



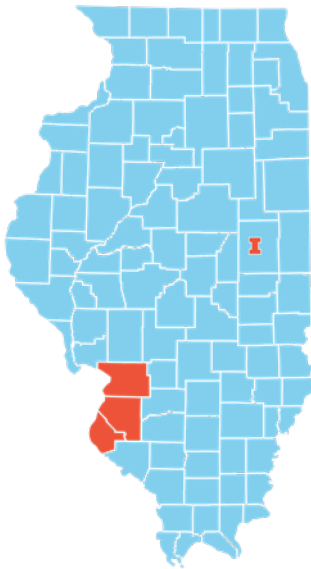
EXTENSION
IN ACTION

Serving Madison, Monroe,
and St. Clair Counties



Laquitsha Bejoile-Hayes
County Director

Guiding people to a brighter tomorrow



Two years post-COVID, Extension’s programming has grown drastically. A special thank you to our communities, partners, stakeholders, and volunteers. We exist because of your trust and support.

Some of our successes this past year include opening a third office, adding a new nutrition and wellness educator to expand our nutrition education efforts, and increasing our volunteer base across 4-H and agriculture and natural resource teams.

As we continue our efforts in reaching all audiences, we keep at the forefront our mission of being a land-grant university. Using research and evidence-based practices, we are the local experts in everything community, economy, environment, food, and health. In fulfilling our mission:

- We are conducting research and exposing youth to agriculture early at Baebler Educational Farm.
- We are present at the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Food Agriculture and Nutrition Center (JJK FAN) with 4-H, agriculture, natural resources, and Illinois Nutrition Education Programs.
- We are committed to relocating our Madison County Office next year to occupy space with Madison County Farm Bureau, USDA, and Country Financial.
- Our unit has over 300 volunteers.
- Our Weekend Gardener, Color of Spring, and Gateway Green Conference events reached over 400 people this year!

These are only a handful of our many successes in 2022. I am excited about what this year will bring!

Sincerely,
Laquitsha Bejoile-Hayes, MPH
Extension 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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Monroe County 4-H member takes on new statewide leadership role

Five Illinois teens, including Monroe County 4-H member Janella Neary, have a new way to make their voices heard on the statewide Illinois 4-H Youth Leadership Team platform.

The team includes 20 4-H members and recent alumni who coordinate and assist with statewide 4-H activities.

“Team members bring a valuable youth voice to the program through planning and leading the Illinois 4-H Junior Leadership Conference, walking the halls of the Illinois State Capitol talking to legislators, and representing Illinois 4-H at state and national events throughout the year,” says Katie Duitsman, University of Illinois Extension 4-H youth development specialist.

The Youth Leadership Team offers 4-H members an opportunity to give back to the 4-H program while further enhancing their leadership skills.

“I hope to gain new opportunities working with other youth,” says new member Sofie Heidrich of Kendall County, “as we plan fun events and make new friendships on the team.”

In addition to planning and leadership roles, teens serve on statewide committees and boards including the [Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors](#) and the [Illinois Farm Bureau Youth Education Committee](#).

“I am so passionate about 4-H because it has given me the life that I am living today,” says new member Janella Neary of Monroe County. “Whether that’s showing cattle at the fair or hanging out with my friends, 4-H gave me those relationships and opportunities. 4-H has helped me grow as a leader and is where I feel at home. I am so excited to see where the Illinois Youth Leadership Team takes me.”

Bringing on new members is an important part of making sure that the team reflects an authentic youth voice.

“Our new members bring new ideas and perspectives to the team,” says Duitsman. “Illinois is a large and diverse state, and a flow of new members ensures that all youth voices are heard.”

New Youth Leadership Team members for 2022 include Ben Suckow, Macon County; Janella Neary, Monroe County; Emma Hughes, Montgomery County; Sofie Heidrich, Kendall County; and Gauri Venkatraman, DuPage County.

New members are chosen yearly for two-year terms and can serve up to two terms. Officers are elected once a year by their peers.



