

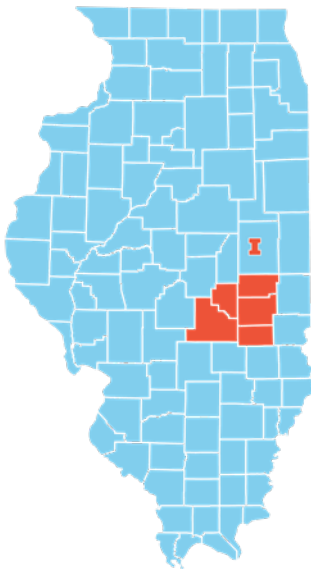


EXTENSION IN ACTION

Coles, Cumberland, Douglas,
Moultrie, and Shelby Counties



Jessie McClusky
County Director



A Message from the County Director

As a supporter of Extension, you already know the following pages are filled with success stories and key data points. All that has been accomplished in 2022 cannot be completely represented in these few pages; our hope is to highlight how we have been able to address local needs.

As we reflect on this past year, we are encouraged by the number of people served in Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby counties. We are able to create opportunities for positive impact due to our talented and passionate staff and volunteers. Additionally, we are thankful to the county boards, foundations, and individuals who make our work possible.

University of Illinois Extension has adapted to local needs for more than 100 years and will continue to serve our local communities for many years to come.

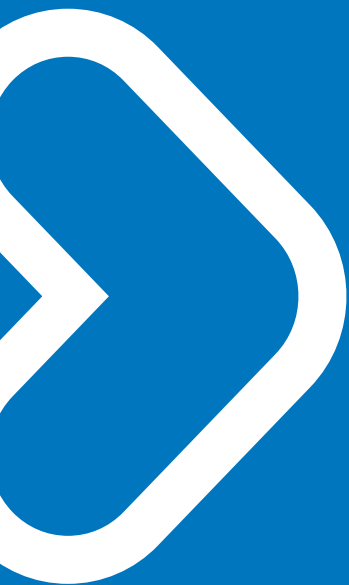
As we continue in 2023, our dedication to providing reliable, research-based education remains in the forefront. To support and provide solutions, we will launch a needs assessment campaign to guide the creation of a three-year plan of work by determining community needs and identifying gaps in local resources which Extension has the capacity to address.

We are excited about the upcoming year and the programs Extension will deliver throughout Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby counties. Please visit our website and follow us on social media to learn more about events and activities offered through Extension.

It is my pleasure to present this brief annual report for 2022.

Thank you,

Jessie McClusky
County Director



Illinois Extension Makes an Impact

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's land grant mission thrives each day through Extension's programs, resources, knowledge, and dedicated staff that are responsive to five grand challenge themes:



Community:
Support Strong and Resilient Residents



Economy:
Grow a Prosperous Economy



Environment:
Sustain Natural Resources at Home and in Public Spaces



Food:
Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply



Health:
Maximize Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health

2022 Engagement

Extension leaders, staff, and stakeholders define priorities that create meaningful, mission-centered outcomes throughout the state:

643 Communities Served	720K+ Program Attendees	14.5M+ Webpage Views	22.9M+ Social Media Impressions	900K+ YouTube Views
488 Educational Sessions/Week (25K+ Annually)	95 Online Courses Accessed by 12K+ People	7,062 Local Government Education Webinar Reach	1,807 4-H Clubs	178,341 4-H Affiliations

Partnerships

Resource Generation

5,941 Program Volunteers	269 Community Gardens	1,030 School Partners	\$15,732,391 Value of Volunteer Contributions	\$223,639 Value of Donated Garden Produce
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Etiquette training provides youth with skills needed in life and workplace

4-H youth development provides the skills needed in life and the workplace, including critical thinking, team building, communication, and etiquette.

Etiquette workshops were held for 198 middle and high school students in 2022. The workshops included lessons on making positive first impressions, interview skills, and dining and conversation etiquette. At the end of the training, high school students practiced their skills at an etiquette lunch or breakfast. Rotary Club members and community volunteers were partnered with the students; students had the opportunity to practice proper introductions and dining etiquette and conversation skills. Rotary clubs from Arthur, Arcola, and Mattoon sponsored the meals.

The etiquette training was created in 2018 at the request of Steffanie Seegmiller, principal for Arthur, Lovington, Atwood, Hammond (ALAH) High School, to help students prepare for their upcoming senior trip to Washington D.C. Kim Morrison, 4-H educator, worked with Seegmiller to create the topics.

