Ontonagon County
2015–2016 ANNUAL REPORT
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MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

For more than 100 years, Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) has been partnering with local governments and communities throughout the state to help Michigan citizens grown and improve. MSUE integrates the extensive research network of the university, our resources and our staff into the public, thereby equipping Michigan residents with the information they need to improve their work, health, safety and communities. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 was created to foster economic development by stimulating the transfer of knowledge from research into practice on farms, in factories, and in families through agriculture, 4-H and youth, natural resources, coastal issues, and many other subject areas.

In this report I have the challenge of conveying the scope and importance of the work of a large number of people in diverse program areas into a concise report. There are many people who access MSUE online resources and educational programs that are not included in this report. As we move forward with greater technological accessibility, more and more people in Ontonagon County are using MSUE resources.

I’ve included links to give more information on the value of MSUE programs that are accessible in your communities. Please let me know if you need additional information on any of the topics covered in this brief overview of our work in 2015-2016. I think that you will be pleased with the excellent programs provided to the residents of Ontonagon County. It is with pleasure that I support the staff members and programs that have and are occurring in Ontonagon County, and I appreciate your continued support.

Paul Putnam, District 1 Coordinator

MEASURING IMPACT

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

Youth Programs ..........................................................300
Health & Nutrition Programs...........................................637
  # of SNAP-Ed Series Participants.................................211
  # of SNAP-Ed Presentation Participants.......................426
Agriculture Programs..................................................496

TOTAL IMPACT.........................................................1,433

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 July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016

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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). 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.

4-H Exploration Days

4-H Exploration days take place annually in June on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. It is designed for young people ages 11 to 19 and involves approximately 2500 participants from every Michigan county. Ontonagon County had 18 youth attend this annual event in 2015.

This fun learning program gives a multitude of hands-on learning sessions, field trips, and recreation opportunities that are designed to:

- Increase responsibility, confidence, independence, accountability, problem-solving, decision-making and time management skills.
- Increase communication, teamwork, citizenship, and leadership skills.
- Foster ability to meet new people and make new friends from different places and backgrounds.
- Develop and expand career and personal interests.
- Develop social and academic skills needed for a successful transition to college and life as an adult.
- Give youth opportunities to try things that aren’t available in their county.
- Develop social and academic skills needed for a successful transition to college.

Many parents and 4-H volunteers notice improvements in their children’s interest, knowledge and social skills after they attend 4-H Exploration Days. Participants often return to MSU as students due to the positive experiences they’ve had during 4-H Exploration Days.
Spring Dance

Ontonagon County youth attended the Spring Dance. Youth from 2nd-5th grade enjoyed a night of dancing and socializing. This event was very well attended. Nine chaperones and 51 youth had a great evening. The community supported it by donating baked goods, pizzas and pop, and a high school teen did a fantastic job of being the DJ for the evening. This empowered her to do more with her DJ services. Our community offers sports programs for kids but very little in the avenue of entertainment and socializing. The youth had such a fun night that they requested another dance in the future. Many parents have commented that this was a wonderful opportunity for their children. It was a win-win situation all around.

After School Activity

Spring crafts in both schools were offered. Ewen Trout Creek had 11 participants and Ontonagon had 16 participants and 1 teen helper. Crafts, bingo, and a homemade bunny cupcake were included in this afterschool activity.

Ontonagon Youth Attends MSU Vet Camp

Kaili Weiner, a 16 year old student and Ontonagon 4-H youth attended MSU Vet Camp on campus in East Lansing. Kaili has a love for animals especially dogs and horses. She wanted to attend Exploration Days this summer but had a conflict with the date so Nickie, her mom, started looking at other options at MSU for Kaili. Vet Camp was a perfect solution for her daughter. Kaili applied and was chosen from a large group of youth to attend for a week of interesting and educational learning. Last year during Exploration Days she met a new friend, Alana, who lives downstate. That friend applied to Vet Camp and was chosen to attend also. These two friends were brought together by a common love of animals and 4-H. This is how 4-H opens doors and friendships for youth that would not be possible any other way. Plus the fact that connections through 4-H can be strong no matter the distance.

I spoke with Kaili about her adventure downstate and she said it was a very positive and fun week. It was filled with lots of sessions that engaged the youth in real life experiences and situations. Kaili said that she went with the hope to better understand what a Veterinary Technician does. When she left Ontonagon, she was not certain that she could do and learn all the skills that it takes to be a Vet Tech. After her week on campus, with hands on learning, she gained confidence and realizes she can definitely become a Vet Tech with proper schooling and determination. A dream comes true for a 4-H youth. Kaili’s independence and personality was shaped through 4-H in the many years leading up to this experience. Of course, her parents and family were the direct influences but 4-H created an atmosphere of education and allowed her curious nature to grow and expand.
Turkey Trot

12 youth along with 5 parents trotted the track to get physical fitness in before we settled for a snack and craft. The youth all walked/ran 2 miles or more. The youth learned about the first Thanksgiving with a fun alphabet game which reinforced their reading and letter skills. We made turkey headbands and the children shared something that they appreciated. The parents really liked the idea of fitness prior to sitting after school.

