Kalkaska County

2012-2013 Annual Report

Message From the District Coordinator

MSU Extension (MSUE) in Kalkaska County continues to provide local educational programming and impacts to meet Kalkaska 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 creative and effective ways of providing programming at reduced costs.

This report provides highlights of MSU Extension’s work in Kalkaska 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.

Sincerely,
Patrick I Cudney, District 3 Coordinator

2012 Participation Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-H Children &amp; Youth programs</td>
<td>284</td>
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<td>4-H Members (Traditional Club Enrollment)</td>
<td>108</td>
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<td>4-H Adult Volunteers</td>
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<td>Short Term/Special Interest Participants</td>
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<td>4-H Clubs</td>
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<td>Agriculture &amp; Agribusiness</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greening Michigan programs</td>
<td>156</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Nutrition programs</td>
<td>1,410</td>
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<td>1,883</td>
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</table>

Mission

Michigan State University helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

Staff housed in Kalkaska County

Dee Miller
Children & Youth Educator

Bethany Prykucki
Leadership and Community Engagement Educator

Carrie Crigier
4-H Program Coordinator

Lori Eccles
Health & Nutrition Instructor

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The Kalkaska County 4-H program currently has an enrollment of 108 youth in 11 clubs. These clubs are supported by 26 adult volunteers. Livestock, horse, Archery, crafts, sewing, and dog obedience/training are a few of the project areas that the clubs offer. The goal—no matter what the project—is for youth to develop skills and abilities that will last a lifetime.

» **TechXcite** is currently being piloted in Kalkaska County through a partnership with SEEDS in both the Kalkaska and Forest Area Middle Schools. TechXcite is an after-school engineering curriculum that is being developed at Duke University’s Pratt School of Engineering. This curriculum is being developed as part of a National Science Foundation sponsored program and will be utilized in 4-H supported after-school programs across the country. The TechXcite curriculum offers a rich and vibrant exploration of engineering, mathematics, science and technology. We currently have four kits being used, Bionic Arm, Rain Water Harvesting, Solar Car, and Need for Speed.

» **4-H National Youth Science Day Experiment, NYSD** — 75 fourth and fifth graders at the Cherry Street Elementary School in Kalkaska and 24 fourth and fifth graders at Rapid City Elementary completed the 4-H National Youth Science Day Experiment. The experiment was to assemble an Eco-Bot, through the Eco-Bot experiment youth were introduced to robotic engineering concepts as they program a robot to clean up a simulated environmental spill and then youth tested the interaction between the Eco-Bots design features and various surface control configurations to determine the most effective clean-up solution for the simulated spill. The second session was focused on Pollutants and Groundwater presented by MAEAP Technician from the Missaukee Conservation District. This event was a result of a NYSD Grant received in Kalkaska County.

» **Jump Into Foods and Fitness (JIFF)** was presented by the 4-H Program Coordinator and Health & Nutrition Instructor to all youth in the 3-5th grades in Rapid City Elementary. JIFF is a hands-on, research-based curriculum that features “Kangaroo Jumps” or sessions that help kids learn the importance of nutrition, increased physical activity and food safety.

» **Science Programming** throughout the Rapid City Elementary 4-H helped classes meet several Curriculum Standards by providing hands on educational programming. Fourth and Fifth graders were able to explore Animal Adaptations. Through this program children identified how variations in physical characteristics of individual organisms give them advantage for survival and reproduction. In the Kindergarten class youth explored Animal Hibernation. Children were able to identify how the weather affects animals and traits and behaviors that animals have that help them hibernate. The Kindergarten Class also participated in a 6 week series on the 5 senses. During those six weeks children identified and participated in hands-on activities about the five senses and how these senses help them learn about their world.
» **4-H Exploration Days** at MSU provides teens with opportunity to experience a bigger world outside of their local communities. 12 youth from Kalkaska County joined more than 2,500 youth, dispersed across the Michigan State University campus to partake in a variety of hands-on, skill-related activities June 19-21 during Michigan 4-H Exploration Days. Sessions on topics ranging from sheep heart dissection to sailing to Irish bowling immediately had participants excited about all they would be doing during the three-day precollege program.

