We hope you enjoy reading this 2016 annual report outlining the services of MSU Extension in Shiawassee County. We have been in this community for over 100 years and will continue to serve as a valuable resource.

This report provides an overview of the variety of MSU Extension programming that residents of Shiawassee County participated in over the last year.

MSU Extension faculty and staff translate the scientific information gleaned from MSU AgBioResearch and other campus units into real world applications.

Throughout the history of the Cooperative Extension Service, founded by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, MSU Extension has worked hard to support an environment of collaboration where innovation and creativity can flourish.

Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension programs in Shiawassee County.

Diane Smith
District 9 Coordinator

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MSU EXTENSION’S EXPANDED DIGITAL REACH THROUGHOUT THE STATE

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 http://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 MSU Extension than 4,000 likes and on Twitter with more than 1,300 followers.

Shiawassee County MSU Extension Facebook has 239 likes and the Shiawassee County 4-H has 877 likes.

‡From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016
MSU Extension 4-H programs have demonstrated that they help youth reduce high-risk behaviors such as drug use that lead to involvement with the court system. Michigan 4-H teaches youth to complete tasks, solve problems and seek help they might need from peers and adults. This helps to prepare current and future leaders by offering numerous opportunities for leadership and skill development. With innovative ideas, renewed energy and the ability to look beyond preconceived obstacles, youth have the capacity to change the world.

4-H Clubs

4-H Clubs are the foundation of every successful 4-H Program. They provide volunteers and youth with unlimited opportunities for learning, relationship building and fun. The primary purpose of 4-H Clubs is to support the development of each youth through building significant and lasting relationships with adults and other youth. In 2015-2016, Shiawassee County had 59 clubs, 739 youth members in 4-H Community Clubs, and 170 adult volunteers working with the youth.

4-H Special Interest Clubs (SPIN Clubs) and Short Term Programs

1,695 youth were enrolled through SPIN clubs and Short-Term programs. Short-Term Programs centered around livestock judging, agriculture, science, and leadership. SPIN Clubs this year focused on photography and environmental education. Local partners for the SPIN Clubs were Pleasant Valley Summer Program, Pleasant Valley Impact Center and Shiawassee HOPE.

4-H Council Supports Youth Activities

The Shiawassee County 4-H Council provided partial scholarships for youth to attend camp, state shows and conferences such as the State 4-H Dog Show, the State 4-H Goat Show, and the Michigan 4-H Dairy Conference, to name a few. The Council’s main fundraiser to generate funds for these purposes is the 4-H Food Stand.
Supporting STEAM Careers Through Youth Programming

The best practices around creative, critical thinking in STEAM encourage projects that “throw away the instructions” and are very self-guided.

The future of Michigan lies, in part, in the hands of its students’ abilities to excel in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM). Science literacy among school-aged youth in Michigan is below the national average, directly impacting college readiness. MSU Extension provides resources aligned with Michigan science education standards to teach confidence, leadership and responsibility related to STEAM. MSU Extension staff have provided the following workshops and contests with a total of 169 youth in Shiawassee County attended seminars such as the following; Youth Dairy Days – State Quiz Bowl; Earth Day Boy Scout Camporee; State 4-H Dog Show; MI 4-H State Goat Show; MI 4-H 4-H Goat Member and Volunteer Workshop; Teen and Adult Horse Leaders Conference; Zoonotic Disease Prevention; Michigan 4-H Shooting Sports State Shoot; MI 4-H Companion Animal Camp; MI 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show; 4-H/FFA Livestock Judging Contest; State 4-H Trail Ride, 4-H Beef Sheep Swine Workshop; Teen Spokesperson Workshop.

4-H Summer Camp

Overall, 60 Shiawassee County youth and 25 counselors attended camp this year in June at Camp Neyati located on Crooked Lake in Lake Station. Campers enjoyed arts, crafts, archery, swimming, boating, games, nature, science, dancing, basic structural design and making new friends while developing their independence in a camp setting.
The best practices around creative, critical thinking in STEAM encourage projects that “throw away the instructions” and are very self-guided.