To learn more about leadership programming in Illinois 4-H, please visit 4H.extension.illinois.edu/programs/leadership



Gloria Bremer represents Madison County as shooting sports ambassador

Meet Illinois 4-H Shooting Sports Ambassador Gloria Bremer from Madison County. Shooting sports ambassadors represent 4-H at special events, with 4-H groups, and with media outlets. They also serve as a spokesperson at county, state, regional, and national events, all while developing leadership skills, public relations, and team building.

The Illinois 4-H Shooting Sports program helps youth work towards skill mastery, but the program also teaches life skills, such as decision-making, teamwork, self-discipline, self-confidence, and problem-solving. Youth learn marksmanship, safety, responsible use of firearms, and the principles of shooting. The activities of the program and support of caring adult leaders provide young people with opportunities to develop life skills and conservation ethics. 4-H volunteers are crucial in providing a safe and caring environment for youth.

Thank you, Gloria, for representing Illinois 4-H!



St. Clair County 4-H Ambassadors host Global Youth Service Day

The St. Clair County 4-H Ambassadors are a teen leadership group with the primary goal of building communication skills to be used in an advocacy role for the St. Clair County 4-H program and other aspects of life. This year, the Ambassadors hosted a Global Youth Service Day event, sponsored by Youth Service America and the Hershey Heart Warming Project. Youth donated canned goods for a local food pantry, donated plastic lids for the Creative Critters 4-H Club recycled table project, made cards for youth and elderly neighbors, and teamed up to solve the Ag Innovators lock box challenge.



454

Youth Members of Organized Community Clubs



1,258

Youth Participating in Special Interest Short Term Programs



1,213

Youth Participating in School Enrichment Programs





Youth explore aerospace at Science Camp 2022

Youth had a blast at Science Camp. They studied aerospace with the River Bend Astronomy Club ~ RBAC. Guest speakers demonstrated piloting and operating drones which benefit agricultural production.

In addition, participants learned about water using an EnviroScape display, made hydroponic growing containers, made solar ovens they used to cook s'mores, made light-up cards, and played with Ozobots, robots that assist youth learn coding. The camp is held in conjunction with the Madison County Farm Bureau and Madison County CAREE Program/Ag in the Classroom.



Youth created hydroponic growing containers at Science Camp. They were excited to learn hands-on and explore aerospace and ag.



4-H Science Club continues for 2022

4-H Science Club started in October 2021 at the Monroe County Annex Building and Valmeyer Junior High School. Sixth through eighth grade youth participated in STEM activities after school. This club provided activities about aerospace, polymers, circuitry, and many other hands-on learning opportunities that spark youth's interest in science. Ten youth participated in Waterloo, and eight youth participated in Valmeyer.

4-H remains resilient as we grow our reach



119
Volunteers



1,169
Club Members



82
4-H Clubs



5,276
4-H Affiliations



Volunteers assist community and homeowners throughout year

Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists were busy working in the community. They assisted with demonstration and food donation gardens, helped remove invasive plant species from natural areas, and provided educational programs for youth and adults.

They answer 170 questions from homeowners in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties. Common questions included managing tree diseases, establishing lawns, identifying weeds, and incorporating more natives into the landscape.

Some of the community sites they worked include:

- Annex Building, Waterloo
- Baebler 4-H Educational Farm, Waterloo
- Gardens at SIUE, Edwardsville
- Henry White Farm, Millstadt
- O'Fallon Community Garden, O'Fallon
- Village Garden, Godfrey
- Willoughby Farm, Collinsville

I appreciate all the information regarding my holly and spruce tree. I was worried they would need to be removed, but I will follow your recommended treatment.

Homeowner, Edwardsville



Learn more about the master gardener program at extension.illinois.edu/mg

Strength in Numbers

Number of Volunteers



118
Master Gardeners



52
Master Naturalists



170
Total Number of Volunteers

Volunteer Hours



8,178.5
Master Gardeners



4,508
Master Naturalists



12,686.5
Total Number of Volunteer Hours

Value of Volunteer Time



\$244,946
Master Gardeners



\$135,014
Master Naturalists



\$379,960
Total Value of Volunteer Contributions
National value of volunteer time = \$29.95/Hour

Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists host educational programs



Master Gardener and Master Naturalists hosted educational programs for homeowners and volunteers this winter.

