



BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

2019 IN EMMET 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 Emmet County for a #STRONGIOWA.

Emmet 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
- K-12 Youth Outreach

K-12 Youth Outreach

In September we held a safety day for Estherville Lincoln Central fourth-grade students. Students learned through hands-on activities at nine safety stations, which were led by local partners. Teachers reported that this program adds value to what they are teaching in the classroom because it helps them meet curriculum standards for social studies, science, health, and listening standards. Local presenters have expressed that they appreciate the opportunity to share their area of expertise with the students. Overall, this program helps the students become more aware of what happens on a farm and provides a review of safety practices. We are thrilled to have such great community support for this program and appreciate all the presenters, sponsors, and committee members who help make this happen!

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.

Bruce Christiansen
Extension Council
Chair

Bryan Whaley
Regional Director

Nancy Rosburg
Council Member,
Vice Chair

Beth Wycoff
Council Member,
Secretary

Greg Deim
Council Member,
Treasurer

Crystal Clabaugh
Council Member

Trevor Enerson
Council Member

Todd Eisenbacher
Council Member

Cody Newgard
Council Member

Betsey Ulrich
Council Member



Health and Well-Being: VITA

Complex and changing tax laws baffle most consumers. That confusion can be especially costly to low and moderate income taxpayers, for whom the filing of a tax return is also the process for claiming important public benefits. These benefits are received through refundable tax credits designed to reward work and assist with child-rearing costs and the costs of higher education. Typical taxpayers, feeling unequipped to prepare their own tax returns, may pay \$100-300 or more to have their return commercially prepared.

In the 2018-19 tax season, 12 volunteer tax preparers prepared 503 tax returns for low- and moderate-income households at six sites in Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Mitchell, Chickasaw, Palo Alto, and Emmet counties. The programs also assisted households that did not need to file or that elected not to complete their returns. Approximately 120 of these households were eligible for the Earned Income Credit and 160 were elderly; these demographics tend to be indicators of need and rarely overlap, so it is reasonable to conclude that more than half of those reached are high-need taxpayers. Tax refunds claimed through Extension-supported VITA sites total over \$571,568. This income provides a boost to families that often have little in savings or emergency reserves. It would typically cost at least \$100 and often more than \$200 for families to have their returns prepared by a commercial preparer. The VITA program saves them more than \$75,450 in tax preparation fees.

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Food and Environment

ISU Extension and Outreach in Kossuth, Palo Alto, and Emmet counties, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association, and Farm Bureau collaborated to offer Dine on the County Line, a unique program inviting individuals not involved with production agriculture to a farm for an evening of education about agriculture practices. The goal was to teach participants about safe food and agriculture practices by sharing accurate education related to GMOs, pesticides, antibiotics, and food labels. Local producers attended the event to visit and share a meal with participants, showing that farmers and agriculture professionals are our friends and consumers can turn to them with questions. We also highlighted the economic footprint agriculture has in our communities and in Iowa. Interactive conversation stations were set up around the farm for people to visit and learn about crop production, conservation, livestock and animal health, and farm equipment and technology.



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