream dish. If using a dish from home, it's important to wash it with hot water and soap and make sure it is clean and ready to go.

Youth added a pea gravel drainage layer to the bottom of their dish which is small enough to let water through. They added a coffee filter to keep the layers separated. A unique potting mix that is helpful for cacti and succulents was added. Youth selecting air plant terrariums skipped the soil step.

Their favorite part was choosing the plants to use! Once planting was complete, they decorated them with their choice of moss, fancy rocks, fairy garden decorations, and so much more!

Youth with air plants were instructed to mist the terrarium once a week; succulent terrariums needed to be watered once a week during the summer and once every two weeks in the winter.

Although these were created in early spring, many 4-H members were able to bring them to the fair to exhibit. During their conference judging, members discussed how they created their terrarium, their care plan, and the highs and lows of caring for their terrarium. Youth had fun learning about growing plants in a new way.



Avery Bohhoff shows off her air plant terrarium where she used moss to decorate her container.



964
4-H Club Memberships



70
4-H Clubs



6,481
4-H affiliations (4-H Experiences)



2,779
Fair exhibits



8%
Minority Youth engaged in 4-H



5%
Hispanic Youth engaged in 4-H



New staff join Extension

Nicole Haverback is the watershed outreach associate within two phosphorus priority watersheds, the Little Wabash River and Embarras River Watershed, as listed in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. Housed in the Effingham Extension Office, she motivates and educates farmers and landowners to voluntarily adopt conservation practices to improve water quality and soil health in these watersheds. Haverback earned her associate degree from Black Hawk East Community College in 2020 and her bachelor's degree in agriculture and rural policy studies from Iowa State University in 2022. She grew up on a diversified farm in west central Illinois where she was an active 4-H and FFA member. Nicole has also had multiple internship experiences within the industry, including internships with Illinois Farm Business Farm Management, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Iowa Learning Farms and Water Rocks! programs, and Bayer Crop Science.



Olivia Snyder is the 4-H Extension program coordinator serving Fayette County. Olivia grew up in Marion County and has had a passion for the arts and outdoors since a young age. She received a bachelor's degree in art from Greenville University. During her time at college, Olivia was a member of the women's volleyball team and began coaching club volleyball in her hometown. In 2015, she moved to Savannah, Ga., where she worked at the Savannah College of Art and Design admission department, coordinating with college representatives and educators across the United States to showcase how youth's interests can be developed into a fulfilling and creative career. In 2022, Olivia



returned to her hometown with her two cats, Jazz and Orion, and her two geckos, Cookie Dough and Pizza Dough.

Megan Pierson is the 4-H youth development program coordinator working in Clay County. She was raised on a small grain and livestock farm in Louisville and is a Clay County 4-H alumna. 4-H has always had a special place in her heart as it gave her so many amazing opportunities and has helped shape her into the person she is today. After receiving her bachelor's degree in animal industry management, Megan moved to Wabash County where she served as the Extension program coordinator for two years. This allowed her to gain valuable experience and see new opportunities for the 4-H program.



Megan stays active in both local and state agriculture organizations where she enjoys being a voice in the agriculture industry and sharing her passion with others. She is completing her master's degree in agriculture leadership, communications, and education at University of Illinois.

Megan resides in Louisville where she continues what started as her 4-H cattle project with her family. She is excited to be back serving her home county in hopes of helping youth find their passion for the 4-H program.

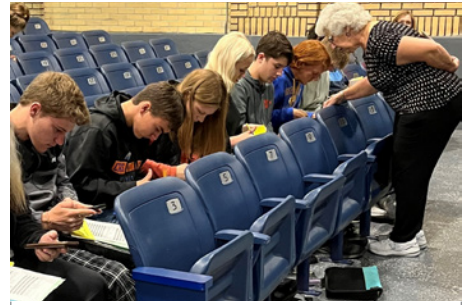
I learned a lot over the past few years, and I am excited to bring it back to Southern Illinois with me. I look forward to working with you to make your ideas reality.