Weekend Gardener was held virtually on March 5. Sessions included I-Pollinate, a citizen science project; Extending the Growing Season Utilizing High and Low Tunnels; Growing Fruit in Containers; and Adding Color to the Landscape.

The Color of Spring workshop, held on March 26 in Waterloo, included sessions on fertilizers, composting, beneficial insects, and selecting trees for the landscape. Participants said they plan to incorporate many ideas discussed during the program, including adding more native plants to the landscape to support pollinators and using tunnels to start fall vegetables.

Master Gardeners also hosted The Color of Autumn Workshop where home gardeners learned about seed starting, common backyard birds, and tool sharpening. Participants shared that they would use their increased knowledge this winter as they do some garden preparation work indoors.



Elizabeth Wahle, Extension commercial agriculture educator, transplanted pumpkin plants for the pumpkin variety trial.



Illinois Extension partners with Eckert's Orchard to host Pumpkin Field Day

Elizabeth Wahle and Nathan Johanning, Extension educators, transplanted plants for a pumpkin variety trial which featured over 80 different varieties of gourd and pumpkins of all shapes, sizes, and colors. The trial site, Eckert's Orchard in Belleville, hosted the Pumpkin Field Day on September 1.

Other pest management trial reports and presentations from field specialists allowed growers to network with other farmers and industry representatives. Participants also learned about current research on weed and cover crop management, the value of foliar nutrient applications, disease management, and insect pest and pollinator management.



Families explore nature at Nature Adventures Day and Butterfly Festival

Spending time in nature provides many health benefits for all ages. Extension invited families to connect with nature at the Baebler Educational Farm. Activities included fishing, flying kites, guided hikes in the woods, and other educational activities. The event also included a herpetology presentation by Bob Weck, a biology professor at SWIC. Bob brought frogs, snakes, and other materials for families to explore. The youth and adults enjoyed examining the animals and learning about identification.

Nathan Johanning, Extension commercial agriculture educator, talks with youth at the Natures Adventures Day at Baebler Educational Farm.

University of Illinois Extension also hosted the Butterfly Festival at Baebler Educational Farm in August. Two hundred attendees learned about butterflies, other pollinators, and native plants. Participants toured the pollinator habitat and participated in educational booths. The event explained pollinators' role in the environment and taught homeowners how to create more habitats to increase the butterfly and pollinator populations.



Dennis Bowman, University of Illinois digital agriculture specialist, shows students how to use a drone for field scouting.



Extension hosts Ag Tech Science Camp

A new science camp focused on technology in agriculture was held at the Baebler Educational Farm. Nathan Johanning, Kelly Brandt, and Grace Margherio are part of a 3-year grant-supported project in partnership with the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center, and Extension to provide this summer agriculture and technology camps to local youth.

The program meets twice a week for eight weeks during summer. Youth learn about plant science and technology by studying the field and sweet corn planted on the farm.

Dennis Bowman, University of Illinois digital agriculture specialist, showed students how to use a drone for field scouting. There is also a student cohort from the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center, and students meet to share knowledge and experiences.

Agriculture and Natural Resource Programming



5,157
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Program Attendance



217
Educational Sessions



3,470
Participants



549
Expert Consultations



Horseradish Growers Conference held at the Caseyville Community Center

The 2022 Horseradish Growers Conference was held at the Caseyville Community Center in January. Growers met Kacie Athey, a new assistant professor and Extension faculty specialist in specialty crops entomology at University of Illinois.

Sessions included:

- Horseradish breeding program by Alan Walters, professor of vegetable science at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
- Benefits and implementation of cover crops in a horseradish production system by Nathan Johanning, Extension commercial agriculture educator
- Horseradish nutrition by Elizabeth Wahle, Extension commercial agriculture educator
- Disease management by Mohammad Babadoost, professor and Extension faculty specialist in specialty crops pathology at U of I.

Syngenta also discussed new herbicides in the pipeline for horseradish, and SIHF Healthcare discussed employee healthcare services.





Participants stopped at the Extension booth during the Local Foods Local Places Juneteenth event.