» **Kalkaska County Fair** — There are 90 youth registered this year in the Kalkaska County Fair. 79 are registered in animal showmanship events, 14 in the 4-H horse shows, 23 4-H dog Show, and 53 in the 4-H livestock auction.

» **4-H Children’s Art Exchange with China** — Throughout the month of March ten original Chinese Children’s paintings were on display in the Kalkaska Public Library. The Michigan 4-H China Project, conducted in cooperation with the People’s Republic of China, is a global education program that often uses the arts for both in-school and after-school learning experiences. A hands on program was held at the Library during their Spring Break- Teen Break event. This program focused on how the Chinese children were communicating through their own personal art pieces; and encouraged youth to create their own pieces of art.

» **4-H Members Learn to Create a Budget** — Deciding to raise a 4-H animal is exciting! It can also be bewildering as families try to calculate ahead of time what they are likely to spend. In a hands-on simulation, 4-H members had to make decisions how they wanted to allocate their limited finances in 20+ expense categories. In the process, 12 participants from Kalkaska County learned about “opportunity costs” and each experienced a slice of reality through “action cards.” Participants also discussed specific actions they could take to improve the profit margin of their 4-H animal projects.

» **Kalkaska 4-H Archery** — With four new certified Volunteers the Kalkaska 4-H Archery program was able to provide hands on training and instruction to 28 youth. Each youth will enhance development of self-concept, character and personal growth through safe, educational and acceptable involvement in shooting. The Archery Program also supports youth in developing valuable conservation and natural resources related knowledge, skills and stewardship.
The Agriculture and Agribusiness Institute is a distinctive resource helping farmers and agricultural businesses and the entire agri-food industry, learn to effectively manage production, financial and environmental systems for success from the individual farm to the state’s natural resource base to the consumer’s dinner plate - all of which comes together to ensure that food and agriculture continue to keep the economy viable.

» **Northwest Michigan Orchard & Vineyard Show** — Over 290 people attended the educational sessions at the 2013 NW Michigan Orchard & Vineyard Show, held in Acme, Grand Traverse County. Sessions covered a broad range of production, pest management and marketing issues. Forty-seven of the attendees listed grapes as their primary fruit crop, 115 declared tree fruits as their primary crop.

» **Wine Grape IPM Kick-Off** — This spring program was attended by grape growers from throughout the Grand Traverse Bay region. The main topic of this year's program was soil biology and soil health, with speakers from a private agricultural consulting firm and a commercial composting company.

» **Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station Annual Open House** — Dr. Paolo Sabbatini from the MSU Department of Horticulture joined local MSUE staff to present information on over a dozen new grape varieties being tested at the station in Leelanau County. Grape growers and winemakers from across northwest Michigan were on hand to see and taste the new varieties.

» **Great Lakes Fruit & Vegetable Expo Grape Sessions** — MSUE educators from northwest Michigan are involved in the planning and facilitation of this annual December event held in Grand Rapids. Many northwest Michigan growers attend to obtain information and make contacts that benefit their farming operations.

» **Vineyard Sprayer Workshop** — A dozen participants were informed about techniques and equipment useful for the calibration and adjustment of vineyard airblast sprayers. A device called a "patternator" was used to visualize sprayer output patterns. Local MSUE staff were assisted in this program by a state-wide pesticide application/safety educator and a representative from a private spray application technology firm.

» **American Society for Enology and Viticulture, Eastern Branch Annual Meeting** (Traverse City, July 16-18, 2012) — This was the first time this meeting had been hosted by Michigan for several decades. It was a fantastic showcase for the Grand Traverse region and all Michigan wineries. MSUE staff assisted with local arrangements and regional tours for participants.

» **Grape Research & Demonstration Projects** — Grape variety trials and growing practices research continued in 2012. Due to changes in emphasis and funding at the MSU department of Horticulture, fewer of the grape
varieties being tested at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center were processed into wine on campus. Cooperative arrangements were made with several NW Michigan commercial winemakers to produce test wines from the 2012 grape research plots. Four students in the Viticulture and Enology Science & Teaching Alliance (VESTA) received many hours of hands-on experience in the experimental vineyard.

