The Iowa Department of Agriculture has instituted a multi-county quarantine to try and slow the spread of the emerald ash borer. Department entomologist, Robin Pruisner says, “We’ve drawn out an area of 25 counties in eastern Iowa that stretches from the Minnesota border down to the Missouri border that encompasses those known infested counties. And, we are just sure that there are other infested counties that we just haven’t found quite yet.”

The quarantine prevents moving wood that might be infected, like entire ash trees; firewood of any hardwood species or any cut or fallen material of the ash. “Any of those things that originate within that area we want to stay within the boundaries of that quarantine unless an industry or someone has a compliance agreement with us where they have certain actions — like heat treating or something along those lines — to eliminate that pest risk,” Pruisner says.

The counties included in the quarantine are: Winneshiek, Allamakee, Fayette, Clayton, Buchanan, Delaware, Dubuque, Linn, Jones, Jackson, Clinton, Johnson, Cedar, Scott, Keokuk, Washington, Muscatine, Louisa, Wapello, Jefferson, Henry, Des Moines, Davis, Van Buren, and Lee.

Pruisner says quarantines in the other states have proven effective in slowing the spread of the pest, “The insect really only flies a few miles a year on its own wing power, but goes pretty fast on the interstate on the back of a truck.”

You might think it’s okay to move wood in the dead of winter while the ash borer is not active, but Pruisner says it can still cause problems when things thaw out in the spring. “If that piece of wood has not dried out all the way — it’s very possible for a beetle to still emerge and then infect that area to where the wood has been moved,” she explains.

Pruisner is hoping people will learn about the quarantine and comply. “Here in the State of Iowa it is a simple misdemeanor, but we do have the ability to confiscate and destroy anything that we feel needs to be handled in that way,” Pruisner says. “And then we can assess the cost of those activities back on the person who is guilty of doing that.”

A federal ban on taking the infected wood across state lines will also go into place with Iowa’s quarantine. “If someone is to break the federal quarantine and cross state lines with it, the Federal Plant Protection Act actually has the finning ability of up to $250,000 per act,” according to Pruisner.

A full copy of the quarantine can be found on the Ag Department’s website at: www.IowaAgriculture.gov

The emerald ash borer has been positively identified in four locations in eastern Iowa: Allamakee County was declared infested in May 2010, Des Moines County in July 2013, Jefferson County in August of this year and Cedar County in October of this year.

The pest kills all ash species and is considered to be one of the most destructive tree pests ever seen in North America.
NEST Parenting Classes

NEST is open to everyone in Jefferson County! Using the NEST is very simple! Whenever you attend a NEST parent class, prenatal or postpartum care visit, well-baby check-up, Library Story Times, Parents As Teachers, or other related things, you receive points. As you accumulate points, you can spend them like money on baby items in the NEST store! The more points you earn the more items you can buy in the NEST store for ‘free’!

Contact NEST Coordinator Lynne Johnson for more information!

Beginning NOVEMBER, NEST classes will be held on Thursday

A new, but UNSAFE, cooking trend is to use the dishwasher in place of the oven or stove top. The creator of this newfound cooking technique recommends cooking food in a vacuum packed bag or airtight container to protect it from the other dirty dishes. The benefit, she states, is that it is environmentally friendly because you can cook your meal and clean your dishes simultaneously.

The bottom line is that this is a very unsafe cooking practice because dishwashers are not designed to cook foods. There is no effective way to monitor the temperature of the dishwasher while it is running. Foods such as fish, poultry, eggs, and beef need to reach specific temperatures in order to kill pathogens. The best advice is to stick to the conventional ways of cooking and not risk making your food unsafe to eat by using inappropriate cooking practices.

REMEMBER: A dishwasher is meant only for cleaning dishes. It is not intended to cook food!

Training and Continuing Education DVDs Dates

*Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT)

December 5, 2013/March 4, 2014  7:00 pm

* COMMERCIAL MANURE APPLICATOR TRAINING

JANUARY 7, 2014 9:00AM—NOON

Cut Stress, Save Money with small steps to Health and Wealth

The approaching holiday season doesn’t have to mean extra stress, expense and calories. With a few small changes, Iowans can be on their way to healthier lives and financial security, says Jan Monahan, a family finance specialist with ISU Extension & Outreach.

“Even simplifying a recipe—making green beans with a touch of olive oil rather than green bean casserole—could cut some calories, save a little money and ease a lot of stress. When guests offer to bring something to your holiday gathering, take them up on their offer! Be ready with a list of dishes they could bring or rolls from the bakery or some type of beverage,” Monahan said.

“Cutting back on discretionary expenses — those expenses that you can control — can add up over time as well,” Monahan continued. “Small steps can improve your overall health and financial picture. But you have to take action. Health and wealth are strongly related and changes in one area can have positive effects upon the other.”

In today’s economy many people wonder how they can afford to save more for retirement. According to Monahan, taking some small steps can make a big difference.

“Take a look at your discretionary spending,” Monahan said. “By ‘stepping down’ the expenses, you can control, you can use that money to ‘ramp up’ your savings.”