4-H Summer Fun Day

The “4-H Summer Fun Day” event was held on Aug. 4, 2015 at the township park on the lakeshore of Lake Superior. Sixteen youth aged 5-8 years old attended and thoroughly enjoyed the day. Amy Thill and Donna Powelson from the Great Start programs partnered with 4-H to offer a well-rounded event for the youth make an awesome kite and bright colorful tie dye t-shirts. The kids had such fun flying their kites and expending some of their energy. They were also excited to bring their t-shirts home to wash and wear them.

Beverly and Jamie Isabel (two teen girls) plus Angie Foley and Kelli Logge (mom’s) volunteered their time and helped with the craft which was a clay pot ladybug or bumblebee. Then they searched with the youth on the nature scavenger hunt. The children located all kinds of neat nature objects and enjoyed searching for them. The Cheetos game was wild and crazy and the balloon relay was a hit with the youth. They were laughing and smiling the whole time. Kids still enjoy simple and friendly games and activities. It is so important that adults encourage those types of activities. It was delightful to spend an afternoon with them. Their natural curiosity and enthusiasm in learning and playing is refreshing.
Developing Youth and Communities, continued

**Ontonagon Theater Board**

There was an interest in having a children's play during the Hometown Christmas weekend. The 4-H youth had 16 participants. The youth learned voice techniques, memorization, stage position, getting into character, teamwork and responsibility. The Ontonagon Theater Board generously offered the theater as a donation. They were eager to have young actors/actresses again in the theater.

**Great Start Program**

One event was at the ETC school and another event was held at the Ontonagon school. The events included family game night and story time. This brought families together to play games and share bonding time. Books were given away to the youth. Attendance was good with a total of 30 participants and the families from both schools enjoyed an evening of socializing and being together sharing the experience with their children.

**Daycare Summer Event**

Collaboration and a partnership with 4 Daycare providers came together to provide a summer event. The event was held at the log cabin along Lake Superior. Food nutrition, color and shapes, exercise and games (teamwork) were the educational aspects for the event. The daycare ladies and the families highly praised the program that was presented. Twenty-six youth participated.

**Spooky Science**

Youth and families attended the 4-H Spooky Science event. This is our biggest event of the year. The event is held to introduce science in a wacky and spooky way to youth and their families. Five science experiments were offered for the youth to do. Crafts and games were also a part of the evening. There was a healthy snacks- no candy policy. Some of the activities included a Skeleton bone hunt- learn the proper names of the bones in our bodies, a clown with balloon animals was present, and a haunted horse drawn carriage ride (nothing spooky) but just an opportunity for families to ride on a lovely evening. One hundred youth participated.

**Lego Club**

Youth aged 5 and older attended this newly formed SPIN Lego Club. This club took place every other week and took place at the Ontonagon library in the village of Ontonagon. The 4-H council bought books about creating new and interesting Lego creations. The kids had a day where they all worked on pieces and displayed the theme in the library. It was great! They learned about how wheels and motors work to propel Legos. There was always time to use their imagination and construct pieces that they decided to do. It was a good combination of many skills as they worked as a team, individually and as partners. Fifteen youth participated.
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition education to Bridge Card eligible adults and children. This program focuses on increasing physical activity and improving dietary quality while stretching food dollars. The ultimate goal of SNAP education is to promote healthy eating and physical activity. SNAP-Ed is funded through a statewide grant from the Federal Government (Farm Bill). The SNAP-Ed program plays a vital role in helping to improve nutrition among low-income individuals.

Kathy Bauer, SNAP-Ed Program Instructor provided youth and adults with 19 nutrition programs reaching 211 individuals, and presentations reaching about 426 people annually in Ontonagon County.

The SNAP-Ed Program does a seven part series in the Ontonagon area school grades Kindergarten through 5th and grades Kindergarten through 4th in the Ewen School. Students learn about My Plate, food safety, reading food labels, taste testing new foods and physical activity. Last year, students had the chance to make their own smoothie with the Fender Blender Bike. Students were so excited and happy. It’s amazing at how many students remember things they learn from year to year. The SNAP-Ed program has also done programs six times in two local daycares. One of the children went home and told their mom she has to buy whole grain bread and explained to her about the yellow whole grain label on bread. Another mom came up to me and said “We are still buying yogurt, strawberries and nuts; my daughter loved the yogurt parfaits.” The students love taste testing and as a result I have had numerous parents appreciate their child trying new foods.

