



# Presque Isle County 2016–2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

Hello from Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) District 14, which serves Alpena, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Montmorency, Otsego, and Presque Isle Counties.

We want to thank Presque Isle County for another year of partnership. Together we offer dynamic and diverse educational events and programs to people right here in our communities. MSUE is the outreach and engagement arm of Michigan State University and brings the latest research from campus directly to you. We believe education and innovative solutions can help address many of today's complex issues. We look forward to our continued service to Presque Isle County and the State.

In 2016, MSUE conducted focus group sessions throughout the state. We asked residents where our educational efforts should be focused. In January of 2016, MSUE District 14 conducted two such focus groups; one in Alpena and one in Gaylord. The top ten issues identified are summarized below. These local areas of focus have been combined with our statewide focus group results and will be used to prioritize our future direction and long-term planning. Thank you to those who participated in this process—your time is appreciated and your perspectives are important to us.

Lisa Anderson  
District Coordinator, District 14



## CONTACT US

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### MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

## Ten Issues Identified in MSU Extension District 14

- Youth Development/Education (4H)
- Life Skills
- Citizenship
- Community Development
- Race Relations
- Nutrition
- Farm to School
- Water Quality Issues
- Agriculture
- Bovine Tuberculosis Research

## Digital Outreach Across Michigan



More than 3.7 million visitors viewed more than 7.2 million pages.



1.3 million newsletters covering 90 topic areas were sent to about 16,900 email addresses.



MSU Extension has more than 3,500 Facebook followers and more than 2,800 Twitter followers.

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**Extension**

# Developing Youth and Communities



**When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for their lives today and 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 are more likely to avoid or reduce involvement with the court system. They learn to complete tasks, solve problems and seek any help they might need from peers and adults. This ensures 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 also increases the likelihood that young people will stay in, or return to, their communities.

## Growing true leaders

Presque Isle County 4-H strives to reach youth from all areas of the county and across the age span of 5 to 19. We offer learning opportunities through ongoing clubs, SPIN clubs, day camps, multi-day camps, day-long events, weekend workshops and leadership roles. We intentionally teach skills they can use now and for a lifetime.

- 11 teens from Onaway, Millersburg and Rogers City participated in the 4-H Teen Leadership and Global Citizenship Spectacular at Kettunen Center, accompanied by 2 adult volunteers. They experienced what it means to be food insecure and got to know teens from several other countries.
- As a result of the Teen Spectacular, youth were motivated to start a local teen leadership club. The Spectacular Teens Club set goals related to helping others, preserving the environment, and getting to know others in meaningful ways. All members have taken on a role to support the operation of the club. They are exploring career opportunities with the guidance of club leader Kim Riley.
- 5 teen volunteers assisted with a Miniature Garden SPIN Club for 13 “Cloverbuds” (youth ages 5-8) who learned skills in self-understanding, social interaction, decision-making, and mastering physical skills.
- 5 teens led youth in science experiments, arts & crafts, food science and games at 4-hour Staycation events in Posen and Rogers City (Onaway was cancelled due to weather) during Spring Break. 19 youth attended in Posen, 41 in Rogers City. Donna Klein partnered with us to provide a theater performance experience.
- 4 teens served as counselors for the 4-day 4-H Summer Camp held in conjunction with 4 other counties. Counselors participate in a full day of training before campers arrive and have a great deal of responsibility during camp. 10 Presque Isle County youth ages 9 – 12 joined 50 others at Camp Go Green focusing on environmental stewardship.



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



### Building communication skills for a lifetime

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

To help young people develop this important life skill, MSU Extension's Michigan 4-H has made communication an aspect of nearly every area of its programming.

- 10 youth and 4 adults attended 4-H Exploration Days on the MSU Campus. For many this is their first time learning to navigate in an unfamiliar urban environment. Class selections included songwriting, dairy cattle, rabbits, volleyball, basketball, chess, horses, drawing, baking, exploring Asia and studying the brain.
- The annual six-week 4-H Summer Recreation Program served 49 youth ages 8-12. Field trips are made within the county to give youth an appreciation for local resources. 26 specific life skills were increased through hands-on activities in a safe and structured environment. 100% of parents reported the program provided their children with learning opportunities and experiences they would not normally have. 3 volunteer Junior Helpers took on the task of assisting staff with the daily lessons and recreational activities.
- 14 teens gained skills in accepting differences, concern for others, empathy, teamwork, managing feelings, communication, problem solving, decision making, nurturing relationships, stress management and healthy lifestyle choices at the 3-day Natural Helpers Retreat Training held at Ocqueoc Outdoor Center. During the school year, members continue to meet twice monthly with students trained in previous years to hone skills and build their helping network.
- A series of 3 day camps involved 13 Cloverbuds in painting, crafting, cooking and energetic games. 6 teen volunteers helped them form new friendships while learning and having fun at area playgrounds and parks.
- 16 youth ages 6 to 10 benefit from relationships with high school students in TBL Mentoring. Members meet weekly after-school to learn about communication, treating others with kindness and respect, cooperation, and making good decisions. The 19 mentors receive training prior to the start of the program, and in brief updates each week.
- The 4-H Garden Club engaged 7 youth in planning, planting and maintaining the garden for a portion of the summer. Donated mulch was placed around the beds to reduce maintenance and increase moisture retention.
- The 4-H BB Gun Club held six weekly sessions to learn safety and precision shooting. Leader Toby Kuznicki was certified at a 3-day training. 10 youth enrolled in the club which met at the Presque Isle Sportsman's Club. A grant from the NRA Foundation provided equipment.

