



#STRONGIOWA

2021 IN WEBSTER 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 Webster County for a #STRONGIOWA.



Sustainable ENVIRONMENTS



Thriving COMMUNITIES



Resilient PEOPLE



Future LEADERS



The Webster County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

Thank you for your support.

Jolene Hays
Council Chair

Jon Flattery
Council Vice-Chair

Debbie Gray
Council Secretary

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Council Treasurer

Kevin Barkley
Council Member

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Kellie Blair
Council Member

Peggy Moody
Council Member

Janet Peterson
Council Member

Serving the People of Webster County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic during 2021, ISU Extension and Outreach in Webster County focused on the following efforts.

- Food and health education and ServSafe®
- Buy. Eat. Live Healthy nutrition education
- Adult agriculture and environment education
- 4-H Youth Development programming



Program Spotlight: Master Gardener and Growing Together Iowa Donation Garden

Master Gardener Doug Brightman led the charge in applying for the **Growing Together Donation Garden Mini-Grant** and provided leadership for a third year.

Grant funds combined with donations converted an abandoned, city-owned community garden into a donation garden with new accessible, raised beds. Produce generated increased to 586 pounds from last year's total of 328 pounds.

This produce, along with 1,789 pounds of excess produce from local gardeners and farmers (up from last year's 492 pounds), was donated to the Salvation Army and the Lord's Cupboard for a grand total 2,375 pounds (820 pounds last year) of fresh produce.

The Salvation Army of Fort Dodge expressed sincere thanks for the bounty their agency received. "The cost savings from not having to buy retail produce has been compelling. No less compelling is the benefit of building closer relationships with the farmers and local gardeners who shared their surplus with us. This has been made possible thanks to the Growing Together Donation Garden."



Master Conservationist

"It is important to me to help keep our environment 'healthy' and intact for future generations to enjoy. Conserving soil and reducing run-off is a huge step in reducing residue downstream and maintaining water quality," noted one of 13 participants of the seven-week Planting the Seeds of Conservation program in Spring 2021. These passionate conservationists can now lead and educate others and advocate for practices and policies to ensure a sustainable future for Iowa's landscape.

Iowa Community Tree Steward Program

Twenty participants learned about basic tree biology, proper soils, post plant care, plant problems, tree identification, pruning, and best practices for planting and selecting location during the six-week program. One participant said, "I learned a great deal about what and where to prune." Participants assessed whole tree growth to determine health and are now better able to serve as community volunteers as well as raise healthy trees in their home landscape.

Annie's Project

Forty-seven percent of Iowa's farmland is owned by women according to a 2017 survey. Annie's Project supports and empowers these women by providing agricultural business enterprises and farm management education, while providing opportunities to network with other farm women and agriculture business professionals. "I am very grateful for this program," said a participant. "I came in wanting to be able to understand some of the farm talk going on around me, but I am now actually able to offer information to the conversation. I enjoyed the many different speakers and the knowledge they had to offer."

ServSafe®

Preventing a single fatal case of E.coli would save an

estimated \$7 million, according to the USDA. Reducing foodborne illness by 10% annually would prevent 5 million Americans from getting sick thus affecting productivity, personal income and health care costs.

In response, ISU Extension and Outreach offered five ServSafe® trainings in Fort Dodge. Although class sizes were reduced for social distancing, over 40 participants became certified. The FDA cites a “correlation between the presence of a certified food protection manager and better food safety practices and behaviors.”

Buy. Eat. Live Healthy

Meal planning, saving money on groceries, eating nutritious foods, cooking, and physical activity are highlights of the eight-session nutrition education program. One recent graduate expressed frustration with meal preparation and concerns about her children who are picky eaters. After completing the series she expressed, "Having a plan and knowing what you're having for supper when you walk in the door is half the battle; being able to sit and enjoy the meal with my family is awesome." She added, "The other night the boys helped me set the table and I really enjoyed having time to hear about their day!" BELH provided lessons virtually and in-person to 41 people this year.

Retirement Workshop

Informed retirement decision making was the focus of a two-part workshop, Writing Your Retirement Paycheck, held in April in Gowrie. Eight participants gained



Buy. Eat. Live Healthy educator Carolyn Maschino makes Skillet Lasagna from the ISU Extension and Outreach Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website with a group at Wahkonsa Apartments in Fort Dodge. Master Conservationists test water PH at the Smeltzer Farm in rural Webster County. Clover Kids Livestock Club member Adley Davis with her lamb.

understanding of Social Security and Medicare, taxes, inflation, RMDs, retirement withdrawal strategies, and more. 100% of survey respondents reported that the workshop improved their retirement readiness, and they would recommend it to others. Heartland Bank was our partner.

Clover Kids Livestock Club

A new Clover Kids Livestock Club focused on sheep, goats, and bucket bottle calves was a success in 2021. The club was comprised of 18 Clover Kids (grades K-3) and five volunteers to lend a helping hand. The group met virtually until May and later met at the Webster County Fairgrounds to learn basic grooming skills, practice walking with their animal, and what to expect at the Webster County Fair.

Showcasing 4-H

The Webster County Fair returned in 2021. Youth demonstrated what they learned through their 4-H project work. Communication participants presented skills, knowledge, and information to an audience. Pictured at left are Communication State Fair awardees Kara McGonegle, Nathan Rethwisch, Sylvia Hess, Gracie Harvey, Sasha Hess, and Josie Novencido.





4-H Book Donation Drive

The Webster County 4-H County Council members organized a book donation drive in March in honor of National Reading Month. A total of 2,110 adult and youth books were collected. County council members helped sort, count, pack, and deliver the books to various locations throughout the county including daycares, nursing homes, YWCA, Community and Family Resources, schools, and more. The first donation book drive was a huge success.

4-H Highlights

- 11 4-H clubs
- 268 members
- 72 volunteers
- 7 summer day camps
- 6 StoryWalks
- 12 active project/livestock area meetings
- 1,010 Webster County Fair Entries

Working toward Recovery

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach in Webster County has engaged lowans in addressing mental health. Looking ahead to 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach in Webster County will:

- Integrate into community services, agencies, and other partners and be an equal contributor.
- 100% of office staff will complete Mental Health First Aid, Question. Persuade. Refer (QPR), and/or Youth Mental Health First Aid training.
- Distribute mental health resource kits with Iowa Concern cards, resource lists, etc., to identified groups.
- Get on the City Council agenda for quarterly check-ins with the smaller Webster County communities.
- Initiate Mindfulness Training in Fort Dodge Schools.

Extension Staff

Michelle Sackville <i>Regional Director</i>	Linda Cline <i>County Program Coordinator</i>	Lindsay Kavanaugh <i>County Youth Coordinator</i>
Holly VanHeel <i>Food and Health Specialist</i>	Nicole Kleespies <i>Youth Field Specialist</i>	Barb Wollan <i>Family Wellbeing Specialist</i>
Malisa Rader <i>Family Wellbeing Specialist</i>	Kapil Arora <i>Agricultural Engineering Specialist</i>	Lindsey Henderson <i>Community/Economic Development Specialist</i>
Russ Euken <i>Livestock Field Specialist</i>	Angie Rieck-Hinz <i>Field Agronomist</i>	Kelvin Liebold <i>Farm Management Specialist</i>
Fred Hall <i>Dairy Specialist</i>	Carolyn Maschino <i>Buy. Eat. Live Healthy Prog. Asst.</i>	Janel Salvatore <i>Office Assistant</i>

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