



Winter Programs

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Visit our website for more details on these events.

go.illinois.edu/jsw

Seebruck joins as Agriculture Educator

Kathryn Seebruck has joined the staff in Jo Daviess, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties as a Crop Sciences and Agronomy Educator. She will work with producers and agribusinesses in the area to support the production of row crops and forages.



A native of Byron, IL, she is familiar with the needs of farmers in Northern Illinois and looks forward to connecting with them and providing information and resources as needed. Seebruck has a masters in Crop Sciences from the University of Illinois College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) and is pleased to be back as part of the University.

As an Extension Educator, she will work with local Extension staff to develop educational sessions, field days and other events to connect with local stakeholders. Her background in weed science and the research she has conducted related to that and other issues farmers face will allow her to be a resource to the local agriculture community.

“I’m looking forward to meeting local producers and I’m ready to learn more about their needs and how to help them become more successful with their farming practices,” states Seebruck. “My background is in weed science, and I became passionate about herbicide resistance through the research projects I carried out in graduate school. I’m eager to share my knowledge with local producers to prevent and help mitigate this growing problem.”

Serving Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties

Jo Daviess County • 204 N Vine St, Elizabeth, IL 61028 • 815-858-2273

Stephenson County • 2998 W Pearl City Rd, Freeport, IL 61032 • 815-235-4125

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Are you needing information?

With all of the resources available, especially online, it can be daunting to know where to get the right information. Often, the internet can be misleading. That's where Extension can help! We offer research-based programs and information in agriculture, sustainability, natural resources, and gardening, as well as nutrition, wellness, parenting, youth leadership, and community and economic development. With 22 Extension employees in Jo Daviess, Stephenson and Winnebago Counties, we can help you find reliable, research-based answers to almost any question you may have.

The next time you're looking for some information, try one of our experts. Call the office nearest to you or send an email to uie-jsw@illinois.edu.

Environmental & Energy Stewardship Educator

Stanley (Jay) Solomon

Local Foods and Small Farms Educator

Grant McCarty

Commercial Agriculture Educator

Kathryn Seebruck

Program Coordinator

Alex Burbach

Program Coordinator

Nikki Keltner

Training & Testing Options for Private Pesticide Applicators

Private Pesticide Applicators who need their license renewed can take the Private Applicator test on the following dates locally:

- **Jan. 10, at 10 a.m.**

Stephenson County Farm Bureau, Freeport, IL

- **Feb. 7, at 10 a.m.**

Elizabeth Community Building, Elizabeth, IL

These are **TEST ONLY** sites and there is no charge, but seating will be limited. **Pre-registration is required** by visiting the Illinois Department of Ag website:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Pesticides/Pages/in-person-testing.aspx>

Private Applicators that would like to take the training and testing can do so locally on:

- **March 5, at 8 a.m.**

Riverview Inn & Suites, Rockford, IL

Registration for this training and testing can be found at <https://psep.extension.illinois.edu/clinics/2324-rockford-1/>

Study materials can be purchased at your local office; call ahead to check availability. Additional Training and testing sites and online training options can be found at <https://extension.illinois.edu/psep/training-and-testing>



Day-Neutral Strawberry Research for Specialty Growers Concludes

In October 2023, a research study on the feasibility of growing day-neutral strawberries in Northern Illinois concluded. Funded by a USDA Specialty Crops Block Grant in 2022, 3 different varieties of strawberries were grown in partnership with Freeport High School's Student Vegetable Farm and Terrapin Orchards to determine whether these annual strawberries could be recommended. The purpose of this study was not only to determine how they would grow but to see if they would fit well with the different needs of growers. Commonly, strawberries are both June-bearing and perennial which provides a short berry season and impacted by overwintering challenges on survivability. With day-neutral strawberries the hope was to have a longer season (yields begin end of August to Halloween) and remove the overwintering.

