

# BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

## JEFFERSON 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 Jefferson County for a #STRONGIOWA.

### Jefferson 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**
  - ⇒ Farm Transition
- **Food & the Environment**
  - ⇒ Junior Master Gardener's
- **Health and Well-being**
  - ⇒ InstaPot Class
  - ⇒ Jam Workshop
  - ⇒ Pick a **better** snack
- **K-12 Youth Outreach**
  - ⇒ In-school and After-school Programs
  - ⇒ Robotics Clubs
  - ⇒ Civic Engagement

### Economic Development

#### Farm Transition

A Farm Transition workshop was held at the Jefferson County Extension and Outreach in partnership with Next Gen Ag Advocates. With 60% of farmers over age 65 and 35% over age 75, who will farm the ground in the future? Will large farms get even larger or are there some opportunities for young/beginning farmers to

transition into some retirees operations? This program looked at offering insights into these questions and others. Flexible cash rents with an emphasis on conservation practices were discussed. Long term landowner/producers relationships and the benefits to both parties were presented as well. Attendees of all ages were well represented with a total of 32 participants.

"I am so glad I attended this workshop. I walked away with a lot of information and it gave me more information that I didn't even think of. Thanks for having this and please have more on this subject soon"



### 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.

**Sue Henderson**  
*Regional Director*

**Stephen Burgmeier**  
*Extension Council Chair*

**Christine Engwall**  
*Vice Chair*

**Susie Drish**  
*Treasurer*

**Brabara Kistler**  
*Secretary*

**Laurie Bennett**  
*Council Member*

**Shelley Moothart**  
*Council Member*

**Eric Miller**  
*Council Member*

**John Peck**  
*Council Member*

**Cory Klehm**  
*Council Member*

IN 2019

## FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### Junior Master Gardeners

Junior Master Gardeners is a group of youth that meet for 12 weeks during the summer months for about two hours each week. Their session is split into two parts. The first part is for educational lessons from the 4-H curriculum. The second part of the class is spent out in the garden getting hands-on-experience with planting, pulling weeds and picking produce. This is a group of 8 youth in grades 4th-8th grade.

One of the first few weeks is spent learning about over crowding and how plants need room to grow.

The youth are asked to create a hat that represents what plants need to survive and this is used in every aspect of the class. This class



allowed us to partner with our local naturalist and youth were able to do their first ever creek stomp. Along the walk they learned about how water travels and depending on the curves and rocks how one side could be higher than the other. As well as the creatures living in the water.

As they grow produce in the garden they get to try what they have grown and came up with the rule that they must try at least one bite. They tend to grow enough produce and partner with the local food pantry to donate the produce. The youth were able to get a tour of the pantry and learn just how important this is for our community. Along with the Master Gardeners the groups donated over 500 pounds of produce throughout the summer months.



## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Instapot Class

35 people participated in two InstaPot classes. Jefferson County Extension offered this class thanks to the our partner Barb Sieren, owner of Back to Basics Farm using her organic vegetables. This class was hosted and recorded by Steve Boss of Great Taste, an Iowa City Radio Show.



The participants learned how quickly you can put together a very delicious and nutritious meal using the InstaPot. In one class they made potatoes and butternut squash that all members were able to taste. At the second class a wonderful pumpkin quiche was enjoyed by all. The participants enjoyed learning about using the InstaPot and enjoyed the delicious meals. These classes were sponsored by the Jefferson County Extension and Outreach.

**“These classes were so fun learning about the InstaPot. I am looking forward to more classes like these.”**

**-InstaPot Participant**



### Youth Jam Workshop

Sara Sprouse, Nutrition and Wellness Specialist for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, taught a class for youth on how to make jam. Youth were able to walk through the whole process, learn the tools needed for the job and understand how certain steps are the most important. At the end of the class, youth were able to take home two jars of their own jam. Youth had a hands-on-experience to learn the methods behind making jam and how we have to follow the recipe or it won't turn out. Youth walked away with the knowledge to make jam at home and have a future project for 4-H.



## Pick a better snack

Our Youth Outreach Educator visits each K-2 classroom at two different local elementary schools each month. This year the program has educated 380 youth. In each session, participants learn about healthier choices and sample a fruit or vegetable perhaps for the first time. The students are encouraged to try it with an open mind. The students try it as a group to encourage the students to try the new fruit or vegetable. Some of the rules of pick a better snack are to be brave, try it, and to never say yuck! The reason we encourage them to not say yuck is to have the student try it with an open mind. We encourage them to be brave and try it, because they may like it.

