

Calhoun County

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

MSU Extension is alive and well in Calhoun County! Locally, the 4-H program experienced another successful year with the help of our 306 dedicated adult volunteers! Calhoun County is extremely fortunate to have such an energetic and passionate 4-H Program Coordinator in Kathy Fisher. She is committed to increasing the number of youth enrolled in clubs, volunteers and programming opportunities as well as expanding 4-H youth development opportunities for all youth in the county. Roger Betz continues to provide statewide leadership in farm financial management. His expertise and knowledge of farm finance and operations is an asset to all Michigan producers. The local farmers who participate in his programs sing high praises of his work to me as I travel through the district. I can't keep up with Dana Wawrzyniec. She is making a name for herself in nutrition education throughout the county. She has maintained and established new partnerships with schools, service organizations and youth programs to bring nutrition and physical activity education to school aged youth and adults. Ingrid Ault has taken leadership of our new community development partnership and is reaching residents of Calhoun through enrichment of the parks system and other community and economic development opportunities. Our secretarial team of Janice Wright and Patty Dadow continue to provide quality support to staff and high class customer service to all those entering the MSUE, Community Development and Senior Services "suite". The local team is small but mighty and works together to make sure residents are connected to programs available to them from other educators throughout the state. As revealed in this report, you will see that each dollar that Calhoun County invests in the local office leverages MSUE resources to extend our coverage much farther than just that provided by those housed in the county. A highlight to me this year is our MSUE website. It is providing quality researched based information available to all Calhoun residents at the touch of a button. Topical experts, webinars and bulletins— all readily available on the web. Thank you Calhoun County Board of Commissioners for your continued partnership in fulfilling the mission of Extension in Michigan. I sincerely look forward to working with you to make sure you are getting the most from Michigan State University Extension. *Julie Pioch*, District 13 Coordinator



CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

of Calhoun County Participants/ Total in State

4-H.....	1835
Master Gardeners recertified in 2015	26/2842
Soil Testing for home gardeners	19/2933
Product Center Counseling Sessions.....	56
Ask an Expert in 2014	17/2380
Home Horticulture Hotline	23/5342

Funding

2015 County Assessment	\$ 150,254.00
Additional General Fund	\$71,581.00
MSU Countywide Economic Impact	
	\$26,913,570

(Source: MiSPARTAN IMPACT)

District 13 Digital Reach

From July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2015 approximately 35,301 visitors from our 7 county district viewed more than 60,000 pages of rich, science-based content on the MSU Extension website (msuc.msu.edu). Of those, 52.2 percent were first-time visitors. Since launching in April 2012, the MUE Extension website has been visited by more than 75,000 people in District 13, more than 1,000,000 people from Michigan and more than 5,000,000 people overall. Search engine rankings make msue.msu.edu one of the most visited Cooperative Extension Systems education sites in the country.

DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

Supporting School and Student Success

To ensure the future success of the Great Lakes State, Michigan schools are charged with improving educational outcomes for the state's youngest minds. Yet, they must do this with fewer resources than ever. Partnering with schools to provide innovative and economical enhancements to in-school learning, MSU Extension youth educators are working with schools to provide custom solutions to their challenges. From once-a-month family workshops and in-school science lessons to after-school technology training and classroom gardening, MSU Extension supplies Michigan schools and the families they serve with the support they need to be successful. Because of these unique partnerships, Michigan youth benefit.

Michigan youth benefit from school partnerships with MSU Extension.