# Ensuring Strong Communities



**When you support MSU Extension, participants learn the skills they need to increase their savings, manage spending, avoid predatory lending and reduce mortgage defaults.**

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

## Improving the fiscal health of Michigan communities

MSU Extension provides education relating to financial literacy and homeownership to County residents. The foreclosure process is stressful for individuals and families. Foreclosures can also have a negative impact on nearby property values in communities. The MSUE Financial Literacy and Homeownership team is available to assist homeowners understand the process of tax and home foreclosure, identify information they must gather to assess their situation and learn how to work with lenders and treasurers to obtain assistance.

- In 2016, MSUE assisted four families in Presque Isle County with foreclosure issues. All four outcomes were positive.
- One family was able to obtain a monthly savings of \$250 through a modification of their mortgage.
- The additional three families were able to bring their property taxes current and learn what they needed to accomplish to remain current moving forward.

Online classes or webinars are also available to bring financial education directly into your home or where public computers and internet access are available. One such class, *Mutual Funds, What? A General Overview* was offered in March of 2016. Residents of Presque Isle County participated in a one hour online session to learn basic information on Mutual Funds including: what they are, what types there are, and what fees and costs may be associated with them.

# Keeping People Healthy



**Encouraging healthy behaviors reduces health care costs by preventing chronic conditions and building 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 teaches skills for social and emotional wellness, which can decrease incidents of violence and bullying. Encouraging these healthy behaviors reduces food and health care costs by preventing chronic health conditions and building safe environments throughout a person's life span.

## **Improving nutrition in Michigan communities**

In 2016, MSU Extension SNAP-Ed programs were presented to 287 adults and youth in Presque Isle County, this is an increase of 96 participants over 2015!

- 57 adults and 57 youth participated in a six-week series of nutrition lessons.
- 173 adults participated in a one-time lesson on healthy lifestyle choices.
- Nutrition articles / newsletters reached 200 Presque Isle Co. adults each month.

MSU Extension is serving 544 children and families weekly in the Tip of the Mitt area through a partnership with Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. As part of the program, backpacks of food are distributed for the weekends. Children and families receive recipes and resources to make a healthier choice an easy choice.

- Presque Isle County- 1 school- 48 children
- Alpena County- 6 schools- 268 children
- Cheboygan County- 2 schools- 96
- Montmorency County- 2 schools- 72 children
- Otsego County- 1 school- 120 children

A new partnership between MSU Extension and Headstart allowed Health and Nutrition staff, Patti Spinella and Children and Youth staff, Kaelie Fessler to co-deliver six weekly 30 minute lessons to students in Onaway. Highlights were a reading experience with children's books focused on healthy eating messages, tasting to encourage trying new foods and a chance to practice healthy habits like hand washing. Staff also provided family newsletters that were sent home to help families make healthy choices.

MSU Extension also participated in Project Connect promoting healthy eating and providing educational materials, including MyPlate cutting boards.

## *Keeping People Healthy, continued*

### **Increasing physical activity**

MSU Extension enhanced the Rogers City and Millersburg Summer Recreation programs by offering Jump Into Foods and Fitness (JIFF) for over 50 youth in 2016. JIFF is a research-based curriculum that features eight sessions to help kids ages 8 to 11 (grades 3 to 5) learn the importance of nutrition, increased physical activity and food safety.. It has become tradition—kids have fun while they jump, learn and run!

### **A prescription for health**

The Prescription for Health referral program through Alcona Health Center reached 39 participants in Presque Isle county with alternative prescriptions for healthy living from providers. MSU Extension provided nutrition education and participants received \$60 in grant-funded vouchers for fruits and vegetables. Classes held in Onaway and Rogers City resulted in the following outcomes:

- 75% improved in one or more food resource management practice.
- 33% improved in eating two or more vegetables at their main meals.
- 80% improved in one or more nutrition practice.
- 39% improved in one or more food safety practice.
- 23% improved in level of physical activity.