On Fox 2 News, Pastor Witherspoon, chair of Make Health Happen ESTL, and Joey Fonseca-Islas, SNAP-Ed educator, promoted food access resources, nutrition education, and health wellness. A total of 300 healthy food samples were shared, along with nutrition resources, to show the importance of wellness. The event ended with a powerful speech from Pastor Witherspoon on nutrition and literacy.

We enjoyed working with the East St. Louis community. With your Make Health Happen LFLP sub-committee, you are already off and running. I trust you are in great hands with Grace, Joey, and others on your steering committee. I have faith you will continue to make good progress for the people of East St Louis. Jason Espie, AICP, Principal Planner, EPR-PC



Local Foods, Local Places action plan guides East St. Louis engagement

The USDA and EPA partners have officially turned over the Local Foods, Local Places project and action plan to the East St. Louis community. The local coalition, Make Health Happen, hosts regular sub-committee meetings of community members and stakeholders to drive the program's implementation.

During the past quarter, the members added and promoted the social pinpoint map, met with the owners of Neighbors Market and Bond Avenue Fish & Poultry to explore food access issues, and began planning the Juneteenth Block Party health fairs around East St. Louis.

Illinois Extension hosted a workshop series at various gardens throughout East St. Louis inspired by the LFLP action plan. The first three occurred at the Jones Park Garden and Greenhouse across from the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center.

Make Health Happen ESTL and the SNAP-Education team also helped make health happen at the East St. Louis Juneteenth event. Extension worked with the city of East St. Louis and the community partners involved with the Local Foods Local Places initiative to highlight health and wellness on Juneteenth 618 day at the Clyde C. Jordan.



Pastor Witherspoon (right), chair of Make Health Happen ESTL, and SNAP-Ed educator Joey Fonseca promoted food access resources, nutrition education, and health wellness.



Youth learned about seeds and germination, grew produce, and adapted a smoothie recipe using the produce they harvested at the JJK FAN Innovation Center.



Youth programming and after-school programs continue at the Jackie Joyner Kersee FAN Innovation Center

Youth programming continues with the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Innovation Center. Youth participated in various programs where they dissected seeds, harvested produce, made smoothies using the produce they harvested and sold at the East Side Health District Farmers Market.

In February and March, activities revolved around seeds and germination. They dissected seeds, ate edible seeds, made seed art, and explored beans, corn, and microgreens at various stages. They also started planning and planting in the outdoor garden beds. First grade students designed individual square-foot gardens and arranged them to fill the plan for one of the raised beds. The youth helped plant the garden at the center and are now enjoying the fruits of their labor.

At the JJK Summer Camp, upper elementary students participated in a Seed to Smoothie. The youth harvested vegetables from the JJK garden, adapted a smoothie recipe using the harvested produce, and created samples to share and promote with the rest of the JJK Summer Camp. The youth were excited to share their creation, promote it, and see the students' and staff's reactions.

Illinois 4-H developed a curriculum, Food Action Academy, that was piloted at the JJK Center with middle school youth. The program promotes food justice and advocacy and creates solutions to food access in the greater East St. Louis area. This curriculum teaches the basics of food systems, food insecurity, and food access. It gives them tools to map their communities and develop ideas to make healthy and culturally relevant food more accessible. Many students went on to start the JJK Farmers Market stand and continue to develop ways to use the funds generated to help with nutrition in the East St. Louis area.

Youth learn entrepreneurship and leadership skills selling produce at the Jackie Joyner Kersee farmers market



Middle schoolers do not quickly get excited about getting dirty in the garden, but they are more than willing to wear a fruit, vegetable, or bee suit to sell JJK-grown produce. In July, middle school youth began selling homegrown fruits and vegetables at the JJK Farmers Market stand.

Preventative Health and Health Education Services has a long history of being the wellness outlet in East St. Louis. One of their many gems is the F.R.E.S.H Community Teaching Garden, run by Elizabeth Patton-Whiteside, Eastside Health district administrator and Master Gardener. The Community Teaching garden has increased food access by offering hundreds of pounds annually to the F.R.E.S.H. Farmers Market and local food pantries and providing green space for city residents. Grace Margherio, Extension educator, was eager to teach JJK youth about entrepreneurship, leadership skills, and food production using the farmers market.