The program's success at ALAH was shared, and the program has grown. In 2022, the etiquette training was delivered to high school students involved in entrepreneur programs, including Illini Prairie CEO, Moultrie and Douglas counties, and Class E, Coles County. Students in eighth grade at Charleston Middle School joined the program and had an opportunity to practice what they learned at a culminating event of communication activities and appetizers.

Participants said:

- 96% of students learned and practiced something that they feel they will use in the future.
- 100% of volunteers said the program created positive opportunity for youth and adult interaction.
- 98% of volunteers said they would be willing to participate in future etiquette events.

Results support the belief that we're never too young or too old to show thoughtfulness and consideration to others. 4-H programs provide the tools for youth to master skills needed for successful personal and career growth..

"The etiquette workshop is a highlight of the year for our senior class. It works to prepare us for our capstone journey, our senior trip, but even more importantly, it prepares our students for the real world. Every high school has important lessons ranging from civics to solving equations to Shakespeare that are essential to their high school education. The etiquette workshop surpasses all of these. From the first moment of entering the workshop - from the practicing of handshakes while looking people in their eyes, to taking a close look at their social media presence, to which utensils to use - the lessons are well thought out and essential. The seamless integration of conversation skills, including the use of pronouns and being respectful, are woven into each aspect of the day. The true gift of the class is how students hear and practice critical parts of becoming an adult in the span of just a few hours."

Steffanie Seegmiller, Principal, ALAH



Discover more about 4-H Youth Development
extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/4-h-youth-development



4-H hits the road for summer adventures

All five county 4-H programs have been finding ways to provide activities for youth across the unit. Unit-wide opportunities allow 4-H members to break out of their comfort zones and grow their network. This effort began as a quarterly photography contest. 4-H coordinators wanted to do something more for the summer, and, as a result, the “4-H Summer Road Trip” was created.

The self-paced, learning and exploring family adventure is designed to build family dynamics and foster positive youth-adult partnerships. Additionally, the program increases civic engagement by learning about surrounding areas while engaging with local businesses and tourist destinations.



“Easily the BEST and most favorite stop of all the spots in the Summer Road Trip was the Goat Tower of Baaaa.”

4-H Member



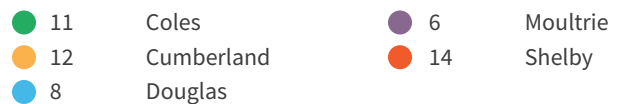
Participants chose to either visit the locations on their own and document the visit with a photo, or attend all workshops offered as part of the program.

Both options provided members to earn prizes as well as travel tokens to be used at the end of the summer for the Grand Adventurer prize drawing.

“I had a lot of fun exploring new places I have never been before. I really enjoyed hanging out with my mom and helping her find the places when the GPS didn’t quite get us to our destination. My favorite place was the Lincoln Log Cabin. I enjoy history, and I thought this place was really cool.”

Delaney, Shelby 4-H Member

4-H coordinators extend their appreciation to the participating locations for their time, support, and new workshop ideas!



314
Total visits



17
Participants



52
Locations



5
Counties



2
Workshops (Outdoor Adventure and Sportfishing)



Discover more about 4-H Youth Development
extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/4-h-youth-development



4-H CLUBS SUPPORT SOLDIERS STATIONED OVERSEAS

Community service is a longstanding tradition within 4-H. These activities help young people see a world beyond themselves. The Shelby County 4-H Federation challenged Shelby County 4-H clubs to collect snack foods, hygiene items, crossword puzzles, and other items for Pat Garlick's Easter Pride Packages. The project has been done for several years, and members are often surprised how much the packages mean to the soldiers. Eleven clubs donated over 500 items. Pat is in her 17th year of doing the Pride Packages and has sent over 4,835 boxes. The 4-H donation was **one of the largest one-time donations she has ever received**. Items donated were put in 65+ boxes and shipped to soldiers stationed overseas in April. 4-H members from John Jordan Jaybirds, Shelby Showstoppers, Oconee Eager Beavers, Silver Spurs, and Strasburg Tailtwisters packed the boxes.



