The Des Moines 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.

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Extension Council Chair

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2021 IN DES MOINES 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 Des Moines County for a #STRONGIOWA.

Serving the People of Des Moines County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of Des Moines County. During 2021 we focused on the following efforts.

- New in 2021, the Master Conservationist program came to Des Moines County in partnership with ISU Extension and Outreach Henry County. 10 budding Natural Resource Stewards received hands-on education from local County Conservation, NRCS, and Iowa DNR professionals and graduated the program ready to educate others on the sustainability of Iowa’s natural resources.

- We continued to build community partnerships in natural resources and through collaboration with the Iowa DNR, Burlington Tree Committee, and City of Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, we were able to offer a National Pollinator Week Walk and Urban forestry and Tree Diversity programs.

- Agriculture programming continued to be delivered in hybrid ways with the goal of giving farmers and agribusiness representatives several options for completing required trainings and continuing education credits. Programming included: Private and Commercial Pesticide Trainings; Manure Applicator Courses; Farm Land Leasing and Farm Estate Planning meetings; and Ag Exploration
Day for area high school students.

- The Des Moines County Master Gardener program completed 2,983 volunteer hours, donated 2,704 pounds of produce that was grown in the donation garden and gleaned from the Farmer's Market, started a new annual Garden Show event, and grew by eight members. A highlight this year - the annual plant sale was so successful all plants were sold within one hour!

Showcasing 4-H at the County Fair

The Des Moines County Fair returned in 2021, providing the opportunity for youth to demonstrate what they had learned through their 4-H project work over the past year.

The 2021 Fair saw 4-H members exhibit 677 livestock and 815 non-livestock projects. Youth performed in the area of communications via Educational Presentations, Extemporaneous Speaking, and Share the Fun. Working exhibit performances included: modeling clothing projects in the areas of Fashion Revue, Clothing Selection, and $15 Challenge. Ultimately, youth eagerly supported their friends and fellow Des Moines County 4-H and FFA members.

New in 2021 was the broadcasting of the livestock exhibitions live on Facebook, allowing family and community members who could not or preferred not to attend in person, to view the festivities.

Working toward Recovery

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach Des Moines County has been expanding educational opportunities for youth.

- A relationship with Building Bridges a Southeast Iowa Initiative was fostered to reach an underserved audience that we have not reached before with the mission of providing research based curriculum and hands-on activities to youth and their families. Program offerings included “Youth in the Marketplace” and “Monday Meals” and have been expanded as a quarterly offering to the Bridges families as we enter 2022.

- Our Local Foods Coordinator and 4-H Youth Coordinator collaborated to bring the new “Taste of Iowa” program to local K-2 classrooms. Beginning in September and heading into 2022, students will receive a short interactive lesson paired with the opportunity to see, touch, smell and taste fruits and vegetables grown in Iowa.

- The Power of Produce (POP) Club provided a fun opportunity for youth, ages 4-12 years, to engage in the local food system through conversations directly with farmers, educational games and demonstrations, and exposure to new fruits and vegetables. POP Club kids also received $2 tokens to spend on fresh produce at the farmers market.

Looking ahead to 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach Des Moines County will be working to further develop our partnership with school districts. We currently have plans to expand the “Taste of Iowa Program,” implement the “On Your Own and OK” program through the PIECES Afterschool Program, and again we will be partnering with Des Moines County Farm Bureau and Mediapolis FFA to promote “Read Across Iowa” during National Ag Week in March.

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