

## 2011 Points of Pride

### County Extension Staff

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### Mitchell 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:

- Elderly Population
- Reaching Low Income/Poverty Level
- New Construction Population
- Labor Pool
- Increased Interest in Food Preservation/Gardening with Economy Issues

### ISU Extension in Mitchell County

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

Steve Rachut  
*Extension Council Chair*

Gary Hall  
*Regional Extension Education Director*

### Healthy People

Developing local food networks and partnerships brings many health benefits to communities. Responding to interest in Mitchell County, ISU Extension partnered with the Women, Land and Legacy group to host a *Feast of Local Foods* program, inviting the public to meet Mitchell County producers and sample what is available locally.

Six producers were featured, with a meal of locally grown, produced and sold foods served to attendees including: pork, eggs, tomatoes, sweet corn and melons from Mitchell County.

Our goal was to educate residents in Mitchell County to learn what is available locally and how to contact local producers. As a result of this meeting, a local foods directory is being planned for our area.

### 4-H Benefits Youth, Families

400 individuals, both parents and youth, gathered in November for 4-H Awards Night to celebrate the accomplishments of the previous year and to build excitement for the coming year's events. 4-H is a program that encourages citizenship, volunteerism, community service and individual accomplishment, and then recognizes those accomplishments and values our youth. In turn, this leads to better communities and better citizens, which is the focus of the 4-H program in Mitchell County.



## Healthy Environments

The KGLO Ag Expo provided excellent information for ag producers to consider the environment as they prepared for the upcoming growing season. Approximately 1,250 people attended the two-day event in Osage.



State Climatologist Harry Hillaker (pictured above) described the changing climate through data from previous years. The information helped producers understand weather patterns and possible environmental scenarios for the upcoming growing season. Selection of hybrids and planning for field work was presented to the group of farmers.

Iowa State University Grain Marketing Specialist Chad Hart explained how the environment can impact grain markets and how producers should position themselves to minimize their risk. Outlook for the grain markets are good, but weather and many other factors were described that farmers should consider.

## Healthy Economies

Mitchell County is a rural community with an agricultural economy. ISU Extension had a significant, positive impact on the economy in Mitchell County this year by offering two programs focusing on meeting the needs of Mitchell County residents.

An Estate Planning workshop to discuss financial decisions, tax laws and planning for the future featured Professor Roger McEowen from the Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation at Iowa State University. It reached an audience of 80 in March.

In August, we focused again on agricultural economics and provided a program in the community to address farmland leasing, supplying owners and renters with useful information for reviewing and renewing their land leases. Again, ISU Extension reached more than 65 interested residents with this timely information.



By offering ag economics programs in Mitchell County, the county Extension office engages the community and offers services that the community values.

The Extension office reports increased walk-in clients and phone questions related directly to leasing, rental rates, and estate laws as a follow-up to the programs presented and "word of mouth" referral. ISU Extension is meeting those needs through client interaction and fact-based educational materials.

## Healthy People

The Mitchell County 4-H program is committed to healthy families and one way we promote this is through the 4-H Intermediate Leadership

League's quarterly 4-H Family Skate Event.



Families are invited to the Cedar River Complex Event Center to spend an afternoon together roller skating at a party organized and facilitated by middle school age 4-H'ers.

The Intermediate Leadership League work to organize the event; they work at the event as skating buddies, music DJ's, ticket takers, skate rental attendants and concession servers which gives them pride and ownership of the program.

Families have the opportunity to spend time together, learn together and play together building a stronger, healthier family. The skating event is a positive community event for all involved.

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Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.

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