**Saskatoon Grower Support** — During 2012 MSUE educators assisted in the development of the Saskatoon Berry Institute of North America, a new organization started by growers and marketers of saskatoons from northern Michigan. Pesticide recommendations for Michigan production of this crop were prepared and provided to growers for the first time in early 2013.

**Climate Variability Meetings** — Increasing world population is placing more pressure on farmers to increase food production locally as well as around the globe. However, recent research has shown localized changes in climatic conditions over the last three decades is making food production less reliable than in the past. Notable changes in the climate include warmer temperatures, more frequent severe weather events, more precipitation, and an earlier onset of spring. These changes in climate have resulted in overwinter pest survival and also have the potential to increase pest generations per season. Also due to climate change is increased erosion due to extreme precipitation events, longer and more variable growing seasons, and periods of excessive wetness and drought. All of these changes pose a threat to producing a crop year-in and year-out. Michigan farmers are faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of our growing population while maintaining the sustainability of livestock and cropping systems.

To address some of these important issues, a Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) team hosted four meetings around the state targeting four unique segments of Michigan’s agriculture: fruit, crops and livestock, state and federal governmental agency staff, and the agri-business community. Each of the meetings were a full day event that included a brief morning overview of the most current research about climate variability and production practices that promote sustainable production of food and fuel around the United States. During the afternoon, a listening session was hosted where participants openly discussed climate-related issues, impacts on Michigan agriculture as a whole, and recent weather events on local farms. Questions were designed to establish what the needs of each of these segments are so that we can prioritize how MSUE can assist growers and producers. The MSUE team consisted of both field staff and campus specialists that work in disciplines associated with the four above named groups.

Research from communication experts highlights the importance of dialogue with stakeholder groups when addressing complex topics like sustainability and climate variability. Our interdisciplinary team decided that the optimal strategy for discussing these difficult issues and their impacts on Michigan
Agriculture is to ask farmers about their current and future challenges in producing sustainable and economical food and fuel. Once the team gains a better understanding of the key challenges impacting Michigan producers, we can tailor Extension programs, research, and outreach programs to meet the immediate and future demands of the agricultural community.

These four sessions will begin an open and honest discussion on how to meet production objectives in Michigan with variability in climatic conditions. By determining needs and establishing research and outreach programming priorities, MSUE can assist agricultural producers in adapting production operations and minimize on-farm risk as weather-related challenges continue.

Following a difficult 2012 year for most of Michigan agriculture, we hope that this season will bring a bountiful crop for all of the state’s growers. However, if model predictions are correct and we continue to see variability in our climate and weather patterns, we hope these meetings will help the Michigan industry and MSU work together to keep farming alive and well in Michigan.

» Understanding and Investigating Horse Cruelty — Michigan State University Extension collaborated with the Michigan Humane Society, Director of Statewide Initiatives, Linda Reider to deliver a Michigan Partnership for Animal Welfare - Understanding and Investigating Horse Cruelty Workshop held at Cherryland Humane Society in Traverse City on February 27, 2013.

Due to drought conditions in some regions of Michigan in 2012, hay availability for horse owners became limited. Limited hay availability caused hay prices to rise dramatically. Therefore, in the fall of 2012, the Status of Michigan Horses Interagency Working Group was formed. Agencies represented in the Interagency Working Group include Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Horse Council, Farm Service Agency and the Michigan Humane Society. The goal of the Interagency Working Group was to evaluate what potential issues were occurring within the Michigan Equine Industry. Based on the consensus of the working group, contacts with horse owners searching for feed resources, reports of thin horses and horse owners searching for alternatives for horses they no longer preferred or could afford to take care of were identified as issues. In turn, realizing that law enforcement agencies would be on the front lines when potentially dealing with some of these issues, a workshop entitled Understanding and Investigating Horse Cruelty was developed. Educational topics of the workshop included: 1) Best Practices for Evaluating Basic Equine Health and Body Condition presented by Karen Waite, MSU Equine Extension Specialist, 2) Handling – Making it Safe for You and the Horse presented Tom Guthrie, Statewide MSU Extension Educator, Equine 3) Working with Your Local Prosecutor; Horses as Evidence and Handling the Media presented by Debby MacDonald, Chief Investigator and Detroit Shelter Director for Michigan Humane Society and
Terry MacKillop, current and past president and legislative liaison for the Michigan Association of Animal Control Officers (MAACO), director of Roscommon County Animal Control and Shelter. Educational presentations were followed by a roundtable discussion with participants entitled: Putting it all together for best outcomes for horses and cases to wrap up the workshop.

