



Huron County

2015–2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

Partnerships, People and Programs...the essence of our promise to our stakeholders in Huron County. Whether it is the delivery of food and nutrition education programs to limited income clients, the development of entrepreneurial opportunities in communities, leadership and citizenship development with our young people or delivering quality educational experiences for development of agriculture and agribusinesses, PARTNERSHIPS are the cornerstone of our work with individuals, families and communities. As you review this annual report you will witness plenty of examples of our relationships with others in Huron County, the District and across the state. PEOPLE are the reason why we are in this business; the business of providing non-formal educational programming to meet the needs, issues or opportunities of our communities. PROGRAMS that support the mission of helping improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical needs, issues and opportunities.



This report highlights specific programs within our four major program areas: Health and Nutrition - Keeping people healthy; Ensuring strong communities - Governance, conflict management, and community development; Developing youth and communities - Literacy, school readiness; and 4-H programs that offer youth learning skills that prepare them for the workforce, encourage them to be civically active, and ensure success in school.

Thank you for your PARTNERSHIP to deliver sound educational PROGRAMS that are meaningful to the PEOPLE of Huron County.

Joseph W. Bixler

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District Coordinator, District 10

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FUNDING	
2016 County Budget	\$167,932
MSU Contribution	\$292,241

MEASURING IMPACT

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

4-H Program.....	701
Food Safety Programs.....	757
Health & Nutrition Programs.....	1,590
Field Crops - Agricultural Programs	718
Livestock - Agricultural Programs.....	431
TOTAL IMPACT.....	4,197

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

DISTRICT 10 DIGITAL REACH

From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016, 38,019 visitors from District 10 including Huron County viewed more than 101,482 pages of rich, science-based content on the MSU Extension website (msue.msu.edu). Of those, 49.5 percent were first-time visitors. Search engine rankings make msue.msu.edu one of the most visited Cooperative Extension Systems education sites in the country.

about 16,900 email addresses.‡ You can sign up for these informative newsletters by visiting msue.msu.edu and clicking on "Newsletter Sign Up" texting MSUE to 22828.

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

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

Developing Youth and Communities



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

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

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

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

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

In the past year Huron County 4-H youth took part in the following programs:

4-H Exploration Days

» 4-H Exploration Days — Michigan's largest annual 4-H event is designed to help students:

- Learn new ideas and techniques
- Increase their interest in and readiness for college
- Explore career options
- Develop decision-making
- Develop their independence and teamwork skills

They also meet and interact with people from different backgrounds and areas throughout Michigan. 4-H volunteers and staff are on hand to provide oversight and guidance. Participants pre-register, choosing from more than 200 session options which they attend throughout their three-day stay. Huron County's delegation consisted of 34 youth and 6 adult chaperones. 2016 had 11 first-time delegates.



Huron County
Exploration Days delegates



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

4-H Ambassador Program

» **4-H Ambassador Program** — Is designed to follow new 4-H guidelines and to get more youth involved.

The 4-H Ambassador Program is based on a 3-tier system:

- Senior Ambassadors – entering grades 9-12 (3 are selected)
- Junior Ambassadors – entering grades 6-8 (3 are selected)
- Cloverbud Ambassadors – 5 to 8 year olds as of January 1 of the current year (all participants)

4-H youth are highly encouraged to complete the application process and go through an interview where Junior & Senior applicants are evaluated by two to three judges on the following:

- Follows 4-H Dress Code
- Presentation of Self
- 4-H Activities
- 4-H Awards & Achievements
- Community Activities
- 4-H Leadership
- Initiative



2016 Senior Ambassador Candidates

4-H Cloverbuds must complete a short, one-page summary, and be interviewed by the three current Senior 4-H Ambassadors, and participate in various activities while being rotated through the interview process. In 2016, nine 4-H members applied for the Senior 4-H Ambassador Tier, one 4-H member applied for the Junior 4-H Ambassador Tier and eleven 4-H Cloverbuds automatically became 4-H Cloverbud Ambassadors.

