

## MAKING LIFE BETTER IN BUCHANAN COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach harnesses the power of research-based knowledge, education, and information combined with practical experience. We engage the people of Buchanan County to make life better and build a **#STRONGIOWA**.

### ► UPSKILLING IOWA'S WORKFORCE

ISU Extension and Outreach provides online and in-person education to meet the needs of Iowa's workforce. Our research-based information and resources help workers build skills, gain necessary certifications, and advance in their jobs and careers. In Buchanan County, we offered numerous annual Continuing Instruction Courses (CIC) for

Commercial and Private Pesticide Applicators and held trainings for Commercial and Private Manure Applicators. We partnered with the Independence Area Chamber of Commerce and Buchanan County Economic Development to provide several lunch-n-learn workshops to improve productivity, profitability, interpersonal relations, and grant writing in Buchanan county.



### ► EMPOWERING TODAY'S FAMILIES

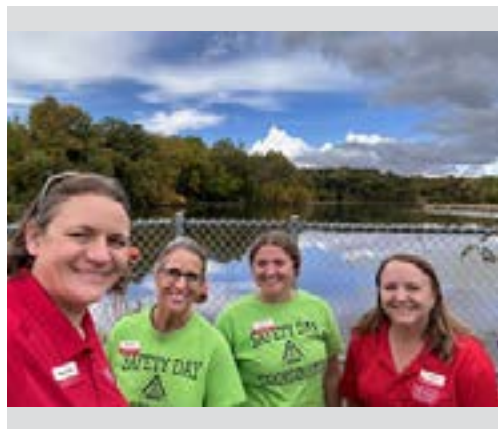
ISU Extension and Outreach empowers Iowans with research-based education related to family, food, and finance, and focused on well-being. They gain knowledge and build skills to strengthen their relationships, improve nutrition, increase financial security, and address mental health. In Buchanan County, we provide monthly Health and Wellness 365 programs at the Independence Senior Center in collaboration with Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging/USDA. We offered Mental Health First Aid trainings, full day skill-based workshops covering the signs of a mental health crisis and how to take action.

Once a month we provide outreach programming at the Darrell E. Davis Adult Day Center, a senior care provider for residents needing respite care.

### ► STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

ISU Extension and Outreach of Buchanan County is the host organization of the Independence Farmers Market connecting local food producers and crafters. In addition to special events, we average 24 vendors per week offering all homegrown and homemade items. Our local arts organization, LACES, continues to provide live music with the Second Saturday Series.





The Buchanan County Master Gardeners use research-based horticulture and gardening knowledge and practices to educate people and coordinate projects that promote healthy communities. These volunteers work tirelessly to plant and maintain numerous gardens in the area. They provide hands-on activities for our youth at special events and at the Farmers Market. The annual Gardening Symposium was attended by nearly 100 gardeners from Buchanan and neighboring counties.

This summer we introduced the Power of Produce (PoP) Club to the community. It is an incentive program designed to empower children ages 4-12 to make healthful food choices. Each week at the Farmers Market, children receive a coupon to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables and food plants. We had 134 participants sign up and 343 coupons were turned in over the course of 16 weeks. This program is generously funded by the Buchanan County Master Gardeners in conjunction with our goal to build a healthy, prospering community.

## **BUILDING TOMORROW'S LEADERS**

ISU Extension and Outreach engages Iowa youth in educational experiences. We help them build STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), communication, leadership, and other skills. They will be ready to pursue higher education and careers and become Iowa's next generation of leaders.

Buchanan County has nine active 4-H clubs for grades 4-12. The 4-H program empowers youth to reach their full potential through youth-adult partnerships and research-based experiences. We also boast seven Clover Kids clubs that foster the development of life skills that are essential for the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical maturation of kindergarten through third graders by providing a unique, age-appropriate educational opportunity.

This year at the Buchanan County Fair, there were 215 4-H and FFA exhibitors with over 1300 livestock and static projects! Over \$125,000 was raised at the annual Livestock Auction with the money given directly to each exhibitor to help with their expenses for their livestock projects. The Pie and Flower Auction earned over \$16,000 to support programming and projects within the 4-H program.

Twenty 4-H and FFA Mentors paired with 20 Buddies in our third annual Goat Getters program which provides an opportunity for special needs individuals to be part of showing livestock in a safe environment. Over 180 youth attended our Summer Day Camps held in various locations throughout the county. Youth could learn about magic, be a chef for the day, create art projects, learn the science behind candy-making (and taste the reward!), and discover how to survive zombies. We offered 12 six-hour STEM-based summer day camps!

Several 4-Hers participated in the Junior Camp and Intermediate Camp held each June. This summer we also collaborated with Buchanan County Conservation and Fontana Park naturalists for a Wapsi Wanderers two-day canoe and camping trip down the Wapsipinicon River.