A total of 33 participants consisting of animal control officers, sheriff deputies, prosecuting attorney and Humane Society employees representing 20 Michigan counties attended the workshop. Horse experience level of participants ranged from experienced and owning horses of their own to no experience.

**Good Food - Safe Food: Reducing the Potential for Antibiotic Residues in Milk or Meat** — From December 2012 through February 2013, the MSU Dairy Team conducted 13 half-day meetings on reducing antibiotic residues in milk and meat. This topic was suggested by the Extension Dairy Advisory Team and supported by them as timely and important. Each Dairy Educator played important roles in promotion, organization, finances and instruction. The meetings were intended to correspond with the planned January 2013 release of an FDA report on a study of residues in milk. The agenda explored the issues of residues in both milk and meat and practical preventative aspects including valid veterinary client patient relationship (VCPR), development of protocols and communication on farm with all involved. The agenda was planned to involve a local veterinarian on the program at each site. A bound conference proceedings was produced and provided to each participant. Meetings were supported by industry. One veterinary health company had a representative at eight meetings. MSU Extension took a leadership role in putting on these meetings that would not directly impact producer profitability nor production and are not new regulations. Yet they are important to the industry because of the need for consumer confidence in the safety of food.

The total attendance at these meetings was 187. These meetings were particularly well supported by the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) Animal Industry Division which sent their field and administrative staff to these meetings. Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA) likewise sent their field staff, laboratory and key staff, and two board members to the meetings. An estimated 90 producers attended. The Good Food - Safe Food program was offered as a pre-conference session at the Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference. This is the first time that a pre-conference session has been offered at GLRDC. The session was included in the GLRDC flier at no charge and admission was free. The program was well attended by a total of 62 out of 400 GLRDC attendees.

The meetings spurred discourse on the topic by professionals working with a number of dairy producers. Ten private practice veterinarians served as speakers on the program. Four additional private practice veterinarians attended. It is estimated that these veterinarians work with approximately 250 dairy producers.

"Thanks also for putting this program together with excellent presenters. I heard a lot of positive comments from our staff as well as many of the attendees (no negative comments)."

- Tom Buss, Director of Environmental Health, Animal Control Supervisor, Grand Traverse County
Agriculture & Agribusiness Educational Programs

dairy farms with more than 80,000 cows. As a result, MDARD planned and hosted a one-day conference for food animal practice veterinarians entitled “When is Drug Use Appropriate?” That meeting will be followed up with additional workshops for veterinarians with the purpose of encouraging greater adherence to VCPR intent and greater use of drug protocols for farms. MMPA has told us that their field representatives will talk with members on-farm about the issues and avoidance of potential residues. A 6-month follow-up survey will be conducted to determine actual impacts of the program.

Articles have been written by Durst and Schweihofer and published on the MSU Extension News website:

- “Antibiotic residue testing in meat results in few positive samples” Jeannine Schweihofer
- “Do you have a valid Veterinary Client Patient Relationship?” Phil Durst
- “Work with your veterinarian on drug protocols” Phil Durst

Agriculture Labor Programs were offered in five locations within Michigan in 2013. Three of the locations included Traverse City, Shepherd and Sandusky.

MSU Extension Educators work to tailor the program to the specific needs in the various areas of the state and the various commodity groups. The TC location program was significantly different from the Shepherd and Sandusky location as it focused mostly on a fruit grower audience and their unique needs with a shrinking migrant labor force. This variance was directed by grower input, and the program was planned around an overall effort to assist producers in the NW Lower Peninsula area that have experienced great hardship because of last year’s fruit freeze. The TC location also had several grower speakers focusing on how they manage diverse labor pools and also sharing technology that they use to make labor management more efficient. The final difference in the TC location is that the Ag labor management portion of the program covered the entire programming time, whereas in the Shepherd and Sandusky location this was limited to the morning with an Ag Labor Safety program being conducted in the afternoon. The Ag Labor Safety program is a partnership between MSU and Michigan Farm Bureau.

