



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

Extending Knowledge Changing Lives

Jo Daviess, Stephenson & Winnebago

Jo Daviess County

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815-858-2273

Stephenson County

2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, IL
815-235-4125

Winnebago County

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815-986-4357

SNAP-Ed Office, Winnebago County

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2016 Impact Report

A Note from Margaret Larson

University of Illinois Extension provides research-based, non-biased information in a variety of informal settings. The outreach arm of the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana campus, Extension has a presence in every county in Illinois and provides a variety of programs and events to strengthen communities and help residents tackle a variety of issues.

People are what make Extension so valuable to our counties. This includes our staff, our volunteers, those from partner organizations, and our participants in programs.

Extension staff are trained, knowledgeable, caring individuals who specialize in providing education, training, and assistance on many levels. With resources from the U of I College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Extension is well equipped to assist with community efforts, provide speakers for events, and collaborate on projects with our many partners.

Volunteers are the heart of some Extension programs, and our work in our area extends through their involvement. They serve as 4-H Leaders and project volunteers, Extension Council members, and Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers. By working closely with our volunteers to provide them with training, resources and support, our impact increases exponentially.

We are fortunate to have great relationships in the area, which allow us to work together with area agencies and organizations on programs and events. Providing not only our local resources, but the resources from the university to local efforts strengthens them, and we are most interested in seeing our involvement increase impact whenever possible.

The people most valuable to us are our participants--those 4-H members that we impact, that backyard gardener who has learned to save water (and money, too), those who directly benefit from a training which allows their crop production to increase, and countless others in a variety of scenarios. The list is long and varied, and all told, most important to us!

Margaret Larson, County Extension Director
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Unit 1 Staff



Margaret Larson
County Extension Director
(Jo Daviess, Stephenson,
Winnebago Counties, Unit 1)



Jackie de Batista
Extension Educator, 4-H Youth
Development



Carol Erickson
Extension Educator, SNAP-Ed
(Rockford)



Candice Hart
Extension Educator,
Horticulture



Antionette Hobson
Extension Educator, 4-H Youth
Development, Metro



Grant McCarty
Extension Educator, Local Food
Systems and Small Farms



Diane Reinhold
Extension Educator, Nutrition
and Wellness



Jay Solomon
Extension Educator, Energy
and Environmental
Stewardship



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Program Coordinator,
SNAP-Ed—Winnebago County



Alex Burbach
Program Coordinator—
Jo Daviess County



Samantha Burbach
Program Coordinator—
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Program Coordinator, 4-H and
Youth Development—
Winnebago County



Nikki Keltner
Program Coordinator—
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Unit 1 Extension Council Members

University of Illinois Extension Unit 1 spans Jo Daviess, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties in the northwest corner of Illinois.

The Extension Council is authorized by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, in accordance with state law, to be actively involved in the operation of University of Illinois Extension. Extension Councils cooperate with Extension staff in planning, promoting, developing, implementing, evaluating, and financing an Extension program designed to meet the needs, interests, and resources of the local communities served.

University of Illinois Extension provides educational programs in five broad areas:

- Energy and environmental stewardship
- Food safety and security
- Economic development and workforce preparedness
- Family health, financial security, and wellness
- Youth development

Ms. Angie Goral, Rockford
Ms. Faye Lyon, Rockford
Mr. Jim Webster, Rockton
Mr. Rick Dittmar, Elizabeth
Mr. Ray Massingill, Warren
Ms. Monica Pierce, Freeport
Ms. Kevyn-Ann Sutter, Lena
Mr. Don Klinger, Galena
Ms. Beth Baranski, Galena
Pastor Eldred George, Freeport
Mr. Mike Shore, Freeport
Ms. Tiltyla Stone, Rockford
Mrs. Bev Haselhorst, Freeport
Mrs. Chris Urish, Freeport
Mr. Drew Groezinger, Stockton
Ms. Vicky Lyford, Roscoe

Extension Council members serve as a catalyst and leader in shaping the vision for Extension in support of county/unit citizens.

