

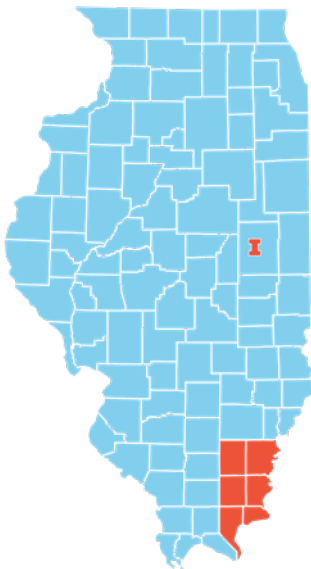


EXTENSION
IN ACTION

Serving Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin,
Pope, Saline, and White Counties



Angela Messmer
County Director



A note from the County Director

It was good to get things back to normal this last year. The ability to provide programs and events without restrictions allowed everyone to relax, have fun, and enjoy being together. This report provides a snapshot of what was accomplished in 2022. You will see pictures and stories reflecting cooking schools, 4-H shows, community gardens, and more. Please take a moment to reflect on the programs and events of the last year.

I am proud to work with this outstanding and dedicated team. We are proud to serve our communities through 4-H youth development, SNAP-Ed nutrition education, agriculture and natural resources, small farms and local foods,

and community and economic development. We look forward to 2023 and continuing to provide quality programming, continue traditions and make memories to last a lifetime.

I want to thank the 4-H volunteers, county boards, 4-H and SNAP families, and our communities for your support of Extension and Dixon Springs Ag Center. You make everything we do possible through your support and participation. We look forward to working with everyone in the coming year.

Angela Messmer
County Extension 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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Gallatin County seeks solutions to address food access

Through the Health Equity Achieved Together (HEAT) Project, University of Illinois Extension is working to bring healthy, nutritious food sources into the very rural and isolated communities in southern Illinois facing high food insecurity. Gallatin County has 4,800 residents currently and has lost 23% of its population in the last 20 years.

Gallatin County lost its last grocery store over a decade ago. This left residents in a food desert with very limited retail options for fresh food. About 69% of the town’s population travels out of state to shop for groceries at least once a month. The county has a Dollar General in the county seat of Shawneetown that carries a limited selection of fresh food, including fruits and vegetables. About two-thirds of the county residents buy food there occasionally. The only other sources for food in the county are convenience stores and food pantries. The county is very rural and spread out over 328 square miles, with over a dozen small towns and villages geographically separated by large stretches of farmland.

In the spring of 2022, a group of citizens came together to explore solutions for greater access to fresh and nutritious food. The HEAT Team and Steering Committee looked at several options, including creating a mobile retail market in partnership with Kroger stores, seeking expansion of Dollar General stores in the region, and encouraging expansion of fresh food options in local convenience stores. While those options are still being considered, the committee partnered with Tri-State Food Bank, Salvation Army, Arrowleaf, and Builder’s Initiative to develop a two-phase solution:

1. Increase fresh food distribution events to monthly in communities throughout the county
2. Create a Mobile Food Pantry that can visit various remote communities to reach those without transportation or access to fresh food.

Currently, the group is seeking funding for a mobile pantry: a 28-foot long, self-contained, portable, client-choice shopping experience inside a custom trailer. With ramps and stairs that fold down for accessibility, clients can pass through the trailer with baskets and select any items they need at no cost. The trailer has refrigerated and frozen cases so that shoppers may select from a wide variety of nutrient-dense staple, such as: fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, eggs, bread, meat (beef, pork, fish and chicken), and dry goods (cereals, canned foods, pasta, rice, beans).

The mobile rig can accommodate up to 3,000 pounds of food per trip. This serves up to 60 families per site visited. Volunteers are present to help clients with their shopping experience, offer information on other resources, helpful tips, and healthy recipes.

The first year (2023) of this pilot involves planning and set up. The second year (2024) includes scheduled visits to two rural and geographically isolated Gallatin County sites (to be determined) each month. Over this period, the team will gather data on awareness and usage to determine whether those sites can sustain a regularly scheduled mobile food pantry. As more is learned, the team will be looking for areas to expand services in subsequent years.