4-H Club Explosion

» **4-H Club Explosion** — (formerly known as the 4-H Talent Show) provides an outlet for youth and 4-H Clubs to demonstrate their talents in regard to expressive arts through drama, dance, vocals, instruments, etc. This program also gives youth and 4-H Clubs the opportunity to publically demonstrate their accomplishments at the Huron Community Fair. In 2016, a total of seven acts were performed by 44 4-H members from seven 4-H Clubs.



4-H Club performs during 4-H Club Explosion at the Fair

4-H Camp

» **4-H Camp** — The main purpose is to get youth (ages 9 to 14) involved in an outdoor-living experience. Thumb Area 4-H Camp offers a golden opportunity for 4-H'ers and non-4-H'ers to make new friends and share experiences in camping, all while building and developing life skills. 4-H Camp activities include Great Lakes ecology, kayaking, mud hiking, swimming, archery, teambuilding skills, skits, games, crafts and so much more. Fifty-six youth and 14 adult chaperones, along with a team of 25 awesome teen counselors attended the 2016 Thumb Area 4-H Camp held July 6-8, at Camp Cavell in Lexington, Michigan.

Developing Youth and Communities, continued

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

4-H Projects Galore Workshop

» 4-H Projects Galore Workshop — 4-H Projects Galore Workshop allows all youth ages 5 to 19 (4-H and non-4-H members) to experience how to use their skills and gain new creativity through making different arts and crafts and other project areas. Seventeen different instructors taught a variety of projects such as woodworking, snow-globe snowmen, pencil drawings, campfire popcorn, para-cord flip flops, spring popcorn treats, wooden benches, mini-scrapbooks, soap carvings, wooden toolbox/caddies, fleece-tied blankets, basics of beading and jewelry making, personalized name boards, painted canvas with tape, photography, and a session on small animals (goats, rabbits & poultry). This annual workshop was attended by 36 youth in 2016 and is put together by the Huron County 4-H Council.



4-H Projects Galore participants constructing wooden tool caddies.



4-H Projects Galore participants learning how to carve soap.

Clothe-A-Child Program

» Clothe-A-Child Program — Each year Huron County 4-H Clubs are asked to help wrap empty two-part boxes for the Clothe-A-Child Program. The Clothe-A-Child Program provides complete outfits including underwear and socks to needy youth in Huron County at Christmas time. In 2015, 97 4-H members from nine 4-H Clubs wrapped more than 250 boxes; and in 2016, 75 4-H members from six 4-H Clubs wrapped approximately 175 boxes for this awesome program. This is a great community service project in which Huron County 4-H Clubs and their 4-H members participate in each year. Community service certificates are presented to 4-H members who wrap boxes.

4-H Proud Equestrian Program (PEP)

» 4-H Proud Equestrian Program — The 4-H Proud Equestrian Program (PEP) is a therapeutic horseback riding program that offers riding lessons to youth with special needs. It is limited to 18 participants. 4-H PEP is held for 12 weeks during the summer at the Huron Expo Center (fairgrounds) in Bad Axe on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. In order to be able to participate in the program, youth must be special needs and complete the Michigan 4-H Proud Equestrian Program Registration forms prior to riding. In 2016, 15 youth with special needs participated in the 4-H PEP horseback riding program. Not only do they get riding time, but they also spend time in a stable management class where they learn more about the horses and do some arts & crafts projects. Numerous 4-H leaders volunteer their own horses for this program each year.