Northern Illinois Berry School & Northern Illinois Apple Tree School

**Grant McCarty, Local Foods &
Small Farms Educator**

In 2016, Northern Illinois Berry School and Northern Illinois Backyard Apple Tree School were developed to address a growing need from homeowners and established growers in becoming better producers. In collaboration with Candice Miller, Horticulture Educator, and Bruce Black, Horticulture Educator for Carroll, Lee, Whiteside Counties, these programs were held in different locations in each of the three Units. Northern Illinois Berry School held in Rockford in January 2016 was also a collaboration with University of Wisconsin Extension-Rock County Horticulture Educator, Christy Marsden. These programs provided participants with an overview on how to grow berries/apple trees, general management practices, and common diseases/insects related to growing these. Berry School was also designed for new growers getting started in production with the idea that they could use this information to start their berry enterprise. This 3-hour program also provided an overview on controlling Spotted Winged Drosophila, an invasive insect, that targets most berries and brambles in our region. From this program, I've been able to provide resources and information for residents and growers when it comes to diagnosing this invasive insect. We distributed monitoring traps at all of the programs for participants to take home and use when determining when these insects might be present.

Since Fall 2015, Northern Illinois Berry School has been held in 7 locations including Lee (15), Whiteside (4), DeKalb (37), Ogle (15), Jo Daviess (25), Stephenson (16), and Winnebago (35) with a total of 148 participants. Since Fall 2016, Northern Illinois Backyard Apple Tree School has been held in Jo Daviess (27), Boone (14), and Lee (11) with a total of 52. Plans for 2017 include Northern Illinois Backyard Apple Tree School in Winnebago, Stephenson, and Whiteside, and plans for developing a backyard table grape/vineyard school.



Grant McCarty teaching at Northern Illinois Backyard Apple Tree School.

Reaching Audiences through Social Media

**Candice Hart,
Horticulture Educator**

Social media isn't just for staying in touch with family and friends, it's an important means of sharing information and is a key method for reaching a larger audience. The unit Horticulture Educator has developed a loyal following of program participants that come to public programs in person or by webinar, but there are thousands of other gardeners who can be reached in other ways. Social media has been a way that Candice can reach those other gardeners that may not come to a program but can still benefit from the research based education.

Through the use of her Facebook page, Twitter, Pinterest, Youtube, and her blog, Candice is able to effectively keep her programs in front of a diverse public audience. Over the past four years since starting her accounts, her followers have continued to increase. The Hort in the Home Landscape Blog for example, averages 2,500 to 3,000 views per month.

A monthly email newsletter that goes out to 1,100 email recipients is also a new way that Candice is getting her horticulture content and program information in front of her audience. This newsletter was created as a result of a program planning survey sent to 900 previous Horticulture program participants. Participants indicated that email was the best way to stay in touch about upcoming programs and horticulture content. This survey has been a key resource in the program planning process for horticulture programming.



Improved Grazing Management

Jay Solomon, Energy and Environmental Stewardship Educator

Working with livestock operations to adapt managed grazing concepts positively impacts the environment and increases profitability for the livestock operation. Managed grazing concepts are scale neutral, meaning techniques can be applied to small acreages and large operations. The concepts are based on mimicking natural grazing patterns of wild herds. The animals are moved from one area to another frequently, based on the amount of forages consumed and available. From an environmental perspective, this keeps the forages vegetative and growing throughout the season, ensuring good ground cover and natural habitat for native wildlife. The livestock benefit from consistent availability and quality forages through the grazing season.

Environmental and Energy Stewardship Educator Jay Solomon and Program Coordinators Nikki Keltner and Alex Burbach provide leadership for the program within Unit One. Over the last year, area livestock farmers and others have had the opportunity to participate in several educational events within the unit and tristate region.