After hosting a few farmers market stands at the F.R.E.S.H market, youth were ready to relocate their stand to the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Center. In August, they tried two days of marketing in front of JJK. This move significantly increased profits, community engagement, and youth participation. The farmers market stand has continued in front of JJK, engaging more students, staff, and families with awareness of the JJK garden, Extension recipes, and upcoming JJK Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Innovation Center programs each week.



Youth sell fresh-grown produce they harvested at the JJK FAN Innovation Center

Fall Sessions



64
Agricultural Education Sessions at the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Center



146
Total Youth, Ages 7 to 13



Encouraging healthy nutrition and wellness across the community

Food preparation, food safety, nutrition, chronic disease prevention and management: Illinois Extension is committed to helping families across the state live the best versions of their lives. Personal health decisions are influenced by our broader community and the environment we live in. By working together, we can create environments where healthy choices are easy. Classrooms, school cafeterias, food pantries, workplaces, and other built environments play an important role in promoting health and well-being.



Human Support Services clients learn food safety, cooking skills

Monroe County Human Support Services clients learned basic cooking skills during an 8-week workshop with nutrition and wellness educator Kris Juelfs. HSS helps individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities pursue their potential and live their best lives. Clients learned to practice food safety, follow recipes, and use kitchen utensils and equipment efficiently and safely.

Participants prepared many tasty recipes, including refreshing fruit smoothies, blueberry pancakes, breakfast wraps, meatball and pasta bake. Their favorite recipe was white chicken chili. Participants completed cooking skills independently with visual recipes and verbal prompts. To conclude the workshops for 2022, participants invited other HSS clients to the holiday workshop. Ten participants attended and prepared hot cocoa mix in mason jars for gifts, reindeer crunch snack mix, and grinch fruit kabobs.

I love the passion you have for your job! I am open to discussing any other ideas you have for partnering...lots of possibilities.

HSS participants at our holiday workshop prepared hot cocoa mix in mason jars for gifts, reindeer crunch snack mix, and grinch fruit kabobs.

Nutrition and Wellness Program Impact

(From April to December):



292
Participants



47
Sessions



117
Hours



Learn more tips about managing critical nutritional needs and find resources:
extension.illinois.edu/food



HSS clients completed an 8-week cooking workshop.

They loved the holiday workshop! Thank you so much for putting that together. It was really special.

Michele Bowen



Teaching food safety and nutrition concepts at Youth Cooking School

This year marked the 25th year of the Youth Cooking School in Monroe County, which expanded into Madison and St. Clair counties in recent years. In 2022, the four-day schools occurred in Waterloo, Columbia, Millstadt, and at Scott Air Force Base in Belleville.

With a focus on food safety, nutrition, and farm-to-table concepts, participants learned valuable hands-on cooking techniques. Favorite recipes included New Orleans jambalaya, fruit pizza, smoothies, and pancakes. The school is for youth ages 9 to 14. The Youth Cooking Challenge program allowed older, more experienced chefs to show off their culinary skills!

Youth Cooking School and the Youth Cooking Challenge reached 156 students over the summer. For youth who want to continue learning about cooking and nutrition, a 4-H SPIN Club met monthly from October 2022 to May 2023. Seventeen students participate in the monthly club meetings, and 4-H Teens as Teachers provide assistance.

What was your favorite part of cooking school?

Getting to cook with my brother, getting to use different kitchen tools, making different food and the helpers, green smoothies, being trusted to be independent.



Participants try their food after preparing recipes at Youth Cooking School Challenge program.



Kris Juelfs, Extension nutrition and wellness educator, taught participants about different nutrition topics.

Encouraging healthy choices through our Wellness Wednesdays program



More than half of Illinois adults have a known chronic health condition, with many facing inequities that make improving their health more challenging. People of all ages need trusted and reliable research-based information to make health decisions to enhance their quality of life. With community partners, Extension delivers creative and sustainable solutions to ensure that these supports are available when and where people need them.

Wellness Wednesdays is a monthly program implemented by Kris Juelfs, nutrition and wellness educator, to help target the community by making research-based information easy to understand. Wellness Wednesdays began in September 2022 and will continue to be held monthly in 2023.