- 31% Never
- 12% About once a week
- 25% About once a month
- 32% A few times a month

In a grocery access survey of Gallatin County residents conducted by Illinois Extension in the Spring of 2022:

69%
Of shoppers in Gallatin County buy their groceries out of state at least once a month.

32%
Buy groceries out of state a few times per month or weekly.

Almost two-thirds of residents in the county buy a portion of their groceries at the Dollar Store in Shawneetown.

25.5%
Of residents reported having to travel more than 30 minutes to buy groceries.

13%
Rely on friends and family to transport them to buy groceries.

According to Feeding America, Gallatin County has 810 food insecure residents or 15.9% of its population. 65% of the residents live under the SNAP threshold of 165% poverty.

County Healthy Rankings rank Gallatin County among the “Worst” for food environment index (FEI), which accounts for both proximity to healthy foods and income.



Extension partnerships work to increase food access

Community partners addressed food access and nutrition security during the Southern Illinois Food Security Summit in September 2022. The event allowed agencies and organizations an opportunity to collaborate, learn, and prioritize healthy food access initiatives for southern Illinoisans. There were more than 120 participants at the summit that represented elected officials, city government, food banks and pantries, early care and education programs, schools, health departments, health care, and social service agencies from the lower 16 counties of southern Illinois, all working toward more food-secure communities.

There are many partnerships and successes that support food access and food security efforts across southern Illinois. The goal is to keep the momentum going and build upon these successes. Building off strategies that were identified during the 2021 summit, *From Food Insecurity to Food Equity: A Roadmap to End Hunger in Illinois*, this year, participants were asked to rank a variety of strategies that support the four USDA Actions on Nutrition Security.

Seven mini grants totaling \$8,000 were awarded. Applicants submitted project proposals describing how their projects will support food and nutrition security by increasing healthier food access in their communities. The grants were possible through SIU School of Medicine - Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development. The awardees will present the progress of their projects at next year's summit, scheduled for Sept. 12, 2023, at John A. Logan College. Local Extension staff served as part of the planning and grant review committee, presented information, and will continue to help plan and promote for the 2023 Summit.



Educational booths connect residents with access to recipes, healthy habits

Eat. Save. Move. booths are a valuable tool to meeting families where they live, shop, learn, and work. These booths are a great way to build new partnerships and fortify already-established relationships with organizations. EMS booths cover several

different topics with key messages allowing them to engage in short, interactive nutrition education activities.

EMS booths are a vital tool in promoting other University of Illinois Extensions SNAP-Ed programs to both youth and adult participants. Fresh fruits and vegetables are provided, often from the 4-H G.I.F.T gardens, and recipes are provided, featured at eatmovesave.org. Participants learn ways to prepare and cook ingredients and fun ways to be physically active.

The booths showcase valuable community resources, such as the Find Food IL map that allows users to search for places in their communities that offer free food or meals: local food pantries, grocery stores, farmers markets, school and summer meal sites, senior food resources, and SNAP and WIC offices.

While at the booth, residents can sign up for newsletters and a new text messaging programs that provide healthy recipes that are easy to make with accessible ingredients that are good for your health. EMS booths are found at food pantries, federally qualified health centers, eligible food retail stores, Department of Human Services offices, soup kitchens, and community events where eligible.



Parent (Kory Potts) and student (Prairie Potts, Carrier Mills Grade School kindergartner) learned about healthy substitutions at an Eat. Move. Save. booth at the Carrier Mills Grade School Back to School Bash in Saline County.



Community Outreach Worker Terra Russell provided fresh produce from local Carmi-White County 4-H G.I.F.T Garden at an Eat. Move. Save. booth at Carmi Cherry Street General Baptist Church food pantry.



Recording recipe videos



Creating healthy recipes for you

Community outreach workers collaborated with two other neighboring units to produce a video series featuring healthy recipes. Marketing Coordinator Heather Willis worked with SNAP-Ed staff at the Community Kitchen in Massac County to create short, engaging videos which are used across the unit for health education. Seasonal recipe demos and Eat.Move.Save. messages were recorded and shared at pantries, on social media, at booths, and during programs. These videos have received hundreds of views, and several are included in the video playlist recently sent to the Family Community Resource Center offices across the state.