The Driftless Region Beef Conference, held in Dubuque, Iowa on February 4-5, 2016, offered area producers a chance to hear from leading livestock researchers and educators from Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Jay Solomon was a member of the planning committee and a session moderator.

The annual Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference was held on March 2, 2016, with the theme of “Jump Start to a Good Year,” focusing on transitioning cattle from winter feed to pasture, forage options and management economics of grazing, grazing and water quality, and cost share programs available. The conference featured two out-of-state presenters: Denise Schwab, Beef Specialist with Iowa State University Extension, and Gene Schriefer, Agriculture Agent with University of Wisconsin Extension. Two University of Illinois Extension Educators also presented: Jay Solomon and Travis Meteer, Beef Commercial Agriculture Educator.

As part of the small farms/local foods webinar series, Solomon presented “Setting up a grazing system on a small farm.” The presentation focused on creating a successful managed grazing system for a farm by building on the principles to meet the farm goals and animal choices.

In August, a “Grazing by Design” workshop featured a combination classroom and on-farm field experience on implementation of a managed grazing system. University of Illinois Extension Educators Jay Solomon and Andy Larson lead the 5-hour workshop which drew thirteen current and beginning livestock producers from four surrounding counties.

In addition to these workshops, numerous phone calls and email client contacts have been responded to over the last year. Many of these came from workshop participants seeking additional, personalized information. Jay Solomon made on-farm visits in all three counties within the unit. These included visits to sheep, goat, beef, and horse operations. Grazing management and optimization, and enhanced environmental benefits seem to be of growing interest for small acreage livestock producers. Larger operations continue to see the profitability and environmental benefits as well.



Denise Schwab, Beef Specialist with Iowa State University Extension, answering questions at the 2016 Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference.



University of Illinois
Extension
SNAP-Education:
Stephenson &
Winnebago Counties

2016 Impact

SNAP-Education helps those in need make healthier choices by reaching people where they are in their communities with interactive classes and activity stations, and by working towards policy, systems, and environmental changes to encourage healthier behaviors.

Program Reach



10,065 total individuals reached

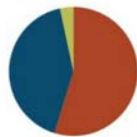


2,446 (24%) participants identify as Hispanic

30%
Adults



70%
Youth



55% Caucasian (5513)
42% African American (4213)
3% Asian American, American Indian, or Pacific Islander (339)

Reaching Families Through Community Partnerships

Education Provided at the Following Site Types:



go.illinois.edu/INEP

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education



Healthier Policies, Systems, and Environmental Changes:
Stephenson & Winnebago Counties

2016 Impact: Collaborating with Community Partners

23 Community Partners in Collaboration to Positively Influence Community Health:



Success in Action



Three Rockford-area farmers markets have expanded their acceptance of SNAP benefits. Thanks to the collaboration with SNAP-Education, the benefits were used more widely than in previous years, leading to more community members enjoying nutritious, local foods.

"Thank you for your hard work getting the word out about SNAP at our market! We have noticed an increase in clients as a result."



Markets noted an increase of **174% to 1031%** in SNAP benefit redemption compared to 2015



go.illinois.edu/INEP

ABC's of School Nutrition

**Carol Erickson, SNAP-Ed Educator
Diane Reinhold, Nutrition & Wellness Educator**

In 2015, University of Illinois Extension began partnering with Illinois State Board of Education to provide training and professional development for school nutrition employees across Illinois. Through the multi-year grant, Extension staff help school districts comply with new USDA Professional Standards requirements. In the 2016-17 school year, food service staff are required to have 6-12 hours of training depending on their position. Free training options include in-person and online training, regional workshops, videos, and USDA Team Up for School Nutrition Success Program. Extension staff also provide technical assistance on school wellness policies, Breakfast Before the Bell, applying Healthier US School Challenge recognition and other nutrition-related grants.

