

MAKING A DIFFERENCE *for Iowans*

Clippings



Lyon • O'Brien • Osceola • Sioux Counties

A Weekly Column from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Week of January 4, 2016

For Immediate Release

100 years

Cindy Gannon, Marketing Coordinator

100 years. That's how long Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has been serving the people of Iowa through county offices. You may know us as the "county extension service" or just "extension" or as my friends like to tease me, "You're the extension lady!" Others may be familiar with 4-H, one of our most popular and largest programs. As with any business or organization that has been around for 100 years, we have evolved.

Today we call ourselves "Iowa State University Extension and Outreach". One hundred county extension districts provide local access to Iowa State University Extension and Outreach programs in all of Iowa's 99 counties. (Pottawattamie County has two districts.) The 900 members of the 100 elected county extension councils work in partnership with local citizens, Iowa State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to carry the land grant mission beyond the campus in Ames to all parts of the state.

What does all this mean? How did our service start and why are we still going? The simple answer is, "It's the law." Here's a little history lesson about Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

Cooperative Extension and Federal Law

In 1862, Iowa was the first state to accept the terms of the Morrill Land Grant Act, establishing Iowa State as our state's sole land grant institution.



In 1903, a group of Sioux County farmers cooperated with Iowa State University to establish the "extension idea". Starting with Sioux County in 2016, local county extension will celebrate their 100 year milestones of organized extension work and the hiring of their first county agents. Lyon, Osceola and O'Brien Counties will celebrate in 2018.

In 1914, Iowa State became the first land grant institution to accept the terms of the Smith-Lever Act and establish cooperative extension. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is part of the federal Cooperative Extension Service — a network of 106 land grant institutions and the U.S. Department of Agriculture serving communities and counties across the United States. The Smith-Lever Act created the federal Cooperative Extension Service to “aid in diffusing among the people of the U.S. useful and practical information on subjects related to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same.”

ISU Extension and Outreach programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources, Community and Economic Development, Human Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development are part of Cooperative Extension. While ISU Extension and Outreach is federally mandated to provide education within these areas, citizens in partnership with ISU Extension and Outreach can determine the mix of programs offered locally.

State Extension in Iowa

Although the Smith-Lever Act did not establish extension nationally until 1914, the Iowa Legislature enacted the Agricultural Extension Act in 1906 to make funds available for agricultural demonstration projects. This appears to be the first specific legislation establishing state extension work. Iowa State College took responsibility for the state extension service in 1906, which led to the creation of a Department of Extension at the college. Iowa was ahead of the curve again.

County Extension and State Law

Today, operation of county offices consists of 20 regions. ISU Extension and Outreach partners with 900 elected county extension council members who represent the 100 county agricultural extension districts, and who are responsible for determining local county programs — as set forth by the County Extension Law, Code of Iowa, Chapter 176A — to provide access to education meeting local needs.

The bottom line — we engage citizens with university resources in partnership with federal, state, and county governments. Our role is to serve as a 99-county campus, connecting the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. Our goal is to provide education and partnerships designed to solve today's problems and prepare for the future. We invite you to be a lifelong partner. Join us as a learner, volunteer, or advocate. Call our hotlines, visit our county offices, contact your county extension council.

We are everywhere for Iowans. We want what you all want — a strong Iowa.