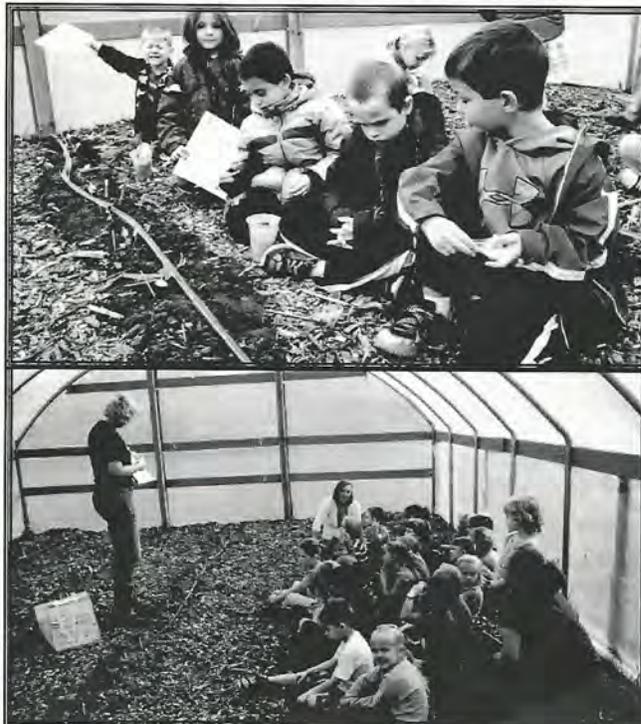
Read here what our partners are saying about us.



North Penn Elementary

MSU Extension at North Penn Greenhouse

Each of our kindergarten teachers has been conducting one session of class per week in the greenhouse this fall. Recently students have been visited by Kathy Fischer, who is on the staff of Michigan State University's Extension Service. She also serves as the 4-H Coordinator in Calhoun County. She has been reading farm and gardening books to students in the greenhouse and coordinating activities related to the plants that they are growing. Kathy brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm to our students in the areas of plants, gardening and home grown food production. Science is just one of the curriculum areas that students are able to study in the greenhouse. They have been doing math computations by counting the plants and measuring things such as distance between plants and the amount of growth that has taken place. Students have discussed farming and food production jobs, which falls into their social studies standards, and they have been doing some non-fiction writing about the things they have been learning. Instruction in the greenhouse has been the result of a partnership between North Penn staff and Jeremy Andrews of Sprout Urban Farms. His visits to North Penn each week, throughout this school year, have been made possible by a grant from the Pennfield Schools Educational Foundation. First grade and second grade classes will also do instructional rotations in the greenhouse between now and the end of the school year.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

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.

- In the 2014-2015 4-H program year, there were 768 youth members, 306 adult and 37 Youth volunteers enrolled in Calhoun County 4-H, with 724 participating in other group youth activities.

Supporting STEM careers through youth programming

The future of Michigan lies, in part, in the hands of its students' abilities to excel in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Science literacy among school-aged youth in Michigan is below the national average, directly impacting college readiness. In the U.S. today, many job openings for STEM-related positions go unfilled due to a lack of qualified applicants.

MSU Extension provides resources aligned with Michigan science education standards to teach confidence, leadership and responsibility related to STEM. Michigan 4-H encourages youth to participate in programming during the summer to continue to develop skills in unique, out-of-school settings. Program results include:

- » 100 percent of 4-H Animal & Veterinary Science Camp participants want to learn more and 97 percent plan on applying the skills learned in camp to real-world settings.

One youth (40 total in attendance) from Calhoun County participated in 5 day Animal & Vet Camp in 2015.

- » 77 percent of 4-H Great Lakes & Natural Resources Camp attendees are more knowledgeable about careers in environmental science-related fields as a result of participating. - One youth from Calhoun attended GLNR Camp in 2015.

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Developing Youth and Communities, continued

In the U.S. today, many job openings for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) -related positions go unfilled due to a lack of qualified applicants.

- » 73 percent of 4-H Renewable Energy Camp participants reported being more likely to pursue a career in bioenergy-related fields as a result of attending camp.
- » The Great Lakes Education Program has reached more than 7,600 participants teaching economic growth and protection of coastal resources.
- » Seventy-Seven Calhoun County youth attended science literacy programs at 4-H Exploration Days in June at MSU. Youth attended 2 to 6 hour long sessions highlighting career opportunities on topics such as: Working with K-9 Dogs, Feed Science, Therapy Dogs, Veterinary School: is it right for you, Sheep Husbandry, Art & Design Science.
- » 15 Calhoun Youth and Adults traveled to MSU's Kettunen Center to attend one and two day workshops taught by MSU state experts to study animal systems, animal health, recognize illness and bio-security issues.
- » A Livestock Judging Series was taught at the Calhoun County fairgrounds bringing resources from around the state to teach 22 youth and 13 adults from Calhoun County the science of animal handling and traits of quality breeding.