Smarter Lunchroom Movement is one of the programs that Extension nutrition staff worked on this past year. The goal is to equip school lunchrooms with evidence-based tools that improve child eating behaviors and in turn improve their health. The process includes an assessment of the lunchroom environment that leads to 1) diagnosing barriers, 2) prescribing potential changes, 3) implementing selected changes, and 4) evaluating impact.

Diane Reinhold, Nutrition and Wellness Educator, and Carol Erickson, SNAP-Ed Educator, have been working on ABC's of School Nutrition grant in Unit One. Ms. Reinhold has been working with Freeport Public Schools and conducted 10 Smarter Lunchroom assessments in 2016.

Ms. Erickson has been working with Rockford Public Schools and conducted 10 Smarter Lunchroom assessments. Erickson led a 2-hour professional staff training for 50 Rockford School foodservice managers and administrators in August. She also recorded an online training program to introduce nutrition administrators and staff around the state to Farm to School. Erickson has met with Harlem and South Beloit School staff about Smarter Lunchroom and training possibilities. In May, Erickson attended the USDA TEAM Up training in Springfield to become a mentor to schools who need technical assistance.

Nutrition & Wellness

**Diane Reinhold,
Nutrition & Wellness Educator**

Healthy Lifestyles/Living programs benefit individuals, families, and communities by providing improvements in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and intent to change, which often leads to improved quality of life. Programs such as Superfoods to the Rescue, Cooking with Culinary Herbs, Are You Eating to Enjoy Retirement, Busy Lives, Easy Meals, and Managing Stress through the Holidays, address emerging food trends while also addressing health behaviors such as reducing intake of sodium, fat, and calorie dense foods.

Informal needs assessments gathered by conversations with local staff and community partners, such as the Center for Learning in Retirement, and the Stephenson County Health Department, aided in determining the focus on healthy living programs. Two-hundred and seven participants attended twelve programs across the unit, including two statewide webinars, with several individuals attending subsequent workshops.

Diane Reinhold, Nutrition and Wellness Educator, works to meet the needs of local community stakeholders by providing low-cost wellness programs focused on prevention, which many agencies are unable to provide due to limited resources within our rural communities. Prevention is difficult to measure, and the overall impact is often not directly evident; however, the need for healthy living programs continues to grow as people are living longer. Ms. Reinhold informs consumers, validates and reinforces positive health messages, and provides opportunities to learn new or enhance existing skills through cooking demonstrations, activities and providing evidence-based resources.



4-H Youth Development

Annie Hobson & Jackie de Batista, 4-H Youth Development Educators

4-H remains a leader in non-formal education across Northern Illinois thanks to the hard work and dedication of six Extension 4-H staff and 180 4-H club volunteers in Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties. Each and every person on our 4-H team makes it possible to mentor, inspire and positively impact the lives of more than 1200 club members and 2000 program participants.

Project-Based Learning

4-H is widely known for teaching tangible, project-based skills such as photography, animal science, woodworking and more. These skills provide our youth with important hands-on experience that will serve them for years to come. Over 135 youth from 39 4-H community clubs across Northern Illinois did so well with their 4-H fair exhibits this year that they were selected to compete at the state level at the Illinois State Fair. Of those who went, 37 received a Superior Award, given to only 10% of exhibitors. Most notably, Bria Koester of Country Couzins 4-H Club in Dakota won the Illinois State 4-H Dairy Judging Contest, an amazing accomplishment that underscores her knowledge, passion for dairying and hard work.

Another example of tangible skill building within 4-H occurs in Winnebago County, where our Tech Wizards program reaches more than 70 youth who attend CICS Jackson Charter School, New Life Christian School, and Northwest Community Center. These youth receive hands-on learning opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) that are designed to inspire the next generation of science leaders. The 4-H Tech Wizards Program, funded by National Mentoring Program (OJJDP), is a mentoring program that connects youth to mentors who are school partners, parents, and after-school staff, forming valuable, lifelong bonds with our youth.

Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

4-H also excels at teaching youth intangible, “soft” skills such as communication, creativity, the ability to work in groups, independence, and generosity. Nowhere is the impact of 4-H soft skills programming more visible than in our efforts to teach and inspire 4-H members to embrace leadership. 4-H club members across all three counties have embraced the opportunity to stand up, speak out and make a positive impact on 4-H and their communities. The most common ways our 4-Hers learn leadership skills are by volunteering to be a club officer or joining one of our many leadership groups.

For example, in Jo Daviess County the 4-H Federation leadership group helps plan and lead enrichment programs for current 4-Hers, organizes yearly activities like ski trips and bowling nights, and holds fundraisers to help offset the costs of 4-H membership for all youth in Jo Daviess County. The Stephenson County 4-H Ambassadors show leadership through public speaking and promotional events. They promote 4-H to the general public and encourage others to get involved by offering 4-H exhibit tours at the Fair, recording 4-H testimonial videos and offering hands-on activities at public events. In Winnebago County, the 4-H Youth Leadership Team practice leadership through teaching Project Workshop Day and Cloverbud Workshop sessions to 4-H members and the general public, while the 4-H Teen Leaders based at Northwest Community Center work year round to raise awareness about the needs of Rockford youth. These Teen Leaders organized a health fair at the Community Center where they taught more than 80 youth and their parents about the importance of health and nutrition, bus stop safety, dental hygiene, education, physical activity, and the dangers of tobacco. Through these and other experiences, 4-H youth practice leadership by planning, teaching, leading and mentoring other youth in the county. They are building valuable life skills that will benefit them in the future while making a positive impact in their communities.

4-H Educational Programs

4-H has made a substantial effort to diversify programming and expand our reach to those not previously served. Youth Educators Jackie de Batista and Annie Hobson work with community partners to seek innovative ways to engage new youth, and have created programs that are culturally relevant to the communities we serve. In Winnebago County, nearly 350 youth have participated in the 4-H Police Academy, a curriculum designed for 5th-grade students to interact with Rockford law enforcement in the classroom setting. This 10-week program allows youth to form positive bonds with police officers while strengthening their pro-social and resiliency skills. Cooking in the Class and Sewing Class, are programs that teach youth, ages 11-17, kitchen skills, including how to eat nutritionally on a fixed income, and sewing basics, such as how to repair school uniforms. These two programs have served nearly 65 youth.

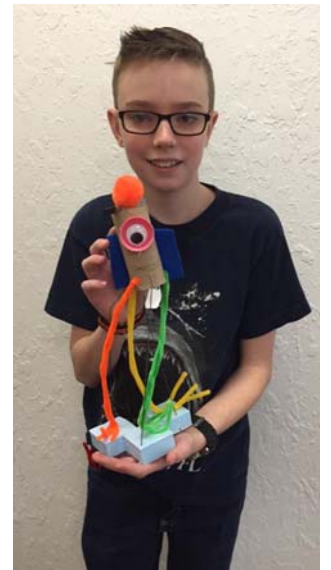
Over 200 youth at Freeport’s Center Elementary, Freeport Middle School, and Lena Elementary School participated in 4-H National Youth Science Day Drone Discovery where they learned about flight dynamics, remote sensing, aircraft types, and the principles of coding. Finally, nearly 100 students at River Ridge Middle School in Hanover participated in three days of cultural acceptance activities. The activities were designed to help them better understand their culture and the cultures of presenters from different nationalities during their annual Cats for Character Multicultural Fair. These programs and more bring 4-H educational resources to schools, community centers and partner sites across the tri-county region and aim to connect youth to life skills and entrepreneurship by equipping them with skill sets that are both employable and profitable.

Head...

Heart...

Hands...

