

Program Accomplishments

University of Illinois Extension
Madison-St. Clair Unit
November - December 2008

Consumer and Family Sciences

Lowering Fat, Sugar and Salt in Diet

- 81 people desiring a healthier lifestyle attended the **Healthy Cooking Showcase** at the Gateway Center, Collinsville in November. The Showcase consisted of instructional sessions from 10 a.m. until mid-afternoon. Topics focused on various ideas intended to echo the theme of the day.

Guest demonstrators included Lynn Thillman of Feed Fare-e Personal Chef Service; Carol Schlitt, University of Illinois Extension; Pam Smith, a personal chef, and Suzanne Boyle, food editor for the Belleville News Democrat.



Everyone registering and attending the Healthy Cooking Showcase received a book filled with recipes that coincided with the topics. Participants learned about super foods, how to incorporate them into their diet and how to reduce fat in recipes and much more. The education doesn't stop with the participants. Many reported sharing with family and friends about healthier concepts and recipes. Several high school teachers attended and indicated that they were going to introduce their students to couscous and orzo as well.

Participants reported that they will take action based on what they learned. They will eat more fruits knowing they need two cups per day; potassium helps balance salt regarding blood pressure. Others reported learning that cooking healthy can be easy and the importance of using quality ingredients.

Participants were also asked if they had attended previous Healthy Cooking Seminars, how they have applied the information. Answers included *I use the recipes often; tried different meats to lower the fat in my diet; improved my shopping habits; cook healthier than before; threw out the potato chips, cookies, snack cakes and keep other healthier alternatives handy and have consulted with a dietician.* Many more comments were submitted, but too numerous to mention here. We're meeting our goal of helping families eat healthier as news reports and studies tell us is needed. Is there a day that goes by that we don't hear this?

University of Illinois
Extension
Madison-St. Clair Unit
www.extension.uiuc.edu
u/madisonstclair

900 Hillsboro Avenue,
P. O. Box 427
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 650-7050
FAX (618) 655-9951
e-mail:
madison_co@extension.
uiuc.edu

621 South Belt West
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 236-4172
FAX (618) 236-9416
stclair_co@extension.
uiuc.edu

Staff:

Belva Blakely
Family Nutrition

Janet Burnett
County Director

Jan Denby, Coordinator

Benna Denué, Coordinator

Michaelleen Gerken
Natural Resources

Denise Godfrey,
Office Support

Andrea Harris, 4-H

Maritza Lemke
Family Nutrition

Shannon Murphy
CAREE Coordinator

Sarah Ruth
After School Programs

Patricia Shipp
Family Nutrition

Patty Stanton,
Office Support

Julie Tyberendt, 4-H

Dawn Waller
Youth Development

- Diabetes is on the rise in epidemic proportion in the United States. As part of the effort to teach about dining with diabetes, Extension staff participated in Anderson Hospital's health fair with the theme, ***Why Should You Care about Diabetes?*** Healthful diabetic friendly cookies along with recipes brought participants to learn more.
- The **Family Nutrition Program** serves lower income families in the area teaching food budgeting, food safety, and healthy meals. In November and December, **4,887** individuals participated in the two county area with an additional 15,000 receiving educational information through educational handouts. ***Know How Much You Eat and Drink Daily***, the primary topic for November emphasized eating only the amount of food your body needs to avoid gaining weight. To lose weight, eat only what your body needs and be more physically active every day. Choose activities that you enjoy. Start new habits. Walking is a great way to start. Take a brisk 10 minute walk to and from the parking lot, or bus stop.

December began a series focused on the importance of family mealtimes. Studies are showing that not only are mealtimes good for communication, but they also contribute to healthier diets.

Participants enjoy telling us how they benefit from the classes provided. At one of the senior citizen classes, Patty introduced herself explaining that since attending Maritza's classes and following the healthier eating suggestions, she is feeling more energetic. When visiting her doctor, he asked her what she has been eating, because he recognized a change. She explained about the Family Nutrition classes, how she had changed her shopping habits to reading labels, budgeting her food dollars and making healthy food choices.

Food Safety

- The Family Nutrition Program teaches food safety as well as nutrition and budgeting. A recent workshop at a local WIC program focused on **safely thawing and cooking a turkey**. One of the attendees shared that previously she thawed her turkey on the kitchen counter and had done that for years. After the class, she changed her habits and is now thawing meat in the refrigerator. Handouts that she received on thawing meat and poultry have been shared with her friends and family members as she convinced them to change their methodology, too.
- According to the Soap and Detergent Association 2007 Clean Hands Report Card, 87% students know that cleaning hands regularly is the number one way to prevent colds and flu. However, only 22% seldom or never wash their hands when they use the bathroom, 31 % before eating lunch and 41% after coughing and sneezing. That rates a D rating for our youth. ***Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies*** strives to change that behavior.

