



March 2019 Narrative Report

Upcoming Events:

April 1st – STEM Careers PD, NCEA Zoom

April 2nd – PSI workshop

April 3rd – Deans' Advisory Committee

April 5-13th – NELD, Costa Rica Experience

April 16th – Clay Co. Supervisors Mtg., Present at Odegeo

April 17th – Fillmore Staff Mtg.

April 18th – Lunch & Learn, Fillmore Co. Hospital, Clover Kids, Clay Co.

April 19th – Food, Fitness & Fun workshop

April 22nd – PSI, Clay County & Fillmore Co. Ext. Board Mtg.

April 24th – Fillmore Co. 4-H Council

April 25th – Clover Kids Mtg., Fillmore Co., Blueprint 4 Summer – Library

April 29th – May 3rd – eXtension Impact Collaborative Summit- Atlanta, Georgia

Brandy VanDeWalle

Extension Educator, Fillmore & Clay Counties

Crops – Innovative Cropping Systems

I coordinated the final 2018-19 **Farmers & Ranchers College program** for the season which was held at Lazy Horse vineyard for women involved in agriculture. Michele Payn

founded Cause Matters Corp. in 2001, which is a company designed to build connections around the food plate. Michele explained the importance of connecting with consumers on a personal level rather than

just spewing facts and statistics at people. When we are able to connect with others on a personal level, it allows us to share our stories with them and understand where they are coming from with their potential concerns. She has also extensively researched social media trends and encouraged participants to share their messages on social media, especially Instagram which is extremely popular with the younger generation. Engaging in dialogue is important to spread the message of agriculture.

I also participated in a **Mental Health First-Aid training** to better be prepared in situations where it becomes apparent that persons are developing serious mental health problems and understand how to assist that person in receiving professional help. I am now certified until 2022 and would like to participate in the youth version of training this year.

With the disasters in our state, our **Mental Health** team has been ramping up efforts to provide resources for those impacted. I was chosen to represent Nebraska at the next national eXtension Impact Collaborative Summit in Atlanta, GA.





Crops – Youth (STEM-Careers)

I met with extension staff from Iowa and Indiana to start planning for the **Regional Youth Crop Scouting Competition**. Due to the statewide disasters, I extended the deadline for the Innovative Youth Corn Challenge.

4-H Youth Development

Holli asked me to serve as a mentor for the **Inventure Day** held in Clay County which taught youth the process of being an entrepreneur. Youth had a “widget” they turned into an invention. All 7th graders in Clay County participated in the program and had to give a pitch on why their invention should be selected.

I held two **Clover Kids workshops**, one in Fillmore and one in Clay County. Youth learned about caring for companion animals, mostly related to dogs and created an animal care kit which can be entered at the county fair.

I participated in professional development from Leaders Issue team on positive youth leadership identify and youth voice. The interactive presentation of youth theories most relevant to our work with Nebraska Extension was presented.

I helped Rachel score the livestock judging cards for the annual **Animal Science Day** which also provided youth the opportunity to attend the Youth Quality Care of Animals training presented by Rachel.

Professional Development or Organizational Citizenship

I presented to the Fillmore County **Odegeo** leadership team on ways to motivate people. I also presented to the **Leadership Wayne** group via zoom on using power and influence in leadership settings. As Unit Leader, I provided annual coaching sessions for staff in both counties; we set goals to be accomplished during the next year. I met with Susan Lynch, new **Fillmore County Development Corporation** director to explain extension to her and programming extension can offer.

News Columns/Blogs

AgrAbility, National Ag Week, Coping with Stress During a Crisis, Advocating for Agriculture