Shelby Sparklers 4-H Club decorated veteran memorial with wreaths.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS EARN METAL

Shelby County 4-H members were challenged by the 4-H Federation to complete at least three community service projects. Federation wanted to assist clubs to resume group projects after the pandemic to help members use leadership and public speaking skills. Eighty members and eight Cloverbuds completed the challenge and received a community service medal sponsored by Federation. One project included making over 60 Easter cards sent in Pride Packages to soldiers overseas. Cards were also made for local veterans. Valentine cards and spring crafts were delivered to area nursing homes. Other clubs shopped for Angel Tree kids, cleaned the park in downtown Assumption, picked up trash, decorated veterans memorial and planted flowers at the wall in Sigel, created appreciation snack baskets for "Back the Blue," and planted peppers and tomatoes at the Shelbyville Community Gardens.



4-H MEMBERS FILL MINI FOOD PANTRY

Food insecurity is an important issue for 4-H clubs, and members have become advocates, finding innovative ways to provide regular access to nutritious food for their communities. 4-H members filled the Blessing Boxes, mini food pantries in Shelbyville, at the 4-H Achievement Night, and they didn't disappoint! Forty-two members provided over 500 items, including non-perishables and hygiene products such as soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, and toothpaste. Kyla Oller, Oconee Eager Beavers member, topped the chart by donating 50 items! The mini food pantries in Shelby County are located at the Shelby County Senior Center and HSHS Good Shepherd. Anyone in need may stop by these locations and help themselves to the items. The boxes are stocked with donations and managed by HSHS Good Shepherd Hospital, the Shelby County Senior Center, and the Shelby County Extension Office. Members learned that if each person contributes a small amount, a big contribution can be made to the community.

"Stocking two Blessing Boxes in Shelbyville is a challenge," says MaryBeth Massey, SNAP-Ed program coordinator. "We very much appreciate the 500+ items that were donated by 4-H families, especially the hygiene products."



Preschool students in Windsor are pictured holding their new backpacks filled with healthy, kid-friendly food and counting puzzle activity provided by the Shelby County 4-H Federation Club.

4-H CLUB RECEIVES \$1,000 FOOD ADVOCAY GRANT

"My hands to larger service" was the focus for Shelby County 4-H. The Federation was awarded \$1,000 for Backpack Buddies, a project that provides children in the Head Start and Project Help programs with new backpacks filled with kid-friendly food. Members wrote the grant, determined items to include, did the shopping, and packed 105 backpacks. Each backpack also included a fun, educational counting puzzle activity, handmade by members. This experience allowed members to collaborate and use leadership skills. Teachers in each program said families were appreciative to receive the backpacks. "I hope the families enjoyed the backpacks," says Federation member Matthew Horsman. "Our goal is for families to realize 4-H isn't just about raising animals, but about giving back to the community. Maybe they will want to join 4-H in the future."





Deer donation program serves up success

The Illinois Deer Donation Program kicked off its first hunting season in October 2022 and experienced a huge success! The program provided 30,056 servings of lean protein.



More than 7,500 pounds of ground venison was donated by 168 local hunters. Donations provided a lean source of protein to food pantries free of charge in 12 east-central Illinois counties: Clay, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Macon, Moultrie, Piatt, and Shelby counties.

Coles, Cumberland, Moultrie, Douglas, and Shelby counties received 2,740 lbs. of ground venison, equal to 10,960 servings.

Illinois Extension staff hosted booths at food pantries to provide recipes, taste testing, and food safety handouts on how to properly prepare the venison. “It’s a great source of protein for families, especially big families,” says Joshua Zoppa, Mattoon Community Food Center executive director. With the cost of groceries increasing nearly 13.5% from this time last year, it is important to have a lean source of protein available in food pantries.

“It’s a great source of protein for families, especially big families.”

Joshua Zoppa, Mattoon Community Food Center Executive Director

At the conclusion of the hunting season, hunters and food pantry managers were surveyed and meat processor were interviewed. Overall, the program was well received and appreciated. Hunters said they were more likely to donate due to the processing fees being covered. Processors and food pantries appreciated the coordination of pantry deliveries, and food pantry guests were grateful for the opportunity to have a complete meal at home.

Program staff extend their appreciation to the hunters who donated to the program, meat processors for their time and effort, and The Lumpkin Family Foundation for the generous monetary donation used to reimburse meat processors.

The program is funded in part by the Health Equity Achieved Together Project (HEAT), a multi-disciplinary collaboration with University of Illinois Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) and other partners within University of Illinois Extension.



Ross Osterday, community worker, accepts the first deer donation.