4-H and non 4-H youth are creating their own name boards during 4-H Projects Galore

Developing Youth and Communities, continued

4-H'ers Earn Scholarships

» **4-H Council Scholarships Program** — Each spring the Huron County 4-H Council awards up to four \$500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are enrolled in the Huron County 4-H Program. The 2016 Huron County 4-H Council Scholarship recipients were:

- Jacob Aymen, son of Ric and Mary Aymen of Port Austin, is a member of the 4B's 4-H Club for the past thirteen years. Jake graduated from Bad Axe High School and is attending Central Michigan University majoring in Public Administration.
- Elizabeth Booms, daughter of Andrew and Dawn Booms of Harbor Beach, is a member of Country Corners 4-H Club for the past nine years. Elizabeth graduated from Harbor Beach Community High School and is attending Eastern Michigan University majoring in Speech-Language Pathology.
- Alexandria Camp, daughter of Lawrence and Kelly Camp of Harbor Beach, is a member of Rebel Riders 4-H Club for the past twelve years. Alexandria graduated from Ubyly Community High School and is attending Grand Valley State University majoring in Bio-Med Sciences.
- Brianna Hunsanger, daughter of David and Kelly Hunsanger of Bad Axe, is a member of 4B's 4-H Club for the past nine years. Brianna graduated from Bad Axe High School and is attending Alma College majoring in Biotechnology.

4-H'ers Earn Group State 4-H Award

» **Thumb Area 4-H Teen Counselors Win Group State 4-H Award** — In June 2016, a team of teen camp counselors competed for the Group State 4-H Award while attending 4-H Exploration Days at Michigan State University. Macy Knoblock of Huron County, Gabrielle Romero from St. Clair County, Ryan Rich and Ryan Zawodny both of Sanilac County represented Thumb Area 4-H Camp, as well as their fellow teen counselors. They wrote essays and created a presentation on the many life and leadership skills they developed as teen camp counselors. Their efforts gained this group first place recognition. They were presented the State 4-H Award which is the highest honor given by 4-H in the State of Michigan. The teen counselors train under the guidance of 4-H adult volunteer Jeanna Michalek.

Cathryne Goulet, previous Huron County 4-H Program Coordinator stated, "Thumb Area 4-H Camp would not be a growing success if it were not for the enthusiastic teen counselors who take their responsibilities seriously. This and Jeanna's commitment in having the teen leaders actively involved in the planning and execution of activities make the camping experience fun-filled. Everyone who attends the Thumb Area 4-H Camp goes home tired and with a smile on their face."



4-H State Award Winners

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food



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

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

Reducing foodborne illness through education of individuals, small businesses

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

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

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

To educate consumers about keeping their food safe, MSU Extension provides local programming in the areas of Food Preservation, Cooking for Crowds and ServSafe manager training for adults. Food safety educational presentations for youth or adults groups are also held upon request.

Results of programming from 2016 in Huron County include:

ServSafe Manager Training

» **ServSafe Manager Training** — ServSafe manager certification and education was provided for 33 foodservice employees representing local schools, churches and restaurants. A four hour ServSafe Food Handlers training for 14 school foodservice staff was held before school began. Having all school foodservice staff trained and knowledgeable about basic food safety principles is a good way to carry food safety messages through the entire school district and lunchroom.

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food, continued

Senior Market Fresh

» **Senior Market Fresh** — 259 Seniors citizens learned about keeping the produce safe that they purchase with their Senior Market FRESH coupons. When purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables at local farm markets, proper washing and storage of produce is critical and these messages were reinforced when Seniors received their coupons.

Youth Food Safety

» **Youth Food Safety** — 90 preschoolers received a food safety presentation to learn about staying healthy and germ free. A story book about germs is read to the students and “BAC” the puppet helps teach how to get rid of germs and stay healthy. Students love to meet “BAC” and teachers tell us that the preschoolers do a much better job washing their hands after the presentation. Parent reinforcement handouts are shared so as a family they can all take steps to reduce the presence of germs and bacteria in their homes.

Cooking for Crowds

» **Cooking for Crowds** — A Cooking for Crowds class was held at a local church in Port Austin for 11 church volunteers. Volunteers were educated on the basics of food safety when planning food events and food fundraisers to ensure safe food for the public. The information will also allow the participants to keep food safer in their own homes as well as when cooking for family and friends.

