Message from the District Coordinator

MSU Extension (MSUE) in Ottawa County continues to provide local educational programming and impacts to meet Ottawa County and Michigan’s needs. Extension staff members work diligently to maintain programming and reach as many residents as possible each year. Educators and all staff have worked hard to innovate with creative and effective ways of providing programming at reduced costs.

This report provides highlights of MSU Extension’s work in Ottawa County during 2012 within the structure of our four programmatic Institutes:

- Agriculture and Agribusiness Institute
- Children and Youth Institute
- Greening Michigan Institute
- Health and Nutrition Institute

MSU Extension has changed in many ways since our beginnings in the early 1900’s. But we have not changed our focus of connecting education and research on campus to the people and businesses in the communities we serve. Thank you for your continued support of this critical partnership.

Betty Blase
District 7 Coordinator
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Overview of Agriculture in Ottawa County

Agriculture, both food and non-food, is critical to Michigan’s economy and an increasingly important segment of the state’s budget. Agriculture is now the fastest growing sector of our economy. We must ensure it has a thriving knowledge base to become even more competitive in local, state, national, and international markets making Michigan’s economy stronger.

According to the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture, Ottawa County had 1,451 farms covering 170,539 acres. They produced a market value of crop and livestock sales over $391,093,000 resulting in a number 1 state ranking in value of crops including nursery and greenhouse, a number 3 ranking in value of livestock sold, and total sales dollar value rank of number 2 ranking in the state in overall value of agricultural sales.

MSU Extension develops and delivers programming to ensure that agricultural businesses can stay competitive and profitable in the quickly changing business environment and provide the best product possible. In addition, there is increased interest in local food production, with resulting demand for education from non-commercial audiences.
The MSU Extension FRUIT and FIRM (Farm Information Resources Management) workgroups collaborated to survey and identify needs of farm producers impacted by the freeze. They also worked with the agricultural industry to monitor and coordinate efforts to respond to this crisis situation. Response efforts continue through 2013 as the financial loss of 2012 production will impact 2012 and 2013 cash flows.

Prior to Freeze Events:
In early March, Jeff Andresen, MSU Agricultural Meteorologist, forecast unseasonably hot conditions which would cause plants to begin growth very early. A conference call between fruit, landscape, nursery and consumer horticulture educators and specialists allowed them to prepare a course of action. Articles at MSUE News alerted growers to the unusual conditions and strategies they could use to reduce injury. Articles were published on freeze tolerance of tree fruit, active (using sprinklers or cultivation) and passive frost control measures. Home owner articles dealt with impacts to home landscapes, turf and ornamentals. Fruit Educators had early grower meetings across the state: in West Central Michigan (Districts 5, 7, and 8) Amy Irish Brown and Phil Schwallier had Jeff Andresen speak on freeze control strategies with wind machines.

Crop Management After The Freeze:
Even without a crop, fruit trees need to be maintained in good health to assure a good crop the following year. Fruit educators developed plans for maintaining fruit trees and vines that had no crop. Amy Irish-Brown, Phil Schwallier and Bill Shane developed a plan for apples and Nikki Rothwell and Erin Lizotte developed one for cherries.

To dispel the impression that Michigan’s fruit crop was completely wiped out, educators promoted small fruit, less severely impacted by the freezes. They visited growers to help assess damage, discuss options and assess emotional and educational needs. Educators worked with crop insurance loss adjustors and the USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) to expedite quick crop insurance payments. Farm Management Educators developed programs to help economically stressed growers. The impact of these freezes will linger for several years and MSUE agriculture educators are working to help producers maintain their livelihoods and Michigan’s economy.
Weather in 2012—Freeze and Drought

