Montmorency County
2015–2016 ANNUAL REPORT
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 Montmorency County for another year of partnership. Together we bring dynamic and diverse educational events and programming 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 Montmorency County and the State.

We hope you enjoy reading through the Montmorency County MSUE annual report for 2015-2016.

Lisa Anderson
District 14 Coordinator

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ISSUE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

In 2015-16, MSUE conducted focus group sessions throughout the state to determine where the people we serve felt our efforts should be focused. In January of this year, District 14 conducted two such focus groups; one in Alpena and one in Gaylord. The top ten issues identified are summarized below. These areas of focus will be combined with our statewide focus group results and will be used to prioritize our future direction and long-term planning. We are currently conducting additional focus groups and surveys to ensure Michigan’s diversity is represented. These results will also be combined with the statewide efforts. Thank you to those who participated in this process—your time is appreciated and your perspectives are important to us.

**Top Ten Issues Identified in District 14**

- Youth Development/Education (4H)
- Agriculture
- Community Development
- Citizenship
- Water Quality Issues
- Life Skills
- Farm to School
- Nutrition
- Race Relations
DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

4-H offers a wealth of opportunities to youth ages 5 to 19 and to teen and adult volunteers. Seven guiding principles steer our work: 1) Youth develop positive relationships with adults and peers. 2) Youth are physically and emotionally safe. 3) Youth are actively engaged in their own development. 4) Youth are considered participants rather than recipients in the learning process. 5) Youth develop skills that help them succeed. 6) Youth recognize, understand and appreciate multiculturalism. 7) Youth grow and contribute as active citizens through service and leadership. “Learn by doing” takes on a deeper meaning when considered in the context of these principles.

So just how does this happen? This report will describe the various delivery methods utilized in 4-H programming in Montmorency County in 2015 and 2016.

Camps Help Youth Develop The Skills Needed To Make Good Decisions...

4-H Camps are a summer highlight for youth. They look forward to making new friends and participating in fun hands-on learning activities. Camps also provide youth an opportunity to learn the social skills that are needed to interact well with others, participate in groups, work cooperatively to accomplish goals, and value differences in other people.

- Camp “GO GREEN” taught 9 to 12 year olds how to preserve and care for the environment. Youth learned about recycling and how important it is for the environment. Campers were able to take home some cool projects that they made from recyclables. Activities included in this over night camp at Ocequeoc Outdoor Center were archery, canoeing, slip and slide water fun, softball tournaments and geocaching. Camp offers the youth of Montmorency County an opportunity that many otherwise wouldn’t have. Montmorency’s large, rural geographic location and the high poverty rates are challenges for parents. Often youth stay home and are unable to participate in what may be life changing experiences. Youth from all areas of Montmorency County and three teen counselors joined nearly sixty other youth from neighboring counties in this three day adventure.

- Exploration Days “4-H Grows True Leaders” is a pre-college program for youth ages 11 to 19. Exploration Days is designed to increase responsibility, confidence, independence, accountability, problem-solving, decision-making and time management skills. Youth are also able to develop and expand career and personal management skills. Every year Montmorency County sends a handful of youth that want to brighten their futures and become “TRUE LEADERS.”
Growing 4-H Youth...

The number of 4-H youth in Montmorency County is growing, so why not infuse them with knowledge for their future and the present time.

- **Seed Program** is a program that is designed to help youth in Montmorency County learn how to start and take care of a garden. Every year youth from Atlanta, Hillman, and Lewiston Elementary schools are given the chance to sign up for and receive free seeds that they can use to plant their very own garden. Youth can choose to take some of their produce to the fair and enter it. This year we had a total of 72 youth that took advantage of this great program.

- **Pork Quality Assurance** also known as PQA is an educational based certification class that youth can take to increase their knowledge in the swine project area. This year was the first year that Montmorency County hosted their own PQA certification class. We had 26 youth from Montmorency County attend this certification class. In addition, youth from surrounding counties were invited to participate and 13 youth took part.

- **Kettunen Center Events** are unlimited. If you have a passion that you want to pursue or want more information on a topic, you can most likely find it at Kettunen Center. This year a few youth from Montmorency County took advantage of these events and came back knowing that they wanted to pursue a new career.

- **Montmorency County 4-H Fair** is always a highlight when you are in the 4-H program. Youth can get together, find out what each other have been working on and show their skills through some good friendly competition. This year we had 10 new youth show at the county fair. We also have a strong number of clover buds (5-8 year olds) that will be able to show and compete soon!

The future of 4-H...