Food Safety Education

» **Food Safety Education** — Food safety education outreach was done at the Children’s Wellness Adventure Health Fair in Bad Axe and provided education and information for 350 families and kids. Kids and adults spun the MI Health Matters Wheel and answered questions about food safety to win prizes. Refrigerator thermometers were given to adults allowing them to make sure their refrigerator temperatures are 40 degrees or below.



Participants spin the MI Health Matters Wheel at the Children’s Wellness Adventure Health Fair

Photo courtesy WLEW Radio Station

Michigan FRESH Fact Sheets

» **Michigan FRESH Fact Sheets** — Michigan FRESH fact sheets educating on the safe use, storage and preservation of Michigan grown fruits and vegetables as well as beef, poultry, lamb, venison, pork, and eggs were distributed through two local farm markets as well as the MSU Extension office and all food safety programs. Also available are fact sheets to help with safe food preservation methods such as Basics of Water Bath Canning, Freezing Foods, Pressure Canning, and Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables. These fact sheets are valuable resources and hundreds have been distributed. To find the fact sheets, visit our website at : http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi_fresh or stop in the MSU Extension office.

Keeping People Healthy



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

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

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

In Huron County in 2016, residents were engaged in a variety of programs to enhance their health through interactive educational classes on nutrition and physical activity.

Senior Market Fresh

» **Senior Market FRESH** — Eight educational presentations for 259 seniors over the age of 60 in partnership with the Huron County Health Department were held in the summer of 2016. Seniors learned the importance of fruits and vegetables in their diets as well as received \$40 in coupons for free, fresh Michigan fruits and vegetables to spend at local farm markets to enhance their nutrition and health.

Show Me Nutrition

» **Show Me Nutrition** — 267 youth participated in a series of six classes about healthy eating, MyPlate, and being more physically active. All Headstart and Great Start Readiness Preschool classrooms in Huron County received the program which utilizes story books and activities to teach children about healthy eating.

Cooking Matters and Eat Healthy, Be Active

» **Cooking Matters and Eat Healthy, Be Active** — Nutrition education adult programming including Cooking Matters and Eat Healthy, Be Active. A series of classes for 83 participants throughout Huron County took place in 2016. Class participants learn not only about healthy eating but also basic cooking skills and preparation of healthy recipes.



Participants in a Cooking Matters class get hands on experience with the Program Instructor



Volunteer instructor helps Cooking Matters students

Keeping People Healthy, continued

Eat Smart, Live Strong (ESLS)

» **Eat Smart, Live Strong (ESLS)** — A nutrition education series for Seniors was held at the Huron County Senior Center for 14 senior citizens. This series combines both education about eating more fruits and vegetables along with adding more physical activity. During the six week series, seniors set goals, track their fruit and vegetable intake as well as physical activity level. Participants become much more aware of what they eat as well as their activity level by the end of the series.

Nutrition Presentations

» **Nutrition Presentations** — Presentations on various nutrition topics were held for 71 adults. Participants from around Huron County were given healthy eating tips during the 35 - 60 minute presentations. Topics varied from fresh fruits and vegetables to picky eaters and healthy snacks.

Smarter Lunchroom

» **Smarter Lunchroom** — The Laker Elementary and Laker Junior/Senior High lunchroom environments were assessed to determine additional ways to promote healthy foods and enhance the eating experience for students. Utilizing grant funds from Team Nutrition and Michigan Department of Education, the schools implemented improvements to enhance the lunchroom environment including branding for their school, posters displaying healthy foods and promoting fruits, vegetables and white milk.



Lunchroom at Laker Elementary School

What They Said

» **Success stories from program participants:**

“The classes have increased my awareness of food values and had changed my shopping list for the positive. I have switched to Greek yogurt, now cook whole-wheat pasta, and I have reduced my sodium intake.”