Topics included

- Links Between Arthritis and Diet
- Air Fryer 101
- How to Stay Healthy During the Holidays

Each hour-long session included an audio/visual presentation and a food demonstration. Sessions reached over 30 adults in Monroe County.

Thanks for the classes you have done so far. I now use my compact air fryer frequently. Before this class, it just sat in a box unopened. Also, I have made the Mediterranean Dip several times. You have so many good ideas.

Program Participant



Volunteers worked at Lalumier's community garden.



Illinois Extension assists Lalumier Elementary with garden challenge

Lalumier Elementary Garden faced challenges over the summer: flooding and lack of volunteers. Despite those challenges, with the help of several partners, the garden work provided fresh produce to the community. The garden also received a free trimmer from Glen Carbon's Lowes to maintain the overgrown weeds in the garden.

University of Illinois Extension provided the pantry with healthy recipes for the families matched to the produce they receive. The SNAP-Ed team hosted a garden workday at the end of the gardening season. 4-H teens on an educational trip from Arizona spent a morning at the garden to help clean it up and close it for the end of the season. Students also learned a lot about food insecurity in the area and how the garden helps increase access to fresh produce for community members.



SNAP-Ed continues to build strong partnerships

SNAP-Ed works with Illinois families in need to make healthier choices easier. The team has built strong partnerships within our communities through networking and programming. The team continues to collaborate with community partners through classes and workshops to adapt research-based solutions that encourage healthier nutrition options. SNAP-Ed continues to show resilience with new partnerships every year.

SNAP-Ed outreach



27
Partnerships with K-12 Schools



6
Partnerships with Early Childhood Centers



19
Partnerships with Emergency Food Sites



38
Partnerships with Other Types of Organizations



67
Policy, Systems, or Environment Changes Adopted by Partner Organizations



1,131
Nutrition Education Classes



23,821
Total Estimated SNAP-Ed reach



Food pantry's success celebrated at Hunger and Health Conference

An area food pantry was recognized for its work in mitigating food insecurity and hunger. Marla Goodwin and Jeremiah's Food Pantry of East St. Louis won the Innovative Food Pantry Programming Award at the Extension Hunger and Health Illinois Regional Conference held in Springfield in March.

Jeremiah's Food Pantry received a cold storage unit through the Building Resilient and Inclusive Communities (BRIC) grant available through the Illinois Public Health Institute. The food pantry serves a large audience but was limited in its ability to keep food cold. President Joe Biden also recognized Jeremiah Food Pantry and its volunteers for their work combating food insecurity in the region.

The conference provided Illinois food pantries opportunities to better explore the many SNAP-Ed resources, including food pantry set-up and the Find Food IL application.



Marla Goodwin, Jeremiah's Food Pantry manager, received the Innovative Food Pantry programming award for the amazing work they do in East St. Louis.



Increasing food access through the fruit and vegetable voucher program

Last year, the fruit and vegetable voucher program served 500 families in the area by providing \$10 vouchers redeemable for fresh produce. There were \$5,000 worth of vouchers provided for families in Belleville and another \$5,000 worth of vouchers offered to families in East St. Louis.

This year, the program continues in partnership with several Belleville schools and East Side Health District. To date, East Side Health District has distributed over 200 vouchers and has already had 50% of those vouchers redeemed at the Fresh Farmers Market in East St. Louis.

Extension thanks the Healthier Together Coalition group for their efforts and funding this initiative and helping to combat food insecurity and increase food access.



Extension helps pantries receive cold storage freezers, refrigerators

Several pantries received a cold storage unit through the BRIC grant, made available by Illinois Public Health Institute, Make Health Happen, and Healthier Together. The grant allows for the expansion of freezer and refrigerator storage.

"We are serving a large audience, but sometimes we cannot accept certain donations because of the cold storage limitation we have," says Marla Goodwin. "Thank you for providing us with this opportunity and for your continuous support."



SNAP-Ed encourages youth to eat breakfast for better health

There's no better time to remind youth to eat breakfast than during National Breakfast Week. More than 250 students at Bernard Elementary School had fun while they learned the importance of starting their day with breakfast and milk. Results indicated that the activities caused youth to eat breakfast and drink milk that week. The number of students who ate their breakfast and drank their milk increased that week.



