

# BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

## STAKEHOLDER REPORT 2022

### 2022 IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach provides research-based education and engages Iowans in solving today's problems and preparing for a thriving future. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Washington County for a #STRONGIOWA.



**The Washington 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.*

**Dave Erwin**  
Council Member

**Kathy Ebert**  
Council Member

**Rhonda Clough**  
Council Member

**Sue Janacek**  
Council Member

**Donna Palmer**  
Council Member

**Dennis Lampe**  
Council Member

**Duane Hamman**  
Council Member

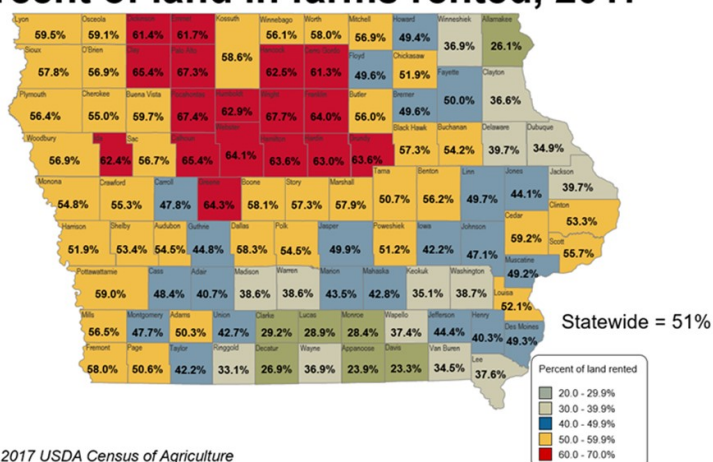
**Ann Williams**  
Council Member

**Margaret Brinning**  
Council Member

### SERVING THE PEOPLE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

In 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach Washington County continued to support Iowans in reviving the Iowa economy, including the farm economy. Farmland is a limited resource for agricultural producers in Iowa, and 38.7% of Washington County agricultural land is under some form of rental arrangement. With an aging landowner population and issues related to farmland changing year after year, leasing programs and the educational materials used in these programs are of great value to the clientele in our county and the landowners scattered across the country. In 2022, we hosted one of 74 locations for Farmland Leasing and Management workshops. As a result, small businesses, entrepreneurs, agribusinesses, landowners, and farmers increased their knowledge of leasing trends, legal issues, and methods

### Percent of land in farms rented, 2017



## Farm and Ranch Wellness

Our county is part of a collaborative project with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to give farmers and farm advocates resources regarding mental health. Two packets were created to be distributed to farmers and those that are in contact with farmers in each designated region of the state. The packet titled "Stress on the Farm" is focused for the farmer themselves. The agriculture advocate packet titled "Farms Stress and Mental Health" includes information on ways business can respond after losing a client or customer to suicide.

The goal from this project was to distribute 2,000 packets throughout Iowa from September 2021 - July 2022. With 7 representatives in 8 region groups, 23,082 packets were distributed to 83 counties. The region Washington was included in consisted of 16 other counties from Jasper to Lee. Within those counties there were 250 direct contacts made, meaning one on one conversations with individuals about the program, and 2,778 indirect contacts which consisted of distributing packets during private pesticide meetings, at banks, courthouses, insurance companies and many other ag advocate locations.

**Brandi Dawson**

**[Bldawson@iastate.edu](mailto:Bldawson@iastate.edu)**



for determining cash rental rates and creating more resilient leasing arrangements. One of the most common replies as to why individuals attend a meeting is to stay aware of trends and changes related to renting farmland. This year, 33.33% of attendees said they would raise the rent due to the information shared in the meeting. ISU Extension and Outreach Washington County continued to engage Iowans in addressing mental health and to provide access to research-based training and education on mental health literacy and suicide prevention. We engaged in programs like Mindful Teen, Farm and Ranch Wellness, QPR and Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

## Agriculture in the Classroom

This year Diane Rinner, Youth Outreach Educator, is in her fourth year of teaching Agriculture in the Classroom. She will be in 60 classrooms, Pre-K thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade, in all of the Washington County school districts and will meet with 1,037 students every month. Through creative and hands-on lessons, she will be teaching students Pre-K thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade about where their food, fuel, and fiber come from. Students were also able to see the importance of agriculture has on their everyday lives.

