

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

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

Evelyn Oliver

Extension Council Chair

Clint McDonald

County Extension Education Director

Healthy People

Woodbine, Iowa is a participant in the Northwest Area Foundation's, Horizons Program, which develops community leadership and works to reduce poverty in communities.

ISU Extension facilitated Woodbine's active involvement in Horizons activities including Study Circles, Leadership Plenty training, Action Forums, and Community Visioning.



During this time, community members identified and prioritized needs with committees then being formed to take action on the ideas.

One of the prioritized identified needs was a youth mentoring program. It was hoped that such a program would lead to youth receiving support and guidance from a caring adult and thus show improvement in academic achievement, attendance, discipline, and interpersonal relationships.

Healthy Environments

A group of local crop producers, ISU Extension staff, NRCS staff and Harrison and Shelby County Soil and Water Conservation commissioners and staff along with conservation and production experts planned the Western Iowa No-Tiller's Field Day.





Pictured: Julie Shelton, Mary Dickinson, Annette Knott, Sue Cogdill, Tammy Neill, Evelyn Oliver, Russ Kurth (l to r). Not pictured: Gary Hall, and Pam Parsons

Harrison 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:

- Youth Development
- Poverty Reduction
- Bioeconomy
- Economic Development



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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Western Iowa No-Tillers (continued)

Over 150 people attended the day-long program held at Minden, Iowa on June 17, 2008. Cropping rotations, fertilizer placement, seed to soil contact, moisture conservation and fuel savings were subjects addressed by a host of experts. A particular emphasis of the day was corn on corn acres.

Management of residue cover and planting populations and seed depths was also emphasized. A display of no-till planters was on-site. Presentations from six ISU Extension specialists representing crop physiology, pest and soil management and water quality were featured in the field demonstrations.

Healthy Economies

Many Harrison County landowners have highly erodible land that is not suited for row crop production. The Aronia berry is a crop that grows well in these areas and lends itself to profitable, organic production systems. The motivation behind the success of the Aronia berry as a food ingredient is the health aspects (high in antioxidants and other nutrients) and the value of the natural, stable purple food coloring.

Currently, the growers of Aronia berries in Harrison County and the Midwest cannot match market demand and Aronia products are being imported. Aronia berries are grown throughout Europe, and are just now getting established as a viable crop in the U.S. in the last ten years.



Harrison County Extension is helping local growers seek out other growers to dedicate 2 to 10 acres each to new Aronia production. As the total acres of Aronia increase, growers will be able to justify the expense of mechanical harvesters by sharing investment costs. Mechanical harvesters will reduce labor costs/acre and increase efficiency.

In addition, once critical mass is developed, a complete packaged-goods line can be mass marketed (starting regionally and then expanded).

In summary, the current growers of Aronia in Western Iowa would like to recruit other growers to give Aronia a try. The increased production will also boost opportunities for all growers. In addition, these growers desire to establish a grass roots client base for Aronia products.

ISU Extension has been a partner in helping the growers get established with various aspects relating to horticultural and organic production systems; as well as issues related to over-all growth plans and end product marketing.

Impact



"ISU Extension has been instrumental in helping Sawmill Hollow Organic Farms achieve our goal of creating a new sustainable industry for the region and also educating the public about the positive health qualities of the Aronia berry." ...Vaughn Pittz