MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

Monroe County

2015–2016 **ANNUAL REPORT**

msue.msu.edu

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

MSU Extension (MSUE) staff strive to provide programming that has a positive impact on the residents of Monroe County while making the best use of the local, state, and federal funds that have been generously provided for the completion of this work.

Extension educators and program staff continue to look for ways to make our programs accessible for all county residents. Advancements in technology have enabled us to provide access to programs and resources in a more timely and efficient manner. Still, our presence in county offices across the state allows us to remain connected to the communities we serve, giving us a better understanding of local programmatic needs.

This report is intended to provide an overview of the wide array of programming opportunities that have been provided to the residents of Monroe County over the last year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension programs in Monroe County.

Matt Shane
District Coordinator, District 12

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FUNDING

2016 County Assessment $ 142,160
(3% increase from FY2015)

MEASURING IMPACT

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

4-H club enrollments	1,774
Total youth served through 4-H	11,100
4-H adult volunteers	627
2016 Breakfast on the Farm attendance	3,624
General agriculture programming attendance	331
Health and Nutrition—Youth and Adult participants	1,332

DISTRICT 12 DIGITAL REACH

From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016, 168,081 visitors from the six-county district viewed more than 347,634 pages of rich, science-based content on the MSU Extension website (*msue.msu.edu*). Search engine rankings make *msue.msu.edu* one of the most visited Cooperative Extension Systems education sites in the country.

MSU EXTENSION'S EXPANDED DIGITAL REACH

Through combined face-to-face trainings, online webinars, social media, website interaction and electronic newsletters, MSU Extension has made more than 8.8 million connections. More than 149,000 adults* and 203,000 youth† participated in MSU Extension programming in the 2015-16 programming year.

More than 3.7 million people viewed more than 7.2 million pages on the MSU Extension website.‡ Of those, more than 760,000 were Michigan residents. MSU Extension remains one of the most visited Cooperative Extension System education websites in the country.

MSU Extension also distributes a series of electronic newsletters that cater to residents' unique interests. Last year, nearly 1.3 million newsletters covering 90 topic areas were distributed to about 16,900 email addresses.‡ You can sign up for these informative newsletters by visiting msue.msu.edu and clicking on "Newsletter Sign Up" texting MSUE to 22828.

MSU Extension uses social media channels to reach people with educational content. Currently, Extension reaches more than 3,500 Facebook followers and more than 2,800 Twitter followers.‡ In addition, Michigan 4-H families and volunteers stay informed about activities through social media channels, including on Michigan 4-H Facebook with more than 4,000 likes and on Twitter with more than 1,300 followers.

*From ES237 Federal Report – Oct. 1, 2014, to Sept. 30, 2015
†From Michigan Extension Planning and Reporting System – Jan. 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2015
‡From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016

Developing Youth and Communities

When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Extension programs help children develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. They learn leadership and decision-making skills in 4-H that increase their likelihood of becoming civically active.

4-H'ers also demonstrate reduced high-risk behaviors such as drug use, and learn to complete tasks, solve problems and seek any help they might need from peers and adults. 4-H involvement also helps participants avoid or reduce involvement with the court system. This helps ensure more young people succeed in school, attend college and contribute to their communities. More successful young people in communities results in greater tax revenues and consumer spending and increases the likelihood that young people will stay in, or return to, their communities.

Growing true leaders

With innovative ideas, exuberant energy and the ability to look beyond preconceived obstacles, youth have the capacity to change the world. However, many lack the skills and confidence to empower these assets into motion. They need experiences and training that help them to feel ready and capable to lead.

Michigan 4-H helps to prepare current and future leaders by offering numerous opportunities for leadership development. From the club experience to statewide youth councils, all youth have the chance to serve in a leadership role. Those experiences and various leadership trainings provide youth with skills to last a lifetime and empower them to stand up today as true leaders in their families, schools and communities.

In the past year:

- 25 youth formed the Michigan 4-H State Youth Leadership Council, becoming statewide champions for 4-H.
- 32 youth were trained as teen leaders in the 4-H Ag Innovators Experience. These youth cultivated important leadership skills as they delivered programming to 1,200 of their peers.
- 40 youth learned how to become advocates for themselves and 4-H through the 4-H Teen Spokesperson training; 86% of those surveyed indicated they feel confident in standing up for issues that are important to them.
- 297 Monroe County youth participated in workshops such as Parliamentary Procedure Training, What is Leadership and how does 4-H help?, State Youth Leadership Council Face to Face Meeting/Training, and 4-H Officer Training.

4-H GROWS HERE

Whether it is written, spoken or visually represented, the way we express ourselves makes a big impact on our daily lives at home, work and play.