Find the recipe video library
go.illinois.edu/healthyrecipesforyou



2022 Leadership for Change Learning Institute

The Illinois Extension SNAP-Ed educator for the unit joined a team of system partners and the Southeastern Illinois Community Health Coalition in a 6-week pilot training focused on building leadership capacity of public health practitioners and their partners. A goal of the institute is for fellows to be better equipped to create large-scale sustainable social changes to address issues within their communities.

The Leadership Institute uses the 6 Stages of PSE Change Framework that was developed by the Policy, Practice, and Prevention Research Center of UICs School of Public Health. The local cohort focused on the PSE change of a community garden. Upon completion, the coalition received a grant to implement a raised bed garden at the Golden Circle in Ridgway in Spring 2023. Master Gardeners provide education and support for the planning and planting of the garden, while SNAP Ed staff provide additional nutrition education.

Videos help pantries better serve clients

Extension worked closely with two pantries, 4Cs Food Pantry in Harrisburg and Greater Galatia Food Pantry, to provide technical assistance and training while they planned and transitioned to new spaces. Extension developed an informational video highlighting local pantries with different client choice models. The video is shared with other food pantries interested in making those changes. Special thanks to the local pantries featured in the video, Friends of Jesus Food Pantry in Equality and The Roads Food Pantry in Norris City.



Learn more about client choice food pantries
youtube.com/watch?v=2sJnp0fmNDM

Strong partnerships create healthy food access

With many communities in the area facing high food and nutrition insecurity rates, Extension's SNAP-Education team continues to work with local food pantries in a variety of ways. The team provides nutrition education, food and recipe demonstrations, food storage and preparation information, signage, staff training, site assessment, connections to resources and funding opportunities, and technical assistance.

Many local pantries are also engaged with the Southern Illinois Food Pantry Network. Quarterly meetings provide collaborative learning opportunities, information and resource sharing, and funding opportunities. This year, these pantries received nearly \$2,000 in mini grants: Friends of Jesus, 4Cs, Shawnee Development Council, Hands of Hope, and SIC Freddie's Food Pantry.





Nutrition education efforts reach youth, adults throughout the region

SNAP-Ed community outreach workers provide nutrition education to the communities' youth, adults, and families. Programming is delivered at area schools, libraries, community events, and summer programs, in partnership with several area agencies. Some programming highlights include:

- **Illinois Junior Chef conducted at We Love White County-Arrow's Afterschool program.** Youth learned a variety of new skills, including proper measuring and how to crack an egg, then put those skills into practice when cooking their own whole grain pancakes.
- **Healthy Kids Out of School was held at Galatia Public Library's Summer Reading Program.** Children learned the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables, drinking plenty of water, and getting exercise while having fun. They made yummy snacks, such as fruit kabobs, smoothies, and flavored water, to go along with each lesson.
- **When the Create Better Health Curriculum** was released in December of 2022, it opened a wealth of opportunity for the future of Illinois Extension SNAP-Ed and the clients it can serve. Prior to Create Better Health, there were limited adult-focused curriculum. Create Better is a comprehensive curriculum to show adults how to eat well and be active on a budget.



Participants are encouraged to make a smoothie from what they have on hand.



CW Ashley Gilmour teaching IJC



Kids cutting shapes for fruit kabobs



11 Partnerships with K-12 schools



9 Partnerships with Emergency Food Sites



8 Partnerships with other types of organizations



41 Policy, systems, and environment changes adopted by SNAP-Ed partner organizations



312 Nutrition education classes



6,597 Total estimated SNAP-Ed reach



Biological insect control in high tunnel production systems has merit

The final year of high tunnel insect pest research was completed from the Extension Collaboration Grant funded project, *Sustainable Insect Control In High Tunnel Vegetable Production Through Biological Control*. Bronwyn Aly worked with Extension entomologist Dr. Kacie Athey on this applied research project studying the use of natural predator insects as a biological control option against insect pests within high tunnel production systems.

From a survey of fruit and vegetable high tunnel producers conducted in 2017, insect management was ranked as a high priority research need. This project addresses this identified need by focusing on biological control options for thrips, aphids, and spider mites, three major insect pests within high tunnel production systems. Instead of making pesticide applications to control insect pests, beneficial predator insects were released within the high tunnels periodically throughout the growing season and various types of data was collected including insect sampling to identify what insects are present in the high tunnels, insect collection and gut analysis to determine what insects are eating, insect counts to measure if the released benefit predator insects were staying in place or relocating outside of the high tunnels, and tomato and pepper fruit quality and yield data.

