

CHRISTIAN COUNTY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

June 2008

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Area Teachers Enjoy A Taste Of Central Illinois Ag

With help from a Dudley Smith Initiative (DSI) Education Grant, teachers from Christian, Macon, and Piatt counties spent four days learning about central Illinois agriculture and ag-related activities that can be easily incorporated into their current lesson plans.

The 2008 Summer Ag Institute featured hands-on learning sessions with Illinois Ag in the Classroom instructors, both the Illinois Beef and Pork Producers Associations, Richland Community College Horticulture Program instructors, the Illinois FFA, and a presentation on the "Illinois mAGic" kit

now available through the Ag Literacy Program.

Participants also had the opportunity to visit local agri-business operations to get first-hand knowledge of the Twin Groves Wind Farm at Bloomington, Taylorville's Big M Manufacturing and Berry Patch, the Dunkirk Swine Farm near Morrisonville, the Assumption Co-op Grain Elevator in Palmer, the Goldmine Organic Farm near Assumption, the Dudley Smith Farm near Pana, and the Clavin Dairy near Rosamond, IL.

At each facility, the teachers heard the



farmer/operator explain how they produce and market various commodities.

The Christian County Extension office encourages teachers throughout Illinois to apply for DSI Educational Grants designed to help teach the important role agriculture plays in their lives.

DDG's to be Focus of Newest Dudley Smith Research

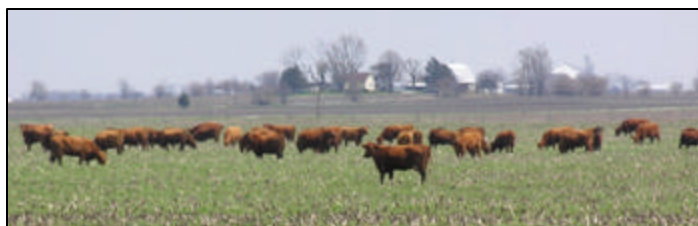
Over 70 area farmers and ranchers attended the June 11th Cow-Calf Field Day at the University of Illinois' Dudley Smith Farm near Pana.

This program was designed to share the latest information on forage quality and cow-calf performance on pasture-grazing systems

with producers.

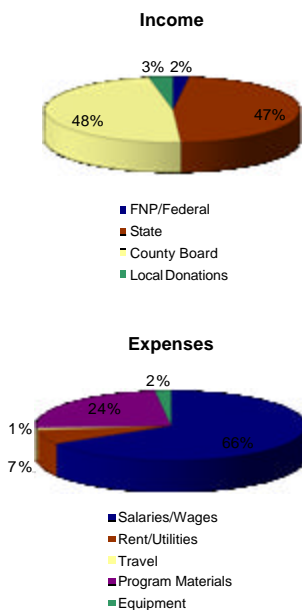
Dan Shike, visiting Animal Science professor from the University of Illinois College of ACES, was introduced as a new

cooperating researcher who will study the effect of adding DDG's (distiller's grains) to the calf-grazing ration over the next few years.



Financial Information

University of Illinois Extension is a three-way partnership, in terms of both programming and funding, among the State of Illinois, the United States Department of Agriculture and Christian County residents.



We're on the Web!

www.extension.uiuc.edu/christian

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Building Stronger Farm Family Relationships

Eleven Annie's Project participants wrapped up their final classroom session on June 25 eager to learn more about the agricultural industry, the business of farming and their own family farming operations.

Throughout the six sessions, these women learned the importance of designing a workable business plan, marketing grain, setting up balance sheets, developing spreadsheets, the basics of crop insurance, estate planning concerns, and

farm leasing options.

Sponsored locally by the First National Bank of Pana and the University of Illinois Extension in Christian County, participants will continue working on assignments to learn more about their own operations and attend follow-up sessions on marketing, taxation



issues, depreciation and much more.

To learn more, visit Annie's Project online at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/annie/>

Annie's Project Coordinator and University of Illinois Extension Farm Business and Management Educator, Ruth Hambleton, along with Christian County Farm Credit Services Representative Mary Schmitz and others taught specific topics during the 2008 "Annie's Project" program.

Discovering the Best of the Best!

The 2008 4-H Fair got off to a great start in June with over 30 young people exhibiting at the 4-H Foods Show and 12 participating in the 4-H Clothing Show. These shows allow 4-H members to be judged on the quality of their projects based on the age of the 4-H'er and the years of experience in each project.

4-H members must also be prepared to

explain the skills they have learned to the judges, especially if they are selected to show at the Illinois State Fair.

Judges, in turn, can provide much insight into solving problems the 4-H'ers may have



encountered.

Illinois State Fair officials are once again providing individualized judging, and Christian County 4-H exhibits will be judged on Tuesday, August 12. This face-to-face judging opportunity allows young people to visit one-on-one with a judge, which can be a rewarding experience for both the judge and the exhibitor.

Stay In The Game With Smart Snacks

Taylorville Library's summer reading program theme: "Get in the Game -READ," led the Family Nutrition Program to chose the lesson "Stay in the Game with Smart Snacks" as a compliment to this program.

Each participant had the chance to build their own 4th of July firecracker filled with a nutritious dried fruit and nut snack. They also enjoyed making their own sundae using fresh strawberries,

blueberries, low fat vanilla yogurt and granola.

Pictured are Kristina, Evan, and Kamila Allen from Taylorville.

