

SAMPLE LETTER to Extension Volunteers

This letter can be customized to speak to either 4-H or Master Gardener volunteers. Select the appropriate wording based on the volunteer group you are addressing.

Dear (4-H) (Master Gardener) volunteer,

Like most tax-supported institutions, Iowa State University Extension has had to weather its share of budgetary challenges in recent years. Maintaining funding for popular programs and services is a task that is crucial to Extension's mission of improving the quality of life for Iowans.

ISU Extension is the parent organization for (4-H) (Master Gardener) in Iowa. Your help is needed to tell legislators how participants and the public in general benefit from this wonderful program.

You can provide a powerful testimonial. It needn't be long or complicated. Simply give a brief statement of how (4-H) (Master Gardener) has helped you, your family, or your community, and send it to one, or both, of your legislative representatives. Attached is a contact list for state lawmakers serving (XXX) County. If you have close ties with a legislator or can meet with one personally, your message will be even more effective.

The 2008 session of the 82nd Iowa General Assembly convened Jan. 14, and budget considerations are already under way. It is important to make your contacts as soon as possible.

As you compose your message, you may want to consider the paragraph below as a starting point and add your own personal experience to it.

[select one paragraph for the appropriate group]

- **Iowa 4-H** reaches nearly 118,000 youth statewide—24,200 through local club enrollment, nearly 72,000 in school enrichment programs, and the balance through camping and special interest groups. Another 10,500 adults and 1,300 youth assist as volunteers. 4-H provides mentored, hands-on learning opportunities in leadership, citizenship, communication, and countless specialized project fields. 4-H develops the life skills, confidence and self esteem necessary for youth to grow into successful, caring adults. Through ISU Extension, Iowa 4-H has built upon a century of experience in meeting the needs of youth, their families, and communities. Here in (XXX) County last year, 4-H programs helped nearly (XXX) kids working hard to make their best better.
- Since 1979 **Master Gardener** has trained more than 9,000 Iowans in virtually every county of the state. The mission of the Master Gardener program is to provide current, research-based, home horticulture information and education to the citizens of Iowa utilizing the staff and services of Iowa State University Extension. In addition, Master Gardeners statewide have donated more than a quarter million hours of volunteer service work to their communities since 2003.

Thanks in advance for your help in preserving this valuable program!

Sincerely,

[name]

(XXX) County (4-H, Master Gardener) Volunteer

(street address)

(city), IA (zip)

Phone: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

[Complete the following information and provide to volunteers]

(XXX) County Legislative Contacts:

The Honorable Chet Culver

State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Salutation: Dear Governor Culver:

To send an e-mail to the Governor, go to:
<http://www.governor.iowa.gov/administration/contact/>

Phone: 515-281-5211 (Voice) 515 281-6611 (FAX)

Sen. (insert name), (XXth Senate District)

State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Salutation: Dear Senator (insert name):

E-mail: (first name).(last name)@legis.state.ia.us
Senate switchboard phone: 515-281-3371

A complete listing of all state senators, their addresses, occupation, committee assignments and legislation sponsored can be found at: <http://www3.legis.state.ia.us/ga/legislators.do?>

Representative (insert name), (XXth House District)

State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Salutation: Dear Representative (insert name):

E-Mail: (first name).(last name)@legis.state.ia.us
House switchboard phone: 515-281-3221

A complete listing of all state representatives, their addresses, occupation, committee assignments and legislation sponsored can be found at: <http://www3.legis.state.ia.us/ga/legislators.do?>