

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

University Extension



Black Hawk County Extension

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Get inside Extension and discover how we support healthy people, healthy environments, and healthy economies. Read about some of the ways ISU Extension meets local needs, improves quality of life, and helps make Black Hawk County a better place to live. You'll be amazed at what we do.

County Extension Staff

Allen Ricks

County Extension Education Director

Julie Evenson

County Horticulturist

Meridith Morgan

County Youth Coordinator

Lynette Cline & Ardie Viet

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Kevin Sittig

Extension Council Chair

Allen Ricks

County Extension Education Director

Field Staff based in Black Hawk County

Madelyn Ridgeway, *County Family Ed.*

Sandy Scholl, *Community Resource*

Mary TeWinkel, *4-H & Youth Development*

Jill Weber, *Families: Nutrition & Health*

Mike Willett, *CIRAS*

Field Staff serving Black Hawk County, but based in other counties

Donna Andrusyk, *Families: Family Life*

Craig Chase, *Ag: Farm Management*

George Cummins, *Crops*

Judy Isaacson, *External Relations*

Mark Storlie, *Swine*

Dale Thoreson, *Ag: Dairy/Beef*

Healthy People

Black Hawk County is the recipient of CYFAR (Children, Youth, Families at Risk) funding for a series of "Strengthening Families" classes. Under the leadership of field specialists Madelyn Ridgeway and Donna Andrusyk, these classes promote healthy relationships in families with young teens.



Research proves the effectiveness of focusing on youth development at crucial ages of vulnerability. Strengthening Families uses trained facilitators to work with youth and parents in developing healthy habits for communication, respect and values sharing. Classes are held in multiple settings and sites within the community to reach broad audiences.

The CYFAR project completed its first funding year in 2008. Four additional years will permit even greater expansion and development as Extension seeks to build healthy families.

Healthy Environments

The spring and summer of 2008 brought many challenges to rural and urban audiences as an F-5 tornado moved the length of the county on May 25, followed two weeks later by record flooding on the Cedar. Extension staff immediately got involved in "hands-on" ways, helping with field debris clean-up and with sandbagging and flood recovery efforts.





Council and constituents in planning session. Current Extension Council members are Loretta Doepke, Lucy Evans, Kathleen Holmes, Donna Jones, Don Moore, Gloria Paulsen, Mike Pipho, Kevin Sittig, and Lillian Thomas.

Black Hawk County Extension Council

Every Iowa county has an elected Extension Council that guides local educational programming by partnering with staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the issues and people of the county.

We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Support Consumer Horticulture
- Strengthen Youth Programming
- Be innovative in use of technology



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(Healthy Environments cont.)

Extension also responded to these natural disasters by providing information resources related to home clean-up, safety, and long-term recovery. Crops, livestock, and farm economics field specialists assisted farm families in assessing need and providing resources for decision making.

4-H youth used the occasion of these events to "Make the Best Better," as they developed projects around their families' recovery from life-altering challenges.

As the long-term recovery continues, Extension's leadership is seen in the state and local initiatives to help the physical, emotional, and economic rebuilding of our region. Just as Extension responded to its first crisis in Black Hawk County in 1913, the heritage of service to people in times of need continues in the 21st century.

Healthy Economies

How can agricultural producers best make decisions about their farming operations in these turbulent times? Extension seeks to offer practical, research-based information for economic decision making.

For the second year, Farm Leasing meetings were held in the summer of 2008, with more than 200 land owners and renters in attendance. Craig Chase, farm economist, provided useful information for reviewing and renewing land leases.



A number of Black Hawk County producers utilize the services and programs of the Northeast Iowa Research Farm at Nashua, where best practice trials are field demonstrated. A new educational building, under construction at the Research Farm, will

allow even greater access to research-based information.

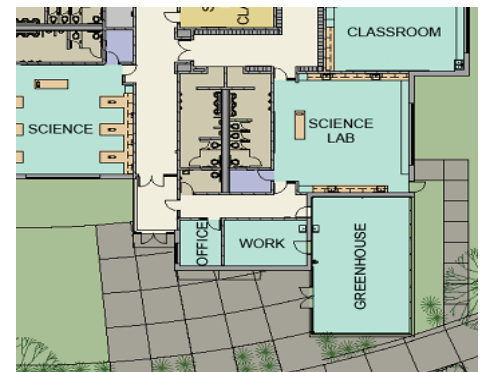
Black Hawk County Extension is also a partner in Women, Land, and Legacy programs, designed to meet the particular needs of women who are decisions makers for farming operations.

Additionally, Extension staff meet one-on-one with county residents who have particular questions or who are seeking guidance in their own economic decisions.

Extension's Impact

A very exciting project is under development in Black Hawk County! Extension is partnering with the Waterloo Community Schools in the construction of an educational greenhouse at the new facility that will replace Logan Intermediate School.

Through a gift by the Young Family Foundation, the greenhouse will be completed in the fall of 2009.



The greenhouse will be a resource for all of the schools in Black Hawk County, and will also be open for after-hours and summer-time programming. Master Gardening classes and gardening symposia will be held there. Curriculum planning is underway and facility use agreements are being written. "Dinners in a Greenhouse" are becoming annual fundraising events to find the additional dollars to meet programming needs.

The project has developed through strong community collaboration over three years. The greenhouse will open in with the new school year. Extension is pleased to be able to help bring this new dream to reality.