The ***Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies*** program teaches this simple concept. In November and December, volunteers taught 1,406 third and fourth graders when and how to properly wash their hands through the ***Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies*** program in partnership with the Madison and St. Clair County Health Departments.

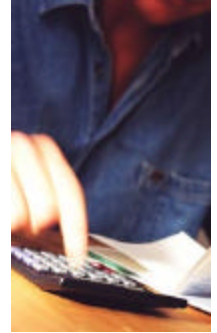


We were asked to return to a group of students where the program had been presented last year although there were new students present also. The volunteer decided to let the students teach her since they had been exposed to the information previously. They explained how to wash her hands and why it is important to use soap and water to wash. The new students asked questions including why hand

sanitizer can't be used to clean hands. Another student quickly answered by explaining that they had used hand sanitizer and could taste it while eating. Another student explained how they used hand sanitizer and then used hand wipes and could see how dirty the hand wipe was after using on "clean" hands. They preferred to use soap and water because they could see the difference. The children had fun teaching the program and the volunteer was able to evaluate how much they remembered from last year. At the end of class, the new students were asked to tell what they had learned, enabling those who taught to know if they had done an effective job.

Getting Through Tough Times

- The new **Getting Through Tough Financial Times website**, <http://www.ToughTimes.illinois.edu>, provides timely information and links to related money management resources. This is your "one-stop" shop for all University of Illinois Extension resources that will help you if your financial security is threatened. Currently, the website is organized around such topics as: Avoiding Money Traps, Setting Spending Priorities, Managing Your Debt, Talking with Creditors, Saving and Investing in Turbulent Times, and Spend Smart/Save Smart tips. New resources are added weekly as the economic situation evolves.



Various organizations have requested information for their newsletter readership such as one recently submitted to the Madison County Health Department on ***How Do We Communicate with Our Children about These Economically Stressful Times?***

4-H Youth Development

Expansion of 4-H

- To better help prepare youth for their club leadership positions, **4-H Officers' Training** was held in both counties. Along with Julie Tyberendt, 4-H community worker and teen volunteers, Dawn Waller, Youth Educator, conducted trainings with a total of thirty 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 4-H officers indicated that they learned how a 4-H business meeting should be conducted. Furthermore, 100% of the participants felt that they could now do a good job as an officer. Participants reported learning parliamentary procedure is worthwhile.
- Approximately 1,200 4-H delegates from across the nation gathered in Atlanta, Georgia for the **87th National 4-H Congress** in November. Illinois was represented by numerous teens, including Kristalynn and Katelynn Raymond from Alhambra.

National 4-H Congress offers states an opportunity to send outstanding 4-H youth to this event and provide them with an expanded educational experience through seminars, community service projects, and tours sponsored by local and national 4-H program donors. All Congress delegates participated in special cultural programs such as the International Dinner & Dance and a night at the Atlanta History Center. Other educational experiences during National 4-H Congress include delegate participation in workshops focusing on cultural differences, team leadership development, and the power of youth. Several delegates had the opportunity to tour locations around Atlanta, such as CNN, the Georgia Aquarium, The World of Coca-Cola, The Carter Presidential Library, Centennial Olympic Park and more.

Throughout the year, over 280,000 University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development participants can receive recognition for their work at the local, county and state level. County nominations for curriculum area winners are sent to the state selection process in January to begin an intense selection process that includes application judging, 4-H story judging and interviews. The process helps judges select the top 4-H members in various curriculum areas. Many of these winners are selected for a trip to this national event. Kristalynn Raymond was named a 2008 State Winner in the Illinois 4-H Award Program in the area of **Achievement**. Katelynn Raymond was named a 2008 State Winner in the Illinois 4-H Award Program in the area of **Home and Family**.

National 4-H Congress is conducted by Cooperative Extension Service staff on behalf of the Cooperative Extension System of the state land-grant universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension.

After School Programming

- The **4-H Teens Reaching for Success** afterschool program, located at Coolidge Middle School, is funded by JCPenney Afterschool Fund Mini-grants with National 4-H Council.

With cooler temperatures setting in, the youth in the **4-H afterschool program** at Coolidge Middle School in Granite City worked diligently to finish their work in the local park. As part of a community service project, youth have identified trees and will soon be making a map of tree types and locations within the park using GPS and GIS technology. On the final days in the park, youth selectively gathered leaves for an indoor activity. Through construction of leaf books, students put their tree identification skills to use and taught others what they had learned. For leaves that they couldn't identify, youth were quite resourceful in knowing how to find the answer. This project also required using an iron to press the leaves, which was a new experience for many of the youth. Thus, students learned safety tips for using an iron, which will be quite useful in their personal lives.