Mattoon Community Food Center Board Chairman Mike Gerkin



168
Hunters donated



7,514 lbs.
Ground venison donated by local hunters



2,740 lbs.
Ground venison provided to Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie and Shelby food pantries



10,960
Servings of lean protein



For more information, visit
go.illinois.edu/deerdonation



Follow along on Facebook
facebook.com/IllinoisDeerDonationProgram



Partners in Produce meets the need

Local households in Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby counties face food insecurity daily. Produce provided to these households are often past their prime. Partners in Produce provides fresh, high-quality produce from the Arthur Produce Auction. For those facing health issues like diabetes, the need for nutritious foods, such as fruits and vegetables, is even more urgent.

In 2022, the program provided 61,241 pounds of produce to 41 different local food pantries, summer nutrition programs, and local agencies. All the pantries in partnership received weekly donations. On occasion, the program was able to extend produce to Champaign, Macon, and Edgar counties.

A conservative estimate of 2,184 families benefited from the program.

During the growing season, Extension staff, volunteers, and students from Eastern Illinois University attend the Arthur Produce Auction every Tuesday and Friday. Growers and buyers donate a portion of their produce to the program to help food insecure individuals in their community. In addition to donations of produce, staff use monetary donations to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. The produce is distributed to local food pantries, summer nutrition programs, and local agencies.

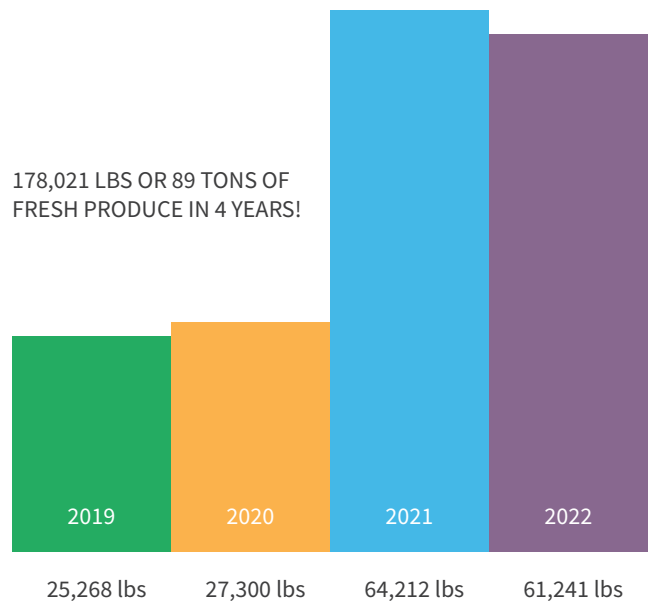
As program leaders look to the future, they are working on increasing community involvement to assist with produce delivery, finding a committed source of annual funding, adding options for onsite gleaning, and adding new sites to serve the food insecure.

The success and support of Partners in Produce has been incredible since the inception in 2019. Thank you to the supporters of Partners in Produce program:

- Growers and Buyers
- Feeding America
- Lumpkin Foundation
- Eastern Illinois University Nutrition and Dietetics Students
- Arthur Produce Auction



Eastern Illinois Students help track and load fresh produce.



For more information about the program
extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/partners-produce



Strong Couples award winners include: Allen Barton, Karla Belzer, Tessa Hobbs-Curley, Robin Ridgley, Cheri Burcham, April Little, Judy Schmidt, and Melissa Wilson with Shelly Nickols-Richardson, Extension director Michele Crawford is not pictured.

♥ Burcham earns national and local award

Cheri Burcham, family life educator, received a team award for her contributions in the Illinois Strong Couples program. Cheri and the team earned the second place Innovation in Programming Award at the annual National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Conference in September. In addition, they received Illinois Extension's Team Excellence Award at the University of Illinois Extension Annual Conference in November.

“This program has been great for us. We’ve been able to use it to work through decisions, conflict, and long-term dreaming about our future.”

Maintaining a healthy and supportive relationship is a trying endeavor for many couples. Supported by decades of research, unmitigated, chronic relationship distress can significantly impair the health and well-being of individuals, their families, and the broader community. National estimates suggest approximately one-third of marriages are distressed.

Illinois Strong Couples provides evidence-based relationship education programming, balancing scientific effectiveness with innovation to achieve substantial public health impact while reducing barriers to relationship education. The online program delivery allows couples to participate at times convenient for them while they balanced their busy lives and demands of raising families, working and life responsibilities, families, work demands, and life responsibilities.

