MSU Extension—Serving Missaukee County since 1917

It is my pleasure to bring to you the Annual Report for Missaukee County Michigan State University Extension. Thank you for your continued support of Extension services and 4-H in Missaukee county. We continue to strive to help people improve their lives by bringing the vast resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses. For more than 100 years, MSU Extension has helped 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.

2013 was another productive year for MSU Extension in Missaukee County. Our agriculture, 4-H, food and nutrition programming were all strong, and I’ll elaborate on that in the following pages.

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, Missaukee County received its first agriculture agent and joined many counties throughout the state of Michigan in a cooperative extension program.

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Kathy Lee
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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.

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Missaukee County 2013 Numbers

4-H Club Members ..........................................................102
Total Youth Served ................................................................697
Nutrition Program for Low Income Persons ..........................401

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4-H Demonstration Day—In May the forth annual 4-H Demonstration Day was held at Lake City Agriculture Arena for 5th graders from Lake City and McBain schools. The students moved thru demonstrations of projects presented by 4-H members. Youth explained their projects, including how to care for the animals, how to show the animals in competition, and the science involved in their care and feeding. Projects such as swine, beef, rabbits, poultry, and horses were presented with live animal demonstrations.

Horse Shows—In June the Freedom Riders 4-H Horse club hosted their “Speed Series” of horse shows at the Merritt Horse Arena. The four shows were well attended and a new series of shows is planned for 2014.

Greatest 4th in the North—The Missaukee 4-H Float took “Best Youth Entry” at Lake City’s Greatest Fourth in the North Parade on the 4th of July, many 4-H’ers also rode their horses behind the float.

Missaukee Agriculture Youth Show—Held in August of each year, many 4-H youth participate with live and still exhibits. Many 4-H’ers won ribbons for their projects at the fair. The MSU Extension Office assists by producing the 300 MAYS Fair Books. MSUE also produced the Sale Booklet for the Market Auction.

Chicken BBQ Dinner—This 4-H fund raiser is a popular event at the Agriculture Youth Show. Adult and Youth volunteers served 485 dinners for another record setting year.

Exploration Days—In June seven youth attended Exploration Days (MSU’s pre-college experience for youth 11-18) on the campus of MSU. The youth attended educational sessions on a variety of subjects of their choice, lived in a college dorm room, met youth from other counties, and learned how to navigate the college campus.

Youth 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.

“Attending Exploration Days made me appreciate other ideas and trying new things.”

Farm to Field Day—Dave Stroud, the Missaukee 4-H Coordinator, was the host for the “Small Animal” section of the Project RED event presented by Missaukee Farm Bureau and Missaukee Conservation District. 572 youth from area schools—McBain, Lake City, and Cadillac—learned about feeding and caring for a variety of small animals. The aerial goat walk was a huge hit with the youth.

Youth Pork Quality Assurance—Dave Stroud is a certified Youth PQA Plus Instructor thru the National Pork Board. Over the year he taught Youth PQA Plus classes to 240 youth and adults and certified over 150 youth from 5 northern Michigan counties.

Babysitting Clinic—In 2013, Missaukee County 4-H teamed up with the Wexford-Missaukee Child Protection Council to deliver a babysitting safety series in McBain. Teaching youth the importance of being prepared and knowing what to do when babysitting young children is an important and popular skill as youth prepare for summer jobs.
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.

Dairy

Dairy is the largest agricultural segment in Missaukee County. Current estimates indicate there are over 14,500 adult dairy cows. The total amount of milk sales in Missaukee County is estimated at over $82 million.

Enhancing Reproductive and Genetics Management of Dairy Cattle

This MSUE educational program was held in February 2013 at the Kettunen Center. Two nationally recognized dairy reproduction experts presented strategies to enhance reproductive performance. Participants also learned how to improve the genetic potential of dairy herds. Profitability of Michigan dairy herds is dependent on cows beginning a new lactation on a regular interval. In addition, selecting genetically superior sires is necessary to ensure the availability of high-quality heifers for herd replacements. Attendees included Missaukee County dairy farm owners and employees, veterinarians, and agribusiness professionals. The veterinarians and agribusiness professionals share the information gained from these meetings with their clientele.