Olivia Snyder

WELCOME TO THE REAL WORLD

EXTENSION PROVIDES CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Welcome to the Real World is a career readiness signature 4-H program. This year, 11th grade students at Newton Community High School participated in a series of activities leading up to a real-life simulation. Youth educator Kasey Kemme met with students to discuss careers, college requirements, and student loans. During the simulation, students chose a career, made housing and transportation choices, and played a card game that, just like in real life, had both bad and good experiences. At the end of the simulation, students discussed how they may make better choices in real life. The main take-aways from the program include maintaining good credit scores by paying bills on time, not spending more than they make, and saving for emergencies. Students enjoyed hearing from community professionals on how to prepare for their future.



Juniors at NCHS learn the importance of financial planning and budgeting.



St. Thomas fifth grade students learn about a career as a Nurse Practitioner.

4-H HEALTH JAM IMPROVES HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Fifth grade students at St. Thomas and Newton Elementary School participated in 4-H Health Jam, an Illinois Extension signature 4-H program. During the nine-week program, health care professionals visit students and explain their careers. Students increase their knowledge of the relationship between physical activity and personal health, engage in learning experiences about nutrition and healthy eating, and complete the Walk Across Illinois challenge by completing 30 minutes of daily physical activity. Students sampled foods that were unusual to their diets, including avocado, kiwi, dragon fruit, and buttermilk. By the end of the program, many students indicated they liked eating the new foods.

4-H FULFILLING A NEED IN TODAY'S WORKFORCE

A vital STEM workforce is needed to drive innovation in today's global world. Because robotics is a combination of programming, electronics, and mechanics, the robotics club provides a valuable learning environment to promote skills that translate well into STEM careers. Youth work cooperatively to innovate, build, solve problems, and imagine new possibilities for the world. The new Robotics 4-H Club is an exciting opportunity offered to youth in Effingham County. Members are discovering the world of robotics as they learn to build and program robots to accomplish various tasks. 4-H members make new friends while having a lot of fun building robots. The robotics team will compete at the state competition in May. Members will compete against teams of students that must design and build a robot that can master a series of specific challenges.



Caspian Knowles, Kortland Burry, and Michael Dennison are shown working together as a team to program their robot.



Alaina Hartke had her first experience with 4-H at the Effingham County 4-H flower arranging workshop. Alaina enjoyed spending her afternoon making new friends and created two beautiful center pieces.

ILLINOIS EXTENSION BRINGS EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS TO LOCAL 4-HERS

The most popular workshops this year included a 4-H horse clinic and a flower arrangement and bow making workshop. Participants at the horse clinic learned about general horsemanship, addressing everything from groundwork to leadership skills. This workshop taught riding skills and improving the performance of the horse and helped to improve the talents of the participants in the saddle.

Deb Schultz, floral designer with a true passion for flowers and a greater passion for working with youth, shared her expertise with youth at the flower arrangement workshop. With 30 years of experience, she has created many beautiful arrangements for weddings over the years in Effingham County and passed these skills on to youth in attendance who were given step-by-step instructions on how to create their own floral design to take home.



David Stine displays his Grand Champion Dairy Steer at the 2022 Fayette County 4-H Fair