Drought of 2012 follows record-setting freeze
As of August 8, three-month precipitation deficits across Michigan ranged from 1 to 3 inches from central sections of Lower Michigan to more than 6 inches in southwestern Lower Michigan. Plant available soil moisture levels in the top 5 feet of the soil profile of this area were estimated by NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center from 1 to 5 inches below normal for that time of year. Assessment by the U.S. Drought Monitor placed just over 80 percent of the state in abnormally dry or some stage of drought conditions. Worst overall impacts in the state resulting from the drought were across the lower tier of counties of the Lower Peninsula. (Adapted from an article posted on August 9, 2012 by Jeff Andresen, and Aaron Pollyea, Michigan State University Extension, Department of Geography)

In response to increasingly dry conditions throughout Michigan, MSU Extension agriculture educators created the Drought Resources webpage: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/drought_resources
This valuable resource is available to growers and the public with updated information on a variety of state crops and issues, including:

Weather
Field Crops
Forage/pastures
Christmas Trees and Nurseries
Fruit Crops
Vegetables
Weed Management
Insects Health
Home and Yard
Turf
Apples

Although 2012 was a disastrous year for the apple crop in Michigan, we are planning for a good crop in 2013. Apple maturity testing and reporting to growers will be vital. This testing is done by MSU Extension staff collecting samples from local farms and testing them for maturity pressure, starch, and brix (a guide for target sugar levels in fruit). To give an example of information disseminated to growers to help in their harvest decisions, here is a partial table from one of the weekly 2011 reports:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Avg. Ethylene (ppm)</th>
<th>% Fruits with Ethylene over 0.2 ppm</th>
<th>Color % (range)</th>
<th>Firmness lbs pressure (range)</th>
<th>Starch (range)</th>
<th>Brix (range)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Imperial Gala</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>57% (40-80%)</td>
<td>15.4 (12.2-18)</td>
<td>1.7 (1-2)</td>
<td>11.4 (11-12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MSU’s Crop Advisory Team (CAT) alerts have been the Michigan source for pest and crop news for over 25 years. The information is written by MSU faculty and Extension educators and is now included with all of our news at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu

Pests that are a continued threat to local fruit crops include the Marmorated Stink Bug and the Spotted Wing Drosophila, shown below. Educators communicate with growers about critical insect and production issues throughout the growing season with electronic CAT alerts, Code-A-Phone telephone updates, email, and field visits.

MSU Extension staff Adam Kantrovich, Carlos Garcia-Salazar, Mark Longstroth, and others provide educational programs on farm business management, agricultural labor updates, restricted-use pesticide educational sessions, and sprayer demonstrations. They also provide educational programs at the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo held annually in December in Grand Rapids. Over 4,000 industry people from 42 states and 6 Canadian provinces attended the 2012 Expo.

http://apples.msu.edu/index.htm

Marmorated Stink Bug  Spotted Wing Drosophila
Education on New Invasive Pests

According to the 2011 Michigan Fruit Acreage Inventory (USDA-NASS) Ottawa County is the second largest blueberry producer in the state of Michigan with 101 farms growing 5,950 acres of blueberries. This acreage represents 28.5% of the total Michigan blueberry growing surface, and is Ottawa County’s main fruit crop.

In addition to blueberries, Ottawa County is home to a small but increasing number of raspberry and strawberry growers. As of September 2012, there are approximately 15 berry farms that produce strawberries and raspberries for local consumption. Because of the “Buy Local” promotion, more people are buying fresh berries at local farms, increasing the importance of U-pick operations for the local economy.

Michigan State University Extension is serving this continually growing small fruit industry with technical assistance, training and educational programs to maintain the industry as an important source of income and employment in Ottawa County. There are multiple challenges that small fruit growers need to overcome every year in order to maintain their competitiveness. These challenges include new invasive insect pests and restrictions imposed by environmental concerns.

In 2012, blueberry, raspberry and strawberry growers were seriously affected economically by the presence of a new invasive insect pest, the Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). This insect was first found attacking small fruits and cherries in California (2008). In 2010 it was found in Michigan attacking all berry crops. In addition to fruit loss, the cost of combating this pest—an extra $100-200 dollars per acre in pest control—substantially impacted growers economically.