The Shepherd and Sandusky locations were specifically marketed toward dairy producers in these heavy dairy areas, although all producers were welcome to attend. Attendance at these two locations was less than expected (13 & 11 respectively), but we see this as a first effort to reach the dairy audience with this very important program.

All three locations utilized speakers from the MI Workforce Development Agency, ICE, and MSU Extension (Stan Moore common speaker). This allowed us to summarize the evaluation questions that were repeated over the three programs and perform statistical analysis on the combined responses.
The common denominator of the three programs revolved around “Understanding Ag Labor issues and complying with Farm Labor Laws.” The survey results represent 26,060 acres of agricultural production in Michigan. Results showed a statistically significant change in participants knowledge of agricultural labor law regulations, preparedness for a labor inspection, skills necessary to work with multiple sources of labor (TC location only), understanding of what skills and tools they need to manage labor more effectively, belief that employee retention on their farm would increase in the future (TC only), and willingness to explore hiring from a different source of labor than they had in the past. On a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree, respondents indicated that they would implement some of the concepts learned at the program with a rating of 4.42. Respondents also indicated that their knowledge of agriculture labor state resources improved (3.71 with 1 being no change and 5 being greatly improved), as well as their knowledge of agriculture labor regulations (3.69). Finally, at the TC location, respondents indicated that their skills in agriculture labor management increased (3.72).

Farm Information Resource Management (FIRM) assists farmers, agriculturally-related businesses, industries, families, and individuals improve their lives and achieve their goals through an educational process that applies management, production and economic knowledge to critical issues, needs, and opportunities. The FIRM team was involved in the following in the Northwest Michigan region in 2012:

- **Oil and gas leasing information and individual consulting** — Landowners received detailed information about oil and gas leasing and development. Care was given to enable participants to more deeply understand some of the critical points in the lease that may impact them when they are participants in an oil and gas well that is placed on their farmland. The updated oil and gas web page is accessible to anyone at [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/oil_and_gas](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/oil_and_gas).

- **2012 Fruit Freeze** — The FIRM team created the 24 month Fruit Cash Flow Budget Planner, an Excel program that allows a fruit producer to project income, expense and cash flows for business and succession planning. This is also required by lenders as part of qualifying for the 2012 MI Emergency Loan program.

- **Income tax and cash flow planning in December** — Four commercial farms produced an average positive change of $26,937 in their economic situation from this program. 100% of the attendees reported the workshops have improved their understanding of farm accounting principles and methods.

- **Cropland leasing consultation** — For the district as a whole, approximately 16 producers were counseled and given printed information about cropland leasing and lease rates.
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: Sustaining Community Prosperity, Government and Public Policy, Natural Resources and Community Food Systems.

» **Financial Literacy Programs** — MSU Extension addresses financial health of individuals and families through community-based educational programs. The overarching goal of these efforts is for Michigan consumers to become aware of their personal financial profile, to adopt sound financial practices – including managing a spending and savings plan and utilizing financial products and services in a beneficial manner and identify goals and the steps necessary to reach self-sufficiency.

Evaluation results reveal that the financial education program was effective in reaching the goals of positively changing financial practices among Michigan residents. Participants of the MSU Extension financial education programs show significant changes in the frequency of writing spending plans, keeping track of spending and income, saving money regularly, reviewing credit card bills for accuracy, and paying off new credit card charges monthly. Other outcomes shown in the evaluation results include participants reporting the ability to pay down their debt, obtain a housing payment that fits within their budget, and making choices today that will make retirement a reality.

» **Housing Education Programs** train Michigan residents to be better consumers and help to secure and retain home ownership in the state. Sustainable housing is important to individuals and families. Homeownership education and counseling gets buyers into lower-cost mortgages, increase credit scores, reduce defaults, improve borrowers' financial standing, and increase the likelihood of troubled borrowers seeking foreclosure prevention assistance.