To start the class, we do a lesson on healthy living. They have learned about such items as washing their hands, food groups, and serving sizes. One fun activity that they did was a food group game. They drew cards with different foods on them and sorted them into different food groups. The five food groups consist of dairy, vegetables, fruit, protein group, and grains. It helps them figure out where certain food goes in which food group. They have fun, because everyone gets a chance to participate in the activity.

**"I learned that trying new foods can be fun and taste good!"**

**-Pick a better snack participant**

## K-12 YOUTH OUTREACH

### In-school and After-school Programs

Jefferson County 4-H has been working with the Fairfield Middle School as a part of their Lift groups for youth in grades 5th-8th. This is an enrichment class offered everyday at the end of the school day. As part of this class Jefferson County 4-H taught Ricochet, an Extreme Leadership Adventure for the youth. This has taught the youth that



everyone can be a leader and we can learn skills to prepare us better! They have done activities such as helium stick, where they must get a paper tube all the way to the ground



with just their fingertips. It shows that they must work together as a team to get the task done.

As a part of their leadership class, they had to plan a community service project. The whole class must come up with one project they would like to see happen. They plan and implement the project on their own. The groups chose to do a toy drive to collect toys for the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. On top of the toy collection, they did a bake sale and pie in the face to help raise more money, so they could go and purchase more toys for the hospital. At the end of their project they were able to take go to the hospital and deliver the items and participant in some STEM activities led by the hospital. In total they had donated over 100 toys and raised over \$300 for the hospital.



The Youth Outreach Educator has been working with an after school group every week at Washington Elementary in Fairfield. They have learned about robotics, creative arts, food and STEM Lit to go. The robotics have consisted of working with bee bots, dash, and dot. The robots that they are working with help them learn how to program robots. The creative art part of it was focused on different kinds of art. One lesson was about turning mistakes and making them turn those mistakes. The book Accidental Oops taught them how to turn mistakes into masterpieces.

### Robotics After-School Clubs

The Youth Outreach Educator goes every week to work with two after school 4-H group on robotics. The groups use Dash and Cue robots to fulfill different missions in a competition. They control the robots using an iPad and have to construct items such as bridges, traps and buildings. The building teaches them critical problem-solving and engineering skills. The bridge was one of the youths favorite missions because they were able to be creative. They had to create a bridge that can support and tall enough for the robot. Over all the youth all agreed they would love to keep this program going.



## Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement is a huge priority of 4-H. Teen Council a group of youth from Jefferson County 4-H plan community service projects as a part of their year. Teen Council and Jefferson County 4-H partnered with the Jefferson County Health Center to help enhance the landscape surrounding the oncology wing at the hospital. Youth wanted to create a space that the patients could enjoy looking at while at appointments.

**“Looking out through those windows, patients enjoy a view of the pond and the neighboring Maasdam Barns. Now, the new rock garden in front of their windows adds a serene setting, complete with bird baths, several bird feeders, shrubs that keep foliage through winter, and plants and flowers that attract birds and butterflies. The many creatures that are enjoying their new habitat are also providing cheerful entertainment for the onlookers in the oncology wing.**

**-Hospital Employee**

**“The oncology wing landscaping project was important to me because I had a family member go through chemotherapy, and I know how a pretty view can impact their outlook on the treatment,. I wanted all patients in this wing to be able to look out and see the pretty flowers and the wildlife it attracts. I wanted to make their treatment experience better.”**

**-4-H Teen Council Member**

The youth had to do a great deal of planning and work. They were able to learn about budgeting, landscape design and partnering with many local businesses. Youth were able to get all of the rock donated by the local quarry in town and meet with a local business to learn about what plants would be best and last all year to make the most impact. The group spent a few days out at the hospital ripping up the grass, putting down landscaping cloth, moving two tons of rock and planting the plants. Teen Council had decided to open this project up to all Jefferson 4-H youth to have them play a part in this community project.



## Jefferson County Extension Staff



**Ashtin Walker**  
County Youth  
Coordinator

ashtinw@iastate.edu



**Lori Padget**  
Office Assistant

padget@iastate.edu



**Clint Mercer**  
County Youth Outreach  
Coordinator

cjmercer@iastate.edu

## ISU Extension and Outreach Jefferson County

2606 W Burlington Avenue

Fairfield, IA 52556

641-472-4166

[www.extension.iastate.edu/jefferson](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/jefferson)

**f @ISUExtensionJeffersonCounty**

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other protected classes. Direct inquiries to the Diversity Advisor, 515-294-1482, [extdiversity@iastate.edu](mailto:extdiversity@iastate.edu). ADV.19.04L September