



BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

2019 IN UNION 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 Union County for a #STRONGIOWA.

Union 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 example
- Food and the Environment example
- Health and Well-being example
- K12 Youth Outreach Example



Economic Development

Union County Extension hosted a community coffee event sponsored by the Union County Development Association. Representatives from 10 area businesses shared a little bit about their companies. We look forward to partnering with these businesses to offer programming to our community in the future.

Once again, Union County 4-H, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Southwest Iowa Provider Awareness (SWIPA) and participated in the annual Bright Eyes in the



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.

Dan Waigand
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Randy Ehm
Council Member

Jerry Hartman
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Brooke Blessington
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Spotlight: SWAG Conference

In April 2019, more than 250 youth from schools in Adair, Adams, Cass, Clarke, Montgomery, Ringgold, Taylor, and Union counties visited Southwestern Community College's campus in Creston for the first ever Southwestern Agriculture (SWAG) Conference, hosted by local Iowa State University Extension and Outreach 4-H staff. SWAG Conference introduced youth to careers and opportunities in agriculture, ranging from livestock production, crop/plant production, agricultural advocacy, and many more!

Youth participants heard from keynote speaker Christie Vilsack. A former teacher and an advocate for rural Iowa and agriculture, Vilsack encouraged youth participants to "Get ready, get set, and go" explore the world around them before settling into agricultural careers.

Youth participants attended three career exploration-focused breakout sessions, including topics like horse production, livestock reproduction, seed science, hydroponics, agricultural advocacy, and precision agriculture. Youth also had the opportunity to tour SWCC's student teaching farm or SWCC's campus. When asked if they would bring students back next year, one educator said, "Yes! It exposes students to more areas of agriculture than just farming. It opens the door of possibilities." This event was provided in partnership between Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, as well as Southwestern Community College in Creston. Financial contributions that made this event possible include: Iowa 4-H Youth Development, Union County Farm Bureau, Landus Cooperatives, and County Extension Districts.

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Park sponsored by the Creston Animal Rescue League. Over 600 kids and their families received information about Clover Kids, 4-H, SPIN (special interest) events and received books and materials from 4-H, CACFP and SWIPA.

The Southwest Iowa Provider Awareness group met at the Union County Extension office to organize a Toys for Tots pick-up day. Over 200 children ages birth - 14 in Union County were supported through this program.

Union County continues to work with Americorp by offering summer internships to select high school and college students. The Americorp interns organized and conducted seven day camps and workshops including one overnight camp. Approximately 120 kids benefited from these programs!

Food, Health and Well-Being

Human Sciences specialists, Kim Brantner, Barb Fuller, and Sandra McKinnon provided a wide variety of programs in Union County that reached clients from ages birth to 99 years old. Through the year each of them partnered with several organizations including Child Care Resource and Referral, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Restaurant Association, Southwestern Community College, The Learning Center, Parents as Teachers, Kiwanis, and several others to offer these programs.

Kim Brantner, Family Life specialist, hosted Raising School Ready Readers for families with young children. This program focuses on helping parents incorporate fun learning ideas into everyday tasks for their children. This 5-week interactive series reached a total of 17 parents and children over the course of 9 hours.

Barb Fuller, Food Nutrition and Health specialist, offered an 8-hour ServSafe class for 15 food service workers needing to be certified or re-certified in safe food handling practices. Fuller also hosted a Food Preservation 101 class for six participants who wished to learn the



differences in food preservation techniques. This was a great learning opportunity for the mothers and daughters who attended this class. Additionally, Fuller hosted a Staying Independent: A Healthy Aging Series class for some of our oldest clients in a local retirement facility. This program, attended by 43 people for seven hours of training over the course of 4 weeks, helps those 60+ learn about the health benefits of eating well and moving more. Sandra McKinnon instructed participants on stretching dollars, avoiding fraud and planning final arrangements have expanded the content.

Sandra McKinnon partnered with a local financial investment firm to offer Writing Your Retirement Paycheck. This series of 2 sessions encouraged 10 participants, those within 5-10 years of retirement, to take steps now to make resources last their lifetime.

Environment and Agriculture

Continuing instruction courses were provided to private and commercial pesticide applicators and manure applicators. Field Specialist Aaron Sauegling provided the annual programming for the private pesticide applicator training at Southwestern Community College for 50 applicators in Union County.

Union County Extension partnered with the local Natural Resource Conservation Service, Pheasants Forever and Union County Conservation District to offer a Monarch & Pollinator workshop. Participants



received information about the current pollinator statistics and received seed packets to help start their own monarch and pollinator habitats.

Patrick Hatting, Farm Management Specialist, hosted a farmland lease meeting in which he answered questions that land owners, tenants and other interested individuals has about farmland leasing.

Hatting also conducted an Crop Marketing workshop to help producers understand the big picture of effectively marketing their crops with a full 18-month marketing plan. Thirty-eight participants attended this workshop.

Union County Extension also hosted a cover crop field day and two Master Gardener programs at the Gibson Memorial Library.

K-12 Youth Outreach

Union County 4-H continues to have a strong program with ten 4-H clubs that served 283 youth in grades 4-12 and eight Clover Kids groups that served 52 kids in grades K-3. Each of these clubs participated in community service projects and fundraisers within their clubs in addition to National 4-H week activities, county fair and state fair.

Every June, youth in grades 8-12 have an opportunity to attend Youth Conference on the campus of Iowa State University for 3 days full of speakers, workshops, mixers,



dances, a banquet, and community service activities. Nine 4-Hers represented Union County at this year's Youth Conference.

Additionally, one youth in Union County traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) with other high school students from across the country. CWF is 4-H's premier leadership program where 4-Hers learn how to be citizen leaders and make a difference in their communities. Participants enjoy a behind-the-scenes look at our nation's capital and the chance to meet members of Congress, develop communication, leadership and citizenship skills through hands-on learning and group activities, and build new and lasting friendships.

Seventeen youth served on the 4-H Youth Council which planned, coordinated and hosted the annual 4-H awards banquet which acknowledges youth achievements in many areas of service and participation. Youth Council also hosted Kid's Day activities at the Union County Fair.

Michaela O'Grady, County Youth and Outreach Coordinator, hosted several special interest (SPIN) events for Clover Kids and 4-Hers that included flower gardening, sewing, wood working, quilting and string art. SPIN events are great ways to get kids involved and interested in things that they normally wouldn't try. Several participants show their SPIN event projects as static exhibits during county fair.

Additional programs, events and activities that 4-Hers participated in are Camp Wild, First Lego League, and First Tech Challenge Robotics Club.

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