Based on evaluation results, housing education was effective in reaching the goal of helping Michigan residents secure and retain homeownership as well as avoid foreclosure or to proceed with foreclosure as informed consumers. Michigan residents that completed MSUE housing education programs reported, as a result of the program, saving money to prepare for homeownership, an improved credit score, setting aside funds for home maintenance, and shopping around periodically for the best home insurance coverage. Other program outcomes show residents were able to identify the best mortgage type for their situation and gained new skills to calculate reasonable monthly housing costs based on household budgets. Housing education participants also reported greater confidence to make informed decisions including reviewing fees and rights related to homeownership and foreclosure processes. During 2012, MSU Extension served 4,212 people in Michigan through 416 financial literacy and housing education series and workshops.
Placemaking & the New Economy — In the new or global economy, the rules and strategies for economic development have changed. Communities that will be successful and have prosperity are those that understand and adapt to those changes. Because Michigan has historically done well with the automobile economy and associated manufacturing, the incentive to make this shift has not existed. As a result, Michigan is behind the curve in adjusting to the new global economy.

In the global economy attracting talented workers is an important economic development strategy. Research on housing markets and demographics has demonstrated the demand for quality of life and places is what attracts talented workers. Talented workers are what bring employers to a community, or those talented individuals become employers. Those talented individuals are very mobile, and can choose to live anywhere, and they do. Only those communities that measure up to what they want will be successful in the new economy. Placemaking is a series of action steps and strategies to help make a region and its communities places where talented individuals wish to locate, which in turn brings prosperity to a region and community.

The process of Placemaking involves many organizations (public, private, and not-for-profit) in a community and region. But the two main actors are the economic development office and the planning commission/department. The Placemaking signature program is targeting training to help local officials understand this dynamic and to put into place actions (master plan, zoning, economic strategies) to start this process in regions and communities. This Placemaking signature program is still being rolled out. A number of pilot sessions were done in 2012. A large multi-organization effort on Placemaking will take place later in 2013-15.

Components and measures of a strong successful “Place.”
» **Michigan Northern Counties Association** — Bringing county commissioners together from 33 counties in northern lower Michigan to learn about issues important to county government, and to share information and learn from the experiences of others has long been the goal of the Michigan Northern Counties Association (MNCA). Recent topics include: ORVs and tourism, mining issues, roads, equalization, health care, statewide ballot issues and the impacts of these issues on county government services. Monthly meetings also include a legislative update from the MI Association of Counties.

» **New County Commissioner Workshops** — Since 1968, MSU Extension, in partnership with the Michigan Association of Counties, has conducted the New County Commissioner Workshops following the biennial election of commissioners. The program offers information and learning opportunities on county structure and process, budgeting and finance, county administration, courts, and more. Commissioners, department heads and others from Kalkaska County participated in the program in 2012.

» **Product Center Food-Ag-Bio** is a unit of the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics. With the goal of accelerating innovation and growth for Michigan business, industry and entrepreneurs in food, agriculture and bio-manufacturing, the Product Center stimulates and develops business innovation and economic growth through business counseling, in-depth market analysis and technical assistance for new entrepreneurs and existing businesses. The use of best practices, knowledge and experience along with collaboration from internal MSU and external partners supports clients in the creation of successful ventures.

In 2012, the Product Center provided 9 one-on-one counseling sessions to local businesses and aided in the launch of a new business in Kalkaska County. The estimated value of increased investment in the county was $60,000.
The Health and Nutrition Institute provides education for families around several areas: Disease Prevention & Management, Social Emotional Health & Well Being, Improving Nutrition & Physical Activity, and Food Safety.

» **Chronic Disease Self-Management (PATH)** — Participants of PATH (Personal Action Toward Health) programs report improved symptom management including decreased worry, decreased fearfulness about future health, and fewer frustrations about health problems. At the end of the series, PATH participants show decreased symptoms of fatigue, decreased shortness of breath, and decreased self-reported pain. Other program benefits show increased physical activity and improved communication with physicians including preparing a list of questions to ask during a healthcare visit. Participants report higher self-efficacy after attending the program and show improved self-rated health scores. During 2012, there were 27 PATH series held statewide reaching 305 people in 27 counties.