The Michigan State University Extension Small Fruit Program offered Ottawa County growers a series of meetings and workshops to help them manage these challenges. From April 25 to November 2012, Michigan State University Extension offered four classroom and hands-on workshops, designed to teach growers to monitor, identify and manage this invasive pest. Growers received materials with training notes for further review.

The target audience for these workshops was commercial growers including underserved and minority growers. During the hands-on training, growers had the opportunity to observe and manipulate insect specimens using dissection microscopes and hand lenses (see photos).

http://blueberries.msu.edu/
West Michigan PRRS ARC Project

Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) is a swine disease affecting productivity and profitability of the pork industry. In 2005, PRRS cost the U. S. pork industry an estimated $560 million. New studies from Iowa State University give a higher price tag of $664 million per year in production loss, a per-sow cost of $114.71. Additionally, veterinary and biosecurity expenses incurred in PRRS in 2010 outbreaks added up nationally to $477.79 million, bringing the PRRS annual price tag for both outbreak and prevention to over $1 billion.

Economic costs, the desire to produce high health pigs, and the need for improved productivity have prompted Michigan State University Extension to coordinate a PRRS Area Regional Control (ARC) project in West Michigan to stabilize and eradicate the virus. This project is making strides in regional control and has been awarded three USDA funded grants, concentrating on increased surveillance of the disease and reporting area outbreaks.

As the program moves into control and stabilization, good participation from veterinarians, producers and allied industry is essential. The status of each site is tracked on a regular basis and compiled in a database summary. The goal is to have bi-monthly reports including non-changing status reports from every site in the area to send to participants. This allows producers to see when and where a status change takes place, giving detailed understanding of the health status of the region.

Herd veterinarians assist producers with accurately reporting the status of herds. Using a visual assessment process, they determine if status of a site has changed or if clinical signs are present. If so, veterinarians then work with producers to complete diagnostics by using either a blood or saliva test if the herd exhibits signs of an outbreak. This information is compiled and tracked by project leadership. Funding is available to assist with expenses incurred with diagnostic testing.

With this information, producers and veterinarians can make production decisions such as whether they need to vaccinate, sell early or take no action. Collective sharing of information strengthens producers’ ability to fight the spread of the virus. It also allows tracking the movement of outbreaks, generating baseline data for producers and improving understanding of the virus and how it travels through the region.
Farm Business Management

Farm business management plays an integral role in the success of any farm or agricultural business. Additionally, the long-term future of Michigan farms and agribusinesses is dependent upon successful business transitions to the next generation. The goal is to keep the assets and resources of the business in agriculture on a sustainable basis.

Dr. Adam J. Kantrovich has continued to meet with local producers one-on-one or in group formats covering topics such as:

- Agricultural Tax Management
- Business Succession & Estate Planning
- Agricultural Cash Accounting
- Farm Financial Management.

These programs allow farm producers to make better management decisions on expansion, tax planning to save the farm money through good and accepted practices, and succession planning to the next generation. Producers from Ottawa County that attended the tax management programs could save on average just over $13,600 by following discussed tax management strategies.

The MSUE educational programs on farm succession and estate planning help families of these businesses utilize various tools to address intergenerational business transfers and avoid potential pitfalls including excessive estate taxes and inadequate funds for purchasing sibling shares of the estate. It has been proven that families who have a plan which utilized these tools have a higher success rate and better family harmony when transferring the business to the next generation.
Ag Literacy Education for the Public

Much of today’s population has become far removed from the farm. Many people, even in an important agricultural county like Ottawa, do not know or understand the importance that the agricultural industry plays within the local economy. It is important to provide educational opportunities to the general public so that they learn how their food gets from farm to plate. Any education that can be provided to the general public about commercial agricultural production practices and its local economic importance will help develop a more agriculturally literate society, allowing them to make informed decisions related to laws and regulations that effect the agricultural industry.