At the end of an ESLS series, Seniors shared:

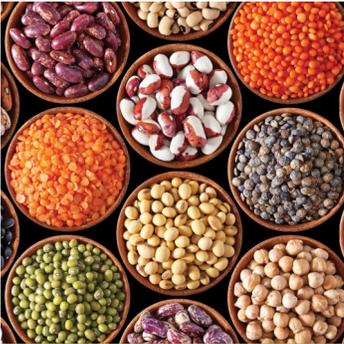
- 1) “I am more aware of trying to eat more fruits and am trying to get active. I never read food labels before and now am reading lots of them. I made chili over the weekend and rinsed the chili beans when I saw how much sodium they had.”
- 2) “We are eating more fruits and veggies. Since taking the classes, we are more conscious of what we eat and am doing the exercises provided with class and walking.”
- 3) “Feeling much better about me because I am eating better-very conscious of snacks using fruits and vegetables instead of sugar.”

“This program has helped me be more interactive with my children. I have never included them in kitchen activities because I wasn't sure how to involve them. After only 6 weeks of working with them and the instructors of this Cooking Matters class, my 9 year old along with my 11 year old have started making us dinner. Thank you for this opportunity.”



Healthy cooking is the focus during Cooking Matters classes

Supporting Food, Agriculture and Livestock



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

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

MSU Extension's Field Crops program aims to deliver current agronomic information to area crop growers. MSU Extension Field Crops Educator Bob Battel uses information generated by MSU campus-based researchers and local research/education plots to deliver the program.

Thumb Ag Research and Education (TARE)

» **Thumb Ag Research and Education (TARE)** — In 2016, local MSU Extension Field Crops educators and technicians planted, harvested and evaluated corn and soybean plots throughout a four county area (Huron, Sanilac, St. Clair, and Tuscola). TARE personnel planted five corn and three soybean plots where 65 corn hybrids and 71 soybean varieties were evaluated. TARE personnel also evaluated agronomic practices including planting population, and seed treatments. This information helps growers make input decisions on their farms.

Thumb Ag Reviews

» **Thumb Ag Reviews** — In December MSU Extension Field Crops educators delivered information gleaned from the 2016 plots to growers at five local meetings in Ubly, Richville, Lapeer, Sandusky, and New Lothrop. Information included data from the corn and soybean trials, as well as wheat and forage trials. Where applicable, information from multi-year studies was compiled and presented. Plot booklets were also distributed to participants at these meetings.



Thumb Ag Research and Education equipment used to plant a corn plot near Kinde in May

A Dairy Odyssey participant interacts with a cow



Supporting Food, Agriculture and Livestock, continued

Dry Bean Research

» **Dry Bean Research** — Huron County MSU Extension collaborated with the Michigan Bean Commission to establish a county dry bean plot and deliver results through a field day in August. In 2016, the dry bean plot was at the Gruehn Brothers farm near Sebewaing. At the plot, 58 dry bean varieties were evaluated. Huron County remains Michigan's top dry bean growing county, and is consistently one of the top three dry bean growing counties in the nation.

Pesticide Education

» **Pesticide Education** — Huron County MSU Extension offered two sessions of pesticide education to Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) users. This education serves to keep RUP users applying pesticides in a safe as well as economic fashion.

Thumb Ag Day

» **Thumb Ag Day** — Thumb Ag Day was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2016. Eighty vendors set up booths to meet with participants, and approximately 275 people attended the day long program. The morning educational sessions included Dennis Stein, MSU Extension Farm Management Educator who talked with participants about land price and rental rates; Jim Hilker, MSU commodity market specialist gave a market update; and Jeff Andresen, MSU agricultural meteorologist reflected on the 2016 growing season. In the afternoon, local MSU Extension Field Crops Educators Bob Battel, Phil Kaatz, and Martin Nagelkirk updated participants about their local field research in corn, soybeans, forages and wheat.