### **Collaborating to foster social-emotional wellness**

The Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle Great Start Collaborative (<http://greatstarttoquality.org/>) is a monthly meeting of intermediate and local school district, Headstart/Early Headstart, health department and human service agency staff working together on strategies to strengthen families through building up protective factors known to reduce abuse and neglect including:

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports
- Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children

MSU Extension educator, Denise Aungst, serves to connect and partner with individual agencies and the group as a whole by offering bullying prevention, alternatives to anger, stress reduction through Mindfulness, and parenting education.

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

## Small Harbor Sustainability – Rogers City

Michigan is home to more than 80 public harbors and marinas, run by state, county, or local government. Each year, Great Lakes boating infuses the Michigan economy with nearly \$2.4 billion through direct and secondary spending. The trend of fluctuating water levels across the Great Lakes, combined with economic downturn have taken their toll on local waterfront communities.

In response a research team, consisting of Michigan Sea Grant (MSU Extension and University of Michigan), Lawrence Technological University, economic and environmental consulting firms, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Office of the Great Lakes, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority, was assembled to assist small harbor communities. The research team developed a sustainable small harbor management strategy for selected Michigan’s coastal communities and chose Rogers City for the project. The main question that drives this work is: What are the key barriers to small harbor financial, social, and environmental sustainability and what tools would help small harbor managers create more stability?



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



- The project team initially met with stakeholders from Rogers City to introduce the project (May 10, 2016).
- Next, during an initial visioning meeting (September 14, 2016), attendees weighed in on the future of Rogers City’s waterfront. Community members helped identify assets linked to existing or potential public waterfront uses and/or facilities.
- There was tremendous turnout for the community of Rogers City in this effort. About 100 people attended the kick off meeting in September 2016 and many remain fully engaged throughout the process.
- The team then followed up with a three-day design charrette (facilitated community planning sessions) to reflect on the community’s shared vision (October 25-27, 2016). The charrette concluded with a “work in progress” presentation to summarize the proposed vision for Roger City’s future waterfront.
- A “final” presentation (January 23, 2017) was delivered to provide an updated version of the “work in progress” document, including a summary of the initial three design alternatives that were reviewed and scored by the community during the design charrette; top ranked components from the design options were used to create a “preferred alternative” — which represents one conceptual vision for the Rogers City waterfront. This is not a set plan, but a vision tool.

## Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops

Four Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops were conducted in the spring of 2016. A total of 282 local fisheries stakeholders (including attendees from Presque Isle County) had an opportunity to engage with fisheries research and management agencies. Participants from across at least 35 counties attended, and included anglers, fisheries-related businesses (charter captains, bait shop owners, commercial fishing operators), resource management interests, educators, and media.

- 2016 workshops delivered as follows: April 19th Bay City, April 21<sup>st</sup> Bad Axe, April 26<sup>th</sup> Cedarville, and April 27<sup>th</sup> Alpena.
- Recreational anglers had the opportunity to learn scientific fishing strategies, including feeding trends of predator fish species.
- Fishery businesses gained insights related to Lake Huron fisheries resources around which their business depends.
- Research and management agencies shared informational updates.

## Award Winning Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative

In 2016, our Michigan Sea Grant and MSUE supported Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI) was selected as one of the top 5 award winners to receive the national Underwriters Laboratory, North American Association for Environmental Education (UL/NAAEE), Environmental Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (E-STEM) Innovation Award.

- MSUE staff, along with several of our network partners, submitted the award nomination to the NAAEE, which is our national professional association for environmental and outdoor education.
- This recognition comes with a \$25,000 award to be reinvested with local schools to promote E-STEM opportunities via our NEMIGLSI network.
- In 2016, NEMIGLSI supported 6 educators directly, in Rogers City and Onaway Schools. This effort also engaged 579 youth from Presque Isle County in a variety of Great Lakes and natural resources learning experiences, ranging from water quality and fisheries ecosystem studies with Michigan Sea Grant, vernal pools woodland wetland monitoring with Michigan Natural Features Inventory, promoting sustainable green schools and managing school forest areas, exploring marine debris issue with NOAA, threatened and endangered species studies at DNR Thompson's Harbor state Park, and one Rogers City student winning honors with her biodiversity-focused film aired at the NOAA Thunder Bay International Film Festival.
- Overall, in 2016, the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative regionally served 32 Schools across 8 counties in Northeast Michigan, 110 teachers supported through professional development and implementing place-based stewardship education programs, and 5,155 total students engaged in local learning projects.