Preparing children for academic success

Youth who are not proficient readers by fourth grade are 68 percent more likely to drop out of high school. Research shows that young children who develop literacy skills prior to entering kindergarten are better prepared to learn to read. In Michigan, there is an educational standard to ensure children from birth to 8 years old have access to learning and development programs.

Children's school readiness improves when parents and caregivers are taught methods that increase early childhood science and reading literacy, and ways to prepare children socially and emotionally. Programming provided through MSU Extension and other organizations prepare children for academic success by giving parents and caregivers the tools they need to help their children succeed in school. MSU Extension is also making learning to read more accessible by putting books into the hands of thousands of children in families living in low-income situations.

- » As a result of MSU Extension trainings and workshops, adults indicated an increase in knowledge of concepts of early childhood development and techniques that promote school readiness and academic success.

22 Calhoun County parents and care-givers attended MSUE early childhood education programs in 2015.

MSU Extension provides resources aligned with Michigan science education standards to teach confidence, leadership and responsibility related to STEM.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

Making an impact at the local and legislative level through Calhoun County 4-H

United Youth Leadership is a collaborative program sponsored by the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, the Calhoun Board of Commissioners and Michigan State University Extension 4-H Youth Program. Thirteen high school aged students participated in an extensive "hands-on" government/citizenship series of meetings and events that provided an opportunity for the youth to develop a better understanding of the role and purpose of tribal, county, and state government. They attended several meetings learning about both tribal and county government, touring tribal and county government facilities, attended Tribal Council and Board of Commissioner meetings, completed an intensive issues identification process, and were given time to present their identified issues to legislative leaders.

The student also spent four consecutive days in Lansing with approximately 100 other students attending Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience. They attended a legislative breakfast, participate in issue groups, visit with state agencies, lobbyists, and work on mock legislation at the state capitol.

Supporting Michigan's military families

Families of military personnel face unique challenges: frequent relocations, deployments, changing family roles, reintegration after deployment and more. These dynamics can be especially difficult for more than 200,000 children in military families throughout Michigan. To support to these families already sacrificing so much for our state and country, MSU Extension offers a range of programming to Michigan's military families and their children. This includes social, recreational and educational opportunities to connect military families with local resources and support, as well as predictable, safe and nurturing environments for military youth to unite with others facing the same challenges.

In the past year, MSU Extension's Operation: Military Kids, 4-H Military Partnerships and other general Extension and 4-H programming supported military families across Michigan, including hosting 24 military-focused events for 454 military youth and 672 military adults in 34 counties—Including 3 youth and 3 adults from Calhoun County.

MSUE Leadership and Civic Engagement (LCE) work team brought their volunteer and board development workshop to Calhoun County in May 2015 where 20 Youth and 5 Adult Volunteers learned about the roles of officers and parliamentary procedure. 33 other county youth spent time in LCE workshops elsewhere in the state building leadership skills.



4-H Youth leadership programs tap into the desire of Michigan's youth to get involved and become a community leader on subjects they are passionate about.. 13 Calhoun County youth participated in the United Youth Leadership Program

MAKING THE MOST OF OUR NATURAL 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.

Training Forest Resource Managers

Climate change related research indicates Michigan's forests and associated ecosystems will be affected by changing climatic conditions throughout the 21st century. To insure some degree of success in the future, forest resource managers should be taking forest adaption projections based on climate change into consideration when making management decisions. The Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science has been researching forest adaption based on science based climate variability projections. Based on this research they have developed forest adaption resources to aid forest managers in their decision making. MSU Extension has been partnering with the US Forest Service and others in offering training in applying these forest adaption concepts to ongoing forest management planning. MSU Extensions training assists natural resource professionals in applying these principal to insure a healthier more sustainable forest ecosystem over the long term of management objectives.