At both sites, the 'Albion' and 'Seascape' varieties produced good yields and overlapped with orchard season. Our third, 'Mara Des Bois' produced small berries and would not recommend. It should also be stated that labor and other factors will impact these berries. A season long growth meant that insects were a major problem especially when grown nearby other vegetable rows. The drought conditions of 2023 eliminated one of our sites where berries are not commonly irrigated. As a grower looks to add these to their operation, they should determine if they have a market demand, labor, and irrigation in order to achieve the yields needed to justify these berries.

All results of this study have been shared on our YouTube channel with a playlist of videos.

go.illinois.edu/strawberryYoutube

Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit to be held in Freeport

Producers faced another challenging crop growing season this year with dry weather and added weed pressure.

“The short yet intense periods of drought this year, although mitigated by timely rainfall, made for an interesting growing season,” stated Kathryn Seebruck, U of I Extension Crops Educator, “it taught us a lot about the importance of setting the crop up for success in defense against these types of adverse conditions.”

To address these growing season challenges and more, the University of Illinois Extension is pleased to announce the annual Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit that will be held at Highland Community College Conference Center in Freeport, IL, on Wednesday, January 31, 2024, with the program running from 10 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.

The theme for this year’s conference is Updates in Nutrient, Weed, and Soil Health Management, with University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin-Madison specialists discussing strategies for weed, nutrient management, and plans to build soil health.

Topics for the day include Practical Nitrogen Management for Corn, presented by Giovanni Preza Fontes, Field Crops Agronomist, U of I Extension. Connor Sible, a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the Crop Physiology Department at the University of Illinois, will present Understanding Biologicals for Row Crops. Navigating the Inevitability of Herbicide Resistance will be delivered by Kathryn Seebruck, Crops Educator, U of I Extension. Dan Smith, Southwest Regional Specialist, Nutrient and Pest Management Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, will discuss Building Soil Health in Northern Climates. Highland Community College Agriculture Instructor Justin Ebert will be on hand to talk about the Highland Community College research plots and the results from this past growing season.

To register or for more information about the Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit, visit us online at go.illinois.edu/jsw or call U of I Extension at (815) 235-4125. Registration is required to attend. Registration cost is \$25.



Driftless Region Beef Conference

With nearly 2.5 million cattle in three Midwest states, university extension services in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin are teaming together to offer the Driftless Region Beef Conference. The twelfth annual event will be held Jan. 25-26, 2024 at the Grand River Convention Center in Dubuque, Iowa.

The driftless region in these states contain rolling hills, streams and karst soil topography. Since soil and water conservation is best accomplished when much of this land is seeded for forage and livestock consumes those forages, the conference will focus on efficient and economic forage and beef production.

Key speakers include Melanie Pimentel-Concepcion, Dennis Hancock, Dan Thomson, Randie Culbertson, Stephanie Hansen, and Lee Schulz.

The early registration fee is \$100 per person and must be received prior to midnight, Jan. 13. The price increases to \$130 after that date. More information on topics, speakers and lodging is available at www.aep.iastate.edu/beef/. Online and mail registration forms are available on the conference website.

go.illinois.edu/jsw

www.aep.iastate.edu/beef/



Livestock Production and Principles for Beginners Continues

The Livestock Production and Principles for Beginners Webinar Series returns in 2024. This monthly series, first launched in 2023, addresses the needs of those who are getting started, exploring the concept of, or even assists those currently raising livestock. With a focus on helping those who are brand new to livestock, 4-H families may be interested in these sessions.

"For those starting their livestock journey, we know that it can be challenging finding the right resources and getting the right answers" states Grant McCarty, Local Foods and Small Farms Educator. "These webinar series presented by U of I Extension experts aim to cover essential and relevant topics that producers can put into place the upcoming season, gaining confidence in their livestock production"

Sessions for 2024 will build upon those for 2023 including:

- **January 11 - A Fence is a Fence, Right?**
- **February 1 - Equine Pasture Management**
- **February 29 - Selling Meat in Illinois**
- **March 14 - Sheep and Goat Internal Parasite Management**

These sessions will all be held via the Zoom platform and begin at 6 p.m. on their respective nights. There will be a \$15 fee to attend the whole series, or a \$5 fee per session. Pre-registration is required by the day before each session to receive the Zoom link to attend. To register or for more information please visit us online at go.illinois.edu or call the Jo Daviess County Extension Office at 815-858-2273.

