

Program Accomplishments

University of Illinois Extension

Madison-St. Clair Unit

January - February 2008

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Enhancing Agricultural Business Skills

- The **Illinois Pesticide act** requires crop producers to become certified as private pesticide applicators in order to purchase and apply restricted-use pesticides. These products include the insecticides, Warrior, Force and Pounce, as well as the herbicides Atrazine, Gramoxone Max, and Harness. To help farmers become certified, University of Illinois Extension hosted a pesticide safety education program clinic in January with 63 participating. This class prepares the participants for a closed-book 50-question exam.

Specialty Crop Production

- The **2008 Horseradish School** held in Collinsville in support of the Horseradish Growers of Illinois brought together forty-one growers, processors and researchers from around the nation. The full day of information from University of Illinois researchers included *Thermo-Therapy for Eradication of Fungal Pathogens in Propagative Root-Stocks of Horseradish*; *Research Update on Volunteer Horseradish Control*; *Horseradish Variety Survey results*; *Horseradish Breeding*; *Logistics and Economics of Producing Pathogen-Free Tissue*; *Progress in Horseradish Tissue Culture*; and *Shoot Formation from Single Cells of Horseradish*.



Natural Resources

- Landowners and agricultural producers wanting more information on the conservation provisions of the farm bill, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Grant website, and the carbon trading program attended the statewide Farm Conservation telenet, Tuesday, January 29.

There are a number of programs and grants that take land out of continuous row-crop production and financially help landowners. Featured speakers were from the USDA Farm Service Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The program provided landowners and producers assistance in understanding their options.

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Youth Development

Home Horticulture Education

- Twenty-three individuals accepted for training in the **Master Gardener program** in Madison and St. Clair Counties began classes in mid-January and will continue until the first of May on a weekly basis. These Master Gardener trainees join the current 150 + active Master Gardeners in supporting the work of Extension's horticulture program. Master Gardener trainees learn about vegetable gardening, ornamental plants, small fruits, tree fruits, plant pathology, plant identification, environmental problems, herbicide use, insect control, soils and fertilization, annuals and perennials, and turf. Following classroom training, they will be working in a volunteer capacity for a minimum of 60 hours.
- Master Gardeners volunteer for Extension in the community in a wide variety of ways including sharing their knowledge through **community presentations**. Master Gardener, Ann Morey explained the Plant a Row program for 24 members of the Women's Guild, St. John UCC, in New Athens in early February. Plant a Row encourages gardeners to plant a bit extra that they can donate to their local food pantry enabling those who qualify the opportunity for fresh fruits and vegetables, which are often lacking in their diet.
- Greg Stack, U of I Extension horticulture educator, shared his knowledge with ten local gardeners as part of a statewide program. The program focused on how to incorporate **vines** into the home garden. Participants learned what to look for in vines and how to care for them.

Commercial Horticulture Education

- If they worked in lawn care, landscaping, nurseries, garden centers, golf courses or any other horticulture-related industry, they attended the **Gateway Green Industry Conference** (formerly Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School.) 935 paid registrants descended upon the Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville for two days of classes, keynote sessions, and a sold out commercial trade show of 100 booths.



Those working in the sports turf industry checked out classes such as *Understanding the Safety of Turf Pesticides; Identifying and Managing Large White Grubs Including June Beetles and True White Grubs; Aquatic Plant Management of Lakes and Ponds; Infield Amendments and Using Pearson's Square; and Choosing Bermudagrass Cultivars for Midwest Athletic Fields*. Tracks were available for golf course management, landscape, arborists, bedding plants, parks and recreation, and public facilities as well.

The conference is the premiere commercial horticultural educational event in the St. Louis region with keynote speakers Paul Cappiello from Yew Dell Gardens, in Crestwood, Kentucky and Chris Beytes, Editor of Grower Talks Magazine by Ball Publishing.

Evaluation comments are extensive and include *excellent selection of programs. Best yet!!; The show is always informative. Many times two good classes will be together. Vendors have good information available.*

Urbanization: Moving Away from Agricultural Roots

- Teaching the basics of agriculture, Jan Tribbett, **Illinois Ag in the Classroom** coordinator in St. Clair County taught 4th graders about simple and complex machines in Agriculture. This is subject matter covered on the ISATs. The kids loved handling the tractor, combine, and implements models—and were totally amazed to hear how sophisticated and expensive the real ones are. Some of the teachers weren't sure if they were going to cover this material before the ISATs, so they were VERY grateful!

This is a 50% funded program.

- Fourth graders in Madison County took a look at livestock and their products during the January and February sessions of the Land of Illinois series. *Madison County C.A.R.E.E. (Conservation, Agricultural Resources, and Environmental Education)* program presented this lesson in 74 classrooms reaching 1,697 students.

Many teachers hatch chickens in their classrooms in the spring, but using an incubator can be very tricky. A workshop provided an opportunity for teachers to learn how to properly use an incubator to insure the best results. Additional ideas for classroom activities involving poultry were provided.

CAREE is co-sponsored with Madison County Farm Bureau, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation Service, and University of Illinois Extension.

Community Development

Developing Community Leadership

- Illinois county officials are challenged to obtain necessary information to make informed decisions regarding policy and delivery of services. The goal of University of Illinois Extension is to provide county officials with opportunities to sharpen their skills and gain knowledge about their legal, administrative, and fiduciary responsibilities necessary to make informed decisions involving their constituency.

University of Illinois Extension programs provide local officials an opportunity to gain access to experts on current issues without leaving their home county. Presenters for the programs include university faculty, representatives of state and federal agencies, and community leaders with experience in the issues and challenges faced by local officials.

Many businesses use the Internet to reach their customers so why should local governments be any different? More and more local governments are exploring new opportunities to communicate with their citizens. The program, *Are You On-line with E-Government* explored resources available to local governments to bring their communities into the age of online communications.

The February program, *Bringing Energy Independence Home* featured Lee White discussing clean renewable energy bonds and Jennifer Jenkins from Ky Stream Government Affairs discussing personal wind turbines.

Consumer and Family Sciences

Lowering Fat, Sugar and Salt in Diet

- In addition to the regular curriculum taught through the FNP program, 4th grade health fairs are very popular. Through an interactive game, students learn to choose **Healthy Snacks**. Students attending Wilson School, Granite City and Edwardsville School district and Grant Middle School, Fairview Heights participated in February. Students were on a scavenger hunt complete with booklet containing a question to answer at each booth. Lights of red and green flashed in our booth helping the children to learn to make healthy choices. Approximately 800 youth participated in the activity.
- The **Family Nutrition Program** serves lower income families in the area teaching food budgeting, food safety, and healthy meals. In January and February, over 2,000 individuals participated in the two county area with an additional 15,000 receiving educational information through educational fact sheets. Canned fruits and veggies, the featured topic for January taught participants to purchase safe canned foods and the importance in their diet.

February saw staff stressing the healthful dish, fish. Encouraging families to eat fish twice a week, they stressed the importance of fatty fish like salmon, lake trout, sardines, canned light tuna and herring. Bake, broil, or grill fish instead of frying. Season with herbs, lemon juice or soy sauce.

- Seven dieticians joined us for a stimulating session on discussing the increasingly important topic of **diabetes occurrence among adolescents**. Dr. Karen Chapman-Novakofski, PhD, from University of Illinois led the discussion helping participants understand the contributing factors to the growing number of youth with diabetes, how to apply the evidence-based guidelines to educational interventions and become aware of local and national resources for teens with diabetes.

The second in the series of professional development took a look at the recent findings that indicate eating broccoli and tomatoes together enhances their value in prevention of prostate cancer. John W. Erdman who is presently professor of Food Science and Human Nutrition, Professor of Internal Medicine, and Professor of Nutrition in the Division of Nutritional sciences at the University of Illinois helped participants become familiar with the connection between diet and prostate cancer. Additionally, participants learned how prostate cancer afflicts African Americans more than other racial groups, learned how innovative outreach approaches improve screening, and how micronutrients interact with synergistic effects in preventing prostate cancer.