Dairy Nutrition Round Table—Four dairy nutritionists serving Missaukee, Osceola and Wexford Counties had the opportunity to participate in a Dairy Nutrition Roundtable in Lake City in December 2013. MSU dairy nutrition professors interacted with dairy nutritionists and veterinarians to informally discuss current issues related to the nutrition and feeding of dairy cattle.

Christmas Trees

Missaukee County has the distinction of being the #1 producer of Christmas Trees in the state. With more than 8,800 acres in Christmas Tree production, 1/3 of the state’s trees come from this region (Missaukee and Wexford). Economic value directly attributed to sales of Christmas trees is estimated at more than $15 million.

Research and Education: Early Coning of Fraser fir—Fraser fir is the preferred Christmas tree species for Michigan growers since it commands a premium price compared to other species. Fraser fir is native to North Carolina and trees often produce large amounts of cones in Michigan tree plantations. While the cones look fairly harmless when they first begin to develop, growers need to remove them to maintain the marketability of their trees. This requires a lot of hand labor and can be quite costly, reducing grower profits. As part of an on-going program to optimize production of Fraser fir for Christmas trees in Michigan, MSUE and MSU AgBioResearch are cooperating with Missaukee County growers to investigate two approaches to reducing the cone problem. In one set of trials we are working to determine the effects of irrigation management and using growth regulators to stop cone production. In addition, we have identified 30 trees with good quality characteristics but few cones at a farm in Missaukee county. In cooperation with the grower, the trees were dug with a tree spade and transplanted to the MSU Horticulture Teaching and Research Center in East Lansing in order to evaluate genetic control of coning and ultimately establish a Fraser fir seed orchard.
Lake City Ag BioResearch Station

The goal of the Lake City research center is to become a leader for university research and outreach in regenerative livestock grazing and management.

Grazing School—This intense grazing program was held for two days at the research station. In 2013 the grazing school was for farmers specifically involved with a “grass fed beef” research and education project. The school blends classroom style instructions with hands-on education.

Beef Breeding Soundness Clinics—In an industry where the major product sold is a live calf, all breeding bulls should receive an annual breeding soundness exam. By identifying potential male fertility problems, producers are able to reduce the risk of a less than optimum breeding season. In 2013 there was a Beef Breeding Soundness clinic at the Lake City AgBioResearch Station in April. Statewide, there were 290 bulls tested by Dr Grooms and MSUE Beef Team members, and 77, or 26.5% of them did not pass the test. Producers were able to test the bulls in advance of the breeding season, allowing them ample time to replace them with a satisfactory breeding bull.

» IPM Academy - In February of 2013, MSU Extension hosted its second Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Academy. The Academy addressed topics related to entomology, weed science, plant physiology, and judicious pesticide use. Participants learned about fruits, vegetables, hops, woody ornamentals and field crops. Christmas Tree growers from Missaukee County attended the academy. Evaluations revealed that 92% of responders indicated expanded knowledge to access MSU IPM resources online, 81% increased their skills to scout for insects and diseases, and 75% indicated utilization of referencing weather modeling to make management decisions.

» Helping Farms Raise Better Soybeans in Northern Michigan - With rising interest in soybean production Northern Michigan an education meeting was coordinated by Extension Educator Jerry Lindquist in conjunction with the Michigan Soybean Association and Extension Soybean Educator Mike Stanton to update cash crop producers. Thirty Eight farms attended the February meeting in Cadillac. The following fall 27% of those who attended were surveyed and reported increased incomes of an average $4,845 per farm as a result of the information gained at the meeting.
» Evaluating, Operating and Scheduling Irrigation Systems — Following the drought of 2012, many farm businesses were seeking information on new irrigation systems. In March 2013 MSU Extension provided an educational program at Baker College’s Lake City campus. Topics included:

  » Water source and legal requirements for irrigation
  » Irrigation management and scheduling — how much water do I need?
  » Irrigation economics — what can I afford to pay?
  » Chemigation/Fertigation — using irrigation to maximize resource inputs

Evaluation of those in attendance show that 87% were already utilizing some irrigation and 71% planned to expand the number of acres they irrigated. The 13% not currently irrigating planned to begin irrigation within the next two years. The majority said they did not understand the water statutes and reporting requirements of Michigan before the meeting and had a better understanding at the conclusion of the meeting. As the demand for farmland continues to increase in the area, many farms are turning to irrigation to get more yield out of their existing land.

» Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) — Curtis Talley, Jr, MSU Extension’s Farm Management educator, provided a training in January 2013 to better educate Missaukee County residents about Oil and Gas leases and “fracking.” Join by an attorney and a representative from the Michigan Dept of Environmental Quality, landowners learned more about the process, the possible effects on groundwater, liability, and leasing issues.

» Pesticide Review — Extension Educator Jerry Lindquist provided restricted use pesticide review training at the Baker Collage Lake City campus in February 2013 for those wishing to take the exam for certification to allow them to purchase and utilize restricted use pesticides in the State of Michigan.

» Strategic Planning Assistance — in February 2013 MSU Extension Staff members Mark Thomas and Tom Kalchik facilitated a strategic planning session for the Falmouth Cooperative who has members in Missaukee and Wexford Counties.

Start Your Own Food Business — This workshop provided participants with information to safely make, label and sell “cottage foods.” Michigan’s Cottage Food Law was approved in 2010 to allow those with an entrepreneurial spirit the opportunity to prepare and sell certain homemade foods prepared in home kitchens. Cottage foods are basically non-hazardous foods. They can be safely kept at room temperature and do not require refrigeration. Examples include jams, jellies, breads and similar baked goods, cookies, cakes, fruit pies, vinegars and other non-potentially hazardous foods. MSU Extension’s Wendy Wieland, Business Consultant and Agriculture Specialist and Jennifer Berkey, Food Safety Educator, presented the business and food safety aspects of preparing and selling cottage foods.

Participants received a certificate stating they have food safety training related to Michigan Cottage Foods. Several Missaukee County residents attended this workshop provided in Cadillac in August.
Nutrition Education—MSU Extension provides nutrition education to persons receiving (or eligible to receive) the Food Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education is funded through a statewide grant from the Federal Government (Farm Bill). The SNAP-Ed program plays a vital role in helping to improve nutrition among low-income individuals.

Cooking Matters® at the Store—This two-hour tour of a local grocery store gives participants the information they need to make healthy, budget-friendly food choices. In conjunction with DHD#10, we provided two guided grocery store tours at Fosters Market. Topics to help families choose healthy, affordable foods included: Shopping with a Plan, Buying on a Budget, Comparing Prices, Reading Food Labels, Finding Whole Grains.

Project FRESH—This series provides information on how to choose, store and prepare fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. WIC-eligible individuals receive coupons to purchase fruits and vegetables from local farmers' markets.

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH—Eligible seniors in select Michigan counties have the opportunity to participate in a nutrition lesson that qualifies them to receive coupons to purchase unprocessed, Michigan-grown products from authorized Michigan farmers' markets and roadside stands. Participants gain access to fresh produce that helps satisfy essential nutrients for healthy aging.

Eat Smart, Live Strong—This six-session series helps older adults improve their health by increasing fruit and vegetable intake and becoming more physically active. MSU Extension provided this in partnership with the Lake City Senior Center and the Country View Apartments in McBain.

Home Food Preservation—MSU Extension food safety workshops teach food preservation skills and techniques that provide participants with safe, high-quality canned products. Using up-to-date research methods, participants learn how to successfully and safely preserve food. Missaukee County residents attended a canning class held in August 2013.
Online resources for MSU Extension Information

MSU Extension News is an online resource that contains the most recent and relevant information from MSU throughout the state.

MSU Extension News features pertinent articles on a variety of categories. It is available both in a traditional format and in a mobile format that can be accessed from any smart phone or pad. MSU Extension News is updated daily to provide the most up-to-date, relevant information available. You can find it at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/

A useful feature is the option to request an email notification of articles that recently appeared on the MSU Extension News website. The MSU Extension Digests will be emailed to you about every 2 weeks, listing new articles that have appeared. Digests are available by topic or category.

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MI SPARTAN IMPACT

District 6:
Missaukee County

ENROLLED MICHIGAN STUDENTS
40

PROPERTY OWNED BY MSU (ACRES)
810

ALUMNI RESIDING IN COUNTY
150

SPENDING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES
$48,158

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT*
$1,518,716

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSED
$684,483