MsU Exploration Days

This year, **33 Shiawassee County** youth attended Exploration Days. Explorations Days, a 3-day event on MSU’s campus in June, is designed to help youth learn new ideas and techniques, increase their interest in and readiness for college, explore career options, and develop their decision making, independence and teamwork skills. They also meet and interact with other youth from different backgrounds and areas throughout Michigan.

Capitol Experience and Citizenship Washington Focus

**3 Shiawassee County** youth were able to participate and learn how state government works. Youth were able to examine a current policy from a variety of perspectives and visit State Senators and Representatives. In addition, **2 youth** attended Citizenship Washington Focus which is a week long study in Washington D.C. with a tour of Gettysburg Battle Fields and a program at the National 4-H Center.

Early Childhood Youth Education

MsU Extension focuses education on those formative years between birth and five years old. A total of **41 Shiawassee County participants** such as Headstart Teachers and Supervisors, childcare providers, after school program teachers, grandparents, and other community members attended such sessions. Session topics offered were as follows: Early Geometry and Constructive Play; A Panel Discussion With Experts; Sensory Awareness and Fine Motor Development; Language and Speech; Resilience Toolbox; Outdoor Play; Importance of Art Education; Finding a Balance Between Technology and Early Childhood; Emotion Coaching; Positive Discipline.
Teaching Valuable Healthy-Eating Skills

Approximately 16.2 percent of people in Michigan were considered to be living below the poverty level. More than 1.5 million Michigan residents qualify to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

MSU Extension’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) programs in Shiawassee County reached 123 adults and 836 youth (Oct. 2015-Sept. 2016) who participated in a series of educational sessions, and another 1153 adults and 840 youth who participated in one-time presentations.

Through our programs, adults and youth learn how to 1) make the most of their food dollars, 2) understand food labels, 3) make healthy food choices, 4) prepare and portion food, 5) plan menus, 6) understand recipes and 7) keep food safe.

The curriculums, teaching tools and venues used to teach the programs include:

- **Curriculums:** Eat Healthy Be Active, Cooking Matters, Show Me Nutrition, Eating Healthy Adds Up, Grow It Try It Like It, Eat Smart Live Strong, WIC Project FRESH, Discover MI FRESH

- **Curriculum Highlight:** Show Me Nutrition Curriculum—Youth programming continues to be a cornerstone of educational programming in Shiawassee County. Children participate in a six-week series of lessons about important health themes such as nutrition, food safety, physical activity, media influence and body image.

- **Venues:** MSU Extension has provided programming in over 25 different locations and with different partners throughout Shiawassee County. These locations include community centers, faith-based organizations, schools, day care facilities, WIC, Head Start, public housing complexes, senior centers and other locations.

Chronic Disease Self-Management (PATH)

Michigan State University Extension disease prevention and management programs provide participants with strategies to improve the quality of their diets, manage chronic health conditions and reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes. Access to high-quality and affordable disease prevention and management education programs such as those that MSU Extension provides is essential to saving lives, reducing disabilities and lowering the costs of everyone’s medical care. MSU Extension’s Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) for Diabetes program equips participants, their family members and caregivers to face the daily challenges of living with diabetes. This year, 32 Shiawassee County residents participated in Disease Prevention and Management Education and 5 residents participated in PATH for Diabetes in 2016. The participants reported improved health status at the end of the program as well as decreased symptoms of fatigue and pain.
Keeping People Healthy

When you support MSU Extension, residents learn safe food handling practices, increase their physical activity and improve the quality of their diets. Encouraging these healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs as well as reduces chronic health conditions.

Improving Nutrition and Increasing Physical Activities in Michigan Communities

Low 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 as well as increase their physical activity. These programs reached more than 112,000 adults and youth across the state in over 1,600 different locations.

