

WHAT WE WANT

#STRONGIOWA

2018 IN BENTON COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Benton County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Benton 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:

- Economic Development
- Food and the Environment
- Health and Well-being
- K12 Youth Outreach

Benton County Extension Celebrated 100 years of service to the county.

Benton County Extension celebrated 100 years of outreach to Benton County throughout the year. There was a celebration with a commemorative framed certificate presented to the Council chair, by



John Lawrence, Vice President of ISU Extension and Outreach, at the fair and the Extension Week Open House, the Vinton Farmer's Market booth and publishing of a history book on Benton County Extension.

Community & Economic Development

2018 was the beginning of two community projects. Old School Produce Partners and Third on 3rd gardens. Our goal is to improve the quality of life in our community and throughout the county by helping citizens grow, buy or receive as a gift, fresh produce. We believe this will stimulate our communities.

We have been actively involved in Benton County Disaster Recovery Coalition to continue help communities with disaster and prepare for them as well.

Extension Council Members

We want communities and farmers to thrive, and families and children to be healthy. And eventually we want to turn the world over to the next generation better than we found it.

Shannon Feuerbach
Extension Council Chair

Greg Svovoda
Council Member

Duane Fisher
Council Member

Jim Harken
Regional Director

Jean Schmidt
Council Member

Allison Hicks
Council Member

Brain Mc Nulty
Council Member

John Holst
Council Member

Barb Schanbacher
Council Member

Matt Marovec
Council Member



Health and Well-Being

ServSafe® is the food safety certification course developed by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. More than 15 participants from Benton County learned current best practices related to safe food handling and cleaning and sanitizing as well as tips on how to implement essential food safety practices and create a culture of food safety

Farm 2 School is working with all 4 schools in the Vinton Shellsburg District to bring locally grown produce and scratch cooking within our lunch program.

The Benton County Wellness Coalition has begun to expand our focus to all sectors of health including: physical, mental, financial, spiritual and emotional.

Benton County Master Gardeners have worked on many garden projects to distribute roughly 300 pounds of fresh produce to those in need.

Food and Environment

Since 2014, Benton County Extension has been involved in the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship water quality project of the Benton/Tama Nutrient Reduction Strategy of three watersheds in the northern part of the county. Recently, we have been involved in the Watershed Management Authority of the Middle Cedar River. As a result, we have affected change by reducing nitrogen on over 22,000 crop acres.

In 2018, we have helped train over 400 private and commercial applicators in safe pesticide application. In Iowa, commercial and private pesticide applicators must obtain and maintain a certification to handle and apply pesticides safely. This training assures crops and food production is safe for consumers and ensures our environment is protected.

Benton County Extension Staff

Greg Walston
County Program
Director

Courtnei Siela
County Youth Coordinator

Patti Upmeyer
Office Coordinator

Denise Schwab
Beef Program Specialist

Benton County Extension also worked with land owners and tenants to help with farm leases and or cash rent agreements.

K-12 Youth Outreach

2018 was a great year for youth outreach impacting over 1000 youth at least once through various activities: 3rd Grade Ag Day, Farm Safety Day, Summer Science Discovery (in 5 communities), Farm 2 School, Farm Field trip, Vinton Youth Garden, Benton County Conservation nature programs, Vinton 1st graders discovered about future careers in *Ag Explore* and kindergarten, a greater understanding of our natural resources in a hands-on, fun and interactive way called *Enviroscape*, .

Benton County 4-H is expanding with 6 Cloverbud clubs and 15 regular clubs. Events included: Regional 4-H Palooza, the legislative trip to the Capital building in Des Moines, volleyball tournament, bowling tournament, awards program and we had a pie eating contest at the fair, plant ID, cookie stacking and photography class.



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