» **Be SAFE - Safe, Affirming and Fair Environments** — Every day in our communities, many young people are faced with feeling unsafe, disconnected, unsupported and harmed because of bullying, harassment and other forms of violence. These issues are of great concern to many parents, educators, youth and family workers and others who work with and care about young people in communities. And while there are several resources available for use in schools to address these issues, very few focus on addressing issues of bullying in out-of-school time settings.

Michigan State University Extension responded to this need by creating a new initiative called Be SAFE: Safe, Affirming and Fair Environments. Designed for use in out-of-school time settings (such as 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, Scouts and afterschool programs), Be SAFE helps young people aged 11 to 14 and adults work in partnership to create environments that are physically and emotionally safe. It draws from extensive research from a variety of key disciplines – as well as evidence-based bullying prevention programs.

Be SAFE includes a core curriculum of engaging learning activities focused on fostering healthy relationships and settings. It was piloted in 2012 with diverse youth and adults in a variety of youth settings in several communities across Michigan before its final release in early 2013.

The overall goals of Be SAFE are to:
- Promote social and emotional learning and development.
- Address and reduce bullying.
- Prevent bullying behaviors by tapping the wisdom and assets of youth and adults.
- Develop positive relationships with peers and adults.

“The BeSafe curriculum activities really gave our student leaders tools and skills to work with their peers. I know the program was a success because kids are talking more about bullying and seeking me out, not because there are more incidents but because they have seen that adults and peers care and can be trusted.”

- Rebecca Kik, Kalkaska Middle School Counselor
While the materials are divided into 10 key focus areas, each of the sections is part of a larger process that makes up the whole of Be SAFE. This overall learning process and design incorporates practices recommended by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) for promoting personal and social skill development in adolescents. CASEL has found that effective out-of-school time programs include components that are sequenced, active, focused and explicit – and Be SAFE was developed with these guidelines in mind. The learning journey of Be SAFE includes the following 10 focus areas:

- Creating a SAFE Space
- Exploring Bullying
- Addressing Cyberbullying and Cyber Safety
- Understanding Differences
- Nurturing Our Emotional Intelligence
- Developing Our Social Intelligence
- Moving from Bystanders to Allies
- Keeping Ourselves Safe
- Becoming Critical Consumers of Media
- Reflecting on Our Be SAFE Experiences

Grounded in research on positive youth development, Be SAFE taps the wisdom and strengths of young people and helps to foster resiliency in the face of challenging situations such as bullying, bias and harassment. When young people have strong connections and relationships with adults and peers, they are more resilient. In addition, research shows that young people benefit from time spent in positive and safe settings with adults and peers. Be SAFE is an important tool that can be used by adults – working in partnership with youth – to create these safe, affirming and fair environments. Statewide and national dissemination efforts are now underway to encourage adults to use Be SAFE in settings in which they work with young people.

The character education class for 6th graders (21 students) taught by Jeremiah Hoover and the Builders Club (38 6th, 7th, and 8th graders) lead by Rebecca Kik in the Kalkaska Middle School piloted BeSafe. Students completed pre and post surveys rating knowledge, attitude and behavior change as an indicator of the success of BeSafe programming.

In the character education class, students participated in weekly one hour sessions with Mrs. Aungst, Extension educator, beginning in November and completing in January. Mr. Hoover designed the lessons to compliment his curriculum and allow for carry over and follow up.

Builders’ Club meets during lunch two times a month. Five student leaders worked with KMS staff and MSU Extension educator, Denise Aungst, to plan the full club meetings (25 minutes). Group discussion, scenarios, and hands on activities allowed students to explore the complexity of bullying, learn about perspectives and differences, and practice skills.
**Building Strong Adolescents** is a Michigan State University Extension authored program for parents and guardians of teenagers. The program focuses on the external and internal assets teens need to succeed, along with focusing on integrating issues related to the prevention of aggression and violence. During 2012, this 10-year-old curriculum was revised and updated to be used in addressing current needs and will be available in 2013.