The STEM Wednesday series at the Jesup Public Library continues for the second year. We feature lessons from STEM-Lit To Go! and STEAM'n Through the Seasons. Topics included activities revolving around popcorn, apples, wind, marshmallows, ice cream, and more! These are innovative Iowa 4-H programs that support the development of STEM, STEAM, and literacy skills for K-3 children.

## **YOUTH OUTREACH**

Buchanan County has made a concerted effort to extend our reach of educational opportunities for youth development programs by providing opportunities in schools, libraries, and other local institutions. In 2023, we held the annual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day for over 200 second graders at Heartland Acres Agribition Center and the Rural School Safety Day for over 150 students at Fontana Park. Our purpose is to teach students to stay safe on farms and at home with a variety of age-appropriate lessons.

We brought the joy of reading to 23 East Buchanan students with books and materials about agriculture through Read Across Iowa, a collaborative effort between the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Iowa 4-H Youth Development, and the Iowa State Education Association.

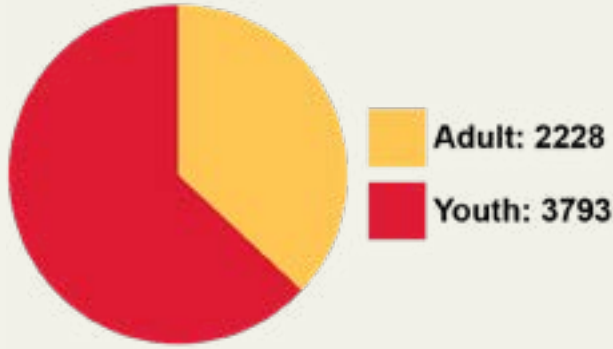
St John's sixth graders learned technical skills, participated in hands-on activities and workshops, and engaged with nationally recognized leaders at the Youth Voice in Action 4-H Summit.

Thirty-four St. Athanasius PreK-1st grade students in Jesup and 40 kindergartners at East Buchanan in Winthrop are delighting in a series of lessons from STEAM'n Through the Seasons

The Ricochet program continues for 40 sixth graders at East Buchanan. Ricochet is a skill-building youth leadership program designed for middle-school aged youth where they participate in interactive and educational activities, discover and develop their leadership skills, get actively involved in their community, and grow as LEADERS!



## Direct educational exchanges with adults and youth in Buchanan County



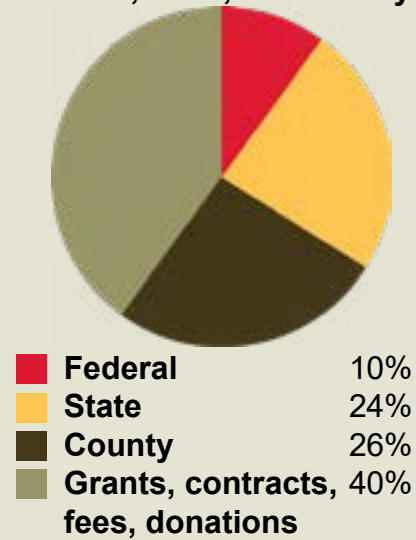
**2453** Volunteer Hours **x** \$28.09/hour

**\$68,909.10**  
Benefit to Buchanan County



**109** Educational Programs Delivered

## A statewide funding partnership: Federal, state, and county



**Did you know?** Statewide, ISU Extension and Outreach is funded through a federal-state-county partnership. In this county, the extension council uses property taxes, program fees, contracts, grants, and donations to fund programming in areas that match county needs. County funds help leverage additional state and federal investments in programs locally.

During educational exchanges, ISU Extension and Outreach assisted Iowans through educational programming or by connecting them to ISU expertise and resources. The number of educational exchanges, educational programs, and volunteer hours are from Federal Fiscal Year 2023 (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023).

## BUCHANAN COUNTY EXTENSION COUNCIL

The Buchanan County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming. From assessing needs through implementing programs and evaluating outcomes, these council members partner with Iowa State University to make life better in Buchanan County:

Ryan Kress (Chair), Whitney Holt (Vice Chair), Amy Peyton (Secretary), Pat Donnelly (Treasurer), Michelle Mangrich, Janel Rathbun, Paul Short, and Cindy Waters.

The ISU Extension and Outreach Buchanan County office in Independence is staffed by Kara Vance (Director), Megan Rawlins (Youth Coordinator), Lori Dietzenbach (Youth Outreach Educator), and DeAnn Lentz (Office Assistant). Our staff strives to be active in the community serving on boards and committees to assist in the growth of the local economy, educate our future leaders, and facilitate strong community partnerships.

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND OUTREACH BUCHANAN COUNTY

2600 Swan Lake Boulevard, Suite A, Independence, IA 50644 | 319-334-7161 |  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/buchanan](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/buchanan)

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