

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

HAMILTON 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 Hamilton County for a #STRONGIOWA.

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Hamilton 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.

Extension Council Members

Cindy McCollough
Council Chair

Tyler Burton
Council Member

Kathy Getting
Council Vice Chair

Amber Cordoba
Council Member

Jeff Meyer
Council Treasurer

Amanda Luhman
Council Member

Mancy Buakham
Council Secretary

Alex Pruisman
Council Member

Steve Wright
Council Member

Master Conservationist

Hamilton, Wright, Humboldt, and Webster Counties held a seven-week Master Conservationist program in late spring with 14 participants. This program created a community of passionate conservationists that will be engaged in local communities advocating for conservation practices and policies to ensure a sustainable future for Iowa.

Participants viewed conservation self-paced lessons from ISU Extension and Outreach online before experiencing them in person with local conservation leaders, natural resource professionals, extension educators, and fellow conservationists that work to conserve Iowa's natural resources.

Participants viewed different conservation practices and methods at diverse urban and rural locations within the four counties. Each location provided participants with hands-on interactions showcasing the diversity of Iowa's natural resources. Participants are now equipped to make more informed choices in their conservation efforts while building relationships with other conservation advocates in their local communities.

IN 2019



Retirement Ready

Eight local residents are better equipped for their retirement income and spending decisions, thanks to ISU Extension and Outreach's four-hour workshop, "Writing Your Retirement Paycheck." All participants reported the workshop increased their knowledge about Social Security, asset allocation, income taxes in retirement, and preparing for economic downturns. Participants left the workshop feeling better prepared to make the important decisions ahead of them in the next few years.

Farm Bill Decisions

Twenty-eight participants now have a better understanding of upcoming changes to the Farm Bill program and are better equipped to determine the path that best fits their farm operation after attending the "2020 Farm Bill Decisions" meeting held in Webster City in November. Attendees found it beneficial to have a local farm management specialist on-hand to present on and answer questions about county specific issues.

Farmers in general are entering this Farm Bill with more financial stress and less operating capital than in the past, when commodity prices were still high. That financial stress has the potential to impact the future of the farm and the health of the operator. With that in mind, a portion of the Farm Bill meeting was focused on mental health and reviewed the risk factors and warning signs of suicide.

K-12 Youth Outreach

2019 was another year of growth and "making the best better" for Hamilton County youth! Our 4-H enrollment year had some amazing growth.

- 220 4-H club members (grades 4-12)
- 99 Clover Kids (Grades K-3)
- 60 adult volunteers
- 660.50 Iowa 4-H curriculum contact hours (277% growth from 2018)
- 900 K-12 youth reached
- 209 registered county fair exhibitors
 - ⇒ 557 static exhibits entered
 - ⇒ 763 livestock entries made
 - ⇒ 47 communication/clothing entries
 - ⇒ 1,320 total county fair entries

Through the K-12 outreach educator, 4-H had a presence in all Hamilton County schools. In addition to in-school curriculum, the 4-H members experienced workshops, day camps, trips, and overnight camps at the county, state, and national levels.

Throughout the year, the members of the eight Hamilton County 4-H clubs spent time building strong bonds in their local communities and county-wide through engaging activities. They strengthened their leadership and civic engagement skills by taking part in community service projects and club meetings.



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