Building communication skills for a lifetime

Communication is an essential element of every aspect of life – personal and professional. Whether it is written, spoken or visually represented, the way we express ourselves makes a big impact on our daily lives at home, work and play. Youth who practice and enhance their communication skills in adolescence will find these skills to their advantage in future employment and adulthood.

To help young people develop this important life skill, MSU Extension's Michigan 4-H has made communication an aspect of nearly every area of its programming. Youth are required to record their progress on projects, verbally report their activities and illustrate their understanding in a number of ways. Some Michigan 4-H programs make communication a major focus, further allowing youth to cultivate and enhance these critical skills.

In the past year:

- 40 youth attended the 4-H Teen Spokesperson workshop; 78% of those surveyed indicated they feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings with others.
- 32 teen leaders taught more than 1,200 fellow young people the Water Windmill Challenge as part of the 4-H Ag Innovators Experience.
- Nearly 350 youth participated in 4-H meat and livestock judging programs where they verbally validated their class evaluations.
- 5 Monroe County youth participated in entrepreneurship training to learn product development and marketing techniques.

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food

MSU Extension efforts in ensuring safe and secure food lead to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care costs in check and our communities viable.

When you support MSU Extension's efforts to enhance residents' access to an adequate supply of safe, affordable food, program participants will focus on food safety measures in the field and at harvest, learn proper food preparation and food preservation techniques, and bring community partners together to strengthen access to healthy food supplies. This leads to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care costs in check and our communities viable.

Reducing foodborne illness through education of individuals, small businesses

The National Institutes of Health estimates that every year, 48 million people in the United States become ill and 3,000 die from pathogens in food. Causes range from outdated home food preservation practices to unsafe sanitizing practices at public events and small businesses. Since 2013, MSU Extension food safety and preservation programs have taught almost 10,500 Michigan residents safe food handling, food preservation and methods to reduce foodborne illness.

Participants include youth, nonprofit organizations that prepare food for the public and food preservers who want to create safe products for their small businesses.

Through face-to-face and online learning, Michigan communities receive high-quality, research-based education using U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines for safe food preservation.

- 95% of participants report they will follow research-based and tested recipes for home food preservation.
- 86% of youth participants gained knowledge about food spoilage organisms and learned how the organisms' growth can be slowed or prevented.
- 85% of participants can correctly list strategies for cross-contamination prevention.
- 91% know correct methods of cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.
- 6 Monroe County residents participated in food safety and food preservation programs
- Michigan produced more than 83 million bushels of soybeans, valued at more than $1 billion, in 2013, making it one of Michigan's most valuable commodities.
- Monroe County continues to rank in the top five for soybean production

Ensuring Strong Communities

MSU Extension efforts in ensuring safe and secure food lead to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care costs in check and our communities viable.

When you support MSU Extension, participants learn how to implement best practices in good governance that keeps communities solvent, productive and engaged; learn effective conflict management skills that help leaders and residents work collaboratively on complex issues; and engage youth leaders in decision-making. In the personal finance area, MSU Extension helps youth and adults alike learn the skills they need to increase their savings, manage their spending avoid predatory lending and reduce mortgage defaults. All of these outcomes help lower the cost of governmental services and lead to personal and community stability, strong neighborhoods and safe communities.

Improving the fiscal health of Michigan communities

Only with healthy, vibrant communities can Michigan residents be expected to thrive. To help Michigan prosper in a sensible, sustainable fiscally responsible way, MSU Extension launched the Center for Local Government Finance and Policy in late 2015.

The center is led by MSU Extension economist Eric Scorsone,, who has assisted multiple cities during fiscal crises including Detroit, Flint and Lansing. The center will advise cities during fiscal hardships so communities can find a sustainable path forward. It will also develop fiscal tools and offer outreach to help communities improve their fiscal health. In addition, the center is committed to connecting legislators with experts in public policy and forging partnerships in the public and private sector.

The center's efforts include:

- Assisting in the development of performance metrics for government budgets, strategic plans and public accountability reporting.
- Providing an overall assessment of long-term and short-term trends in revenues, expenditures, debt, general fiscal health and recommendations regarding adoption of financial policies.
- Publishing an annual local government fiscal health report for communities wishing to improve fiscal health.
- Publishing an annual legislative mandate report that identifies the costs imposed on local governments and their impact on fiscal and operational health.
- 49 Monroe County residents participate in Financial Capacity and Homeownership workshops.

Keeping Businesses Strong

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants understand the economic, environmental and social benefits of purchasing local and regional foods.