Following workshops offered over a two year period, 15 different long range forest management plans are being adjusted taking climate related adaption into consideration including one managed by the **the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) in Calhoun County**. These adaptations will impact more than one million acres of Michigan's forest. The NHPB manages a relatively small land base called the Pine Creek Reservation. For this project, tribal natural resources staff assessed the impacts of climate change on the forest lands managed by the tribe and designed several adaptation actions that could be pursued over time.

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Making the Most of Our Natural Assets, continued

Youth Explore County Park with “Picture This”

The Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Department/MSU Extension partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Battle Creek, the YMCA, the Battle Creek Parks and Recreation Department, the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance, Fort Custer, the North County Trail Chief Noonday Chapter, and the National Parks Service to bring at risk youth into a park setting to learn photography. The program titled “Picture This” included four outings engaging 59 children (aged six to seventeen) to learn photographic techniques through hands on instruction at four park site visits. The children were primarily from low income households and many had never visited a park beyond a neighborhood park before.

The children were immediately engaged in the project upon arrival at the four different park sites that included Kimball Pines Park, the Ott Biological Preserve, The Battle Creek Linear Trail and Fort Custer. Several children took over 500 hundred photographs of which they were supplied with a disk of them along with one print copy of the “best” photograph in their selection.

At the conclusion of the project, one photograph from each student’s pictures that was printed, framed and displayed in a gallery setting at the Battle Creek Community Foundation. The grand opening was open to participants and their families, volunteers, and agency staff to view the collection of photographs and rejoice in the overall success of the project.

The gallery remained open to the public for a month and was deemed such a success that the Battle Creek Community Foundation purchased a second set of prints for a traveling display. (Each child received the copy of their photo that was on display at the conclusion of the show.)

To date, the show has received national attention and is scheduled to open in Hot Springs National Park in Hot Springs, Arkansas in May of 2016. Currently it is scheduled to open in January 2016 at the Marshall Calhoun County office building and will remain available through the middle of February.



ENSURING SAFE AND SECURE FOOD

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.

As a result of MSU Extension food safety programs, individuals now use safer food handling, preparation, storage and preservation techniques.

Teaching residents and food entrepreneurs about food safety

From the farm to the kitchen table, food safety is an important issue. Foodborne illness outbreaks occur crossing all socioeconomic lines from production and consumption to preservation of foods. Foodborne illness costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars each year in lost productivity, hospitalization, long-term disability and even death. The Cottage Food Law took effect in July 2010, allowing home-processed foods to be sold to the public, emphasizing the need for food safety education.

MSU Extension Cottage Food Law workshops supply Michigan residents with up-to-date, scientifically backed information on food safety. Since 2013, nearly 4,000 Michigan residents learned about preserving food and preparing safe food for public consumption. Food consumers can have increased confidence when buying food products sold by someone with an MSU Extension food safety certificate related to producing cottage foods.

Participants in MSU Extension's Cottage Food Law workshops reported:

- » 46 percent will now sanitize surfaces before preparing food, in addition to 54 percent who already practiced this.
- » 46 percent of participants learned how to properly prevent food cross-contamination; 54 percent were already using safe food cross-contamination practices.
- » 13 Calhoun residents participated in "Cottage Food Law" and "Cottage to Commercial" trainings in 2015.

Jeanne Nichols, MSU Extension Food Safety Educator, worked with several Calhoun youth to make strawberry jam at Branch County's Dearth Center & along with Mark Thomas, MSU Product Center Innovation Counselor brought Cottage Food Law Workshop to Battle Creek in 2015.



Ensuring Safe and Secure food, continued

Educating the public on food systems

Educating the general public on the food system is an important first step in bringing people together to solve food security issues as well as expand markets for local food producers. MSU Extension community foods educators presented food system information to 145 community leaders in 2014. County. Participant evaluations revealed that the presentations increased their knowledge of the Michigan Good Food Charter and the benefits of purchasing locally and regionally grown food; there was 100% increase in those who said they would purchase more locally and regionally grown food after the presentation.