Locally, our impact has been as follows:
- 81% of 3rd to 5th graders improved their knowledge or ability to choose foods according to the Federal Dietary Recommendations
- 70% of adults always followed food safety measures taught in the program
- Over 75% of adults in our programs showed improvement in one or more nutrition practice (plan meals, makes healthy food choices, prepared food without salt, reads nutrition labels or has children eat breakfast)
Ensuring Safe And Secure Food

Teaching Residents About Food Safety
MSU Extension offers ServSafe, a national certification program, for those working in food service, especially managers and other leaders. ServSafe teaches about foodborne illness, how to prevent it and how to train employees about the latest food safety issues. This year, 2 Shiawassee County residents completing the 8 hour ServSafe course.

MSU Extension also teaches Cottage Food Law seminars that teach residents how to prepare and store foods in home kitchens for a home based business or community fundraiser.

MSU Extension Reducing Foodborne Illnesses Through Home Preservation Education

Food preservation is both a popular hobby and a small business opportunity, but people who preserve food without following scientifically proven food preservation techniques increase the risk of foodborne illness. As a result of MSU Extension food safety programs, individuals now use safer food handling, preparation, storage and preservation techniques. This reduces medical expenses, reduces food recalls and contributes to the financial stability of food businesses. This benefits other community members by decreasing the economic costs of foodborne illnesses, estimated at $6.9 million in 2000.

7 Shiawassee County adults enjoyed the following Food Preservation courses MSU Extension offered:

- Preserving Food at Home—Canning Basics
- Fresh Pack and Fermenting Pickling Methods
- Canning Jams and Jellies
- Blanching and Freezing
- Drying Fruits, Veggies & Herbs
- Keeping Food Safe At Fundraisers
Supporting Food and Agriculture

MSU Field Crops Education
22 Shiawassee County residents participated in the following seminars on field crop subjects: Tile Drainage and Nutrients in the Root Zone, Crop and Pest Management, Milk and Grain Marketing Series, Ag Review, and Ag Innovation Day.

Pesticide Review Series
21 Shiawassee County residents attended the Pesticide Review sessions by MSU Educators to prepare for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) pesticide applicator certification exam. This certification is required for farm pesticide application on field crops.

Ag Newsletter
150 Shiawassee County residents received the MSU Extension Agriculture newsletter developed by Marilyn Thelen, Ag Educator in Clinton County who covers Shiawassee County.

Smart Gardener Series
13 Shiawassee County residents participated in the Smart Gardening Series that included seminars such as Green Thumb Expo, Earth Friendly Practices and Gardening, Composting, and Vegetable Gardening 101.

Ornamental Horticulture
8 Shiawassee County residents participated in educational sessions on various topics such as Christmas Trees, nurseries, floriculture and greenhouses.

Soil Testing and Soil Test Interpretation
9 Shiawassee County residents bought consumer horticulture soil test kits and 15 farmers bought crop soil test kits. From vegetable gardens, lawns to healthy trees and farm land, soil testing and proper use of nutrients is key to the smart garden and farmers soil.

MSU Extension’s interactive soil test website provides smart soil messages using tip sheets. This site links to Ask An Expert and the Consumer Horticulture Lawn and Garden Hotline as a resource for home horticulturalists.

Test kits, as well as additional publications on a wide variety of topics, are available at the local MSU Extension office or at shop.msu.edu (click the MSU Extension Bookstore link on the top right.)
Michigan agriculture continues to be a growing segment of the state’s economy. MSU Extension teaches producers profitable and efficient business production practices while learning to optimize and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers to conserve and protect water resources. The number of households raising a portion of their own food and raising livestock or gardening for pleasure or relaxation continues to increase as well.

**Breakfast on the Farm**

17 Shiawassee County residents attended the Breakfast on the Farm (BOTF) event in Tuscola County. The BOTF gives consumers and farm neighbors a first-hand look at modern food production and the farm families who work hard to produce a safe, wholesome food supply for Michigan communities and the world.