Michigan State University Extension, in collaboration with the Tri-Cities Museum, and Ottawa County Farm Bureau, developed an educational event held in September of 2012. This event brought in local agricultural producers, processors, and end users (such as local restaurants, small food manufactures, and others) to showcase what local agriculture provides. Ottawa County is arguably one of the most agriculturally diverse counties within the state of Michigan. Michigan’s agricultural diversity is second only to California. The Ottawa County Soil Conservation District, MSU Extension and others also staffed the event, providing information and educational material to those in attendance.

Just under 600 people attended this event that was held at the Tri-Cities Museum in Grand Haven. The response was overwhelmingly positive from the local community. Plans are underway to make this an annual event that may grow in the coming years.
Online Training on Anaerobic Digestion

eXtension (pronounced E-Extension) is an internet-based collaborative environment where Land Grant University staff exchange objective, research-based knowledge to solve real challenges in real time. Unlike any other search engine or information-based website, it’s a space where university content providers can gather and produce new educational and informational resources on wide-ranging topics. It is a resource that’s available to students, researchers, clinicians, professors, and the general public at any time from any Internet connection.

In 2012, Michigan State University Extension educator Charles Gould, along with colleagues from other universities across the North Central Region, began developing three research-based online modular courses on bioenergy generation that were posted on an eXtension site titled the Bioenergy Training Center. Gould’s role included providing leadership for the development and completion of the anaerobic digestion modules, which include a bioenergy and renewable energy community assessment toolkit.

The Bioenergy Training Center provides educational training resources for Extension educators focused not only on the technical feasibility of bioenergy generation, but also on approaches and processes that assist communities in understanding the comprehensive implications of bio-based alternative energy. The intended outcome of the courses is to bring viable bioenergy projects into communities by providing Extension educators with tools and knowledge they can use to make this happen.

Gould was one of the authors of the third module in this online course, focused on anaerobic digestion. The units of this module include:

- Introduction to anaerobic digestion
- Factors that affect manure digestion
- Types of anaerobic digesters
- Anaerobic digester start-up, operation and control
- Economics of on-farm anaerobic digesters
- Cooperative development of digesters
- State and federal regulations

The curriculum went live in February, 2013, so feedback from online participants is not yet available. However, based on the reviews of individuals who used the bioenergy and renewable energy community assessment toolkit in 2012, it does a very good job of helping developers and communities objectively assess renewable energy projects.
Area Greenhouses Cooperate with MSU on Energy Audits

In 2012 Michigan State University and MSU Extension provided a training program to train 12 individuals as energy auditors for greenhouses in Michigan. The goal of the program is to bring about a reduction of energy usage in greenhouses while still maintaining or improving overall productivity, safety and operator comfort.

The training program utilized three days of classroom education, hands on group audit projects, a group report and an individual farm energy audit report by the adult learners. Upon successful completion of all phases of the training, the auditors received certification from MSU.

In order to complete the on-site greenhouse audits, Senior Extension Greenhouse and Nursery Educator Thomas A. Dudek identified four cooperating greenhouses in Michigan, two in this area that would serve as “audit sites” for the group projects. A team of 3-4 auditor trainees visited a site, gathered data on the energy usage, heating, cooling systems, and reviewed all the structures. A detailed report with recommendations was developed, reviewed by MSU and MSUE staff and then presented to the greenhouse grower as a benefit for their part of serving as a training site.

The detailed report provides the individual greenhouse with specific recommendation to conserve energy without sacrificing plant growth or quality. Dollar and cents savings for energy efficiency changes as well as payback periods are provided in the report.

A summary of the two local greenhouses involved in the 2012 Energy Auditor training project showed a savings of 162,817 kilowatt hours of electricity and 14,672 MM BTU’s of natural gas for a dollar savings of $140,134.00 if all the recommendations were implemented.
Consumer Horticulture

Reduced budgets and increased programmatic responsibilities challenge MSU Extension staff to maximize time and resources while meeting growing demands. The MSUE Consumer Horticulture Team faced the daunting task of delivering science-based, environmentally sound information to 70% of Michigan adults who engage in yard and garden activities, almost 5 million people. Using technology and a collaborative spirit, they met the challenge and also won an award for their efforts.

The team received the eXtension Working Differently in Extension Award Oct. 2 at the National eXtension Conference in Oklahoma City. Rebecca Finneran, MSUE Horticulture Educator from Kent County, was a member of the winning team.

In 2010, the team launched the “Gardening in Michigan” website as a platform to offer online classes and resources. The website now serves thousands of people. In early 2011, the team decided to add an Ask an Expert (AaE) widget to the website's front page. Before they could do this, they needed experts to answer the questions, so they worked to develop an AaE training process for advanced Master Gardeners. Fifteen Master Gardener volunteers were recruited and trained online, and the widget was launched in June 2011. Through the widget, the team answered more than 700 questions in 13 months.

The team did not stop there. Thinking a statewide hotline to answer gardeners’ questions a good idea, they used technology to link existing county hotlines together under one toll free number (1-888-678-3464) to provide the service to all counties. Training volunteers for the hotline resulted in uniformity and quality control. Within one year, calls increased by one thousand; the hotline has served clients from 80 percent of Michigan’s 83 counties.

The team also created a soil test kit provided with a postage-paid return mailer consumers can purchase online from the MSU Extension Bookstore. The consumer mails the soil sample in to the MSU Soil and Plant Nutrient Lab. Once the folks at the lab analyze the sample, the consumer receives an email with results and access to an interactive website, providing customized fertilizer calculations, instructions on correct application, links to AaE and additional resources on the Gardening in Michigan website.

Finally, the team redesigned the Master Gardener training program to create a statewide, easy-to-replicate program integrating a hybrid in-person and electronic delivery method. These efforts will lead to greater focus on the educational products, which translate to more trained Master Gardeners and increased involvement of those volunteers in local community development projects.
4-H is a community of young people across America learning leadership, citizenship, career exploration and the importance of academic success. Young people make new friends, develop new skills, become leaders and help shape their communities. About 41,000 Michigan youth are enrolled members of 4-H clubs. Another 135,000 Michigan youth get involved in 4-H through educational opportunities at school, in after school programs, or at neighborhood centers. They live in cities, suburbs, small towns and rural communities.

4-H gives youth a chance to pursue their own interests - from photography to computers, building rockets to raising sheep. They go places - to camp, to state and national conferences, even other countries on 4-H exchange programs. They learn to be leaders and active citizens.

In 4-H clubs, youth serve as officers and learn to conduct meetings, handle club funds, and facilitate group decision-making. They give back to their communities. 4-H members get involved in volunteer projects to protect the environment, mentor younger children and help people who are less fortunate.

In Ottawa County, adult and youth leaders attend 4-H workshops to learn and then teach valuable skills to youth in science, technology, engineering and math. The Ottawa 4-H Council provided over $2000 in scholarships to help offset cost of workshops for attendees.

Highlights of Ottawa County 4-H in 2012:

- At the annual 4-H Awards Banquet, more than 200 people attended to see youth recognized for leadership skills and dedication to 4-H.
- 21 Ottawa County 4-H youth and 3 adult chaperones participated in MSU Exploration Days, a pre-college prep program.
- Many of our clubs organize and plan community service projects including adopt-a-highway and adopt-a-soldier programs.
- 4-H members attended educational programs such as rabbit showmanship and Pork Quality Assurance training, as well as 4-H Science Blast activities at the Maranda Park Parties & National Night Out events.
- Five different Ottawa County 4-H members were recipients of college scholarships through the local and state 4-H program totaling over $13,000.
4-H Mentoring

MSU Extension hosts a variety of 4-H mentoring components that work together to create positive youth development opportunities. Journey 4-H Youth Mentoring seeks to reduce the frequency and severity of repeat offenses committed by youth ages 8-17 in the community. It is a collaborative effort between Michigan State University Extension and the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court Family Division/Juvenile Services. Youth referrals for one-on-one relationships included 83% court-involved youth and 17% youth at risk for future court involvement.

In 2012, Journey 4-H Youth Mentoring engaged:
- 24 youth in one-on-one mentoring relationships
- 13 Juvenile Justice Institute students in its group mentoring program
- 29 volunteer mentors and
- 6 detention visitors.

Mentors and youth are able to participate in a variety of opportunities including outdoor activities, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum, and other projects that facilitate relationship building and give structure to their time together. In 2012, the program planned over 36 hours of skill-building activities for mentoring matches including hiking, kayaking, hayrides, rock climbing, and other events.

In May 2012, former University of Michigan football coach and Mentor Michigan spokesperson Lloyd Carr came to promote Journey 4-H Youth Mentoring at Hemlock Crossing Nature Center in West Olive. Dozens of people including former players, local school staff, and other community leaders were in attendance to hear Coach’s speech on the difference mentoring can make in the life of a young person. The event was also featured on three local news stations, local sports talk radio, and received print media coverage.

The Ottawa County Mentoring Collaborative (OCMC) is another initiative of MSU Extension that brings together 14 mentoring organizations across the county to support mentors and mentored youth. Together, participating agencies recruit mentors, promote mentoring and enrichment opportunities, and host activities for matches. By housing and giving leadership to the Mentoring Collaborative, MSU Extension continues its investment in partnerships and community across the county.
The focus of work in the Greening Michigan Institute is on leveraging natural and human assets for prosperity. This institute is comprised of four work groups:

- Community Food Systems
- Natural Resources
- Government and Public Policy
- Sustaining Community Prosperity

The Sustaining Community Prosperity statewide team is very diverse and fosters development of sustainable communities that contribute to the economic, social and environmental health and well-being of people. Programs include: Sea Grant, Citizen Planner, New County Commissioner Training, Conflict Management, Natural Shoreline Management, and Financial Management and Housing. This team was recently selected to host the 2014 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals conference, which will be held Grand Rapids, MI.

Kendra Wills, MSU Extension Educator based in Kent County serves as a co-leader of the statewide Community Food Systems work group, and as a member of the Leadership and Community Engagement team. In 2011/12, this team partnered with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to design and implement a collaborative process to redesign the state’s brownfield redevelopment program. The goal of this process was to work toward faster turnaround times for businesses and a streamlined regulatory approach for all parties. This work is being implemented by the MDEQ and through legislative changes. In addition, this team served as facilitators to develop a statewide Tourism Master Plan which will guide the state’s tourism efforts for the next five years.
Lake Michigan Salmon Stocking Education and Decision Support

Last year, fisheries managers and scientists from around Lake Michigan worked with MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant to educate anglers regarding the potential for collapse of the lake’s salmon fishery and the forage base that supports it. Researchers at MSU’s Quantitative Fisheries Center projected that continuing with current salmon stocking policy had a one in five chance of crashing this economically important fishery. Educational efforts were geared toward helping anglers understand that stocking cuts would actually lead to a better chance of sustaining quality fishing in the future.

Dr. Dan O’Keefe, District Sea Grant Educator, coordinated with state and tribal fisheries managers in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana to develop workshops, presentations, and an online survey to gauge angler reactions to proposed reductions in salmon stocking. Of 580 respondents from around the basin, only a single angler categorically objected to reducing Chinook salmon. However, the survey revealed that Wisconsin and Michigan anglers differed in their opinions regarding the magnitude of cuts and the species that should be included in stocking cuts. This was reflected in the ultimate decisions made by the Lake Michigan Committee and member agencies. In Michigan, Chinook salmon stocking will be reduced by 67% in 2013 while Wisconsin will reduce Chinook salmon stocking by 39% and include other species in future reductions.

