

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

MARION 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 Marion County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Marion 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:

- Positive youth development through youth leadership, citizenship, and life skills training.
- Strengthening families
- Economic development in communities
- Natural resource and environment



Severe Weather and Drought Response

A hail meeting was held on Monday morning June 19th following the severe storms of Thursday evening June 15th that damaged many southern Marion County crop fields. Staff worked with local media and agribusinesses to communicate a quick program response by Extension and Outreach field staff. Field Agronomist Rebecca Vittetoe led the discussion at an area crop field to help farmers assess the hail damage to crops. More than forty area farmers learned how to evaluate corn and soybean plants for survivorship and management options for the damaged crop situation.

Staff responded to many agriculture and natural resource calls about plant and animal problems due to the extreme (cont'd)



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.

Marion County Extension Council and Staff (Left Photo)

Top Row: Jim Petersen, Keith DeBruin (Vice-Chair), Trey Schneider, Dale Miller (County Director), and Mark Drost (Chair)

Middle Row: Kisha Jahner, Randy Thill, Cindy Dale (Treasurer), Carol Van Dyke

Bottom Row: Mindy Kephart (CYC), Lauren Petersen (Office Assistant), Laci Dykstra (Secretary)

Mark Drost
Extension Council Chair

Dale Miller
County Extension Program Director

IN 2017



drought conditions. Area meetings addressed concerns with crop stand evaluation, pest management, communication with crop insurance agents, pasture management, forage and water quality for livestock.

Master Gardener Training

Marion County hosted Master Gardener Training in the fall of 2017 beginning in September. This year we opted to change the format to flipped classroom style lessons. This allowed our trainees to gain more hands on experience and face to face interaction while doing their training.

In 2017 we had seven Master Gardener Trainees. These women enjoyed coming in on Thursday evenings for two months to learn about all facets of horticulture. Our trainees enjoyed hands on lessons exploring the many resources of ISU Extension and Outreach including a flower dissection lab, field trip to Bessie Spaur Butterfly Garden, and the annual Class on Campus at Iowa State University.

They had only positive things to say about the format and really felt that they understood the material better with being able to read the material and watch videos at home and follow up with a hands on lesson where they could ask questions and gain experience in the topic.

4-H Junior County Council

2017 brought about the introduction of a new leadership group within Marion County 4-H named Junior County Council. This group consisted of youth grades 7th-9th that were nominated by their leaders to participate in Junior County Council.

Junior County Council is an introduction into leadership and Senior County Council. This year we had this group of youth put on a Little Hands on the Farm event at the County Fair. They were in charge of picking a handful of activities, making signs, contacting businesses, fundraising, and running the event at the County Fair.

Little Hands on the Farm was a huge success at the 2017 Marion County Fair. This event was aimed towards children ages 2-5. The activities included Milk the Cow, Pig Corralling, Farm Animal Washing, Crop Harvesting, and Sheep Shearing.

We are looking forward to growing this program and hopefully adding another event for the Junior County Council members to host during the fall/winter months!

ISU Extension and Outreach Marion County

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