From observations and further questions generated from this project related to beneficial insect behavior within high tunnel production systems, Aly and Athey were awarded an Illinois H.R. 133 Stimulus Grant, *Strategies for Improving Biological Control of Insect Pests for Vegetable Growers Utilizing High Tunnels*. This two-year project will incorporate winter cover crops and cut flowers grown within tomato and pepper crops to investigate additional seasonal plantings that could be added to high tunnels to enhance pest control by natural enemies.

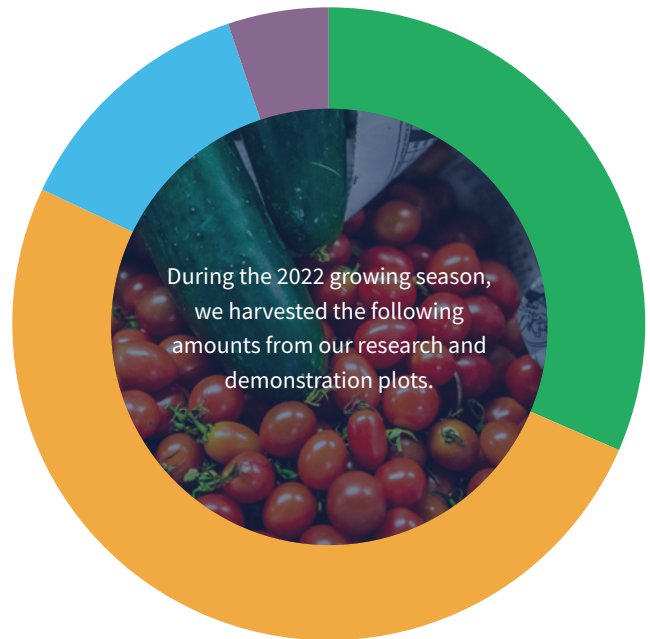


Beneficial predator insects about to be “applied” to hydroponic tomato and pepper plants infested with aphids. This particular predator insect is a type of parasitic wasp, very small in size, and shipped in a sawdust media to help with dispersal during “application.” The sawdust is sprinkled in trays anchored within the foliage of infested plants, and the parasitic wasps then search out their primary food source, aphids, thus reducing the insect pressure damaging the plants.



Food production projects yield harvest

Bronwyn Aly, local foods educator; Julie Zakes, ag gardener; and Jennifer Warren, program coordinator; have continued research and demonstration projects for the 2022 season in the high tunnels at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center. Research and demonstration trials for the 2022 growing season included replicated determinate tomato and bell pepper variety trials; insect sampling, collection, and release; observations and sampling of hemp varieties; and hydroponic production of cucumbers, herbs, lettuce, and strawberries. Weekly harvest data has been collected from tomato, bell pepper, cucumber, and strawberry trial plots from April through the middle of September.



- 3,537 lbs. Cucumbers
- 5,657 lbs. Tomatoes
- 1,444 lbs. Peppers
- 578 lbs. Other, misc crops



2022 Southern Illinois Summer Twilight Series brings crowd to network, learn

The Southern Illinois Summer Twilight Series completed its eighth year of on-farm meetings. The three locations in 2022 included Little River Farm near New Haven, Glaciers End near Johnston City, and Feathers Farm near Waterloo. Crops and production systems were highlighted, including hydroponic strawberry and lettuce production, biological insect pest control options, value-added products, cottage food law updates, and year-round lettuce production.

Sixty-six participants attended the 2022 meetings, bringing the eight-year total to 782. Participants see various on-farm production and marketing practices from local fruit, vegetable, and livestock farms across the southern Illinois region, as well as set-up a networking environment for farmers, Extension educators, and agriculture professionals to interact.

After attending the first twilight meeting in 2022, one family was interested in establishing a high tunnel on their farm. They visited the high tunnels at DSAC and asked Bronwyn for expert assistance on site selection, structural and systems information, and production options. By mid to late summer, they had a new high tunnel constructed and ready for production.