2015 Kalamazoo Area Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair

The Second Kalamazoo Area Community Supported Agriculture Fair hosted by MSU Extension was held on March 6, 2015 in partnership with Kalamazoo Valley Community College and People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo. Twelve CSA farmers whose farms and service area included Kalamazoo, Berrien, Calhoun and Allegan counties participated in the CSA Fair. The Fifty-five people who attended were provided information on each of the participating farms and their CSA programs, as well as general information about the CSA model for purchasing local food and a list of questions to ask farmers. A secondary MSU Extension table provided Michigan Fresh fact sheets on food safety and preserving foods and a seasonality chart for produce. Get Fresh Too cookbooks, featuring recipes and tips for preparing Michigan-grown fruits and vegetables, were offered as an incentive for filling out a program evaluation.

This event was overall successful in connecting area residents to resources in their local food system and increasing individual purchases of local and regional food. Farmers also appreciated the opportunity to connect with potential customers and to network with other farms. Participants indicated that the event increased the likelihood that they would purchase more local and regional food in the future, and their knowledge of where to purchase local food increased as a result of the CSA Fair.

MSU Extension continues to be an active partner and contributor to Good Food Battle Creek with Mariel Borgman, Extension Educator serving in that leadership role.



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.



In 2015, Seven county residents received Serve Safe certification through the 16 hour MSU Extension food handling training. Food consumers can have increased confidence when buying food products sold by someone with an MSU Extension food safety certificate.

KEEPING BUSINESSES STRONG

Meeting the needs of Michigan craft brewers



Consumers are eager to purchase made-in-Michigan products, and craft brewers in Michigan are attempting to meet this demand by using all Michigan-made ingredients in their suds. Michigan's growing craft beer industry, made up of dedicated small business owners, is improving the economy and instilling a sense of local pride in regions throughout Michigan, which are seeing their locally made brews get national attention.

Michigan brewers are looking for high-quality, affordable malt and hop products with consistent quality and availability. If these needs are met, then the craft brewing industry will continue to grow to support positive economic development for local communities. MSU Extension has educators and specialists supporting the growing hops and craft brew industries, and is working to help them meet their biggest challenges going forward:

- » Currently, there are only two small malt houses in the state with more needed to keep up with demand.
- » Farmers will have to learn to produce high-quality malting barley and hops both in and out of the traditional growing season.
- » Return on investment for farmers will need to be competitive with other available crops.
- » Start-up costs are high and there is a lack of key control measures.
- » The inaugural Great Lakes Hop and Barley Conference was held in Grand Rapids in 2015 coordinated by MSU Extension and AgBioResearch and the Michigan Brewers Guild. The event drew 350 participants (3 who identified themselves from Calhoun County).

Helping farmers make business decisions

The 2014 Farm Bill contained new farm programs that required complex decisions by farmers and landlords in late 2014 and early 2015. 38 Calhoun County producers took part in MSU Extension programs designed to provide producers and landlords with education, resources and tools to help them be aware of actions that needed to be taken to prepare for making important production and business decisions. Decisions made this year will have implications for the life of the farm bill (2018).

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Keeping Businesses Strong, continued

MSU Extension and the MSU Product Center

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.



The MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assists county residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio economy. The innovation counselor has special training to deliver these services to local residents. Business counseling is conducted on a one-on-one basis and may take place at the MSUE office or the client's home or business location. The assistance provided is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include things like developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain or seeking funding options. The innovation counselor also assists clients in accessing specialized services they may need that are offered through Michigan State University like feasibility studies, nutritional labeling and packaging assistance.

2014-2015 data shows that 56 counseling sessions took place in Calhoun County to assist six entrepreneurs. Specialty food processors were connected with MSU services on campus where they received assistance with food safety, product classification and labeling. The Product Center also assisted Farmers on Move which is headquartered in Battle Creek. Farmers on the Move is the only cooperative of Hispanic farmers in Michigan. With 13 members on 12 different farms they grow and market fresh produce with a quality assurance plan and full product traceability.