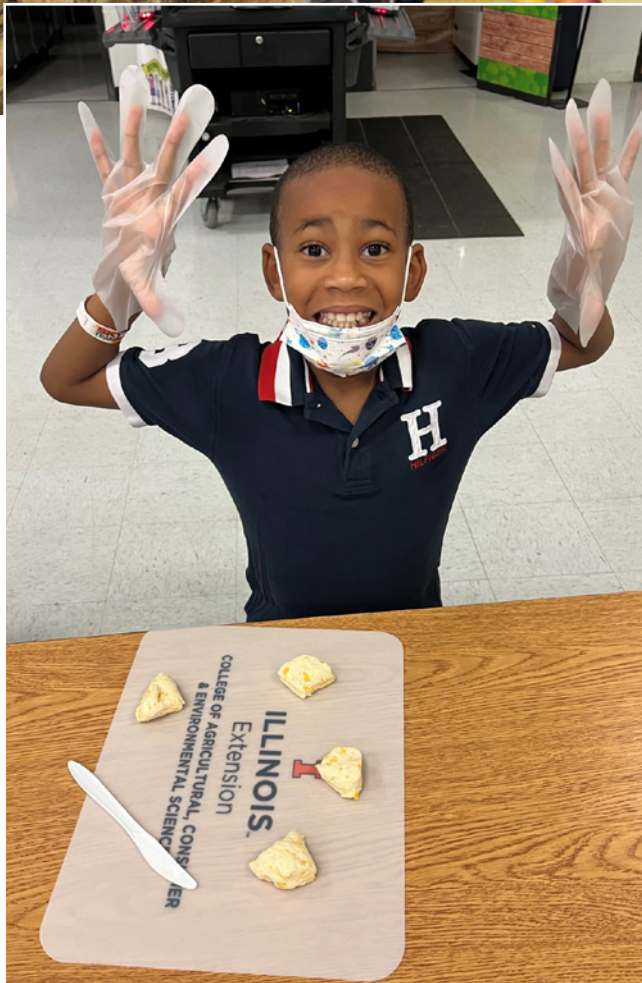
965
SNAP-Ed Participants



284
SNAP-Ed Sessions



147
SNAP-Ed Educational Hours



Summer youth cooking schools theme inspired by movies



EFNEP reaches hundreds of youth in Madison and St. Clair counties annually with exciting summer youth cooking schools. Youth take the skills they learn during Youth Cooking School and implement them at home. This experience is hands-on, focusing on food safety, cooking terms, nutrition education, and reading nutrition fact labels.

This year's youth cooking theme was "Dinner and a Movie." Examples include zoodles and turkey meatballs inspired by *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. Peppers, carrots, and popcorn were used and inspired by the *Lion King*.

Staff at Katie Harper Wright Elementary School were just as excited as the youth for this year. The teachers were impressed by how well students engaged and participated in the prepping and preparing the recipes. The staff appreciated the youth trying new foods and how well the recipes tasted. The teachers want to establish adult classes soon. They are looking forward to EFNEP returning in the fall. Youth enrollment for Summer Youth cooking schools was 494 for Madison and St. Clair counties.



Youth learned cutting skills, different cooking methods, foods on MyPlate, and the importance of proper measurements.



Lansdowne UP partnership provides new kitchen for training

Lansdowne UP has provided a commercial kitchen for EFNEP to teach to the public. County director Laquitsha worked closely with Lansdowne UP staff on the layout and appliances to ensure all of the health safety requirements are met in the new space. Kris, nutrition and wellness educator, provided food handlers training for 13 Lansdowne UP staff. The Lansdowne UP shared that they enjoyed the training and look forward to using what they've learned.

This learning space at the Lansdowne UP Center will greatly impact the community by providing a space for hands-on teaching.

EFNEP Youth Program

86% improved their abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations or gained knowledge.

46% improved their ability to prepare simple, nutritious, affordable food or gained knowledge

52% improved their physical activity practices or gained knowledge.

48% used safe food handling practices more often or gained knowledge.

EFNEP Adult Program

94.4% adults made a positive change in their eating habits.

