

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

STAKEHOLDER REPORT 2022

2022 IN KOSSUTH COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach provides research-based education and engages Iowans in solving today's problems and preparing for a thriving future. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Kossuth County for a #STRONGIOWA.



The Kossuth County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

Thank you for your support.

Charles Bormann
Council Chair

Julie Larsen
Council Member

Phil Divis
Council Vice-Chair

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Council Member

Katie Patten
Council Treasurer

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David Laubenthal
Council Secretary

Linda Peterson
Council Member

Vacant Position

In 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach Kossuth County offered a variety of programs to meet the needs of Kossuth County. This report highlights some of the work done.

MASTER GARDENERS

Kossuth County has one active Master Gardener and four interns. Volunteers used the research-based horticulture and gardening knowledge learned in training to educate others and coordinate projects around Kossuth County in 2022.

SEED EXCHANGE

Kossuth County Master Gardeners teamed up with the Burt Public Library to offer the second annual Seed Exchange on February 23. To kick off the event, Master Gardener interns Betsy Barglof and Brenda Bormann gave a 20-minute presentation on garden planning. They shared information on seed selection, methods for growing transplants, crop companions, and crop rotation. Following the presentation, participants were able to collect free seeds from a selection of over 50 varieties to plant in their garden. Seeds were donated by participants, Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah and other gardening enthusiasts.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: LIVESTOCK WORKSHOP

A livestock workshop was held in Kossuth County on June 12. Over 55 4-H and FFA members from four different counties attended.

The three-hour workshop focused on general and species specific information. First, four mini sessions were offered on health, nutrition, animal anatomy, and biosecurity.

Participants also had the opportunity to participate in species-specific sessions (goats, sheep, cattle, and hogs). Participants rotated through different sessions related to the species of their choosing, which included:

- Daily care.
- Health.
- Nutrition.
- Biosecurity.
- Clipping and fitting.
- Showmanship.

Industry experts led each session. Throughout the day, youth participated in hands-on experiences and gained knowledge about animal husbandry.



In the Seed exchange program evaluation, participants shared they learned:

- Using a fan helps strengthen indoor-grown seedlings.
- Rotating crops and planting companion crops are important in helping reduce pest outbreaks.

LOCAL BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS

Communities with maintained landscaping areas look cleaner and more welcoming. In addition, having a variety of plants and trees to look at can improve one's health.

When flower beds around the city of Algona and Smith Lake needed some care, Master Gardeners in Kossuth County stepped in to help beautify their community.

Tall grass varieties and sedum were planted in over five areas across the city of Algona. At Smith Lake, cone flowers and other native plants were planted in a pollinator garden. Many of the species planted require minimal care, thrive under various conditions, and attract pollinators.

HOLIDAY GARLAND WORKSHOP

Decorating for the holidays can be expensive and, due to rising costs, many are on a limited budget. Master Gardeners offered a holiday garland workshop in December to allow area residents an opportunity to create a lower-cost holiday décor item.

Master Gardener intern, Shannon Franke led the workshop. Franke has created handmade garland in previous years, many times using clippings or other recycled materials.

Participants were given a three-foot strand of balsam fir. Using additional greenery and embellishments, they each created their own unique strand of garland. Some even turned their garland into a wreath.

HEALTHY AND HOMEMADE

With rising food costs, it's more important now than ever to save money on food while still eating healthy. We partnered with the Whittemore Public Library and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Human Sciences to offer two sessions of Healthy and Homemade. In this series,



participants learned and practiced strategies for using time, money, and skills wisely when eating at home. Fifty people participated in the two offerings: Slow Cooker Meals and Cooking for One or Two.

EMERALD ASH BORER

In July, Emerald Ash Borer was first discovered in Kossuth County. EAB is a significant threat to native ash tree species, typically killing a tree within two to four years after becoming infested.

