It is my pleasure to bring to you the Annual Report for Isabella County Michigan State University Extension. Thank you for your continued support of Extension services and 4-H in your county. We continue to strive to help people improve their lives by bringing the vast resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses. MSU Extension helps grow Michigan’s economy by equipping Michigan residents with the information that they need to do their jobs better, raise healthy and safe families, build their communities and empower our children to dream of a successful future.

2014 marks the anniversary celebration of 100 years of Cooperative Extension in the United States. On May 8, 1914, the Smith Lever Act was signed, granting federal legislation to the vast cooperative extension services throughout this county. In 1917, Isabella County received its first agriculture agent and joined many counties throughout the state of Michigan in a cooperative extension program.

Shari Spoelman
District Coordinator

2013 Participation Numbers

- Soil Tests: 107
- Youth Enrolled in 4-H Clubs: 742
- Youth Served: 1,976
- Nutrition Program Recipients: 972
- Ag Program Attendees: 224

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

Staff

- Monica Borgman
  4-H Coordinator
- Nonie Gross
  Secretary
- Paul Gross
  Agriculture Extension Educator
- Sabrina McGee
  Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Instructor
- Belinda McLaughlin
  Master Gardener Coordinator

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» Isabella County Youth & Farm Fair - July 20 - 27, 2013. This large central Michigan fair had 647 youth participants and hundreds of adult volunteers (4-H leaders, 4-H parents, fair board members, fair superintendents and fair volunteers).

» Horse Clubs - 4-H horse leaders and teen horse leaders plan and execute horse clinics, horse camp and horse shows. Isabella County has 29 horse leaders and 99 4-H members enrolled in the horse project.
   - Horse Camp - June 28-30, 2013 - 3 day educational camp - 56 youth participants
   - Horse Shows - 8 shows at fairgrounds during spring and summer months. They are also open to other county 4-H members who need practice.
   - Isabella County Youth & Farm Fair
   - State 4-H Horse Show - August 9-11, 2013 - 6 members qualified to participate and represent Isabella County

» 4-H Proud Equestrians Program - PEP therapeutic horse riding program is an eight week program for children with disabilities. A certified instructor, numerous volunteer leaders and youth volunteers (from our horse leaders and teen leaders) helped make this a success for our participants. There were 2 riding sessions each night.

» 4-H Shooting Sports Programming Committee - 4-H shooting sports certified instructors and 4-H leaders plan and execute shooting sports clinics (fun shoots), practices, and the county shoot. Isabella County has 21 leaders and 138 4-H members enrolled in the shooting sports project. Youth must participate in at least 1 fun shoot in order to participate in the county shoot. The county shoot determines who is eligible to participate in the 4-H State Shoot. In 2013, 24 youth from Isabella County participated in the State Shoot.

“While growing up, I learned important lessons about hard work, responsibility and community from my parents and grandparents. 4-H was an important part of those lessons and is an important part of who I am today.”

– Debbie Stabenow, U.S. Senator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isabella County 4-H By the Numbers – 2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members enrolled in 4-H clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County youth participating in 4-H school enrichment programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered adult leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth participated in camping programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H Clubs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
» **Livestock Producers** - 4-H leaders and teen leaders plan and execute large animal clinics and events. Isabella County has 47 large animal leaders and 339 4-H members enrolled in large animal projects (beef, dairy feeders, dairy, swine, and sheep).
- Moo Madness Clinic - June 14, 2013 - Covered showing, fitting, caring and judging of dairy cattle; focused on nutrition and how a cow’s digestive system works
- Sheep Weigh-In (36 youth), Swine Tagging (86 youth) - May 2013
- Dairy Feeder Weigh-In (109 youth) - March 2013
- Isabella County Youth & Farm Fair

» **Migratory Bird Day** - May 3, 2013 - partnered with Soil Conservation District and the Ziibiwing Center for an International Migratory Bird Day Celebration at the Ziibiwing Center. The 4-H booth on environmental science opportunities had a hands on activity - bagel bird feeders. There were 100 participants.

» **Environmental Education Day** - May 17, 2013 - this day of education and fun for Isabella County 3rd graders (550 students attended) included a 4-H booth on environmental science opportunities including a seed germination activity.

» **4-H Exploration Days** - June 19-21, 2013 - is an annual youth conference held on the campus of MSU that is open to all youth ages 11-19. This event is meant to be a learning experience that will instill self-esteem, decision-making skills, independent thinking and leadership skills while giving youth a college campus experience. 29 youth participants and 4 adult participants.