Business & Food Safety

In the interest of providing safe food, retailers are requesting producers be certified in USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) or other certified food safety program. In 2015, Phil Tocco, Extension Educator provided a GAP workshop for 8 Calhoun producers.

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



“The Marketplace Trade Show was a fun opportunity to talk to buyers and make connections with other food producers,” says owner Hether Frayer. “My MSU Product Center Counselor, Mark Thomas, has been an invaluable resource. He has helped with labeling business planning and HACCP planning.”

KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY

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.

Working to improve social and emotional health

Many negative factors affect social and emotional health, including ongoing and toxic stress that may result from situations including abusive relationships, bias, damaging coping behaviors and relationship violence. Across the lifespan, people faced with these situations and settings are at risk for a wide range of physical, psychological, social, emotional, cognitive, financial and spiritual health challenges. The United States spends an estimated \$425 billion in direct and indirect costs of violence each year.

RELAX: Alternatives to Anger is designed to actively engage adult learners and child caregivers in a group setting to increase knowledge and skills around anger management and to give adults constructive ways to deal with anger. Aspects of promoting social emotional health are woven throughout the training and include expressing emotions, navigating stress, resolving interpersonal conflict, taking another's perspective, feeling capable and whole and building skills for forming and maintaining satisfying, healthy and supportive relationships.

Suzanne Pish, Extension Educator works with the Juvenile Home in Battle Creek to bring RELAX to them. Two series were completed in 2015. teaching anger management to 51 youth, over half from Calhoun County.

- » Participants increased their knowledge about the impacts of healthy and unhealthy relationships on individuals and settings.
- » One in two participants improved their ability to respond to one's own social-emotional needs and the social-emotional needs of others. For example, program participants work hard to be calm and talk things through and when they get upset, and try to end on a positive note.
- » Other outcomes included increased knowledge about ways to foster safe and fair relationships such as using positive communication skills and decreased involvement with unhealthy/abusive behaviors and relationships.

As a result of RELAX, participants reported being more respectful of others feelings and are working hard to make sure loved ones are not hurt emotionally or physically.

Programs focus on helping participants gain the skills needed to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods; increase their physical activity; breastfeed their babies and stretch their food dollars.



Keeping People Healthy, continued

- » As a result of the program, participants reported being more respectful of others feelings, working hard to make sure that those loved ones are not hurt emotionally or physically, and taking time to understand how others feel.
- » Participants report knowledge gain of child development and stages of self-control and how to help children with self-control and activities to assist children with self-control.
- » Two RELAX programs were held in Calhoun County reaching 65 caregivers and adults.

Fighting obesity through education

Michigan has the 11th highest adult obesity rate in the United States, according to the CDC. More than 30 percent of adults are obese, and an additional 35 percent are considered overweight. Nearly 80 percent of both adults and youth do not consume adequate amounts of fruits and vegetables.

MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Topic areas include nutrition, physical activity, food safety and food resource management. Programs focus on helping participants gain the skills needed to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods; increase their physical activity; breastfeed their babies and stretch their food dollars.

- » More than one-third of youth decreased their intake of sugary drinks.
- » Nearly one-third of youth increased their level of physical activity.
- » Nearly half of adults increased their daily vegetable and fruit consumption.
- » More than two-thirds of adults increased time spent being physically active, including three-quarters of older adults.
- » More than two-thirds of adults reported improved ability to make their food dollars go further.

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.



MSU Extension reached more than 87,000 adults and young people across the state through programming. Nearly one-third of youth increased their level of physical activity and more than two-thirds of adults increased time spent being physically active, including three-quarters of older adults.

Keeping People Healthy, continued

MSU Extension's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) programs teach adults how to make the most of their food dollars, by developing skills such as menu planning, understanding recipes and keeping food safe.