Hydroponic strawberries in a three tier vertical system at Little River Farm, New Haven.



Demonstrating how quickly they set out new lettuce transplants at Feathers Farm, Waterloo. This weekly task is part of the farm's succession planting schedule to maintain a steady supply of fresh lettuce to customers 48 weeks per year.



Deanna Dyer received the Outstanding State Master Gardener Award

Master Gardener and Master Naturalists provide vital training for area



After completing their training, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers offer their expertise in a variety of ways in the community. In 2022, volunteers delivered lessons at community gardens and library programs. They also volunteered at Extension-supported gardens by harvesting produce, weeding, watering, and conducting other required maintenance tasks. The online option for Master Gardener training allows for several training sessions per year, and the unit welcomed three new volunteers in 2022. Ten Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists collectively logged a total of 523 volunteer hours. In addition, Deanna Dyer was presented the Outstanding State Master Gardener Award. Only 2% of the active Master Gardeners in the state are recognized with this award annually. We thank all our volunteers for their time and dedication to their local communities!

Several Master Gardener volunteers helped with the 4-H youth tunnel at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center. Staff and volunteers provide a weekly youth garden class series that use the 4-H youth tunnel area. Local youth helped in the garden by harvesting and maintaining the area. The produce was placed in a food donation box located near the office at DSAC. Residents in the area could access it when needed.

Extension staff and volunteers gave a lesson during the classes on a variety of topics, including beekeeping, pollinators, composting, herbs, and wildlife. This program not only taught the children and their families about gardening and the outdoors, but also the importance of giving back to their community.

Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists in Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, and White counties reported:

523
Volunteer hours

\$15,663
Value of volunteer time put back into local communities





Dixon Springs Ag Center high tunnels draw interest from local groups

The fruit and vegetable plots within the high tunnels at the Dixon Springs Ag Center offer educational opportunities to a wide range of groups. Over the course of the 2022 growing season, multiple tours were given to garden clubs, youth groups, agricultural professionals, and individuals interested in learning more about the production of specialty crops in a high tunnel system.



Dixon Springs Ag Center hosted a retiree picnic for former staff. Current and former staff were able to enjoy a meal, reminisce on past experiences and discuss what the future holds for DSAC.



Learning archery basics



Camp Shawnee Whitetail

Camp Shawnee Whitetail was held in October 2022 at Dixon Springs Agricultural Center. This camp is a two-day one-of-a-kind hands-on hunter safety course primarily for youth; however, a few adults joined in. All participants were able to be hands on with different hunting activities. They learned the differences between a climbing deer stand and how to safely climb with them and a ladder deer stand installation.

They learned how to safely climb and properly get their hunting gear in the stand. All participants learned how to shoot a bow, a rifle, and a shotgun. Instructors worked with each child until they were able to hit the targets. All participants passed their Hunter Safety test at the end.



White County 4-H G.I.F.T. Garden feeds the hungry

The White County 4-H G.I.F.T. Garden (Growing Illinois Food Together) teamed up with the Extension SNAP-Ed program and completed the Growing Together Illinois grant during the 2022 gardening season. Over 550 pounds of produce, varying from cucumbers to potatoes and tomatoes to strawberries and blackberries, were harvested and distributed to local food pantries. Master Gardeners also participated in the University of Illinois I-Pollinate program and taught lessons on pollination and pollinators to the 4-H summer program participants.

Members of the community and their families were invited to Community Night at the Garden to learn about different topics including blackberries, beekeeping, monarchs, milkweeds, and cool planting with low tunnels. We look forward to having more in the future.

Gift Garden Produce	Weight in Pounds
Celery	37.35
Potatoes	9.31
Green Beans	16.07
Cherry Tomatoes	43.75
Large Tomatoes	38.81
Cucumbers	126.91
Onions	41.48
Peppers	27.19
Zucchini	59.73
Squash	39.48
Blackberries	104.46
Carrots	3.86
Radishes	2.54



Learn more about the G.I.F.T. Garden
facebook.com/WhiteCounty4HGIFTGarden



Ready for work: Preparing the next generation for career success

“I was nervous, but I’m glad I did it!”

That is a phrase 4-H program staff hear countless times during the school year while working to increase employability skills with high school students. Workforce development and career readiness is a key youth development focus, equipping about 300 youth each year with completed resumes and mock interview experiences.

