WHAT WE WANT

#STRONGIOWA

2018 IN DUBUQUE COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Dubuque County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Dubuque 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

Encouraging Eating Local Helps Producers and Restaurants

For the month of September, Iowa State Extension and Outreach in Dubuque County partnered with several area restaurants to showcase locally produced foods. The Eat Dubuque Local Food Tour featured 12 restaurants throughout Dubuque County. Each restaurant highlighted a locally sourced item on their menu throughout the month, and guests who ordered the local special either received a coupon for a return visit or were entered to win a larger prize. (Continued on next page)

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.

Cindy Kohlmann  
Extension Council Chair  
Matt Simon  
Council Member

Paul Mariman  
Regional Director  
Diane Hanson  
Council Member

Mary Lou Baal  
Council Member  
Barb Sauser  
Council Member

LuAnn Krapfl  
Council Member  
Bill Watters  
Council Member

Lindsay James  
Council Member  
Deb Mahoney  
Council Member
In total, there were 15 local dishes offered among the 12 restaurants. Countless participants enjoyed the local fare which supported 26 different local producers and highlighted some of Dubuque County’s finest fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, and wines.

The event gave customers a real sense of connectedness in the community, both to where the food was coming from and to the local businesses they were supporting. It also added an extra reason to explore different area restaurants for their limited time ‘local offer.’ The Eat Dubuque Tour also gave restaurants an opportunity to showcase their support of the community by buying from area farmers, and allowed several restaurants to make new connections with local producers. Making connections between farmers and higher volume purchasers like restaurants is just one of the ways we are working to build a stronger food system in Dubuque County.

Beginning Farmers Gain Knowledge on Loan Opportunities

A growing need for education around funding opportunities for beginning farmers led to a workshop series hosted jointly by the extension office and Dubuque County Women, Land, & Legacy. The three-part workshop series had over 30 beginning farmers attend in person or via ZOOM. The farmers ranged from livestock producers to crops producers to fruit and vegetable producers. The first two workshops were held back to back in September with the third following up in November.

The first part of the workshop featured loan officers from FSA to talk about their loan programs, requirements, and how to get started. The second workshop featured Ann Johanns providing an overview of the Ag DecisionMaker website, along with some hands on experience with commonly required such as the cash flow statement and balance sheet. The third workshop was held a couple months later and featured Steve Ferguson with the Iowa Finance Authority. Steve shared information about the Beginning Farmer Tax Credits that will be available in the coming year. These workshops assisted beginning farmers in the area with understanding their financing options, as well as assisted those looking at renting/selling to a beginning farmer to understand their potential benefits to helping a the next generation get started.
Health and Well-Being

**Powerful Tools for Caregivers Meets a Growing Need**

In meeting with staff that work at assisted living centers and nursing homes in Dubuque, they expressed a need for programming for older citizens who are in caregiving situations and looking for ways to cope with their emotions as they find their loved ones needing more help than they can give. **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** is a six week course in Dubuque County that includes tools for how to take care of you, identifying and reducing personal stress, how to communicate feelings, needs and concerns, how to communicate in challenging situations, learning from emotions and mastering caregiving decisions.

After taking the class, participants commented that they felt good about what the future was going to bring them. They learned about options that were available and different communication approaches. Caregiver’s guilt was mentioned frequently and the participants learned how to move forward without guilt holding them back to do what needed to be done for both the caregiver and the spouse to give both of them a better quality of life. Effective communication methods were reinforced to the participants along with the use of stress relieving methods. Participants gained new ideas on how to handle the many challenges that come on a daily basis.

**Food and Environment**

**Consulting:** In the 2018 year, our office has assisted our county with over 319 individual home and garden related questions. Our office services a wide array of questions ranging from, how short should the lawn be mowed, to technical questions related to pesticide labels. Clients are provided with university-based research information to help them make an informed decision.

**Educational programing:** Our office offers diverse educational garden information through presentations at many events throughout the year. With topics ranging from Integrated Pest Management to Fruit Tree Grafting, we have educated over 275 people through our garden related outreach education presentations.

**Master Gardener Events:** Our Master Gardeners are very involved with our community through educational events. Annually, they host a Spring Seminar and summer Tour of Gardens. The Spring Seminar educates approximately 90 local garden enthusiasts on a variety of local garden topics. The Tour of Gardens is a showcase of a few of Dubuque’s most beautiful home gardens. Annually, the tour attracts around 260 participants. The first ever Fall Workshop was held this past October. This hands-on event taught over 60 garden enthusiasts about fall garden preparation.

**K-12 Youth Outreach**

**Afterschool STEM Enrichment Empowering Youth**

Dubuque County Youth Development program continues to be an integral partner with St. Mark’s Youth Enrichment by providing youth STEM enrichment during their afterschool program. St. Mark’s Youth Enrichment provides afterschool programming in seven different schools reaching almost 200 students. During their afterschool programs, Dubuque County provides STEM enrichment for the students to give student’s the opportunities to solve real-world problems. (Continued on next page)
The students have familiarized themselves to the Engineering Design Process to guide them with their problems. Students are able to gain confidence as they create their own solution to the problem and improve on their design!

Dubuque County introduced St. Mark's Youth Enrichment Coordinators to the new 4-H curriculum, STEM-Lit-to-Go. The coordinators were excited and couldn’t wait for the lessons to be delivered at their schools. STEM-Lit-to-Go lessons include inquiry-based STEM activities and children’s literature. The youth experienced several of the lessons and were able to put their engineering skills to work to design a candy machine, investigate the property of light, and explore force and motion using roller coasters and much more. The lessons continue to grab the youth’s attention. The youth are learning while doing and empowering youth to develop skills for the future.

Youth Leaders Making an Impact on Younger Students

Dubuque County has a group of Youth Leaders in grades 7th-12th that volunteer at county events, do community service, and help grow Dubuque County 4-H. Every year the Youth Leaders host a program called Happy Feet. Happy Feet is a fundraiser that raises money to buy snow boots for kids in need through-out Dubuque County.

Youth Leaders raised over $800 this year, and put some of their own money together to buy boots! They partner with Theisen’s so that they are able to get the best deal on boots and buy as many as possible.

Youth Leaders bought 50 boots to donate to six schools in Dubuque County in 2018! They rotate schools, so that they are able to help as many schools as possible. This fundraiser is a great way for 4-H members to help kids in their community. This fundraiser also helps the Youth Leaders to see why it’s important to help others and how easy it can be to give back in a small way.

County Extension Staff

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