**The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed)** provides nutrition education to Bridge card eligible adults and children. This program focuses on improving dietary quality and increasing physical activity while stretching food dollars. The ultimate goal of these programs is to promote healthy weight maintenance and obesity prevention.

During the past year in Kalkaska County, 271 adults and 54 youth were reached through nutrition education classes at various venues in the county. There were a total of 474 contacts with these groups in total.

An expanded partnership over the past year with Share our Strength’s Cooking Matters™ has allowed nutrition education staff to teach healthy eating during a cooking class. Kalkaska County MSU Extension nutrition staff partner with a volunteer culinary chef to teach adults and teens how to select nutritious and low-cost ingredients and prepare them healthily. Cooking Matters specialized curricula covers practical nutrition information, hands-on food preparation, and food budgeting and shopping. The adult participants receive recipes and other educational materials from the lessons and also receive a take home bag of groceries each week funded by Wal-Mart to practice what they’ve learned in class. Cooking Matters courses are designed as six weekly, two-hour lessons with curriculum target audiences of adults, teens, and childcare professionals. This program continues to be popular in Kalkaska County reaching new adults and youth.

MSUE also provided nutrition education to eligible seniors and WIC families on the benefits of including fruits and vegetables in their diet. Participants increased the quality of their diet by purchasing locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables from Kalkaska County farmer’s markets through Project FRESH and Market FRESH. These coupons are redeemed at the farm market for over $12,350 in funds for produce grown by local farmers.
As with all Health and Nutrition Institute education programs, success is determined not only by the number of individuals staff worked with but more importantly, how their knowledge or behavior was changed as a result of attending the classes.

**Adult Program Impacts:**
- 94% of the participants completing the series had a positive change in any food group at exit (Grains – Fruits – Vegetables – Milk – Meat & Beans).
- 82% of participants showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices: planning meals, makes healthy food choices, preparing foods without adding salt, reading nutrition labels or has children eat breakfast.
- 72% of participants demonstrated acceptable food safety practices at the end of the program.
- 75% of participants showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices: planning meals, comparing prices, does not run out of food or uses grocery lists.

**Youth Program Impacts**
- 71% of the children from kindergarten to second grade reported a significant increase in their knowledge about food groups
- 88% of school teachers reported children being more aware of the importance of healthy nutrition.
- 93% of school teachers reported that children are more willing to try new foods.
- 86% of school teachers reported that children improved hand washing.

This winter MSU-Extension Health and Nutrition Institute provided two series of Cooking Matters for Teens classes at Forest Area High School. These 6 week nutrition and cooking classes took place during the school day in Health Class. The Forest Area Foodservice Director Christine Luce volunteered her time to help teach the kids the fundamental skills of healthy cooking on a budget. We received state and national recognition when 9&10 news interviewed our class and Cooking Matters posted the link on their national website. In addition, future classes are being planned in Forest Area Schools with help from a partnership with the Teen Health Corner and a grant in which we are included.
» **Food Preservation** — Michigan State University Extension educates community food handlers on skills and techniques for proper food preservation in an effort to decrease foodborne illnesses. Food-borne illness outbreaks occur on an ongoing basis crossing all lines – from production, consumption and preservation of foods. Residents in Michigan communities have the opportunity to receive high quality education on safe temperatures for storing food, cooling hot foods, storing temperatures, freezing and dehydrating food, as well as canning using the United State Department of Agriculture guidelines for safe food preservation. Food Preservation Education offered by MSU Extension is a workshop intended to teach safe food processing and canning techniques to homeowners.

Food preservation education contributes to safer food sources, especially those produced locally by Michigan residents. As a result of food preservation workshops, 89% increased knowledge of how to use proper processing techniques to safely can low- and high-acid foods, 87% learned the correct processing times to can foods safely, and 76% gained knowledge of how to use proper techniques for freezing foods. Participants also reported learning where to locate research based/tested recipes for home food preservation, how to follow research based/tested recipes when canning food at home, and how to select high quality foods for preservation. During 2012, there were 46 Food Preservation events held statewide reaching 681 people.
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