» **4-H Cloverbud Camp**—July 1 - 2, 2013 - day camp for youth ages 5-8 at the Coldwater Lake 4-H Camp. Activities included craft projects, sports activities, nature hikes, swimming and story time. 2013 included a partnership with Clare and Gladwin counties.

» **4-H Summer Camp** - July 10-11, 2013 - overnight camp for youth ages 9-13 at the Coldwater Lake 4-H Camp. Activities included craft projects, sports activities, swimming and campfire activities. Isabella County partnered with Clare, Gladwin and Gratiot counties.

» **Small Animal Association** - 4-H leaders and teen leaders plan and execute small animal clinics and events. Isabella County has 40 small animal leaders and 305 4-H members enrolled in small animal projects (rabbits, poultry, goats, cats, dogs and pocket pets).
- Small Animal Showmanship Clinics - 4 clinics were held at the fairgrounds
- Dog Training/Obedience Classes - weekly classes in spring and summer
- Isabella County 4-H Rabbit & Cavy Show - February 2013

» **Connect With Your Wild Side** - August 24, 2013 - family fun day. Partnered with Isabella County Parks & Recreation - participated with an educational 4-H booth and hands-on activities for families. Over 200 community members attended.

“I now know what I need to do to find a career and where I can look to find a college that suits my interests.”

– 4-H career exploration program participant
Agriculture plays a large role in the economy of Isabella County. It is estimated that the market value of agriculture production is over $83.3 million annually. Farm production expenses are estimated at $66 million annually, much of which is spent in the county. The primary crops are corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa, sugar beets, and edible beans. According to Michigan Agriculture Statistics, Isabella County has 28,000 head of cattle, of which 7,900 are dairy cattle. Isabella County’s agriculture is diverse. There are a growing number of acres planted to potatoes. Also on the rise are the acres of vegetables grown for farmers’ markets and local food programs such as community supported agriculture. Isabella County has a steadily growing number of organic crop and livestock producers.

It is important to remember that Agriculture is a local production and marketing based industry unlike some of the chain stores or manufacturing firms that may generate dollars and all of the profits are moved out of the community. In Agriculture a large share of the farm incomes are reinvested in local businesses, pay salaries, and have hundreds of people and local firms that gain a large portion of their income from the farms that they service. This would include, trucking, construction, vehicle sales, supply stores, elevators, and the list goes on. With that in mind, we normally look at $1.00 of farm income to generate $2.50-$3.00 of local economic rollover impacts. One should never underappreciate agriculture’s impact on local economies.

### Ag Programs Attended by Isabella County Residents (by category)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Crops</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>Sugar Beets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Gardeners</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Soybeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-Energy Crops</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Landowners (leasing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Forage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal Grains</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dry Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pork</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dairy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Others: Goats, Labor Law, Upland Vegetables, Entrepreneurs/Investors, Veggie Specialization Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MSU Extension’s bio-energy team demonstrates pellet making at the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College.

We are excited to be hosting a Breakfast on the Farm in Mecosta County this year. It will be held August 16 at the De Grins Oer Dairy Farm, in Blanchard. Plan on attending this awesome event to learn more about modern farming.
» Mid Michigan Crop Report - Each year MSU Extension provides crop production and management information in a report following research results in central Michigan. The report helps farmers stay current with the latest recommendations and changes. In May, corn and soybean variety trials were planted on five Isabella County farms. In October and November, crops were harvested and the corn and soybean variety trials were analyzed and results printed in the Mid-Michigan Crop Report. This is done in cooperation with Gratiot and Clinton counties. Over 200 copies are distributed in Isabella, Clare and Gladwin counties.

» Pesticides Training - Pesticide applicator training provides farmers and commercial applicators training on how to safely apply pesticides. The training topics include rules and regulations, integrated pest management, personal protection equipment, calibration, pest identification, pesticides and the environment, labels, and safe pesticide storage and handling. The trainings prepare attendees for the Michigan Department of Agriculture pesticide licensing exam, provide credits toward recertification, or the latest information on pesticide application and pest management for interested farmers. Paul Gross provided this training for 31 Isabella County farmers.

» Milk and Grain Marketing Meetings - held quarterly in Isabella County to provide education and support for area producers. Successful marketing strategies have been one of the most important indicators of farm profitability over the past decade. The impact of global economies and markets has created market volatility never before seen. This volatility impacts Isabella County farms. The Milk and Grain Marketing meetings provide technical and fundamental market information and provide strategies that farmers can implement to manage market risk. It has been said that “everyone can grow the crop, the successful farmers in the future are the ones that can sell it for a profit”. The workshops are taught by MSU Extension Marketing Specialists, and local Extension Educators. There are six farms that participate.