MSU Extension and the MSU Product Center help Michigan entrepreneurs develop and commercialize high-value, consumer-responsive products and businesses in the food, agriculture, natural resources and bioeconomy sectors. When you support MSU Extension, you help participants understand the economic, environmental and social benefits of purchasing local and regional foods. You also help young people develop business skills that will help them succeed as adults and help communities capitalize on their ecological, social and cultural assets. This fuels the economy by creating and retaining jobs, and helps ensure a healthy tax base.

Building entrepreneurial spirit and skills

As the backbone of the economy, small business owners play a critical role in the prosperity of the nation. But to be a successful entrepreneur, one must have not only the ambition and moxie to take a risk, but also the business sense and skill to make a profit. To ensure the business owners of tomorrow – today's youth – are triumphant in their future endeavors, they need to learn the entrepreneurial concepts that pave the way for success.

MSU Extension is helping to meet this need by providing youth and the adults that support them with the skills and resources necessary to turn ideas into business ventures. Through simulations and workshops, youth learn how to develop business plans and operate their own companies, as well as how to be more entrepreneurial in their everyday 4-H experiences. In 2015, these programs were delivered to nearly 1,200 people in 59 Michigan counties.

As a result:

- 92% said they learned how entrepreneurial skills could be used in any career, and 60% reported planning to start their own businesses.
- 5 youth from the Monroe County participated in the 4-H Youth Entrepreneurship Program.
- 7 Monroe County 4-H youth participated in a Financial Literacy program.

Keeping People Healthy

Encouraging healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs by helping prevent chronic health conditions and providing safe environments throughout a person's life span.

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn safe food handling practices, increase their physical activity and improve the quality of their diets. Extension programming also helps decrease incidents of violence and bullying. Encouraging these healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs by helping prevent chronic health conditions and providing safe environments throughout a person's life span.

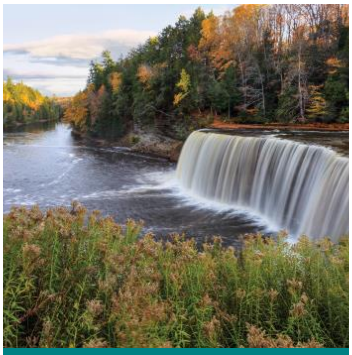
Improving nutrition and increasing physical activities in Michigan communities

Limited income and poor nutrition affect quality of life and can increase healthcare costs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that more than 30 percent of Michigan adults are considered obese, and one out of every three deaths in Michigan is caused by cardiovascular disease, influencing the quality of life and adding billions of dollars each year in economic burden.

MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to help residents in urban and rural communities stay healthy throughout their lifespans. Programs teach participants how to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods and increase physical activity. In 2015 alone, these programs reached more than 112,000 adults and youth across the state in over 1,600 different locations.

- 79% of youth participants improved their abilities or gained knowledge about how to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Guidelines.
- 79% of adult participants made a positive change in at least one nutrition practice, such as preparing foods without adding salt, or using the Nutrition Facts labels to make food choices.
- 73% of adult participants made a positive change in at least one food resource management practice, such as planning meals in advance or comparing prices when shopping.
- 1,332 youth from Monroe County participated in nutrition education programs.

Making the Most of Our Natural Assets



Better land stewardship benefits communities by protecting and enhancing Michigan's natural resource assets.

When you support MSU Extension's natural resources education programs, participants learn about income-generating opportunities, ecological principles, natural resource issues and the role of natural resource professionals. They also explore public policy issues related to environmental stewardship. Our programs can lead to increased income for families that retain their natural resource assets, help landowners become better stewards of their land, and protect land management opportunities for future generations. Better land stewardship benefits communities by protecting and enhancing Michigan's natural resource assets.

Raising awareness of the benefits of cover crops

Cover crops are a hot topic in agricultural circles, thanks to an MSU Extension specialist's message that's resonating with the right crowd. Dean Baas, a senior research associate, conducts cover crop and organic agriculture research and education.

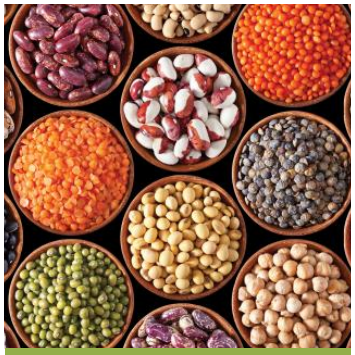
Cover crops are plants seeded into agricultural fields, either within or outside of the regular growing season, with the primary purpose of improving or maintaining ecosystem quality. Environmental benefits include enhanced biodiversity, increased soil infiltration and attraction of honeybees and beneficial insects.

Researchers are focusing on ways cover crops can be used by farmers to bring diversity to the crop system; to reduce reliance on fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides; and to determine the impact of cover crops on overall operation economics.