The Illinois Strong Couples team is proud to be the first Extension system in the nation to implement this delivery model statewide. As the initiative has been impactful for couples seeking relationship improvement in Illinois, the team is engaging in a national dissemination effort in partnership with other Extension systems to reach other help-seeking couples across the country.



Learn more about this program
<https://publish.illinois.edu/strongcouples/>



First Aid aims to strengthen farm industry ♥

Mental health is an often-overlooked challenge farmers face nationwide. Through the Farm Stress Grant, six Mental Health First Aid trainings were held for agribusiness professionals, Extension educators, and others who have regular contact with those in the agriculture industry. Sixty individuals learned to better assist others experiencing a mental health challenge.

Mental Health First Aid is a skills-based training course teaching participants about mental health and substance-use issues. The training is designed for non-mental health professionals who want to know more about helping others, including community members, business owners, teachers, and religious leaders. The training focuses on a step-by-step approach to deliver safe and effective support to those in need, understanding that each person is uniquely different.

“My understanding of this topic was low, so much of the basic information was excellent to create a foundational knowledge. I especially appreciated the information about creating a self-care plan as I am a very strong believer in taking care of myself in order to be of use in taking care of or helping others. The information about suicide was especially good for me as I had no skill at all in this area.”

Mental Health First Aid Participant

Post-training evaluations showed that 100% of participants reported they knew:

- The 5-step MHFA action plan statements
- Early indicators that may affect an individual experiencing a mental health challenge
- Actions within the scope of a First Aider
- How to cope with feelings of discomfort or frustration associated with providing MHFA

For those who regularly interact with youth, a separate course, Youth Mental Health First Aid, is available.



To register for an upcoming training or to bring Mental Health First Aid to your organization, visit extension.illinois.edu/health/farm-stress-workshops or call (217)-543-3755



Flexing brain power with Wits Fitness

The Wits Fitness Brain Exercise program has been going strong in Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby counties since 2015. There is increasing evidence that brain health is directly related to body health. Most people think more about keeping their bodies and hearts healthy than working at maintaining a healthy brain. Wits Fitness Brain Exercise program helped 318 people learn and address brain health and the lifestyle factors to help maintain cognitive health. One hundred eighty-six additional people participated in other brain health programming in 2022.

After participation, participants evaluated reported on a scale from 1-5:

- 54% reported knowledge about lifestyle choices affecting brain health and function was 4 out of 5 or high/very high
- 63% reported awareness of memory strategies and techniques was 4 out of 5 or high/very high
- 60% reported skill level for using techniques or lifestyle choices was 4 out of 5 or high/very high

Some of the actions they intended to take as a result of the classes included: “Play mind games; Making relationships; Really focusing when introduced to someone for the first time so I can remember their name; I pay more attention as things are happening; Doing games at home and thinking; I have learned some techniques to help me pursue what I have forgotten (names, words, dates); Get more rest; Do brain puzzles; and, Do things that keep my brain more alert.”

“I have learned some techniques to help me pursue what I have forgotten.” (names, words, dates)

Wits Fitness Participant

Most important things participants learned:

“Memory can be helped by doing many activities; Do something every day to test your brain; Keep your brain active; Challenge your brain in a variety of ways; Thinking is fun; Exercise of the brain is as important as physical exercise; Concentration; How important it is to do things that help my brain such as

exercise and eating brain foods; Not to be worried about a little forgetfulness – it can be normal; and, To keep learning new things.”

Favorite parts of the program:

“I enjoy sharing with others at the classes; The variety of things we do; Stimulating the brain; Puzzle challenges; Games; I enjoy the activities; The fellowship of the others in the group; Meeting new people and making new friends; The camaraderie and completion of games and puzzles; All of it; and, Cheri! She’s so enthusiastic and presents ideas in simple terms and makes learning fun.”

The program not only assists older adults in maintaining cognitive function by challenging their thinking with interactive activities, but also improving their social connections with others in the classes. The classes are also a great way to build strong relationships and future collaborations between Illinois Extension and host sites.

Positive feedback from participants shows that not only the activities are helpful, but the socialization they receive from participating is valuable.



Wits Fitness participants engaged in a brain fitness activity.