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.
Along with School programming, SNAP ED does Adult programming. This past year, a Cooking Matters with Adults class was held at the Copper Country Mental Health agency with 10 consumers. They completed six classes and received a certificate. Another adult program is working in the senior meal sites in Ontonagon, Mass and Ewen. Kathy Bauer, SNAP-Ed/Program Instructor does presentations on nutrition, food safety and/or physical activity. In the summer, MSU Extension SNAP ED Program distributes Senior Project Fresh Coupons. This program is for people that are 60 or older and it is coupons to be used at the local Farm Markets.

Kathy also serves as co-chair the St. Nicholas committee. St Nicholas Project helps families in need in Ontonagon County. A committee of various agencies and community people organize the project. Then the community and organizations send donations to purchase gifts for children and gift cards for food for the families. The TANGO students from Ontonagon Area School help set up and clean up for the distribution.
Sustainable Small Harbor Project

The Sustainable Small Harbor Management Strategy project entails developing a strategy for small harbors to become economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. A key feature includes documenting the value these small harbors provide to various stakeholders including boaters, anglers, property owners, and businesses and identifying potential revenue streams for the future. Project findings will inform the development of a toolkit of best practices, resources, and funding opportunities to support small harbor planning.

Ontonagon was selected as one of four case study communities. In support of the process, information gathered and analyzed for Ontonagon included:

- Organizational and leadership charts of the community
- Marina statistics such as boats berthed, launched, demand, etc.
- Employment data and other related census data
- Master planning efforts (existing or in progress) or special assessment districts
- Zoning for harbor and downtown/adjacent land areas
- Any recent planning or improvement grants received
- Specific challenges Ontonagon is experiencing (regulation, policy, laws, water levels, maintenance, etc.)
- Economic information (budget for community, budget for harbor operations, funding mechanisms, grants received, etc.) for Ontonagon
- Existing tourist information (flyers, magazines, etc.) and existing tourist wayfinding signage
- Aerial photograph/maps

Developing a vision for a sustainable harbor requires input from a wide range of stakeholders, including landowners, waterfront users, planning officials and local citizens. As such, the charrette design team engaged the Ontonagon community in a multi-day community visioning and collaborative design exercise (also known as a design charrette) to identify opportunities to secure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of public waterfront facilities. The team followed the National Charrette Institute (NCI) Charrette System™ for this phase of the project. An NCI charrette is an iterative rapid design process involving public interaction. The charrette design team hosted an initial meeting on October 21, 2015.
Those who attend the initial meeting weighed in on the future of Ontonagon’s waterfront and identified assets linked to existing and potential public waterfront facilities. A three-day public planning meeting or “community design charrette” to garner feedback, develop ideas and create a sustainable vision for Ontonagon’s waterfront was conducted from November 5 to 7. In the community design charrette participants assessed and prioritized design and planning options. Community participation that framed the options included public sessions and technical meetings with key constituents. These meetings resulted in three alternatives for the public waterfront as an asset to the community. Those alternatives were further refined into a preferred alternative that represents a single vision for Ontonagon in 2035. The charrette team compiled community input to develop a sustainable vision specific to Ontonagon. The final vision, as well as the process for development, for Ontonagon is documented in this report and was presented to Village Council on January 8, 2016.

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.

**Forage Field Day**

Ontonagon County Forage Field Day held on July 23, 2015 part of a U.P.-wide forage extension program funded by an AABI workgroup grant. The program focused on tillage methods to renovate forage ground, improved grazing and watering systems, and species selection. Dr. Kim Cassida, MSU Forage Extension Specialist was present to discuss issues of interest and answer questions. Nineteen adults participated.

**Riding a Bull Market**

Beef producers across the country are enjoying cattle prices that are at historic high levels. The high cattle prices should afford producers the opportunity to make management changes that allow them to improve final product quality and invest in cost savings practices. MSUE Educators conducted in person meetings to improve product quality, animal performance, and marketing practices. The meeting were held in six locations across the state. Eighty-eight participants attended six meetings in various locations across Michigan.

**Beekeeping**

Michigan State University Extension Educators conducted one beekeeping meeting at the Ewen/Trout Creek School in Ewen, MI. Beekeepers across the country have been faced with continual challenges of keeping bees alive and productive. Opportunities for local sales are high. Given the small percentage of disposable household income spent on honey, honey has been a popular purchase of consumers looking to purchase locally produced foods. Sixty-five participants attended the meeting.
Beef Cow-calf Herd Health Meeting

Beef producers across the Upper Peninsula are challenged to market feeder calves locally as there are no auction markets located in the U.P. Consequently most calves raised in the U.P. are transported long distances to auction markets in Lower Michigan, Iowa and Minnesota. The calves then are housed at auction yards for one to two days before being transported again to final destination. MSUE educators conducted in person meetings to improve herd health and increase the number of producers preconditioning calves before marketing. Michigan State University Extension Educators conducted beef production meetings at three locations across the Upper Peninsula. Including in Escanaba, Rudyard, and Bruce Crossing. Thirty participants attended.