This also has a biological basis, since Chinook salmon reproduce naturally in many northern Michigan streams; other areas of the lake see little natural reproduction. In Ottawa County, some anglers are concerned that stocking cuts will hurt local ports more than northern Michigan ports. Available data suggests that, for most of the year, wild and stocked salmon are mixed in Lake Michigan such that cuts will affect all ports equally.

However, mature salmon do return to their stocking site in late summer and early fall and these ‘terminal fisheries’ might be affected by stocking cuts. Michigan Sea Grant, MSU Extension, and Michigan DNR are developing a new program to engage anglers in documenting the prevalence of stocked fish in their catch through the fishing season to better understand the role of natural reproduction and the impact of stocking cuts. This volunteer data program will be piloted in Grand Haven and Holland during 2013.
MSU Helping Entrepreneurs

The MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assists county residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio-economy. Select MSUE educators around the state have special training as innovation counselors to deliver these services. Business counseling is conducted on a one-on-one basis and may take place at the MSUE office or the client’s home or business location.

The assistance provided is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain or seeking funding options. The educator also assists clients in accessing specialized services they may need that are offered through Michigan State University like feasibility studies, nutritional labeling and packaging assistance.

Impact Data for Ottawa County:
From 2004 to 2012 in Ottawa County, 358 counseling sessions took place to assist local entrepreneurs in starting new businesses and expanding existing businesses. Four businesses were launched that resulted in 8 jobs created and 2 jobs retained. New capital investment in these businesses totaled $590,000. The businesses reported $158,700 in new or increased sales. The partnership between MSUE and the MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio is providing support for entrepreneurs in supporting economic development across the state.

For information on food, ag, bio, and natural resources business development, please contact Joanne Davidhizar at: davidhiz@anr.msu.edu.
Meijer and MSU Product Center Promote Small Businesses with Made in Michigan Initiative

Meijer and the Michigan State University Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources teamed up to strengthen the state’s economy by supporting Michigan small businesses through a Made in Michigan initiative, launched in January, 2012.

In a Meijer News Release dated 1-23-12, Meijer Co-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Hank Meijer stated that: “Meijer is always pleased to support Michigan businesses. Also, there is tremendous interest from our customers to buy local and to support local businesses. That is why we continuously increase the amount of products we purchase from local suppliers and companies.”

The Made in Michigan initiative launched the week of January 29, 2012 when 49 new grocery items – including marinara sauce, blueberry butter, gluten free baking mixes and gourmet seasoning – filled designated areas within 33 Meijer stores from Grand Rapids to Metro Detroit, and Gaylord to Ann Arbor. These new items joined dozens of other Michigan products available throughout the store, including locally-grown produce. In March, 2013, Meijer announced that the product list has expanded to 55 items, now offered in all of Meijer’s 102 stores in Michigan.

The initiative is expected to be an ongoing feature within the supercenter chain retailer, and is expected to have a $400,000 economic impact statewide, said Matt Birbeck, High Impact Venture Action Team project manager for the MSU Product Center.

“We couldn’t be more excited about this program,” Birbeck said. “Working with Meijer to implement a dedicated Michigan section for its customers is a win-win situation for everybody. MSU Product Center clients have a unique opportunity to be seen on a larger scale and increasing the selection of fantastic Michigan products at Meijer. Customers can truly buy local in their neighborhood Meijer stores.”
Partnerships for Healthier Lives

Improving health and nutrition for Michigan residents is the goal of MSU Extension staff in the Health and Nutrition Institute. To this end, they have organized themselves into four statewide work teams:

- Nutrition and physical activity
- Social and emotional health
- Food safety
- Disease prevention and management

Nutrition and Physical Activity for Adults:
During 2012 in Ottawa County, nutrition education focused on building relationships with agencies that served low-income participants who could benefit from improved nutrition and food security. This included several addiction treatment centers, Harbor House and the Chester A. Ray Center, both in Holland. We also provided nutrition education for participants with developmental disabilities at Kandu Inc. in Grand Haven, a non-profit organization that provides opportunities for people with barriers to employment. All of these participants could benefit from the skills they learned in our classes to maximize their nutritional health and food dollars.