Food Safety

- Want to stay healthy? Wash your hands.

The strategy seems simple enough, but a 2005 study from the American Society for Microbiology and The Soap and Detergent Association show that although 91 percent of adults say they always wash their hands after using restrooms, but only 83 percent were observed doing so. Only 42 percent of Americans said they washed their hands after petting a dog or cat and only 32 percent washed their hands after coughing or sneezing.

Handwashing is so low tech it doesn't get the credit it deserves. The ***Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies*** program teaches this simple concept.



In January and February, volunteers taught 901 third and fourth graders how to properly wash their hands through the ***Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies*** program in partnership with the Madison and St. Clair County Health Departments.

Family Life

- *We've all had the feeling—there is much to do, but you just can't get motivated to do the tasks. Does your enthusiasm need a boost?* Putting things off due to a lack of time or skills, wanting to do them perfectly or generally talking yourself out of doing them can give you an excuse to delay getting started. Yet, the rewards of completing a “round-to-it” list produce much satisfaction.

Lois Smith, U of I Extension Consumer and Family Economics educator conducted the community seminar for 17 participants who taught another 150 individuals. She helped them explore the 3Ps, Procrastination, Perfectionism, and Pessimism and ways to regenerate motivation.

- We all experience times of unhappiness, sadness or grief throughout the course of our lives. If we occasionally have a “blue” day or feel down in the dumps, that is normal. But when the down feelings last a long time and are more severe than just feeling blue, then we need to find out the underlying cause and get help.

According to recent statistics, depressive disorders are the most common mental health disorders in older adults, affecting approximately 15 out of every 100 adults over age 65 in the United States. This is compared to 10 percent of the overall population.

When someone you know is feeling down, it is important to recognize the differences between the occasional blues and depression that requires professional help. The University of Illinois Extension seminar, *Blues, Blahs and Bouncing Back*, discusses the differences between the everyday blues and depression, tips to help bounce back from occasional blues, and how to help others through these times.

Millie Kaiser, family life educator conducted the seminar which in turn had volunteers teaching another 123 people.

Improving the Management of Family Resources

- *It's all the STUFF—papers, bills and receipts, snapshots, magazine clippings, kids stuff, clothes... I spend half my time piling, sorting and moving it from one place to another.*

Is all the STUFF in your life driving you crazy? Too many toys? So many "important" papers from school. Pictures that you never get put away. University of Illinois Extension offered a unique workshop that may helped the attendees find the answer.

Finding Sanity in Today's World: De-Cluttering Your Life helped the participants develop a personalized plan of attack to clear the clutter. They learned how to reduce paper and clutter, easily locate those important notes and phone numbers, and create storage systems that work for you and your children.

Lois Smith, Consumer and Family Economics Educator, University of Illinois Extension provided easy-to-do tips to get started for an audience in Belleville.

- Planning for the future? **Retirement housing goals** must extend into all the phases of retirement life. This program provided ways to evaluate retirement needs; factors to consider when choosing a place to retire; descriptions of the types of retirement housing options; and questions to ask yourself to help you decide whether to age in place or move.

Lois Smith, U of I Extension Consumer and Family Economics Educator, conducted the community seminar for 17 to help them prepare for retirement housing.

4-H Youth Development

Expansion of 4-H Leadership Skills

- To better help prepare youth for their club leadership positions, **4-H Officers' Training** was held in both counties. Along with both community workers, Dawn Waller, Youth Educator, conducted training with a total of nineteen youth. Training consisted of specific information concerning the roles and responsibilities of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, and recreation leader. Youth were also instructed how to work effectively with their 4-H membership in order to maximize participation and keep youth engaged as well as identify and understand the parts of a business meeting. After participating in the training, all members felt they were better able to do their job as an officer. Furthermore, 75% of the participants felt they learned a lot about how to run a 4-H meeting.
- Through discussion with club leaders, it was learned that when given the option, many 4-H members chose to conduct a talk rather than a demonstration during 4-H club meetings. 4-H club

leaders and staff concluded that members may not have the necessary resources, skills, or confidence to deliver a demonstration. Resources were provided to all club leaders in the fall, 2007 for distribution and discussion with members during 4-H meetings. To assist in the further development of skills, a **4-H demonstrations workshop** was held in January. This workshop was taught by Martha Winter, Dawn Waller, youth educator, and Mary Mue ntnich, 4-H volunteer with 13 youth in attendance. Martha taught participants the basics in conducting a food demonstration. She stressed the importance of using clear containers, viewing your work table as a stage, and working from right to left or vice versa while removing food and supplies from the stage. Dawn and Mary provided instruction on general projects demonstrations while all three adults served as small group leaders so that youth could conduct a practice demonstration on their own. Youth reported learning “how to put more ‘filling’ in the report”; “ how to give a better demonstration”; “to practice, practice more than I already do!”. One youth stated “I learned to introduce myself when I go up in front of a crowd.” 92% of the youth surveyed will conduct a 4-H demonstration at a club meeting, rather than a talk. 27% of these youth stated an interest in performing a demonstration beyond the club level.

- Sixteen St. Clair County 4-H leaders participated in a **Colors of Personalities** session provided by Dawn Waller, youth educator. The *Colors of Personalities* program uses colors to identify four distinct perspectives and personalities. Each color represents an individual’s character. Understanding a person’s true colors and the colors of others brings about a new awareness, in not only understanding yourself but others as well. As a result of the workshop, participants reported that they planned to do the following: “Accept others for their strengths and weaknesses better”; “Understand others better”; “See my co-leader differently”. Participants reported key learnings as “Being reminded that all types of people are so important for group development”. “Fun and eye opening.” 91% of participants indicated that as a result of the training, they are better able to recognize their own strengths and the strengths of others as well as better understand how others process information.
- **New 4-H leaders** are crucial in the expansion of 4-H. In February, two Cloverbud leaders and one 4-H leader from Madison County participated in the first phase of the Valued Volunteers Orientation. They will be leading or co-leading clubs in Glen Carbon, Marine, and Edwardsville. When asked about the most important thing learned about their role as a volunteer leader, they responded “safety and protection of our kids”; “to be a trusted adult for the club members”; and “the difference between the various leadership/volunteers positions”.
- The **2008 Illinois Junior Leadership Conference** was held in Urbana in late February for 7th and 8th grade 4-H members. Two youth and one parent chaperone attended from the Madison-St. Clair unit. Participants were able to choose from exciting workshops such as promoting and designing effective displays, how to develop and achieve goals, exploring the world of robotics and engineering, decision making and problem-solving, how to be a team player, and more. Exciting speakers, community service, and recreation rounded out the weekend’s activities. Youth were invited and encouraged to share their learning with fellow club members upon return home.

After School Programming

- **4-H Teens Reaching for Success** after school program youth have been learning leadership skills as they have embarked on a new challenge. They have been challenged to use their teamwork skills when performing tasks under various leadership styles performed by their peers. Youth also engaged in activities designed to examine their personalities, values, and time management, which also facilitated cooperation and communication skills.

The above activities were done to prepare youth to begin to brainstorm community service opportunities of interest to them. Through these activities, youth were challenged to pay close attention to their surroundings and people's perceptions of community needs so as to get a true picture of the current status of their community. Thus, youth identified a need to help out a local animal shelter and have begun the planning and organizing of a school-wide pet supply drive. Several youth also served on a planning committee to organize information and present it to the school principal for approval of this project. Youth researched the needs of the shelter and have used computer programs to design marketing materials. In fact, several youth with computer skills offered to teach their peers in how to use publisher and word programs to create fliers. Thus, this challenge brought youth together, in the spirit of cooperation, to work towards achieving a common goal, despite individual differences

Orange areas are one of four program areas of focus for University of Illinois Extension.

Blue is the identified issue for Madison-St. Clair unit within the program area.

Black describes the programmatic activity conducted within the two-month period.