**Great Lakes  
stewardship projects  
are making a  
difference across  
Northeast Michigan!**



# Supporting Food and Agriculture



**The MSU Extension Presque Isle County agriculture program leveraged \$231,000 in external funding and generated over \$104,300 in savings or added revenue for producers in 2016.**



Michigan agriculture continues to be a diverse and thriving segment of the state's economy. When you support MSU Extension, you help producers develop efficient farming practices that optimize the use of inputs to enhance productivity while protecting soil and water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, which helps retain and create agricultural jobs. Together, these measures strengthen Michigan's economy, encouraging growth of a sustainable and prosperous Michigan food and agriculture system.

## On-farm research and outreach

On-farm research and outreach bring locally relevant research-based information directly to producers. During the 2016 growing season, MSU Extension Presque Isle Co. collaborated with colleagues, industry partners and growers to complete eleven on-farm research projects investigating crop varieties and management practices that may improve the productivity and sustainability of crop production on Northeast MI farms. In order to share information regarding these projects, **eight local outreach events** were organized including field days and meetings reaching a total of **243 growers and other stakeholders**. In addition, **21 articles** were published on the MSU Extension website, through local media outlets and our Northern Farm and Field Newsletter reaching over **580 contacts on a bimonthly basis**. Notable findings/outcomes of these research projects have included the following:

- A sulfur fertility study showed that growers can increase hay yields and net income by as much as one ton and \$81 per acre by applying gypsum to sulfur deficient stands.
- A second year of malting barley variety trials showed that environmental conditions in Northeast MI are exceptional for producing high quality malting barley for the craft brewing sector.
- Three site years of wheat trials showed that growers can reduce fertilizer and pesticide inputs without significantly reducing wheat yields, increasing net income by as much as \$76 per acre.
- 78% of producers attending our 2016 Northeast MI On-farm Research Review reported that they intend to change their management practices based on the research results received, which they expect to generate an average of \$14 per acre in savings or added revenue, or \$38,635 total, during 2017.

**Stripe rust infested wheat across Michigan in 2016. Resources from MSU Extension helped growers learn how to manage this new fungal disease.**



## Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

### Wildlife damage management

Since 2013, MSU Extension Presque Isle Co. has partnered with wildlife management agencies, producers and other stakeholders to address the technically and socially complex issue of wildlife damage in Michigan agriculture (crop depredation and bovine tuberculosis (TB)). Conover (2002) estimated that wildlife-related economic losses to farmers and ranchers in the United States exceed \$4.5 billion annually. Exclusion research conducted by MSU Extension found that soybean yield loss to white-tailed deer feeding in Presque Isle Co. averaged 10% or 3.89 bushels per acre in 2015, with a farm gate economic impact of -\$307,388. A combination of education, technical and financial assistance is needed to address wildlife damage. In 2016, MSU Extension's efforts were expanded in the following ways:

- \$100,000 was distributed through two DNR grant programs funding 31 habitat modification projects with the goal of reducing transmission of bovine TB and crop damage caused by deer in Northeast MI. \$26,300 of these funds were awarded to landowners in Presque Isle Co. including one wildlife Co-op formed by sportsmen and a producer.
- 18 beef cattle and dairy farms in the bovine TB zone (DMU 452) were assessed by teams of public agency staff, including MSU Extension, under the new Enhanced Wildlife Risk Mitigation program to identify and prioritize potential TB risks that can be addressed with management changes, supported by \$1 million in government cost share funding, pending approval.
- Wildlife damage management sessions were offered at Michigan's three premier producer conferences in 2016-17 reaching a total of 142 participants, of which 63% rated wildlife damage as important or critically important, and 83% reported learning something new about wildlife damage management to apply on their farm.

### Field crops webinar series

In 2016, MSU Extension Presque Isle Co. offered six one-hour webinars as part of the fourth annual Field Crops Webinar Series. The program was designed to share key production points from MSUE's traditional winter meetings with underserved audiences that cannot attend in-person programs due to geography, scheduling or ability. 110 individuals from 38 Michigan counties, five other states and Ontario participated in the program, resulting in 355 live webinar views.

- Evaluation of this program revealed that at least 9,921 acres of field crops and forage were exposed to practices that mitigate risk, increase yield, improve quality, or decrease inputs as a result of the series, generating a total of \$46,650 in savings or added revenue during 2016.
- This program is one of very few opportunities for certified pesticide applicators to earn MDARD recertification credits online, and participants earned a total of 229 credits by participating in the series.
- One participant commented, "I'm an honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces and have an ADA-protected disability. With a day job and a disability, these webinars make the information of Michigan State University more accessible to me."



## Extension Educators Serving Presque Isle County

### Staff Located in Presque Isle County Office:

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