7,417
Local Website Users



17,725
Educational Direct Contacts



4,247
Estimated Reach SNAP-Education



12,598
Page Views



143
Extension Volunteers



21
Master Gardener and Master Naturalist Volunteers



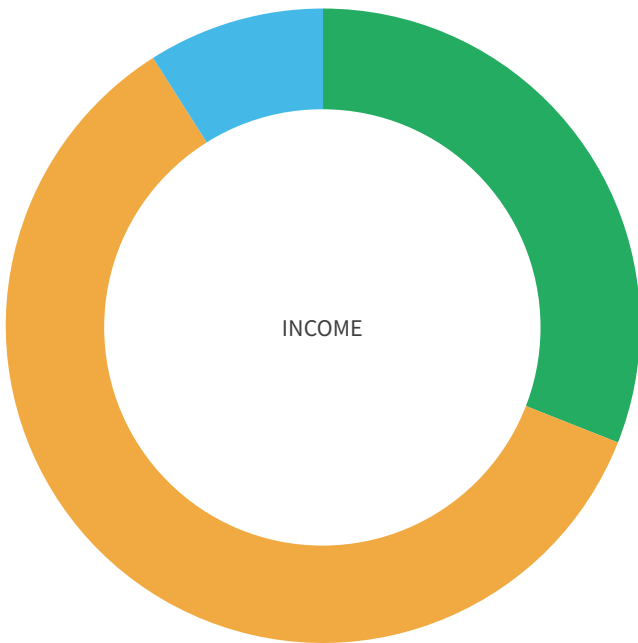
628
Educational Sessions



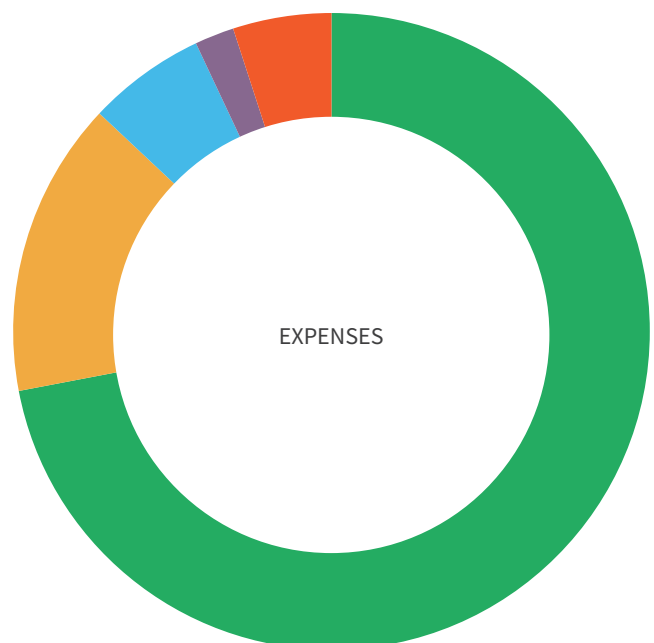
964
4-H Club Memberships



2,835
Hours Donated by Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists



- 31% Local
- 60% State
- 9% Federal



- 72% Personnel
- 15% Program Supplies
- 6% Facilities/Utilities
- 2% Travel
- 5% Other

STAFF

Carl Baker,
County Extension Director

Michelle Fombelle,
SNAP-Ed Educator

Kasey Kemme,
4-H Youth Development
Educator

Mary Fischer,
Horticulture Educator

Nicole Haverback,
Watershed Outreach Associate

Patti Logan,
4-H Youth Development
Program Coordinator

Katie Turkal,
4-H Youth Development
Program Coordinator

Olivia Snyder,
4-H Youth Development
Program Coordinator

Megan Pierson,
4-H Youth Development
Program Coordinator

Erin Maxwell,
SNAP-Ed Community Worker

Elizabeth Hartke,
SNAP-Ed Community Worker

Jackie Hahn,
Office Support Associate

Sarah Clayton,
Office Support Assistant

Debbie Boley,
Office Support Assistant

OFFICE INFORMATION

Clay County Extension

223 West Railroad St
Flora, IL 62839
(618) 662-3124
Fax: (217) 347-7775
Monday - Friday, 8 AM-4:30 PM

Effingham County Extension

1209 Wenthe Dr
Effingham, IL 62401
(217) 347-7773
Fax: (217) 347-7775
Monday - Friday, 8 AM-4:30 PM

Fayette County Extension

118 N Sixth St
Vandalia, IL 62471
(618) 283-2753
Fax: (217) 347-7775
Monday - Friday, 8 AM-4:30 PM

Jasper County Extension

124 S. Van Buren
Newton, IL 62448
(618) 783-2521
Fax: (217) 347-7775
Monday - Friday, 8 AM-4:30 PM

ONLINE



Main: @UIExtensionCEFJ
Clay: @ClayCountyIL4H
Effingham: @EffinghamCountyIL4H
Fayette: @FayetteCountyIL4H
Jasper: @JasperCountyIllinois4H



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Cover photo: Beautiful view of Vandalia's Little Community Garden. The garden celebrated its 20th year in 2022.



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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.