Beginning Farmer On-line Webinar Series

Michigan citizens interested in engaging in new agriculture enterprises sometimes lack knowledge, experience and technical support to get started. Extension educators and specialists receive numerous contacts from such people seeking basic, start-up information. The Michigan State University Extension Beginning Farmer Webinar Series was developed in response to this need.

The 2015 series based in Alger County included twenty webinars offered from January 26 through April 20, 2015. Twenty three MSUE educators, faculty and staff presented webinar topics, with 198 people from fifty-four Michigan counties, twelve other states, and three other countries registering for a total of 1,845 webinar views.

A majority of participants indicated that they plan to utilize additional MSU Extension resources based on the series. They also indicated that the series contributed to creation or updates of business and marketing plans, new crop production, and expansion of farms and marketing strategies on many farms. A small number of participants indicated that they were beginning new livestock and poultry enterprises, purchasing farm equipment, establishing new business relationships and improving job prospects. Six participants said that the series helped them decide not to begin cultivating a crop in Michigan due to increased understanding of costs and risks.

Participants were appreciative for the program especially the convenience of on-line participation. MSU Extension received many compliments on the webinar series.

Agriculture for Tomorrow Conference

The Ninth Annual Agriculture for Tomorrow conference sponsored by MSU Extension was held March 10, 2015, on the campus of Bay College, Escanaba, Michigan. This is the Upper Peninsula’s largest MSU Extension Agriculture educational event. One hundred twenty-six attendees were provided with educational programs. It also gave an opportunity for growers, agricultural product companies, federal and state agencies to gather and interact. A majority of them learned about the Agriculture for Tomorrow 2015 Conference from the UP Ag Connection Newsletter distributed monthly from the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center. http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprc/newsletters

After the completion of the 20 different educational programs offered that day, 73% of the attendees positively identified ways to decrease production cost and increase income. Eighty four percent of attendees feel they will now implement new best management practices on their farm.
Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center

In the center of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula sits the 118 year old Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center (UPREC). The purpose of UPREC is to serve as a hub for integrated crop and livestock research. Applied research on pasture-based cattle management practices and cropping rotations is conducted in the unique environment of the U.P. Grass-based beef finishing, utilization of cover crops, hoop-house farming, season extension and soil health studies are keystone research elements on the farm. The North Farm is an incubator farm specializing in diversified local food production, research, education, and outreach for northern latitude climates. Our focus is healthy soils, food, people, and communities. Please go the UPREC North Farm Facebook site for details and updates: https://www.facebook.com/northfarmatuprec

Complementary agronomic studies at the 1,262-acre site focus on forages and small grains. The center also coordinates field trials on potato varieties and corn varieties throughout the Upper Peninsula region.

Research Goals

1. Improvement of soil quality to enhance the productivity of U.P. agricultural lands in a manner that emphasizes health linkages associated with soil, crop, livestock and people.

2. Development of research that demonstrates the costs and benefits of integrated crop livestock systems, including grass-based livestock production. Closer collaboration between UPREC and Lake City Research Center (LCRC) in Lake City to foster complementary research endeavors and to increase the quality and quantity of research results.

3. Development of research tied to the educational needs of regional food systems in the Upper Peninsula that contributes to community sustainability while linking to objectives 1 and 2.

MSU UPREC has been working over the last three years conducting research to support the growth of malting barley acres in Michigan, especially in the Upper Peninsula. In addition to variety trials, management practices such as fertility recommendations and fungicide use have been studied. In order for the malting barley industry to thrive in Michigan, suitable processing is also necessary. UPREC staff has been working with start-up malt-houses throughout the state and are confident that there will be a major increase in available processing by the end of 2015 – from 2 malt-houses to 6, including one in the Upper Peninsula.

Want to learn more about what Collin does at the North Farm? Please take the time to listen to an in-depth interview with the Farmer to Farmer podcast

http://www.farmentofarmerpodcast.com/episodes/thompson
The following deliverables have been produced in 2014 to support this emerging industry:

- MSU UPREC Malting Barley website to house research, resources, and contact information [http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprec/malting_barley](http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprec/malting_barley)


For more information about UPREC and updates on current projects, please visit their website at: [http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprec](http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprec) or call Center Coordinator, Ashley McFarland at 906-439-5114 or email: ashleymc@anr.msu.edu
# Extension Educators Serving Ontonagon County

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Home gardening questions? Call 1-888-678-3464

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Extension Educators Serving Ontonagon County, Continued

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