Teaching valuable healthy-eating skills

In 2011, 17.5 percent of people in Michigan were considered to be living below the poverty level. More than 1.7 million Michigan residents receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

MSU Extension's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) programs including Cooking Matters, Project Fresh, Healthy Harvest and Show Me Nutrition teach adults how to make the most of their food dollars, by developing skills such as menu planning, understanding recipes and keeping food safe. Participants learned about the nutrition and health benefits of foods to feed their families in healthy ways. MSU Extension nutrition education programs reached 86,701 SNAP-Ed participants from 82 of Michigan's 83 counties in the in the 2014-2015 fiscal year:

- » 94% of the adult participants completing a series had a positive change in dietary quality at exit
- » 74% of adults showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices such as planning meals, making healthy food choices, preparing foods without salt, reading labels and having children eat breakfast.
- » 74% of adult participants showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices such as planning meals, comparing prices, not running out of food and using grocery lists.
- » 73% of teachers in grades K-2 reported that students participating in SNAP-ED programs increase fruit consumption.
- » 85% of seniors (older adults) participating in SNAP-ED programs reporting maintaining or increasing their vegetable consumption.

Calhoun County SNAP-Ed Statistics for the 2014-2015 program year:

- » Total number of adults in completing a nutrition education course series (at least 4 hours of training) = 156 (equates to 871 contacts)
- » Adults in one time presentations = 686 individuals
- » Total Youth in Series (at least 4 hours of nutrition education training) = 214
- » Youth in one time presentation = 1571

Participants learned about the nutrition and health benefits of foods to feed their families in healthy ways.



SUPPORTING FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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.

Webinars Provide Farmers with On-demand learning

The Integrated Pest Management Academy Online Webinar Series is an on-demand, online webinar series that allows participants to begin to understand IPM, the tenants on which the concept is based and available resources. Increasing the use of IPM reduces the use of unnecessary pesticides on the farm. The series covers basic entomology, plant pathology, soil science, pesticides and scouting. With more MSU Educators now providing content the program has grown from 8 to 17 webinars from which to choose. Specific commodity classes such as Chestnut IPM, Fruit crops, Hop IPM, Vegetables, Nursery Crops are offered as well as special topics such as Growing Bee-Friendly Plants.

Viewers are able to request up to five recertification credits toward their pesticide applicators license in the State of Michigan. Between 8/23/14 and 10/2/15, there were 1,968 webinar sessions viewed and represented at least 439 unique visitors.

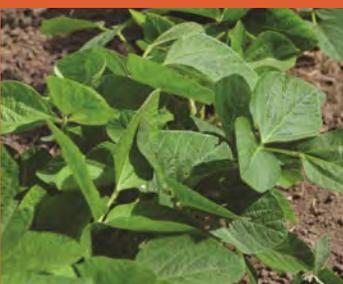
30% identified as growers, .3% as policy makers, 9% as crop consultants, 33% as landscapers, 11% as agriculture educators, 2% pesticide distributors, 7% students, 23% recreational gardeners and 6% were members of the general public.

Thirty-seven viewers applied for Michigan pesticide recertification credits (140 commercial applicator credits and 63 private applicator credits).

82% of respondents said they intended to increase the adoption of IPM strategies and tools based on the information presented in the webinar.

» Calhoun county had 31 participants in the program during this reporting period (up from 9 in 2013-2014 program year).

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



Viewers of the The Integrated Pest Management Academy Online Webinar Series reported an acreage impact of 1,553,199 acres. Thirty-one participants were residents of Calhoun County. Improving knowledge in IPM strategies reduces the use of unnecessary pesticides on farms.

The Michigan Family Farms Conference is hosted annually in Calhoun County by Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS). MSU Extension provides technical expertise and teaches workshops across a variety of topics at this conference designed as a forum for beginning, small scale and culturally diverse farmers to network, learn and build sustainable family farms.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

New Farmer Webinar Series

Michigan citizens interested in engaging in new agricultural 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. Providing basic, practical information to people interested in, or already engaging in, new farm enterprises helps these small business develop sound production and marketing plans. New farm businesses provide jobs, income and increased economic and social stability, and increased food security to rural and other communities.

