



2021 IN EAST POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of East Pottawattamie County for a #STRONGIOWA.



**Sustainable
ENVIRONMENTS**



**Thriving
COMMUNITIES**



**Resilient
PEOPLE**



**Future
LEADERS**



The East Pottawattamie County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

Thank you for your support.

Lori Nisley

Extension Council Chair

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Council Member

Stephanie Harder

Council Member

Andy Messerschmidt

Council Member

Carrie Bane

Council Member

Chris Conover

Council Member

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Tom Novotny

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Connie Haines

Council Member

Serving the People of East Pottawattamie County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of East Pottawattamie County. During 2021 we focused on the following efforts.

East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach worked hard to meet the needs of their audiences. Providing multiple opportunities for both private and commercial applicator trainings. Meeting the needs of what the community



Providing local opportunities for students due to the affects of the pandemic

Due to the pandemic and many uncertainties involving the school days and transportation. Riverside Elementary School was unable to host traditional outings for student field trips. East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach staff were contacted by the district to create activities that would provide educational, hands-on learning, while giving the students an opportunity to experience a field trip type activity.

The local staff took it upon themselves to create two events, with the first geared for pre-school and kindergarten education. Youth were engaged in hands-on-learning on gardening. Education on what fruits and vegetables are grown in gardens. The students traveled from station to station sampling produce, listening to a story, creating a place mat, and planting a tomato plant to take home.

The second activity was designed for first and second grade students. This was an educational opportunity to learn about honeybees. Youth were engaged in activities from playing with Bee Bots, learning about local honey producers, tasting local honey, and traveling the school yard in a story-walk activity.



members and businesses were wanting.

A Beef Quality Assurance training was held in July to help educate local producers on the right way to care for, transport and produce cattle. Allowing participants to obtain national certification so their consumers know they are only raising high quality, well-cared for cattle to enter the food chain.

Showcasing 4-H at the County Fair

The Pottawattamie County Fair returned in 2021, providing the opportunity for youth to demonstrate what they had learned through their 4-H project work over the past year.

Youth were able to engage in interactive, hands-on activities throughout the week. Providing fun and safe opportunities for youth to embrace the local county fair traditions and experiences. This also allowed families to feel a sense of security and welcomed them to the next step in the adventure.

Participants showcased livestock projects, working exhibits, engaged in youth Olympic games, played in the gaga ball pit, participated in a shooting sports demonstration and much more. A story-walk activity was provided for families to travel around the fair ground and see the sites of the fair. A new club challenge was introduced by County Youth Coordinator, Ashtyn Danker. A haybale decorating engaged all the club youth, allowing for friendly competition, laughter and creativity. This also served as a new visual attraction to the grounds for the public to enjoy.

Working toward Recovery

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach East Pottawattamie County has been supporting Iowans in reviving the local economy.

East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach decided to assist the local economy by devoting monies from their



budget to support the local community food pantries in Oakland, Macedonia, Avoca, and Walnut. The council voted to commit up to \$10,000 in tax dollars to the food pantries within these communities. County Director Kadel reached out to each of the pantries and received a list of goods they were lacking. She then worked with the local grocery stores in Avoca and Oakland, as well as the local meat lockers in Minden and Hancock to obtain the items. A few of the items that were purchased were one-pound packages of frozen hamburger, cases of canned vegetables, peanut butter, muffin mixes, fresh vegetables, and personal hygiene items. Each of the pantries were then supplied with Spend Smart Eat Smart recipes to assist in creating meal options. This allowed for monies to be spent locally for items and provided an assistance with the food insecurity that was happening in the rural area. In addition to this, Kadel assisted the pantries in organizing five distributions of Farmers to Families food boxes. During these distributions 1,150 boxes were distributed to families in need - providing healthy food access at no cost to the families and no income qualifications.

East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach Extension council and staff could see the impacts of the pandemic affecting the local eating establishments. After the release of various changes, protocols, and visual impacts of turnover in small food businesses, the decision was made to provide sponsorships for local small business owners to send their employees through ServSafe training. The county did this by providing a training that was exclusive for only East Pottawattamie small businesses. County Director Kadel reached out by letter and phone to each of the non-corporate food businesses in all communities offering the



Top Picture—Distributions of the Farmers to Families food boxes at the Oakland Community Center.

Bottom Left: Carson residents participating in the Rural Housing Readiness program.

Bottom Right: Oakland residents participating in the Rural Housing Readiness program.

scholarships. She provided education on the changes that were coming regarding the law updates that some business owners were unaware of. Nine individuals participated in the March training. East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach paid for one half of the cost of the trainings for each attendee. The cost of the ServSafe is \$150, East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach paid \$75 of the cost for each of the nine participants.

East Pottawattamie County Extension and Outreach County Director Kadel reached out to each of the six communities in their county. Questions were asked as to when the last time each of the communities had conducted a housing assessment. All communities were asked if they would like to participate in any programs offered by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to help their local communities grow. The communities of Carson and Oakland were fast to commit and ask to take part in the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment program. East Pottawattamie County Extension then committed \$5,000 per community to pay for the program to be held. County Director Kadel then took the opportunity to write a grant for each community, obtaining \$10,000 through the Iowa Economic Authority and providing each community with a \$15,000 benefit to assist in their progressions. Both communities have completed the programs and are awaiting the final reports from the Community and



Economic Development staff. This program will assist in providing opportunities for forward progression and growth for each of the communities.

East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach created a story walk tour. A story-walk is a book that is placed page by page on yard signs and then spread throughout a designated area or path. Over a six-week period a new story was placed in a community for families to enjoy. Flyers were sent home through schools and advertised through the local libraries. The stories were placed in each community park. This provided families the opportunity to travel from community to community and enjoy a low-cost family fun event. It also allowed each community's park to be utilized and explored. After the completion of each story walk, families were asked to scan a QR code and complete a brief survey of the story. Following the completion of the event, East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach provided prizes from each community. Local items were purchased such as: movie tickets from the Dreamland Theater in Carson, coupons for baked goods at Roberts Bakery in Walnut, and tokens for ice cream cones at the Oakland Dairy Queen. Again, encouraging travel in our rural communities and creating economic support of each of our small family or community owned and operated businesses.

The pandemic created a great deal of uncertainty for many families. With the unknowns of the school programming, schedules, and class requirements some families elected to homeschool their children. Local libraries served as a safe location for families to gather and have an outing with other homeschool families. However, due to tight budgets not all libraries had access to STEM activities and were/are lacking updated materials. The East Pottawattamie Extension Council voted to provide each of the counties libraries a full set of the most recent Checkout Iowa backpacks. This would allow access to educational activities for families who may not have had access to these. Each of the three community libraries were provided seven Checkout Iowa backpacks.

Looking ahead to 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach East Pottawattamie County will continue to evaluate the needs of the East Pottawattamie communities. The staff and council are committed to serving their constituents and listening to what they feel will benefit the communities.

East Pottawattamie Extension and Outreach will evaluate, recommend, and customize programming to meet the needs of the citizens of Avoca, Carson, Hancock, Macedonia, Oakland, and Walnut. Building a #STRONGIOWA.

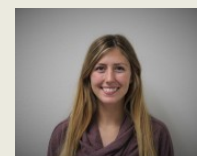
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