Hands on learning took place during Dairy Odyssey Days

Thumb Cattlemen Series

» **Thumb Cattlemen Series** — The Thumb Cattlemen Series starts in December and ends in April. The group meets once a month to listen to experts and discuss with each other topics that include animal well-being, animal health, fundamentals and opportunities in Michigan feedlots. In 2015-16, 196 people took part in this series coordinated by Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer.

Thumb Cattlemen Beef Quality Assurance Training

» **Beef Quality Assurance Training** — MSU Extension Educators Kable Thurlow and Jeannine Schwehofer trained beef producers on Beef Quality Assurance (BAQ) and the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) in December of 2016. Kable covered the overall mission of the BQA program, along with covering results of the most recent beef quality audit. He also spoke about employee education and training, cattle behavior, care and husbandry, livestock transportation (stock trailer BQA), euthanasia, injection site management, reading product labels and record keeping. Jeannine covered the VFD that took effect on January 1, 2017 and giving antibiotics to livestock. There were 15 farms from Huron County in attendance at this program.

Specialized Meat Processing Variance at Retail Establishments

» **Variance** — One meat processor from Huron County received assistance related to the Specialized Meat Processing Variance at Retail Establishments (Variance) that has recently been required through the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The food safety team plan required changes in current processing procedures and MSU Extension was able to assist in helping the processor meet current food safety standards. This enabled the businesses to continue manufacturing and selling processed meat products that are important to their bottom line.

Supporting Food, Agriculture and Livestock, continued

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)

» **HACCP Training** — Food processors have many challenges in their businesses. Food safety is one area that is of utmost importance to processors and impacts public health. Additionally, regulations related to food safety continue to change and increase in number. Jeannine Schwehofer coordinates the MSU Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) team that includes four additional MSU Extension specialists. This team conducts several HACCP trainings per year for the food industry. Huron County establishments participated in HACCP training, including two in 2016.

Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days

» **Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days** — This first time event was a program thought up by Huron County 4-H member, Addy Battel. In collaboration with Addy, MSU Extension was able to make this event happen. It was held on three different Saturdays throughout the summer. 4-H as well as non 4-H youth were able to experience three different local dairy farms. They participated in hands on activities and learned about animal science, agriculture and different career possibilities the dairy industry. The youth were also encouraged to try showing animals at fair or attending events like Dairy Days at MSU to further their knowledge of the dairy industry. This program saw 61 youth participate along with 56 parents and volunteers. Of the 61 youth who participated, almost half were from Huron County.



Several area youth participating in Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days

Optimizing Dairy Farm Profit

» **Optimizing Dairy Farm Profit** — With milk prices low, MSU Extension offered a program for dairy farmers and professionals with concepts to help optimize their profit. This program covered a variety of topics that can impact a farm's bottom line. It started with a current dairy market outlook followed by the importance of identifying and correcting bottlenecks. Participants learned about key financial indicators to monitor on dairy farms and the major differences between high and low profit farms. Several critical factors for successful dairy herd management were highlighted, including heifer raising strategies, optimum stocking density, labor productivity on farms, and the benefits of custom forage harvesting. This program saw 20 participants from area farms take advantage of it.

Breakfast on the Farm

» **Breakfast on the Farm** — Although not held in Huron County this past summer, Breakfast on the Farm saw a large turn out from the area. Held at Zwerk and Sons Farms in Vassar Michigan for over 2,500 people, Breakfast on the Farm saw more than 100 people from Huron County enjoy the morning on the farm along with a large number of Huron County volunteers. Breakfast on the Farm is an event used to teach people about agriculture. Each year it takes place on a local farm that opens their doors to allow the public in to see what a real farm looks like in modern agriculture. People can get their questions about agriculture answered by the experts, the farmers themselves. They can also sit down with people from their community and enjoy breakfast.



Breakfast on the Farm attendees looking over a piece of equipment used on Zwerk & Sons Farms

Extension Educators Serving Huron County

Staff Located in Huron County Office:

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