



ISU Extension Programs Make a Difference

Quarterly Program Report: January—March 2011

Don't Find Yourself in Dirt Court!

During the 4th Women Adding Value to Agriculture (WAVA) conference, the attendees were treated to some dinner theater. In this session of "Dirt Court", three sisters were fighting over Dad's farm.

Dad had a stroke was no longer able to live at home. He did not make provisions for himself or his family and the sisters were debating the future of the farm.



Pictured from left are Judge Mark Murphy, plaintiffs Sandra, Dad (Dick Horne), Margaret and Julie. Margaret rents Dad's farm with her husband. Sandra is an accountant in Chicago and Julie lives at home for free.

After watching the drama, the 37 women in the audience had the opportunity to ask questions and then discussed the situation at their table during supper. Each table then rendered their "jury" decision after the meal.

Several conference attendees commented that the simulation was "almost too real." Sixty percent of those surveyed said that they plan to address issues with their estate plan or will talk to family about their plans after attending this event.

8th Horticulture Chautauqua

Spring returned in spirit with 8th Annual Garden Chautauqua hosted by Iowa State University Extension - Northeast Iowa at the Dairy Center near Calmar on Saturday, March 5.



Over one hundred people attended the conference featuring ten speakers in twelve concurrent sessions throughout the day. Several of the most popular programs included Outstanding Trees, Shrubs and Perennials; Plant Propagation; Pruning Trees & Shrubs; New Perennials and Food Drying.

Participants were asked to rate speakers on a scale of 0 (poor) to 5 (excellent) and eight of the speakers were rated 4 or higher. Bob Hauer, who recruited the speakers, said, "I've heard some of these speakers before and knew they were good and I also got suggestions from others. It worked out well."

This was the first Garden Chautauqua where we did a hands-on project – making a willow garlic basket. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. In fact, the most common complaint was that the sessions were too short!



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Inaugural Food & Farm Expo

Northeast Iowa farmers gathered to network and learn at the first Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Expo in Calmar on Feb. 5. The event, hosted by Iowa State University Extension, NICC and the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm (NIFF) Coalition, attracted more than 150 people.



Participants viewed vendor display and talked with resource people. Four presentations were given during the day on marketing, food safety, farm to school and a food buyer panel.

The NIFF Coalition is part of the Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative--a partner of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food & Community program. The coalition is creating opportunities for farmers to engage in the local food system through production, processing, distribution, storage and market opportunities.

Employee Management Workshops Boost Efficiency

During February, Iowa State University Extension sponsored an Employee Management Workshop series in Calmar. The programs sponsored by the North Central Region Risk Management Education Agency and ISUE, helped agricultural employers look for new methods to improve employee performance, reduce risk concerns, and improve overall operation productivity.

At each program, workshop participants had the opportunity to explore a number of specific topics, including operation labor needs, feedback and communication, and compensation and benefits options, among many others. The workshops presented relevant ideas and concepts that ag-related employers can implement to improve their employee management system. The techniques outlined during the workshops are designed to have a positive direct impact on both the employer and the employee.

Seminars Perfect Dairy Herd Management Practices

ISU Extension, in partnership with area milk, veterinary, nutrition, and milk equipment associates, hosted 13 on-farm workshops across the state to anticipate the upcoming major changes in milk quality standards.



The educational workshops focused on dairy herd management practices that lead to improved cow health and milk quality. Leo Timms, Ph.D., ISU Extension dairy specialist and recognized expert on udder health topics, started the discussion at each farm. Producers visited five stations during the workshop including the milking center and housing areas.

Workshop instructors emphasized the importance of adhering to the ABC's in the cows' environment: Air Quality, Bunk Space along with good nutrition, and Comfortable, clean stalls. Workshop participants also took home practical skills such as Body Condition Scoring, analyzing cow comfort, and techniques for proper milk quality evaluation. By working closely with milk producers, processors and regulators, ISU Extension helps ensure the manufacturing of safe and wholesome dairy products.

New Faces—New Roles



Dan Lane accepted a new position with ISU Extension as the Youth Development Specialist in Region 4 and Region 11. Lane previously served as a Region 4 Program Coordinator and Clayton County Extension Director.



Lynette Anderson has accepted a new position as Regional Youth Program Coordinator. Anderson will assist county staff with 4-H and Food & Fitness activities. Anderson was the County Youth Coordinator in Howard County and will start her new responsibilities on May 1.



Carrie Courtney is the new Office Manager in Winneshiek County. Carrie comes to ISU Extension from Luther College Admissions. Carrie replaces Bonnie Sorum who retired after 42 years with ISU Extension.

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