Monahan suggests calculating the potential weekly and annual financial savings of improving some health behaviors. For example, eating two fewer meals away from home each week could save $10/week or $520/year. Saving $3/day, rather than spending the money on fast food or alcohol, yields $21/week — more than $1,000/year. Quitting a pack-a-day smoking habit would save at least $35/week or more than $1,800/year.

“Seeing the numbers that are possible may be just the right incentive to make positive changes,” she said.

Additional money-saving ideas are available from the ISU Extension and Outreach MoneyTip$ blog, http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/isumoneytips/. Consumers can also contact their county ISU Extension and Outreach office for information about Small Steps to Health and Wealth classes.

ISU Extension and Outreach specialists in family finance and nutrition and health deliver the Small Steps to Health and Wellness curriculum as part of the workplace wellness programs and at community sites. The program highlights nutrition and financial steps to behavior change and is an example of ISU Extension and Outreach efforts that are committed to improving Iowans’ health and well-being.

One participant set up an auto bill pay and each month started to pay herself 10% of her salary. Another participant chose to save her pay raise for her retirement years and continue to live on the amount that she had previously lived on. Another person started to walk during TV commercial breaks, adding up to 15 minutes a day, Monahan noted.

“Small Steps to Health and Wealth made a personal impact for these individuals,” Monahan said.

ISU Extension and Outreach efforts, such as Small Steps to Health and Wealth, support the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative. Individuals, families, businesses, faith-based organizations, not-for-profits and the public sector are working together in community-focused efforts to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation by 2016.

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Communication is Key to Holiday Sanity

By Kristi Cooper, Laura Sternweis

Ames, IA — Children benefit from relationships with grandparents, aunts and uncles and other extended family members. These relatives express love in many ways, including gift giving, which some parents say can be excessive and difficult to manage. Finding ways to set limits and preserve relationships can be accomplished with clear, respectful, assertive communication skills, says Kristi Cooper, a family life specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

"Assertive communication can work wonders in channeling well-meaning generosity for your child’s benefit," Cooper said. But assertive communication does not mean placing blame.

"If you say to Grandma and Grandpa, ‘You are always giving the children junk,’ chances are they will become defensive. Then it will be even harder to solve problems or to preserve the relationship," Cooper said.

"Rather than blame the grandparents, own your feelings and say, ‘I am concerned that the children have too many toys.’ This is an ‘I message,’ which allows you to claim your own perspective without blaming someone else," Cooper said.

“When you start with your own feelings, then you can say to grandma and grandpa, ‘I would like to talk to you about something is very important to me. I value our relationship and appreciate your generosity towards my children. I am concerned that the children have too many toys. I need your help to find ways to manage the amount of things my kids receive.’"

It’s also very important to stay calm, Cooper continued. Tone of voice, body language and choice of words all can impact the outcome of a conversation.

“So, take a deep breath to calm your body and collect your thoughts. Then try these four steps for better communication,” she said.

- Step 1. Alignment: “As a parent, put yourself in the grandparent’s shoes and see the situation from their perspective. Say something like, ‘I can see how fun it is for you to see joy in your grandchildren’s eyes,’ Cooper said.
- Step 2. Agree: “Find common ground,” Cooper said. “You could say, ‘I agree that we both love the children deeply and want the best for them.’"
- Step 3. Redirect: “Then move the conversation forward,” Cooper continued. “You could say, ‘I value our relationship and want to work this out together. Let’s find a time before the next holiday to talk about this.’"
- Step 4. Resolve: “Begin looking for a solution with an action step,” she said. “Talk together and make a list of gift ideas that feel right for the grandparents and for you. Together you can find something that will strengthen their bond with your children and be manageable for your family.”

These four steps may smooth the way for some great problem solving, Cooper said. She provides additional tips for communicating with relatives during the holidays at Re-claimYourHolidays.org under “Creative Gift Ideas.”

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Gathered from Jefferson County 4-H members, leaders and parents, this is over 135 pages of home-style, tried-and-true family favorites! A sample is below! A great stocking-stuffer, or include with mixing bowls, spoons and other kitchenware for the new bride or the college student in their first apartment!

Table of Contents includes Appetizers & Beverages, Soups & Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candy and This & That!

Also included in the front of the cookbook is the History of 4-H, with a page on 4-H today. Clubs contributing to the cookbook: 4 Leaf Clovers, Achievers, Blackhawk Creators, Centeers, Des Moines Ramblers, Dynamics, Jefferson G’s, Packwood Trojans, Penn Workers, Round Prairie Ech-oes, Walnut Ridge Workers and Clover Kids!

(published in 2005)
Jefferson County Business Classes
11:30 am ~ 1:30 pm
“Simplify Your Business!”
Tuesday, January 14, 2014
“Simplify Your Business”
$5.00/lunch provided
(Please register for food count)
Contact Himar Hernandez for more information at:
641-799-6681 or himarh@iastate.edu
or call the Extension Office to sign up @ 472-4166

***NOTICE***
The Extension Office will be CLOSED
for the Christmas Holiday
Tuesday, December 24th
Wednesday, December 25th

Winter Daycamp
‘Winging It’
Monday, Dec. 30th
Limited space available

FSQA Training will be held Friday, January 3, 2014

4-H PLEDGE
I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking.
my HEART to greater loyalty.
my HANDS to larger service,
and my HEALTH to better living.
for my club, my community,
my country, and my world.