

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## University Extension



### County Extension Staff

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Winneshiek County Extension  
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County Youth Coordinator

**Bonnie Sorum**

Administrative Assistant

**Ann Moen**

Office Assistant

**Brian Lang**

Crops Field Specialist

**Erin Ludwig** (not pictured)

Family Management Specialist

### Staff Serving

### Winneshiek County, but based in other counties

**Cindy Baumgartner**

Nutrition and Health Specialist

**Beverly Berna**

Family Life Specialist

**Judy Isaacson**

External Relations Specialist

**Brian Lang**

Crop Field Specialist

**Patrick O'Malley**

Commercial Horticulture Specialist

**Barbara Sauser**

Youth Field Specialist

**Sandy Scholl**

Communities Specialist

**Mark Storlie**

Swine Specialist

**Dale Thoreson**

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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 Winneshiek County a better place to live. You'll be amazed at what we do.*

Glen Ohloff

Extension Council Chair

Brenda Ranum

County Extension Education Director

### Healthier People, Stronger Families, Vibrant Communities

Through the NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative, Winneshiek County Extension is on the ground floor of a movement to improve the policies, practices, and systems that determine how food arrives on our table and how our communities in NE Iowa can grow opportunities for physical activity for all. This past year, CEED Brenda Ranum, Randy Uhl, Winneshiek County Economic Development Director, and Krista Vanden Brink, Winneshiek County Public Health Director led monthly county team meetings to determine our local assets, learn about possibilities, and define our vision. The same work is happening in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, and Howard counties. Over 500 people from all sectors (including public health, education, agriculture, business, government, faith communities, parks and recreation) have engaged in the process.



NE Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Regional Team members plan how to improve our built environments so children and families have access to physical activity every day.

With our neighboring counties, we have built a regional collaborative to strengthen our efforts. Representing Winneshiek County on the Regional Team are Rick Edwards, Eric Nordschow, Lindsay Erdman, Karen Foster, Hannah Ranum, Liz Dovenberg, and Gabe Smith. The NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative is one of nine collaboratives nationwide supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to be models of change over the next ten years.



Front Row: Glen Ohloff, Pat Courtney, Nancy Kovarik; Back Row: Linda Hemesath, Norbert Lovstuen, Kathy Moen and Duane Holthaus. Missing: Dave Huinker and John Anderson

## Winneshiek 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:

- Provide leadership and programming support to the NE Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative and Northeast Iowa Food and Farm Coalition efforts
- Provide opportunities for new and existing farmers to diversify;
- Increase the sale and consumption of healthy, locally grown food on a local, regional and national level;
- Expand youth programming and work to include experiential, educational, meaningful and FUN activities into our Winneshiek County 4-H efforts.



## We connect you to Iowa State University

We are your local link to make connections for campus enrollment,

continuing education, campus visits, campus exhibits, conferences, camps, and sporting events.

... and justice for all

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## Healthier People Investing in the Well-Being of our Children

Eighty-five percent of parents with children under the age of six work outside the home in Winneshiek county. Research shows that 80% of Iowa's child care is of poor quality. To improve child care quality, ISU Extension offers local training, evaluation and consultation through programs such as Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, New Staff Orientation, and Better Kid Care. These programs help providers meet recommendations for staff training, health and safety, and meaningful adult/child interactions. In 2008, 13 providers from the 8 largest child care centers and preschools in Winneshiek county participated in these programs.

## Growing a Healthy Local Food Economy

As a partner of the Northeast Iowa Food and Farm (NIFF) Coalition, ISU Extension brought together local producers and institutions in five counties to network about the use of more locally grown food. By spring 2008, the NIFF Coalition, working with county economic development directors, awarded \$7,500 in mini-grants to 20 NE Iowa producers for growing or expanding local food enterprises. These funds leveraged more than \$108,000 in resources for local food capacity building, including greenhouses, farm stands, packing sheds and orchard expansions.



As a result of these efforts, four local institutions in Winneshiek County, including Oneota Food Co-op and Luther College, reported an increase in their base-line purchases of local foods, totaling over \$225,000. This is a 42% increase over the previous year. Through networking and incentives, partners agree these efforts provided a boost to our local economy. An added benefit is that our families and youth are eating healthier foods grown locally.

## Healthier Economies Alfalfa research results in increased profits

ISU Extension Field Agronomist Brian Lang recognized a potentially significant economic problem in northeast Iowa regarding a soil nutrient deficiency. Through visits to clients' farms, Lang diagnosed what appeared to be a pattern of sulfur deficiency problems in alfalfa. He initiated research, networking farmers and resources to conduct local research trials across northeast Iowa.



Results from the 2-year project identified wide-spread sulfur deficiency problems in alfalfa across northeast Iowa costing producers an average of \$50 an acre in lost income. Correcting the problem provides northeast Iowa alfalfa growers an estimated \$3 million per year in increased profit. In addition, with these research results, Iowa State University engaged industry support for two grants to pursue similar research in corn production.