

# Program Highlights – University of Illinois Extension

## The Goal

Through educational programs University of Illinois Extension helps Illinois residents put knowledge to work to make life better, healthier, safer, and more profitable for themselves and their communities.

## Program Reach and Delivery Methods

In 2008, Extension programs involved over 3,000,000 face-to-face teaching contacts with residents of all of Illinois' 102 counties – and far beyond. These contacts were made through over 17,000 teaching events.

In addition, total page views on Extension's websites continued to increase, numbering over 75 million. A total of 325 unique websites, including 50 in Spanish, are available to the public on a wide variety of topics. Examples of new websites added in 2008 include *Horticulture Answers*, *More for Your Money: Using Your Money Wisely*, *Living with Wildlife in Illinois*, and *Indoor Air Quality*.

Educational outreach through the media included distribution of more than 13,000 news releases, more than 1,300 radio programs, and over 600 television programs. Distribution of newsletters on a variety of topics totaled nearly 2.1 million. Other program delivery methods included hands-on workshops, field days, self-paced tutorials, expanded audio- and video-conferencing, and podcasts.

## Program Focus

In response to locally-identified needs, Extension draws on university-based research and partners with organizations, businesses, and groups to develop and deliver programs. A *sample* of Extension programs conducted in 2008 illustrating the broad areas of focus, the diversity of audiences, variety of delivery methods, and program impact follows.

## Healthy Society

***Dining with Diabetes*** and related programs reached 1,200 participants who reported learning to manage their disease through better food choices including healthy soy-based food.

***Youth Cooking School*** reached 777 youth with over 80% increasing skills in following recipes, measuring ingredients, using a stove, or reading food labels.



***Health Jam*** involved 92 youth who achieved the program's goals—30 minutes of daily walking exercise and knowledge about health careers and body systems.

## Food Security and Safety

***Food Safety Refresher Course*** participants (300) who serve food to the public indicated that nearly three-fourths adopted one or more of 18 safe food-handling practices.



## Pork Quality Assurance Training

sessions ensured that 1,800 adults and 1,600 youth passed certification exams evidencing knowledge of how to produce pork that is safe for human consumption.

## Sustainable and Profitable Food Production & Marketing Systems

***MarketMaker***, an interactive web system of 350,000 food-related enterprises was created in Illinois and now adopted in many states. Producers of food products connect with businesses that serve food to ensure fresher products at reasonable prices.

***Livestock Grazing*** program surveys indicated that 75% of respondents implemented new practices to maximize grazing productivity and have experienced an increase in economic return per grazed acre.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
EXTENSION

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

**Soil and Water Workshops** involved 190 certified crop advisers who indicated they will work with their clients to use soil tests and apply organic matter instead of fertilizer to correct imbalances in crop production nutrients.

**Annie's Project** enhanced the farm management skills of 190 women involved in agricultural operations regarding ways to manage legal, marketing, and production risks.

#### Environmental Stewardship

**Current Biofuels Research** presentations increased awareness of some 370 attendees at regional Crop Management Conferences regarding environmentally friendly and renewable future fuel sources.



**Unwanted Medicine Take-Back** events held in 25 locations helped communities to collect, and prevent 4 million pills from entering and contaminating waterways. Other Extension-led community recycling events collected 10 million pounds of electronic waste and 15,000 pounds of plastic garden plant trays and pots.

**Pesticide Safety Education** programs ensured that approximately 6,000 agricultural producers, homeowners, and Master Gardeners passed certification exams evidencing knowledge of how to safely apply pesticides and protect the environment from contamination.

**Pond Management** programs were attended by some 150 farm and urban retention pond owners or managers. Evaluations indicated that participants will use recommended aquatic weed management, erosion control, and pond establishment information.

#### Enhancing Youth, Family, & Community Well-being

**Saving and Investing in Turbulent Times** engaged 116 participants through audio conferencing with over 70% indicating that their knowledge about investment topics had increased.

**Partners in Parenting** newsletter recipients (287) who responded to a survey agreed that the newsletters helped them gain ideas and confidence in appropriate ways to guide learning and development of their infant.

**Social and Emotional Learning** presentations to teachers in 131 school districts resulted in providing information to families and plans for recently mandated integration of social and emotional learning into school classrooms.

**Certified County Officials** distance education classes provided 425 county board members, commissioners, assessors, clerks, or other officials with information they reported using to make decisions that benefited their local constituencies.

**Illinois Resource Net** education efforts helped increase local officials' and organizations' success in securing more than \$2 million in federal funding to benefit local communities in Illinois.

#### 4-H Youth Development

University of Illinois Extension's 4-H Youth Development program assists youth in acquiring knowledge and developing life skills that will enable them to become caring, competent, and contributing members of society. In 2008, nearly 293,000 youth participated in 4-H activities and programs. Some 24,000 Illinois youth and adult volunteer leaders worked with these youth. Special initiatives for 2008 focused on expanding *science, engineering, and technology experiences* for 4-H youth and included:

- Outreach to over 4,300 Chicago youth and 1,100 adults through the *Science on the Go Mobile Laboratory*.
- *Science Siesta* events increased the interest of 113 girls in science-related careers.
- Formation of 5 county 4-H youth technology teams who are working with robotics.
- Community mapping projects by youth in 5 counties using GIS/GPS equipment.
- Introduction of a new *Wind as Energy* curriculum.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
EXTENSION

Find more information about University of Illinois Extension programs at [www.extension.uiuc.edu](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu)

• University of Illinois • U.S. Department of Agriculture • Local Extension Councils Cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Data reflects statistics for 2008. Published in December 2009