## Why are we teaching about agriculture to students?

"Students have a better understanding and appreciation of where their food comes from. They realize how important agriculture is to Iowa and how we contribute to the food chain. For students who are in their fourth year of seeing me, their growth and understanding of careers in agriculture and the importance of farmers to our food chain allows me to see the positive impact that I am having on our youth in the county."

## Mindful Teen

Starting the 2022 school year, the Iowa 4-H "Mindful Teen: From Surviving to Thriving" curriculum has been a new outreach program delivered by Washington County 4-H & Youth Coordinator Amy Green. On Wellness Wednesdays in partnership with Washington Middle School, Green teaches 8<sup>th</sup> grade Health students the Mindful Teen course. It is intended to be a 6-session program that defines mindfulness



## Master Gardener Program

The Washington County Master Gardeners continues to grow. Washington County experienced 4 new Master Gardeners last year and this year has 6 more trainees. Hybrid class are allowing more to participate. Group trips, online group activities and pride in our grounds is what keeps bringing in new people. One of the highlights of the year is the Master Gardener Sale that happens in May. Master Gardeners bring in their own personal items and sell them. More importantly is the contact they have with the 200 visitors during the sale.

## Master Conservationist Program

Washington County partnered with Keokuk County this year for our first Master Conservationist Program. We had 8 participants this year with over 7 different local presenters.

Master Conservationist Program is a flipped classroom program. Participants were able to get their hands dirty by exploring local locations for each class.

We decided to do this class in the fall. Which created some fun distractions during harvest for participants and for farmers in the fields.



Top photo: Graduation picture from Master Conservationist Program

Bottom Right Photo: Master Conservationist Program

Bottom Left Photo: Master Gardeners and floral program.



and its connection to stress management and overall well-being. They discover, practice, and reflect upon mindfulness practices and work to establish long-term self-care and mindfulness goals. These lessons align with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in Health Literacy. 85% of the participants said they had learned new mindfulness practices, skills and resources that could be applied to their own life. Students reported the workshop series made them feel “relaxed, confident, good, calm, welcomed, good to know more”. Green will return to WMS to teach remaining 8<sup>th</sup> grade Health classes this coming spring reaching a total of just over 120 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The last day of Wellness Wednesday: Mindful Teen students were given a certificate of completion and reported in a one-on-one conversation what was something they had done to care for themselves in the past six weeks that felt good for their mental health. Mindful Teen in Washington County is supported by a grant from

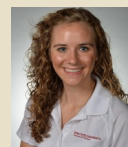
Jefferson, Keokuk, Van Buran, and Washington County Decategorization Project.

### **SALIR ADELANTE**

With invitation from Washington County Extension & Outreach, Washington Community Schools had two staff members trained with 4-H & Youth Coordinator Amy Green to facilitate the Human Sciences program ¡Salir Adelante!. This curriculum helps Latinx parents and their middle school youth reach college and career goals. Over six sessions, facilitators affirm and build on families' strengths to help them explore their hopes and dreams for education and make plans to achieve their goals. Through local community partnerships with DUO Compassion, Hills Bank, Washington State Bank, and Mi Pueblo Real each evening starts with a family meal and then young children have activities in the gym while high school students meet in one room and parents in another room. Their unique lessons then connect back again at the end of the evening for family discussion and activities. Topics discussed have included: personal values priorities, future goals, gpa importance, career exploration in salaries and education, budgets, and college requirements. Eight families graduated from the program with a total of 35 family members. Green commented, "Our evenings were filled with laughter, high energy, good discussion and families seemed to enjoy the hands-on activities together. We always wish to have more time. It was rewarding to see the drive some of these students have for their future."



**Katharina Bain**  
*Regional Director*



**Rebecca Vittetoe**  
*Extension Field Agronomist*



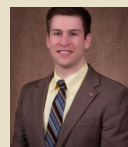
**Andy Miller**  
*County Program Coordinator*



**Cherry Sandeen**  
*4-H Youth Program Specialist, Field Supervisor*



**Amy Green**  
*County Youth Coordinator*



**Matt Romoser**  
*Swine Field Specialist*



**Diane Rinner**  
*Youth Outreach Educator*



**Hailey Burgher**  
*Human Sciences Extension Specialist*



**Brandi Dawson**  
*Office Assistant*



**Ryan Drollette**  
*Farm Management Specialist*

## **IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND OUTREACH WASHINGTON COUNTY**

County Address: 2223 250TH St.

City: Washington, IA 52353 Phone: 319-653-4811

[www.extension.iastate.edu/washington](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/washington)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext). VP.22.329 September 2022