The unit 4-H team teaches valuable skills, such as communication, teamwork, networking, problem solving, and critical thinking through programs such as Skills to Pay the Bills, a curriculum that focuses on soft skill development.

The post-program evaluation of school administrators shows that 100% of respondents find great value in these programs and say their students are better prepared for their futures.

Because of this program, I know I will be successful during my first real interview.
 Program Participant, Age 16

Program Outcomes

- 97% of program respondents reported they felt more prepared to enter the workforce.
- 99% of respondents indicated that after attending Skills to Pay the Bills, they understood the importance of teamwork in the workplace.





When a garden is more than a garden

Hamilton County GIFT Garden combines gardening with healthy cooking

The Hamilton County 4-H GIFT Garden (Growing Illinois Foods Together) has grown considerably since it began in 2013. There are currently 24 8'x 3"x12" raised beds, two apple trees, one peach tree, one plum tree, and 20 blackberry bushes. Last year, they had two rows of okra and four green bean cages not in raised beds. Weekly gardening classes were held from the end of May until the end of July.

During weekly classes, youth planted, weeded, replanted, separated, watered, and then weeded again to maintain the raised beds. They learned to spread mulch for weed control between the boxes. A weekly lesson was presented by a Teen Teacher or an Ag in the Classroom instructor. Youth left each day hot, tired, and with a sense of accomplishment. With 45 enrolled youth and three Teen Teachers, there was never a dull moment.

As the season progressed, youth selected produce for the weekly farmers market. They picked, washed, and packaged whatever was ripe and ready to take to market. The Teen Teachers set up each afternoon following class to offer fresh,

homegrown produce to the community. Any produce left at the end of the day was used for the weekly cooking classes or donated to local food pantries.

The weekly cooking classes are held in an addition to the gardening classes. What better way to learn what to do with fresh produce than to actually do it yourself.

Each week, youth used whatever produce that was left and learned how to freeze, can, and preserve fruits and vegetables. They made blackberry and peach jam, hot pepper jelly, salsa, apple butter, apple sauce, and canned green beans, pickles, peppers, and okra. They learned how to make zucchini, pumpkin, and blackberry bread and muffins. They made several different stir fry recipes and tried various cooking techniques with the vegetables. The canned items were sold at the farmers market.

The weekly farmers market is a very important source of fresh produce, canned items, baked goods, and other handmade items to this community. The Teen Teachers who work at the market learn how to deal with customers, keep inventory, and handle cash transactions. As the years have progressed, they have learned the art of up selling and the importance of an eye-appealing stand. The money raised at the farmers market (just over \$5,000) is used to help with sustainability at the garden and to help cover yearly maintenance and improvements.

In the 2022 growing season, 2,962 pounds of produce was grown. Of that, nearly 1,900 pounds were sold at the farmers market, about 650 pounds were used for cooking lessons, and about 410 pounds were donated to local food pantries, senior citizens, and the Senior Enrichment Center.





Using a breakout room puzzle box to learn about energy.



Teen Teachers try their hand at teaching

Teen Teachers are a group of high school youth that provide hands-on learning experiences for younger youth. Teen Teachers build confidence, step into leadership roles, and engage youth in learning creativity and innovation skills.

Teen Teachers provide hands-on learning lessons that can be used for life. The activities center on healthy living, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), and visual arts. Each helps youth become better at research and critical thinking.

STEM brings problem solving to life. STEM improves the community, economy, and environment. The healthy living programs educate youth on healthier choices and exercises. Students are taught how to be mindful of eating choices and daily activities.

Teen Teachers provided 50 hours of education to students with 32 hours of hands-on STEM activities. Over 475 students from kindergarten to fifth grade were reached through Teen Teacher activities. Activities were delivered in classrooms or at after-school programs so all youth can be a part of the activities. Through Teen Teachers, youth were able to experience activities they typically would not have had the opportunity to try.



Youth practice their teaching skills on their fellow 4-H Teen Teachers.

Teen Teachers is a win-win program: older youth learn leadership skills and explore the career option of teaching, and younger youth have fun and learn lifelong skills. Some Teen Teachers have learned that teaching wasn't for them, while others have gone on to college and pursued a career in teaching.