In anticipation of the presidential election, students engaged in various discussions and activities related to citizenship, leadership, communication, and critical thinking skills. They also participated in science activities in the areas of energy, motion, and robotics. One student, in particular, took great pride in his accomplishment. He programmed his robot, which he designed himself, to successfully move forward and backwards.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Home Horticulture Education

- Members of the Belleville Rose Society wanted to learn more about the research and experimentation conducted by Master Gardeners at the **Henry White Farm**, Millstadt. Team leader at the White Farm, Sam Luton shared the outstanding results from the 2008 growing season.

Extension Master Gardeners established the following objectives

- Improve produce harvest from 3,800 to 5,000 pounds
- Experiment with Irish potato planting methods
- Continue with tomato tasting experiment
- Add two 50 x 50 foot vegetable plots north of current garden

After a less than ideal beginning, 2008 turned out to be the most productive year thus far recorded. Despite inclement spring weather, we exceeded our goal of 5,000 pounds. The 2008 harvest, which lasted into November, yielded 5,750 pounds of produce, a 15% improvement over our goal. Of this total, we delivered approximately 2,780 pounds to Belleville food pantries and 2,970 pounds to O'Fallon food pantries. To plant, tend and harvest such amounts required the dedicated efforts of Master Gardener volunteers.

Flower gardeners established a new Tropical Garden this year. Three new varieties of coleus were planted along a meandering path: Henna, Indian Summer, and Mint Mocha. The Trial Garden featured three hues of a new zinnia: Profusion. Given the unusual weather, we had a bumper crop of weeds, which kept our flower gardeners occupied. Nevertheless, the Demonstration Flower Garden looked great this year

- Master Gardener Bill Klopfenstein, Edwardsville assisted the Triad High School Environmental Class with Tree ID techniques in early December.

Urbanization: Moving Away from Agricultural Roots

- From east to west, north to south, Madison County 4th graders learned about Illinois crops that are the basis of Illinois agriculture, corn and soybeans. In November and December there were 105 presentations reaching 2,380 students. In addition 294 students were reached with learning kits that their teachers implemented in the classroom. **Madison County C.A.R.E.E. (Conservation, Agricultural Resources, and Environmental Education)** has evolved into a program that fits hand-in-hand with the 4th grade curriculum throughout Madison County. An eighth grade program is in its second year at Highland Middle School and was added to Edwardsville Middle Schools in September.. The program is designed to help students think broader about possible careers in agriculture.

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

Inspiring an Appreciation for Nature

- A speaker series sponsored by Climate Change Town Hall Meeting, focused on ways to green your home this winter season. Master Gardener Carol Asbury was the featured speaker on **All about Worms: Getting to Know Them and Grow Them** at Belleville Public Library
- Congress recently extended, through 2009, a Federal **tax incentive for conservation easement donations** that has helped thousands of landowners conserve their land. The incentive:
 - ◆ Raises the deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement to 50 % of his or her income for the year.
 - ◆ Allows qualifying farmers to deduct up to 100 % of their income for the year, and
 - ◆ Extends the time period for a donor to take the deductions to 15 years

Participants learned more about the protection of working farms and natural areas and how to pursue a conservation easement, by attending one of the two informational sessions.

- Our inaugural Master **Naturalist** program continued with training for the 18 participants. In November they learned about soils and geology, climate and hydrology, human dimensions and urban ecology. These topics included field trips to Stemler Cave Woods; Henry White Farm, Millstadt; the Great Rivers Museum, Alton; and Willoughby Farm, Collinsville. We congratulate our participants from Madison-St. Clair that successfully completed requirements and were recognized at a graduation ceremony.

Graduates include Bill Ahaus, Trenton; Kelly Broms, Helen Damon, Glen Carbon; Kristine Brown, Troy; Cathy Burdge, Ellen Nore Nordhauser, Barbara Stanford, Edwardsville; Sarah Carney, Bethalto; Kathy Frey, Nancy Hediger, Highland; and Ned Siegel, Belleville.



Watershed Nature Center Partnership (WNC)

- 3rd grade students from Bethalto came to the WNC to hike, dipnet for macroinvertebrates, and examine aquatic organism under microscopes.
- A troop of seven Boy Scouts completed activities to earn their Naturalist badges. The Scouts did activities to learn about food webs, wetland functions, poisonous plants and animals, and went on an exploratory hike to look for evidence of animals and habitat.

Community Development

Leadership

- ***Orientation for Newly Elected County Officials*** provided newly elected and returning county officials with the skills needed for their responsibilities as an elected official.

The orientation session featured Troy Markert from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity discussing budgetary issues and Extension's David McMurtry reviewing parliamentary procedures. Extension's Bob Sampson, former County Board chairman, discussed talking with the media. Michael Luke from the Office of the Attorney General discussed ethics, conflict of interest, Freedom of Information Act, and the Open Meetings Act on a memorable December day in Illinois history.

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.