88% adults showed improvement in their ability to prepare simple, nutritious, affordable food or gain knowledge

65% adults showed improvement in their physical activity practices or gained knowledge.

65% adults made a positive change in safe food handling practices more often or gained knowledge

Nutrition and wellness educator Kris Juelfs provides Food Safety Handlers training to Lansdowne UP staff at the JJK FAN Innovation Center.

Good Samaritan House families receive nutrition lessons and free books

Metro-east literacy project's primary goal is to promote a culture of reading to transform families. The metro-east area is a book desert, meaning several homes do not have books accessible for families to read.

EFNEP staff partnered with Linda Mitchell, co-founder of Metro East Literacy Project, in September to offer families at Good Samaritan House nutrition education lessons and free books. After families completed their six nutrition education lessons, they received free books for their families, ranging from fiction to horror. Over 100 books were given away.

EFNEP Youth:



35
Groups



604
Participants



600
Graduates

EFNEP Adults:



82
New Adults Enrolled



40
Graduates



Visit our Illinois Nutrition Education Program at:
inpe.extension.illinois.edu



Isidra, a Puentes de Esperanza participant, told the person translating our conversation that coming to the classes has helped her to eat more fruit. The program coordinator expressed that the families participating in the program were happy with the information I shared. Even though there was a language barrier for some, the translator made it easy for families to understand the lesson.

Chastidy Wilson, Community Outreach Worker



Hear from our staff and participants

I love the food and nutrition classes that EFNEP provides for my family and me. The Community Worker has taken pride in her teaching. She is very patient and caring about special needs children. I refer her to many of my family, friends, and colleagues

Tracy, Participant

The Nutrition Education Program has been a blessing to my family. I am provided a wealth of knowledge on the benefits of eating a balanced meal and ways to save money and stay within budget, as well as how to make recipes that are very good and cost-efficient. I love the classes and will refer them.

Brianna, Participant

A mother of three at the Good Samaritan House in Granite City, Illinois, credits the information from EFNEP has given her alternative recipes to deal with her morning sickness.

Gestavia People, Community Outreach Worker





EFNEP incorporates ‘Around the Table’ to increase health awareness and resilience

Since 1969, EFNEP has made a difference in the lives of families through nutrition education. Its programs reach roughly half a million low-income adults and families each year. EFNEP curriculum is evidence-based.

After completing a series of lessons, EFNEP participants walk away with information that will improve their health and overall well-being. In 2022, EFNEP staff participated in a statewide training that explored participants’ relationship with food. The overall goal of this new curriculum is to create communities where everyone can cultivate a healthy relationship with food and their bodies. Around the Table, a new curriculum, has been initiated locally and has received great feedback.

After the program, families say they are confident in purchases and food safety, know more about reading food labels, and have increased knowledge of physical activity practices.

People in our communities deserve access to healthy food and nutrition education that recognizes the effects of traumatic experiences; avoids blame, shaming, or stigma; and promotes resilience.

Leah’s Pantry



Providing quality youth, community programs at JJK FAN Innovation Center

The Jackie Joyner-Kersey Food Agriculture Nutrition Innovation Center (JJK FAN) is working to change lives by providing youth and community programs in STEAM+Ag, food production, nutrition, and physical activity in East St. Louis.

The JJK FAN is a collaboration with the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, and Lansdowne UP. Collectively, they are working to build community capacity to address food access, while shaping experiences for youth in technology, nutrition, and wellness. This year, the partnership provided a wide variety of programs that incorporated garden beds, greenhouse, drone technology, and farm visits. Additionally, the JJK FAN collaboration continues to expand its growing space, allowing increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables in the surrounding community while working to expose youth to opportunities in ag-tech.

The JJK FAN Innovation Center provides interactive programs that promote curiosity and engagement of K-12 youth in plant science, urban agriculture, nutrition, and well-being. This includes innovative, sustainable food production systems along with programming related to high-tech aspects of the industry. It all starts with exposure and igniting an interest in STEAM+Ag.

The value of this collaboration stems from a joint commitment to education and engagement at the core of the program. Extension is one of four organizations that brings expertise and a passion for youth development, community and economic growth, and individual and family health and wellness.



578
Program Reach



395
Program Lessons

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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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