Health





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Master Gardener & Master Naturalist Volunteer Programs

Alex Burbach, Sam Burbach & Nikki Keltner, Program Coordinators

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers throughout Jo Daviess, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties work tirelessly to create a positive impact in their communities through many volunteer opportunities. Unit 1 Master Gardeners put in well over 5,000 hours of volunteer work throughout 2016 and Unit 1 Master Naturalists contributed over 2,500 volunteer hours to their local communities. These volunteers work with local partners in their communities, such as park districts, forest preserves, museums, nature centers, schools and youth organizations, to provide education and service. Each volunteer commits to a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer work and 10 hours of continuing education training annually to remain active in his or her respective program, however most all of our volunteers far exceed those requirements.

At the start of every year, each county kicks off the year with a Spring Garden Symposium that is open to Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, and the public. These programs bring in a keynote speaker as well as several speakers for breakout sessions to educate attendees about various aspects of gardening. Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists present many of these breakout sessions and help in planning, promoting and running the event. These Garden Symposiums are a great kickoff to the year and helps get people ready to garden when spring rolls around!



Shey Lowman accepts the 2016 Illinois Master Gardener Teamwork Award for Don Opel Arboretum Tree Walk project in Stephenson County.



Candice Hart and Jackie DeBatista teaching a Master Naturalist lesson.



“Helping Others Learn to Grow”

MASTER GARDENER MISSION

Financial Report

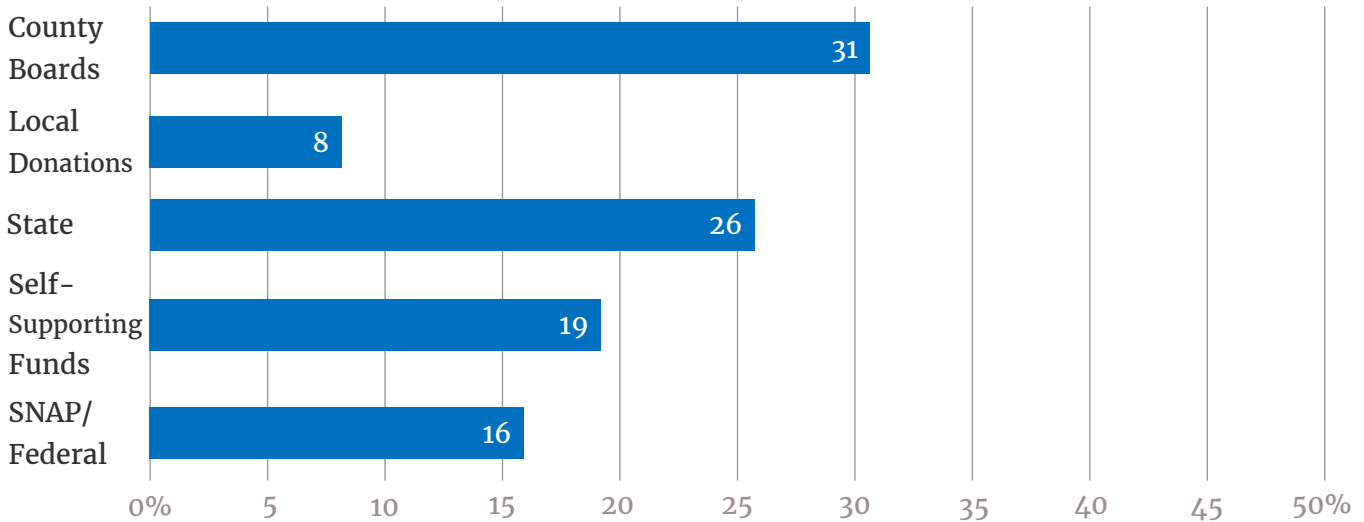
INCOME

County Boards	\$327,000
Local Donations	\$88,854
State	\$270,305
Self-Supporting Funds	\$197,239
SNAP/Federal	\$169,571

EXPENSES

Salaries/Wages	\$767,883
Rent/Utilities	\$114,337
Travel	\$46,000
Program Expenses	\$113,749
Equipment	\$11,000

2016 Income



2016 Expenses