In 2013 we plan to offer a new curriculum for adults and teens in Ottawa County. Cooking Matters has lessons specifically oriented to day care providers, teens and adults and uses a guest chef to help demonstrate concepts learned in the kitchen.

Nutrition and Physical Activity for Youth:
In 2012, series-based nutrition education was provided to 84 children through programming at Jefferson Elementary and Heights of Hope, both in Holland. Our funder, the USDA’s SNAP-ed program, requires that we work with schools that serve free and reduced lunches to at least 50% of the student body. We are an active member of the Great Start Collaborative, and have provided a 2-day summer workshop for teachers and school staff on incorporating nutrition and physical fitness into the classroom day.
Social and Emotional Health Work Team—Nurturing Parenting:
Research shows that babies who receive affection and nurture have the best opportunity for healthy development. Community Based Nurturing Parenting is for parents, grandparents, childcare providers and others who care for children. It is designed to help parents and caregivers of children ages 0-19 strengthen and build skills that promote positive family relationships.

MSUE educator Holly Tiret has worked in partnership with Pathways MI to provide parenting education in Ottawa County. Participants include parents involved in the family court system. Classes have been taught at the Pathways Holland location. Parents are offered a series of 10 lessons from the evidence-based curriculum Nurturing Parenting by Stephen Bavolek, with topics such as:

- non-violent parenting philosophy
- infant/toddler development
- brain development in children and teens
- communication
- understanding feelings
- building self-worth
- forming family rules
- alternatives to spanking
- dealing with stress and anger

These lessons include hands on activities, worksheets, and group discussion. This allows for maximum adult participation and involvement. It also gives parents a chance to talk with others who are going through similar issues. Evaluation results from the Protective Factors Survey which is given on the first and then the last class, have consistently shown an increase in constructs of family functioning, resiliency, nurturing and attachment.

"Of all the parenting classes I have taken, this is the one I have gotten the most out of. This is the only class that taught me about having empathy for my child and seeing things from their side."
Nurturing Parenting Participant

"I really liked being able to have the discussions and to share thoughts with other parents who are going through what I am going through."
Nurturing Parenting Participant

"I learned that it is important for me to take care of myself, so I can take care of my children better."
Nurturing Parenting Participant
# Staff Directory

## Administration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Betty Blase</th>
<th>District Coordinator, Phone 616-304-7191</th>
<th><a href="mailto:blase@anr.msu.edu">blase@anr.msu.edu</a></th>
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## Educators:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Thomas A. Dudek</th>
<th>Horticulture &amp; Marketing</th>
<th><a href="mailto:dudek@anr.msu.edu">dudek@anr.msu.edu</a></th>
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<tr>
<td>Carlos Garcia Salazar</td>
<td>Small Fruit</td>
<td><a href="mailto:garcias4@anr.msu.edu">garcias4@anr.msu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Charles Gould</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Program Instructors:

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## On-Call Associates:

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
</table>

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<tbody>
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</tbody>
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## More Extension Educators Serving Ottawa County

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</tbody>
</table>
ENROLLED MICHIGAN STUDENTS
708

ENROLLED MEDICAL STUDENTS, INTERNS, AND RESIDENTS
44

ALUMNI RESIDING IN COUNTY
4,971

SPENDING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES
$958,212.30

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT*
$54,123,825.00

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSED
$10,532,687

4-H YOUTH AND ADULT PARTICIPANTS
6,247

PROPERTY OWNED BY MSU (ACRES)
6

LOCAL BUSINESSES CONTRACTED WITHIN COUNTY
203

212 PRODUCT CENTER COUNSELING SESSIONS
74

*Data is from an independent study by the Anderson Economic Group

For additional information visit:
http://mispartanimpact.msu.edu/
http://msu.edu

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