

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

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

Wright County Extension Council

Every Iowa county has an elected extension council that guides local educational programming. From local needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the diverse issues and people of the county.

Wright County Extension Council Members:

Cindy Anderson—Eagle Grove, Ethan Bubeck—Eagle Grove, Heather Christensen—Goldfield, Dani Eisentrager—Goldfield, Ben Lindaman—Clarion, Katie Meyer—Rowan, Kevin Moss—Clarion, Ashley Recknor—Clarion, and Molly Wilson—Eagle Grove.

Economic Development

The monthly “Ag in the Community” program continued in 2016 to establish a county-wide professional network. The goals of the hour-long sessions were to: 1) connect local leaders in and out of the agricultural community; 2) raise awareness and knowledge about identified topics in agriculture and possible impacts on our communities and 3) foster a network of local professionals and residents who become more engaged in Iowa State University Extension and Outreach programming. Agricultural sessions included: using cover crops in the watershed, measuring water quality, and promoting local foods production and consumption. The program participants developed a greater understanding of the



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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.

Kevin Moss
Extension Council Chair

Jerry Chizek
Regional Director

issues and connected with local experts that could address additional questions.

Four IRS-certified Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers, with training and support from Wright County Extension and Outreach, filed 2015 tax returns for 180 Wright County low-income households. The free service was conducted at the Eagle Grove Memorial Library and the Wright County Extension and Outreach Office in Clarion. Wright County taxpayers claimed a total of \$281,661 in federal and state refunds in 2016.



ISU Extension and Outreach Wright County

210 1st Street S.W.
Clarion, Iowa 50525
515-532-3453

www.extension.iastate.edu/wright



Health and Well Being

Holly VanHeel, ISU Extension and Outreach Nutrition and Health Specialist, offered food safety training for food service managers this past year. ServSafe® is the food safety certification course developed by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. The fifteen program participants learned current best practices for safe food handling and tips on how to implement essential food safety practices. The eight-hour program targeted foodservice managers from schools, restaurants, convenience stores, child care centers and health care facilities.

Food and Environment

In August, 2016 Kelvin Leibold, ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Specialist, taught 20 landowners and tenants at the leasing meeting to understand the current cash rental rate survey and factors driving next year's cash rents, such as market trends and input costs. Attendees learned about types of leases, lease termination notices, Farm Bill updates and web-based resources. "Due to changes in commodity markets and government programs farmland owners and tenants have challenging decisions to



make, and this meeting provided information to stay up-to-date on farmland leasing issues", said Leibold. In Iowa, nearly 55 percent of the farmed acres are leased.

K-12 Youth Outreach

Wright County youth have many opportunities to develop life skills through the Wright County 4-H program with projects, camps, trips, 4-H Conference, Teen Council, and project workshops. Four-hundred and twenty non-livestock exhibits were shown by 202 exhibitors at the 2016 Wright County Fair with 173 youth showing 545 livestock exhibits. Volunteers are a vital part of the 4-H and youth programs in Wright County contributing an estimated 5,725 hours of service to youth programs during the past year.

4-H Prepares Youth as Scientists

One of the identified critical 4-H youth issues is **Creating One Million Scientists**. As an outreach of the Governor's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) initiative, Wright County 4-H increased science career awareness, a positive attitude toward science, and science problem solving skills. In 2016, Wright County Extension and Outreach 4-H provided three multi-day youth camps, with STEM components with over 60 Wright County youth attending. They used "Dot and Dash" (educational robots) to learn about coding, did multiple science experiments, and built a popsicle stick bridge to support a toy truck. On the last day of each camp, youth shared with parents and family members what they learned.

Another STEM event was the 21st annual Environmental Agriculture Day in Eagle Grove where 153 Wright County 5th graders learned about the science involved in Iowa's largest industry.

It is predicted that there will be a critical shortage of scientists in the coming decade. The Wright County 4-H program is committed to do its part in youth programming in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.



County Extension Staff

Jessica Norman
County Youth Coordinator

Kelly Grandgeorge
Office Manager

Angie Rieck-Hinz
Field Agronomist

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