2013 Field Crops Events

» Gratiot/Isabella IPM Meeting was held in Alma for Mid-Michigan farmers.

» Gratiot/Isabella Dry Bean Day held in Shepherd.

» Farm Transition Workshop in Shepherd for farm estate planning.

» Wheat Field Day - This annual event was held at Hauck’s Seed Farm.

» IPM Field Day at Superior Fertilizer.

» Harvest Field Day in Shepherd.

» Soybean Field Day at Zeien Farms.

» Bioenergy Crop Research Plot where four species of bioenergy crops are planted and harvest to evaluate potential energy yield.

» Conducted biomass pelletizing and biodiesel demonstrations for the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College and Community.
Consumer Horticulture

Science-based gardening, environmental awareness and sustainability have long been a hallmark of MSUE consumer horticulture programs yet somehow, these messages were not getting through to the home gardener, according to Dr. David Smitley, MSU Professor of Entomology. This prompted MSU faculty and staff to start developing simple messages centered on smart lawns, soils and plants that were supported by years of research at Michigan State University: “Smart Gardening.”

A crucial part of the multi-level Smart Gardening campaign was “taking it to the street” which meant employing electronic means, appearing at public venues and through print media. During the winter of 2013, MSUE consumer horticulture educators and trained volunteers actively engaged clients at three home and garden shows which allowed them to interface with tens of thousands of people representing more than half of the state’s counties. Professional displays where over 36,000 fact sheets were distributed allowed volunteers to dialogue with clients about how to “green” up their lawn and landscape while protecting Michigan’s water and environment.

However, the education and adoption of earth-friendly practices couldn’t stop here. This team of educators also ramped up their home gardening website to reflect the “Smart Gardening” messages and populated the site with tip sheets, dozens of “smart” news articles and Smart Gardening videos. The popularity of the website has allowed it to be first choice when using a search engine for gardening in Michigan. Throughout the year, over 35,000 people visited the website making over 136,000 page views.

Smart Gardening was taken to a higher level during two Smart Gardening Conferences held in both the upper and lower peninsulas. During events, participants got a good look behind-the-scenes at research that drives and reinforces these simple messages.

While the conferences provided a more in-depth level of education for MSU Extension Master Gardeners and the general public, hands-on education was the hallmark of the summer-long Smart Garden Apprentice program held in Grand Rapids. Creating a model for these environmentally savvy individuals to follow through expert instruction and outdoor lab experiences, participants enthusiastically adopted what they learned almost immediately. Most of this group also made note that they shared what they learned with others.

http://migarden.msu.edu/

Garden or Yard Questions?
Ask an Expert!
1-888-678-3464
Nutrition Education - MSU Extension provides nutrition education to persons receiving (or eligible to receive) food assistance. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education is funded through a statewide grant from the Federal Government (Farm Bill). “SNAP-Ed” plays a vital role in helping to improve nutrition among low-income individuals.

Youth Nutrition
» **Show Me Nutrition** - This curriculum was taught in four kindergarten classrooms and four second grade classrooms in Mt. Pleasant.

» **Cooking Matters For Teens** - was taught at the Isabella County Day Treatment Center with Chef Emma Currie, co-owner of the Brass Café in Mt Pleasant. One rule of the class was that everyone had to have one bite of the food we made. The teens all tasted the foods and to their surprise liked many things that they hadn’t thought they would like. A grocery store tour was provided for one of the classes and at the end of the tour the first thing the youth did was turn the package over and look at the nutritional label! The last class was an extreme makeover cooking challenge in which the teens needed to take an unhealthy recipe or meal and make it over to make it healthy. The teens surprised the instructors with their creativity and drive. The food was amazing and they were very proud of their accomplishments. The instructors at the Day Treatment Center reported that this was the teen’s favorite program of the summer.

» **Nutrition Presentations around the County** - MSU Extension provided nutrition education at 4-H Cloverbud Camp, 4-H Summer Camp, Summer PEAK day camp, and DHS Take your Kids to Work Day.

Adult Nutrition
» **Presentations & Health Fairs** - Nutrition education presentations were provided at Commission On Aging Health Fair, Coleman Health & Safety Fair, Kinship Day, Special Olympics Annual Fall Conference, and Great Start Parents Collaborative.

» **Eating Right Is Basic** - This series was taught at Michigan Works with the Life Skills class. Participants learned the importance about vitamins, minerals, and the 5 food groups.