Initial studies have shown that:

- Farming benefits include reduced erosion, improved soil quality through increased porosity, soil organic matter and water-holding capacity, as well as the addition of beneficial microbes.
- Cover crops help retain nutrients that otherwise would be lost.
- Cover crops add nitrogen through fixation while combatting weeds and breaking disease cycles.
- A team of MSU Extension Educators in Agriculture and Natural Resources have been working with farmers and partner organizations to help address water quality concerns for the Western Lake Erie Watershed Basin (WLEWB).

Supporting Food and Agriculture



When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices.

Michigan agriculture continues to be a growing segment of the state's economy. The production of commercial food and nonfood agricultural operations is growing rapidly. The number of households raising a portion of their own food and raising livestock or gardening for pleasure or relaxation continues to increase. When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices. Participants also learn how to optimize and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and how to conserve and protect water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, and helps retain and create agricultural jobs. These measures strengthen Michigan's economy while connecting farmers to local food opportunities and global markets. In this way you help MSU Extension encourage growth in a sustainable and prosperous Michigan food and agriculture system.

Preparing youth for future careers in agriculture

As a pillar of Michigan's economy, agriculture must continue to grow and thrive. One way to ensure this success is to prepare an informed and skilled workforce ready for careers in this essential sector.

To meet this need, MSU Extension offers youth a continuum of learning opportunities in the agriculture industry. These opportunities range from interactive experiences such as 4-H Renewable Energy Camp and World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute, to educational resources such as the Youth Business Guide to Success animal marketing curriculum and zoonotic disease prevention tools. Through these experiences and resources, as well as county 4-H projects, youth are educated about agriculture and prepared for careers in this important industry. In the last program year:

- More than 24,000 4-H youth participated in animal, biological and plant science projects in 78 counties.

- More than 850 youth took part in Michigan 4-H pre-college programs with an agricultural focus. These programs, which include 4-H Exploration Days and 4-H Animal and Veterinary Science Camp, among others, are designed to help youth explore potential careers or academic areas.
- 5 Monroe County youth participated in Career Exploration and Workforce Preparation programs.

Since 2009, more than 80,800 people have gotten a closer look at where their food comes from.

New attendance record set at the August 27 Breakfast on the Farm at Hartland Farms

With cars as far as one could see, a new attendance record was set at the 35th Michigan State University Extension Breakfast on the Farm event.

MSU Extension article posted on September 8, 2016 by MSUE Educator Mary Dunckel.

Hartland Farms, located very close to the Michigan-Ohio border in Lenawee County, hosted the final Breakfast on the Farm (BOTF) event in 2016 and drew a record-breaking crowd of 3,624 visitors. The farm is owned and operated by Brad and Tracey Hart and their three sons Chad, Nick, and Burke. Since 1836, the farm has supported seven generations, and four of them were on the farm the day of the event. The farm is a dairy farm with 970 milking cows. In addition, they produce 1,100 acres of corn, 600 acres of soybeans, 400 acres of wheat and 300 acres of alfalfa, most of which is fed to the animals. As you can imagine, there was a lot for visitors to see!

As visitors arrived, they were greeted by members of the host family before being treated to a delicious Michigan breakfast cooked by the 4-H Project Parents group. After enjoying the meal, guests embarked on a self-guided tour of the farm which included 23 different educational stations. Knowledgeable volunteers were present at each station to engage with the visitors and answer any questions. Speaking of volunteers, the crowd was a sea of yellow as 330 volunteers in yellow t-shirts guided, transported and cleaned up after guests.

Hartland Farms achieved verification in the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) in three systems-farmstead, cropping and livestock. Their commitment to water and soil quality was evident throughout the tour. For instance, visitors had a chance to see how the farm controls water runoff in the barnyard with a "greywater" catch basin that not only protects the environment but also helps crops in the next growing season. There was a unique soil and water quality station which demonstrated the use of controlled drainage using buried field tiles. Other stations focused on the care, housing and well-being of the cows and calves.

This Michigan State University Extension program began in 2009. Since then, more than 80,800 people have gotten a closer look at where their food comes from. In general, the program strives to educate the non-farm public about modern agriculture. On dairy farms, the educational focus is on how farmers care for their animals, protect the environment, and produce safe and nutritious food. Hartland Farms hit a home run with all three messages and we are thankful that they stepped to the plate and offered to host.

Breakfast on the Farm is made possible through generous support of many local sponsors and these statewide sponsors: Corn Marketing Program of Michigan, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Michigan Wheat Program, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Farm Bureau Insurance, Michigan Foundation for Agriculture, GreenStone Farm Credit Services, Dairyland Seed, Michigan Milk Producers Association, Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee, Zoetis and Crystal Flash.

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Extension Educators Serving Monroe County, Continued

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Extension Educators Serving Monroe County, Continued

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