Register online at
go.illinois.edu/jsw

Farm Forward: Turn Last Season's Challenges into Next Season's Triumphs

Join University of Illinois Extension Crop Sciences Educator Kathryn Seebruck for the first year of her series "Farm Forward: Turning Last Season's Challenges Into Next Season's Triumphs". This monthly series aims to address the needs of row crop producers and will be rotated between Jo Daviess and Stephenson counties.

"No two growing seasons are the same; however, lessons learned from previous seasons can be applied in those that follow. This series aims to facilitate discussion of last season's challenges, uncertainties, and successes and how those insights can be applied in the upcoming growing season," states Seebruck.

The series will kick off with "Pest Control Following a Drought" on Thursday, January 18 at 10 a.m. at the Stephenson County Extension Office. The 2023 growing season was relatively dry, resulting in low disease pressure and high weed pressure. In this session, we will discuss how last season's conditions will affect this year's pest pressures as well as pest management practices to take into consideration.

Additional sessions include "What 2023 Taught us About Fertility" on February 15 at the Jo Daviess County Extension Office and "Planting for a Strong Start" on March 14 at the Stephenson County Extension Office.

This series is being offered free of charge, but pre-registration is requested. To register or for more information, call 815-235-4125 or visit go.illinois.edu/jsw.



2024 Certified Livestock Manager Training Schedule Announced

University of Illinois Extension and Illinois Department of Agriculture announced the 2024 Certified Livestock Manager Training Workshop (CLMT) schedule. The series of seven in-person workshops will kick off on January 30 in Springfield and conclude on February 8 in Pittsfield. These workshops meet the Illinois Livestock Management Facilities Act (LMFA) training requirements for Illinois livestock managers.

Pre-registration is required to attend an in-person workshop. To register for a workshop, visit go.illinois.edu/CLMT for a link to the registration page and additional information. Registration is open. Class size is limited in some locations due to space constraints.

The 2024 workshop dates and locations are:

- January 30, 2024 — Springfield, IL
- January 31, 2024 — Monmouth, IL
- February 1, 2024 — Morris, IL
- February 2, 2024 — Freeport, IL
- February 6, 2024 — Effingham, IL
- February 7, 2024 — Breese, IL
- February 8, 2024 — Pittsfield, IL

Each workshop will begin at 9 a.m. The training lasts 3 ½ hours, and Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDoA) staff will administer the exam after the training. The U of I Extension training fee is \$40, and IDOA's certification fee is \$30. The training manual used will be the "Livestock and Poultry Environmental Stewardship Curriculum." It is available at go.illinois.edu/manual.

The LMFA requires facilities designed for 300 or more animal units to have at least one employee certified in environmentally aware manure management techniques. Facilities designed for 301 to 999 animal

units must have at least one employee attend a workshop OR complete the online training. Facilities with more than 1,000 animal units must have a certified livestock manager attend a workshop and pass the IDOA exam OR complete the online training and pass the online test.

For the 2024 season, there will be 50 questions on both paper-based and online tests. The pass rate is 70% (35 questions). A Spanish version of the test is now available. Ahora ya está disponible una versión en español del examen para CLMT! Young family members (<18 years old) are welcome to take the training, but they cannot be the only certified managers at their facilities.

Cannot attend a workshop? Online training and testing are available year-round and follow the same format as the in-person workshops. Online training involves nine modules of 10- to 20-minute videos that can be viewed at an individual's own pace. Those who have more than 1,000 animal units may take the test online. The online training can be accessed through the CLMT webpage at go.illinois.edu/CLMT

We kindly ask all participants to register online at go.illinois.edu/CLMT. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in or have questions about the CLMT program, please contact University of Illinois Extension at 815 235 4125 or Stanley Solomon at jssolomo@illinois.edu.

go.illinois.edu/CLMT

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Illinois Extension

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University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need reasonable accommodations to participate in any of the programs in this newsletter, please contact the hosting office.

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences