Keokuk 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:

- Business and Industry
- Human Sciences
- Agriculture
- K-12 Youth Outreach

Business and Industry

In 2017, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Keokuk County acknowledged National Manufacturing Day by partnering with Axmear Fabricating in Thornburg to host a tour for youth. This tour accompanied 62 youth and 4 instructors which included Keokuk County FFA chapters and Indian Hills Community College Career Academy’s machine and welding classes.

Keokuk County Extension also supports local businesses by providing ServSafe to local restaurants, school and health care food services. This training is led by Rachel Wall, Nutrition and Wellness Specialist.

Rachel Wall then provides additional training to local daycare providers with her Child Care Nutrition Training. Rachel shares her nutrition tips on KCRG Channel 9 News on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:15 a.m.

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.

Mike Bensmiller
Extension Council Chair

Janis Collins
Council Vice Chair

Brian Kitzman
Treasurer

Shirley Conkity
Secretary

Shirley Holm
Council Member

Clint Mikesell
Council Member

Carla Dumont
Council Member

Tyler Clawson
Council Member

Justin Abell
Council Member

Keokuk County Extension Council connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Keokuk County for what we all want—a strong Iowa. Read about some of the ways ISU Extension and Outreach meets local needs, improves quality of life, and helps make Keokuk County a better place to live!
Human Sciences

This year, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Human Science Specialists have been busy in Keokuk County! A new program, What About Me? My Wellbeing was presented by all three specialists to our local TOPS group. This program highlighted ways to improve wellness including purpose, social, emotional, financial, and physical health. Family Life Specialist, Dawn Dunnegan, provided an ACEs workshop to Keokuk County’s Mental Health Coalition. This workshop illustrated adverse childhood experiences that cause lifelong effects. Nutrition and Wellness Specialist, Rachel Wall, offered a popular workshop to gardeners and canners this year as well; Food Preservation 101.

These ladies have wonderful plans for 2018. Stay tuned!

Agriculture

Keokuk County Extension reached 219 farmers in 2017! In the spring and fall, our office provides farmers and co-ops with continuing education courses and private pesticide workshops. Ryan Drollette, Farm Management Specialists also invites farmers to his Farmland Leasing Meetings. While Field Agronomist, Meaghan Anderson, added a Palmer Amaranth workshop in 2017 for Keokuk County citizens.

K-12 Youth Outreach

Keokuk County Extension and Outreach staff reach out to youth in the community in a number of ways! In 2017, we served 487 youth with our programs! Our 4-H program continues to grow each year! This year, we introduced 2 new clubs in Keokuk County; the Sewing Club and a new Foods Club! We also introduced 2 new Clover Kids Clubs! We now have 16 clubs in Keokuk County between 4-H and Clover Kids! Our number of volunteers is on the rise also with a total of 96 throughout our program. Other ways we reach out to youth in our community includes STEM Camps in the spring and winter, and Clover University and library camps in the summer. Our County Youth Outreach Educator presents school programs throughout the county as well. These programs include Pick a Better Snack and Ricochet.

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