» **Project FRESH and Market FRESH for Seniors** - MSU Extension provides the nutrition education portion for Market FRESH for Seniors and WIC Project FRESH. There were 125 coupon books distributed to the seniors of Isabella County and 105 coupon books were redeemed. 260 Project FRESH coupon books were distributed to participants of WIC and 208 of the coupon books were redeemed for fresh local produce.

» **Shopping Matters** - Isabella County was selected as a site for the Shopping Matters grocery store tour events held at Walmart stores across Michigan. 35 people participated in the event. Five dietetic students from CMU volunteered at the store along with two staff from Walmart. The Isabella County Parks and Recreation office supplied the event with one-day passes to any county park for each participant.

» **Cooking Matters for Adults** - This curriculum was taught at the Isabella County Building, teaching the participants about healthy eating habits and basic cooking skills.
» **Eat Smart Live Strong** - From the USDA, Eat Smart, Live Strong is an intervention designed to improve fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity among 60-74 year olds participating in or eligible for nutrition assistance programs. This series, which was taught at Emmanuel Village, taught older adults to eat more fruits and vegetables and to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days. The class also addressed goal setting and tips on saving money while eating fruits and vegetables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isabella County Nutrition Education Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Food Safety—Cooking for Crowds**
Cooking for Crowds is an educational program for nonprofit groups that prepare food for their members or for the public as fundraisers. The curriculum shows the food safety risks that can develop when preparing and cooking large volumes of food, and teaches participants how to reduce those risks. Participants learn how to prevent unsafe conditions that may cause food-borne illness when planning, purchasing, storing, preparing and serving food. Participants in the workshops receive a manual and a food safety participation certificate of completion. Cooking for Crowds was taught at the Mt Pleasant Community Church to help them ensure safe food preparation procedures by church members while preparing meals for their various functions.

**Disease Prevention & Management Programs**
Michigan State University Extension provides practical knowledge and skills to Michigan residents who are at risk of diabetes and for those who live with diabetes. Michigan ranks 15th nationally for prevalence of diabetes and it ranks fifth nationally for obesity. Just over nine percent of Michigan adults have been diagnosed with diabetes – an estimated 701,000 people. Healthcare costs are 2.3 times higher for a person with diabetes as opposed to a person without diabetes. Isabella County - Percent of adults aged 20 and above with diagnosed diabetes = 8% (Statewide Average is 8-10%)

http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/michigan/2013/measure/additional/60/data/sort 0

MSUE’s Disease Management & Prevention team worked hard in 2013 developing great partnerships in Isabella County to expand its reach. We are currently hosting a Dining with Diabetes workshop on the reservation. Extension Educator Pam Daniels is working under their (Saginaw Chippewa Tribal) governance. We are pleased that they have extended the invitation to have our programming continue through 2015.

The cost of treating diabetes is expected to triple in Michigan over the next 25 years.
Food Preservation—Michigan State University Extension food preservation workshops cover a variety of topics customized to each workshop’s target audience and may include: freezing, water bath canning, pressure canning and dehydrating. MSU Extension food preservation workshops teach skills and techniques that will provide participants with safe, high-quality canned products. Using up-to-date research methods, participants learn how to successfully and safely preserve food. 25 residents of Isabella County attended a food preservation workshop last year.

ABCs of Bullying Prevention—Program participants discuss the prevalence and types of bullying behaviors affecting their communities. They examine bullying, bias and harassment; explore key strategies for addressing these complex issues at the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural levels; and learn about programs and resources that can be used in community settings.

RELAX: Alternatives to Anger Education—This interactive program includes discussion and skillbuilding activities to enable participants to learn what anger is and what triggers it. Participants learn techniques for calming down and destressing, the principles of problem solving, effective communication skills, and ways to forgive and let go of the past.

GREENING OF MICHIGAN

Greening Michigan programs attended by Isabella County residents in 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement and Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and Housing Ownership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance (elected officials)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance: Building Strong Sovereign Nations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Food Systems Conference: Everybody Eats</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding Markets: Farm to Market</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Food Systems</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District 6:
Isabella County

ENROLLED MICHIGAN STUDENTS
118

ALUMNI RESIDING IN COUNTY
802

SPENDING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES
$641,689

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT*
$9,669,704

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSED
$1,967,807

4-H YOUTH and ADULT PARTICIPANTS
2,178

PRODUCT CENTER SESSIONS
19

ALUMNI DOCTORATE DEGREES
93

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*Data is from an independent study by the Anderson Economic Group

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