The Michigan State University Extension Beginning Farmer Webinar Series began in 2012 with three webinars and has grown to offering a catalogue of 20.

In 2014, 311 people registered for a total of 455 webinar views. The 2015 series included twenty webinars offered from January 26 through April 20, 2015, 198 people from fifty-four Michigan counties (including 2 from Calhoun), twelve other states and three other countries registered for 1,845 webinar views.

Participants include 60% current growers, 37% future growers, 3% consultants. Acreage of farms reported is 0 to 650 acres. Preliminary results of evaluations reveal that 97% found the series valuable and plan to use resources they learned about during the series. 11% report job creation because of the series.

Soybean Management and Research Technology

Soybean yield increases have not kept pace with those of corn, wheat and sugar beets. On average, soybean producers are losing 1 to 2 bushels per acre due to harvest losses. Soybean producers that irrigate their beans are not satisfied with their irrigated soybean yields. In some cases, dryland yields are higher than irrigated yields. On-farm research and education may help soybean producers overcome these challenges. Several SMaRT programs are held across the state. 10 Calhoun County producers attended in 2015. Results from the 2014 programs revealed:

- » 98% of the respondents gained new knowledge by participating in the program.
- » 83% said that they utilized the information they learned at the programs on their farms.
- » Twenty three (23) producers indicated that they *actually* earned additional money in 2014 by implementing the new information they learned at the programs.

4 Calhoun County farmers along with 64 other participants toured nutrient management research plots conducted at MSU as part of the annual nutrient management update and plot tour hosted by Kurt Steinke, Extension specialist and George Silva Extension Educator.



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- » The average amount of additional income realized by implementing the new information was \$13.40 per acre. Because the new information was implemented on 5,338 acres, the *actual* financial impact of the programs was \$71,529 in 2014 alone.

Responding to Pork Industry Challenges

The pork industry has faced many challenges with the introduction and spread of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv), among other diseases. Livestock transporters have been identified as a major partner in the production chain as they serve as the link that connects the pork producer to the packer for product delivery. Advancement of knowledge revolving around the biosecurity issues of livestock transportation will ensure more awareness, possible re-evaluation of implemented practices to protect not only on-farm investments but other assets and businesses that are required for product delivery within the pork industry.

The MSU Extension Pork Team worked with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and the Michigan Pork Producers Association and the USDA to deliver Clean Trucks and Clean Drivers Education Program for Livestock Transporters, transportation company owners, pork producers and truck wash personnel. Expert instructors from Extension and Industry focused on bio-security issues from swine production to livestock transportation to ensure the health and growth of the industry and a demonstration on appropriate application of disinfectants to a livestock transportation trailer. Participants received a bio-security kit equipped with necessary tools to improve bio-security practices while transporting livestock. Twenty-one participants from 8 counties (**6 from Calhoun County**) attended the program held at the Travel America Truck Stop in Tekonsha. The attendees accounted for the ownership of over 8200 sows and 26 livestock transportation vehicles.

In response to industry, the Pork team partnered with MDARD, the Michigan Pork Producers Association, JBS United and support from USDA Agreement Funds to deliver an educational program for pork producers entitled: Health Champions - Protecting and Improving Your On-Farm Investment. Specifically, the program was designed to target smaller scale operations that focus on producing pigs for exhibition and niche markets. With a focus on biosecurity, the program was offered in 3 locations across the State and attended by 102 participants residing in 30 different Michigan counties (**2 from Calhoun County**).

Animal Welfare Issues focus of Battle Creek Program

An MSUE program for animal control officers and law enforcement personnel was held at the 2015 Michigan Partnership for Animal Welfare's, Great Lakes Animal Welfare Conference in Battle Creek, in October. The two day conference included classroom and on-farm learning in animal care for beef, dairy cattle and horses. The on-farm portion focused on housing and management of dairy cattle and beef; and handling, haltering equine. There were 25 attendees from 15 Michigan counties including Calhoun.



MSUE's Pork Team partnered with state and federal agencies and industry to provide hands on training and demonstration kits to teach bio-security strategies to livestock producers and handlers

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