50
Total hours of Teen Teachers in action



32
Hours are STEM related activities



18
Hours are Healthy Living and Foods activities



478
Youth reached



8
Teen Teachers



Bringing kayaking to local lakes



Gallatin, Pope-Hardin, Hamilton, Saline, and White County 4-H members joined the first flatwater 4-H Kayak Club in Illinois! There are dozens of small lakes and creeks perfect for kayaking in southern Illinois. The Shawnee National Forest is a wonderland for those interested in outdoor adventures. Having such rich resources in the area has spurred interest in outside 4-H activities.

Staff and members pitched the idea to Curt Sinclair, 4-H natural resources and shooting sports specialist, and Lisa Diaz, 4-H director and assistant Extension dean. Other state staff verified and recommended appropriate safety policies and procedures, allowing formation of the group to move forward.

Gallatin County program coordinator Kassy Scates and Pope-Hardin program coordinator Kendra Cook reached out to Emily Nichols, Extension specialist for Alabama 4-H, to find out more about the 4-H RiverKids program she developed for Alabama 4-H. Nichols was supportive of the development of a flatwater kayak club, sharing the processes and curriculum they had developed.

Participants learned basic safety and skills while they traveled to various small lakes and ponds in the area. The group used waters with minimal boat traffic for safety purposes. Participants provided their own watercraft, paddle, and lifejacket, as well as transport for those items.



Youth enjoy a day on Glen O Jones Lake.

All participants, youth members, and adult volunteers took the required online water safety course and had the fit of their life jackets checked. The next three meetings took place at Glen O Jones, Lake Glendale, and Little Grassy Lake. Participants put their new skills to use! Each participant filled out a float plan and left it with a trusted adult. The group explored the flora and fauna of the small flatwater lakes in a relaxed atmosphere.



U of I president tours southern Illinois

In August 2022, Dixon Springs Agriculture Center hosted the U of I Leadership 2022 State Tour. University leadership, community stakeholders, and staff enjoyed a beautiful August morning touring the center to view the cattle and high tunnels and explore the history of DSAC. President Killeen and Chancellor Jones spoke with the audience of about 60 participants.





The EID tagging of the herd allows for monitoring of rate of gain and overall health, tracking of lineage for genetic studies, and provides data for many research projects.



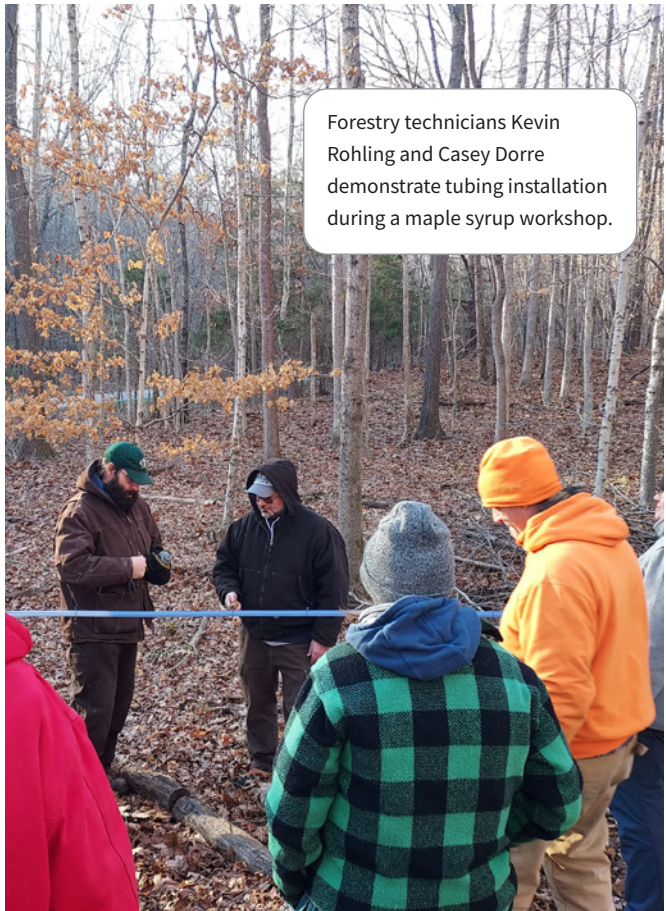
The animal science department at Dixon Springs Ag Center maintains a herd of approximately 800 head of cattle. Each year, the cattle are bred through artificial insemination with an outcome of close to 800 calves. Cattle research at Dixon Springs includes pasture management, genetic studies of breeding, rate of gain based on feeding schedules, and types of feed.