In response, we hosted a public meeting for homeowners and concerned citizens on July 21. Donald Lewis, professor emeritus and former extension entomologist with Iowa State University, Mike Kintner, EAB coordinator with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship; and Emma Hanigan, urban forestry coordinator with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources presented the meeting to 29 people. Participants learned:

- How to identify an ash tree.
- How to properly identify EAB.
- Symptoms of an EAB infestation.
- Treatment options.
- Tree replacement recommendations.

4-H AND CLOVER KIDS

During the 2021-22 4-H year, Kossuth County had 219 members participating in 11 clubs. The Clover Kids afterschool program had 30 youth participating.



Top Photo: Participants at the Emerald Ash Borer Meeting learning from Mike Kintner, IDALS. *Bottom left:* A participant in the Fall Pumpkin Flower Arrangement Workshop adds fresh flowers to her arrangement. *Bottom right:* Participants showing off their garland created during the Holiday Garland Workshop.

PROJECT AREA WORKSHOPS

4-H members had opportunities to expand their project learning by attending project workshops throughout the year. Projects workshops held included:

- Sign painting workshops.
- Fall pumpkin flower arrangement workshop.
- Clover Kids bag printing workshop.
- Rags to Riches workshop.

KOSSUTH COUNTY FAIR

The Kossuth County Fair provided an opportunity for youth to demonstrate what they had learned through their 4-H project work over the past year. More than 1,700 entries were made for the 2022 Kossuth County Fair between static and livestock exhibits.

K-12 PROGRAMMING

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS: AGRICULTURE & KIDS

On May 10-12, the annual Educational Partners: Agriculture & Kids (EPAK) program was held. EPAK exists to help youth learn that agriculture impacts their lives, whether they live



Top: Jane Koppen, Kossuth County 4-H youth coordinator, assists an Algonia fourth-grader with making a corn and soy plastic ball during the “More Than Just a Seed” session at EPAK. *Bottom left:* A student tries “grain big tug of war” during the Flowing Grain Safety session at Farm Safety Day. *Bottom right:* Larry Bielke, Midland Power Coop, explains electrical dangers to students at Farm Safety Day.

on a farm or not. Fourth- and fifth-grade students come from each school district in Emmet, Kossuth, and Palo Alto counties to participate in this field trip. During the day they rotate among seven, 25-minute sessions.

Studies from the Journal of Agricultural Education reveal that the more educated the individual, the fewer negative stereotypes the individual developed about agriculture. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of sources for misinformation about agriculture available to the average person in the information age in which we live.

After attending EPAK:

- 64% of youth correctly identified the other parts of animals used in products we buy in stores.

- 82% of students correctly identified that technology allows farmers to be more accurate on the amounts of ingredients in their feed.
- 84% of students knew that bees are necessary to pollinate fruits and vegetables.
- 54% of students correctly identified soil and rocks as playing an important role in cleaning water.
- 88% of students could identify the correct order of the process of egg production to the table.
- 87% of students knew that drones were used in agriculture to see if crops were healthy.
- 62% of students were able to correctly identify by-products of corn and soybeans.

FARM SAFETY DAY

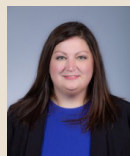
On Sept. 8, over 200 area third-graders attended the Kossuth County Progressive Agriculture Farm Safety Day® at the fairgrounds. Students learned about animal/gate safety, electrical safety, chemical safety, lawnmower/power tool safety, flowing grain safety, and tractor/PTO/ATV safety.

Local FFA students and staff from various businesses and organizations taught the sessions. Individuals previously injured in agriculture-related incidents also shared their story during the “It Happened!” session.

As a result of attending, students shared they learned:

- Not to fly kites closer to powerlines.
- To wear a helmet when riding an ATV.
- Not to play in grain bins or silos.

EXTENSION STAFF



Sara Hunter
Regional Director



Pam Kollasch
Administrative Assistant



Jane Koppen
County Youth Coordinator



Meredith Nelson
Program Coordinator

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND OUTREACH Kossuth County

1121 Hwy 18 E
Algona, IA 50511
(515) 295-2469
www.extension.iastate.edu/kossuth

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