**Animal Production Seminars**

10 Shiawassee County residents attended the MSU Small Ruminant Health Symposium were veterinarians, animal health professionals and small ruminant (sheep and goat) owners and producers learn from lectures and panels led by faculty and professionals of small ruminant health. Michigan ranks 19th in the country in dollar value of small ruminant production. In addition, 4 Shiawassee County residents attended dairy and equine trainings.

**Hops Scouting Workshop**

18 Shiawassee County residents attended the Hop Scouting workshop that trained participants in scouting and Integrated Pest Management.

**Soybean Management and Research**

27 Shiawassee County residents visited Baker College in Owosso to attend the educational program called SMaRT (Soybean Management and Research Technologies) focusing on farm research projects. Participants learned how various management practices and products impacted soybean yields and income to guide their seed selection and production for maximum profit.

**Cover Crops Nutrient Management**

35 Shiawassee County residents participated in workshops that highlighted research addressing vital issues confronting the Michigan field crops industry such as soil health, nutrient management and environmental stewardship. Open discussions centered on topics such as fertilizer practices, nitrification inhibitors, 4R stewardship practices, cover crops and drought management.

**Beginning Farmers Webinar Series**

4 Shiawassee County residents participated in this webinar covering basic, start-up information for new farming enterprises. The audience was primarily people currently engaged, or considering engagement, in smaller scale commercial agriculture.
Michigan Master Gardener Program (MMGP)

4 Shiawassee County residents completed a focused, 13-week training experience that provides in-depth education in many aspects of horticulture including trees and shrubs, flowers, vegetables, fruit, soil, water, pests, indoor plants and lawns. These volunteers can get involved in local gardening activities through the Master Gardeners of Shiawassee County.

Master Gardening Recertification

15 Shiawassee County residents were recertified by completing at least five hours of approved education programming.

Advanced Master Gardening

9 Shiawassee County residents achieved their Advanced Master Gardening status which is a recognition of outstanding service and commitment to the Master Gardener Program. This requires an additional 50 volunteer hours and an additional 25 education hours within five years of your original certification date.

MSUE Lawn and Garden Hotline

MSUE Consumer Horticulture educators and trained Master Gardener Volunteers are dedicated in helping answer any at-home garden questions through the hotline. MSUE has an “Ask an Expert” button on the webpage msue.msu.edu, or call toll-free 1-888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464). Staff and volunteers are available statewide on Friday's from 9am-12pm.

You can also receive valuable information and sign up for MSUE's Gardening news at migarden.msu.edu.
Keeping Businesses Strong

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. This fuels the economy by creating and retaining jobs while helping to ensure a healthy tax base.

Building Youth Entrepreneurial Spirit and Skills

MSU Extension is 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. Lately 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.

Growing Food Processors

As the backbone of the economy, small business owners play a critical role in the prosperity of the nation. The MSU Product Center specializes in helping food processing entrepreneurs succeed. Whether they are struggling to develop their concept for a new business or product, or are an existing business that needs advanced studies to help launch their new product, the MSU Product Center can help. The Product Center can also connect entrepreneurs with experts within or outside MSU for advanced marketing or feasibility studies, assistance with nutritional facts labeling or processing to meet Federal Food and Drug Administration requirements.
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 Healthy Watersheds**

A hands-on session was held in District 9 at the Sloan Museum as part of their exhibit on Water’s Extreme Journey. Participants built their own watershed models and experimented with the impact of wetlands on reducing runoff pollution. They also learned about green infrastructure techniques used to replicate the benefits of wetlands in filtering out nonpoint source pollution both in urban and agricultural contexts.

**Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture**

MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant hosted the Regional Fisheries Workshops in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Division and USGS Great Lakes Science Center. The seminar covered the following topics:

- Surveying Forage Fish
- Saginaw Bay Reef Habitat Assessment
- Saginaw Bay Youth Fishing Education
- Saginaw Bay Walleye and Yellow Perch Fisheries and Management Updates
Staff Located in the Shiawassee County Office:

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6. Martina Valdez, Secretary I, 989-743-2251, valdezm3@anr.msu.edu

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