318
Wits Fitness participants



54%
reported knowledge about lifestyle choices affecting brain health and function was high/very high



63%
reported awareness of memory strategies and techniques was high/very high



60%
reported skill level for using techniques or lifestyle choices was high/very high



186
additional participants in other brain health programming in 2022



Learn more about this program
<https://go.illinois.edu/ccdmsWitsFitness>



Master Gardeners keep on learning

Master Gardeners made a difference in their communities in 2022, offering several different workshops and activities. More than 220 individuals participated in programs from growing cut flowers and creating terrariums, to the history and process of pressing flowers. Master Gardeners brought back the annual Spring into Gardening Conference, featuring presentations about raised bed gardening, gardening for pollinators, and composting.

The May plant sale was held at Lytle Park and featured hanging baskets, vegetables, houseplants, and native plants. Each plant was started in the greenhouse and lovingly cared for by dedicated Master Gardeners. Day trips to local hidden gems gave Master Gardeners opportunities to learn about unique plants and interesting growing techniques. Some of the techniques were implemented at the Idea Garden located at Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital, revamping and incorporating new projects throughout the garden.

Master Naturalist double in size in 2022

The environment is facing challenges from losses in biodiversity to climate change and deforestation. The mission of the Master Naturalist Program is to provide science-based educational opportunities that connect people with nature and equip volunteers with the information they need to help mitigate these environmental challenges.

Master Naturalist training addresses environmental issues ranging from the importance of native plants, wildlife interactions, and forest health. Individuals learn a wide range of information to help them mitigate climate change, reduce invasive species, become engaged environmental stewards, and share important environmental information with others in their communities.

The 2022 training almost doubled the core group of Master Naturalist volunteers, allowing the program to make a bigger impact mitigating environmental stressors. The volunteers assisted partnering organizations with efforts to reduce invasive species; increase local tree diversity populations; and educate community members about native bees, wildflowers, and other important pollinators. Master Naturalists also encouraged people to get outside to hike local trails and engaged in a photo scavenger hunt.

Both groups remained active and productive throughout 2022 and look forward to making an impact in 2023.



Learn more about these programs
extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/master-gardeners
extension.illinois.edu/ccdms/master-naturalists

Master Gardener and Master Naturalist



42
Master Gardener
volunteers



4,428
Volunteer hours
reported



21
Master Naturalist
volunteers



\$137,143
in value to
communities

4-H



5,956
Youth Reached



62
Clubs



878
in 4-H Clubs



2,755
Fair Exhibits

Health



18,759
Individuals Reached



171
Sessions



616
Face-to-Face



73
Face-to-Face



18,143
Webinar/Online



98
Webinar/Online

SNAP-Ed



61,241
pounds of fresh
produce provided



138
Nutrition
Education Classes



6,137
pounds of ground venison donated
in total by local hunters



10,614
Individuals Reached



57
Partnerships



106
Policy, systems, and/or environment changes
adopted by SNAP-Ed partner organizations

Financial Report



- \$256,822 County Board
- \$218,772 State County Board Match
- \$188,848 Federal
- \$6,250 Gifts/Donations
- \$79,750 Local Sources
- \$31,609 4-H Premiums



- \$498,172 Salaries/Wages
- \$218,475 Non-personnel

EXTENSION COUNCIL

Gerry Bertrand (Coles)

Ben Bushue (Youth)

Jim Sparks (Shelby)

Brenda Stone (Cumberland)

Ginger Voegel
(Moultrie-Douglas)

Thomas Webb (Cumberland)

Gary Gergeni (Shelby)

Scott Seegmiller
(Moultrie-Douglas)

Kelly Barringer (Shelby)

Dustin Hay (Coles)

Nancy Purdy (Coles)

Roy Clapp (Cumberland)

Julie Edwards (Shelby)

Travis Phelps (Moultrie)

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Monday - Friday

8 AM - 4:30 PM

Moultrie-Douglas County Extension

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Arthur, IL 61911

(217) 543-3755

Monday - Friday

8 AM - 4:30 PM

Shelby County Extension

1125 W. N. 1st St.

Shelbyville, IL 62565

(217) 774-9546

Monday - Friday

8 AM - 4:30 PM

ONLINE



[/UniversityOfIllinoisExtensionUnit19](#)



extension.illinois.edu/ccdms

Cover photo: Photo taken at Warbler Ridge Conservation Area, Charleston. Pictured: Master Naturalists Terry Smith, standing, and Tim Galos, kneeling, planted a native plant bed at Warbler Ridge's South trail head located off Daileyville Road.



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating.

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

The Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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