Forestry technician Casey Dorre ignites a fire during a prescribed fire field day



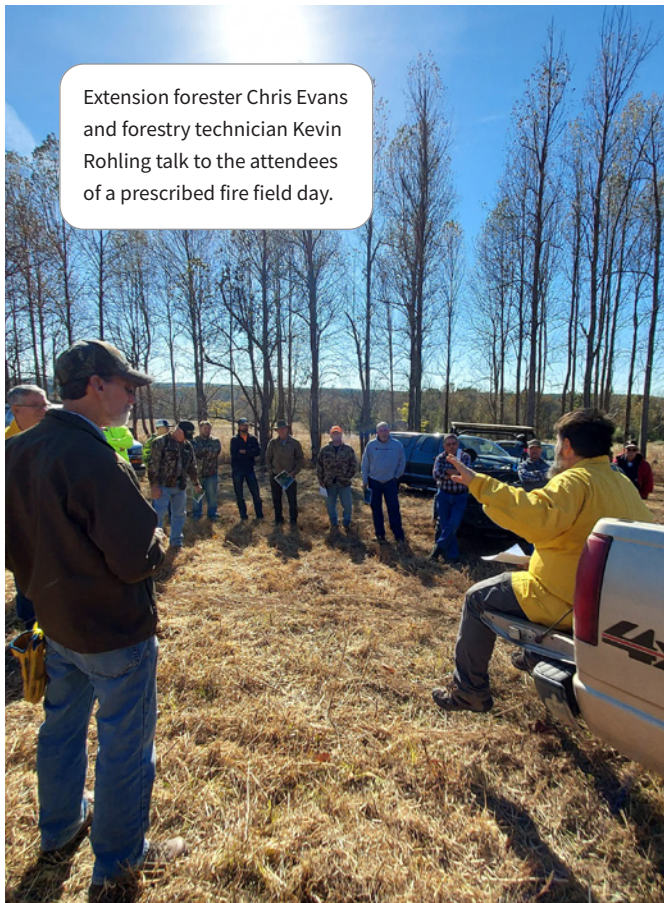
Extension forester Chris Evans demonstrates safe tree felling using chainsaws to the Beginning Forest Landowner participants.



Forestry technicians Kevin Rohling and Casey Dorre demonstrate tubing installation during a maple syrup workshop.



Extension forester Chris Evans and forestry technician Casey Dorre demonstrate how to prepare a log for milling during the chainsaw mill workshop at Dixon Springs Ag Center.



Extension forester Chris Evans and forestry technician Kevin Rohling talk to the attendees of a prescribed fire field day.

OFFICE INFORMATION

Gallatin County

912 S. Commercial St., Ste. 4
Harrisburg, IL 62946
Phone: 618-252-8391
FAX: 618-253-3006
Hours: Monday - Wednesday
8 AM to 4 PM

Hamilton County

100 S. Jackson St.
McLeansboro, IL 62859
Phone: 618-643-3416
FAX: 618-643-3206
Hours: Monday - Friday
8 AM to 4 PM

Pope-Hardin County

Dixon Springs Agricultural Center
354 State Hwy 145 North
Simpson, IL 62985
Phone: 618-695-6060
FAX: 618-695-2492
Hours: Monday-Friday
8 AM to 4 PM

Saline County

912 S. Commercial St., Ste. 4
Harrisburg, IL 62946
Phone: 618-252-8391
FAX: 618-253-3006
Hours: Monday-Friday
8 AM to 4 PM

White County

1715 College Avenue
Carmi, IL 62821
Phone: 618-382-2662
FAX: 618-382-2276
Hours: Monday-Friday
8 AM to 4 PM

Dixon Springs Agricultural Center

354 State Highway 145 N
Simpson, IL 62985
Phone: 618-695-2441
FAX: 618-695-2492
Hours: Monday-Friday
8 AM to 4 PM

ONLINE



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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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