- **Brush Mill Craft Days** will be starting in September. Last year 4-H applied for a grant through The Mill and received funding. 4-H will be offering crafts and educational projects to area youth for 4 months or until the grant monies run out. Youth from all over Montmorency County can come out and participate in these projects with the hopes that those who are not in 4-H will join, increasing our 4-H youth numbers.

- **4-H Baby Sitting Certification** is in the works for 2017. This is a 6-week class designed to get youth certified to babysit for area parents. Participants learn CPR, nutrition, fire safety, emergency procedures and so much more.
Another Side of Montmorency 4-H; Journey Mentoring

MSU Extension has two main types of 4-H mentoring programs; there is group mentoring (tech wizards), and one-on-one mentoring (Journey). Until recently Montmorency County was the only one-on-one 4-H mentoring program in the state that was not matching with the Journey format. It officially changed in May, and now the program has all of the benefits that come with the new name. Matching with the other one-on-one programs allows us to use some resources that we did not have before which strengthens our ability to track the positive outcomes from youth who are matched to mentors one-to-one.

New Funds Make For Opportunities

The last two years Community Financial Credit Union has donated $1,500 to our program. This additional community support gives us the ability to provide volunteers in the program some incentives to take part. Before this donation, we could not even cover the gasoline for the trips that the volunteers took. Some of the mentors drive nearly 40 miles per week just to pick up and drop off their mentee. Community Financials funds help to cover mentor gasoline costs. It also funds, in part, match outings to movies, sporting events, libraries, and other experiential activities. These opportunities help out youth mentees grow their life skills and strengthen their ability to make good decisions.

State Wide Mentoring Events

Mentoring Weekend is one of Journey mentoring’s most eagerly awaited annual events. Mentoring weekend is a three day and two night summer camp at the Kettunen Center. All of the 4-H mentoring programs in the state are invited to come, and this year Montmorency was represented by one of our mentoring matches and MSU Extension staff, Caleb Cumper. This weekend is a very good way for our youth to see that mentoring is much larger than what they see week by week in their own lives. This year there were 76 youth and 25 mentors involved with mentoring weekend.

What Does The Future Look Like?

The program is obviously looking to grow in 2016 and 2017. There have been 3 youth recently referred to the program for participation, and there are mentors for 2 of those 3 should they participate. We will be establishing a coffee shop introduction to the program by the beginning of September where people in the community can come and learn more about the program. There are high expectations that we will also recruit more volunteers through this event.
ENSURING SAFE AND SECURE FOOD

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.

Teaching residents about food safety

ServSafe-
This certification program continues to be requested in all areas. Restaurant managers and staff learn about proper temperatures to cook, cool and hold foods for safety, how to properly thaw foods and quickly cool foods. In Montmorency County there were three ServSafe trainings held with 100% passing rate. This was accomplished with two classes being held with 6 hours of education and two hours of testing time. One in depth class was held, that is 14 hours of education and two hours of testing time. MSUE educators offer these classes as 8 hr. and 16 hr. trainings. A 4 hr. educational program is also offered; this class does not include a test nor a certificate but provides participants basic food safety knowledge. Many youth have taken the 4 hr. training to increase their skills and knowledge in food service to provide them with job skills that will increase their chances of working in local food service establishments. Food safety is not only for restaurants it is information that applies to anyone preparing food.

Cooking for Crowds-
This program is popular with churches and other service groups that do fund raisers and pot lucks. There were 2 groups that took part in Cooking for Crowds education this past year. Both groups felt it was valuable information, stating that they plan on making changes to their system of food service in the future to increase many food safety practices they learned in this training.

Cottage Food Law-
From the farm to the kitchen table, food safety is an important issue. Foodborne illness outbreaks occur crossing all socioeconomic lines from production and consumption to preservation of foods. Foodborne illness costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars each year in lost productivity, hospitalization, long-term disability and even death. The Cottage Food Law took effect in July 2010, allowing home-processed foods to be sold to the public, emphasizing the need for food safety education. This past year Karen worked with several entrepreneurs helping them with proper labeling of their product.

According to Center for Disease Control (CDC) out of 214 botulism outbreaks in 2014, 145 of them were related to home prepared foods and 43 were from home-canned foods.
ENSURING SAFE AND SECURE FOOD, CONTINUED

Reducing foodborne illnesses
Food preservation is both a popular hobby and a small business opportunity, but people who preserve food without following scientifically proven food preservation techniques increase the risk of foodborne illness. A survey conducted by the National Center for Home Food Preservation in 2005 found that many food preservers still follow the out-of-date practice of open kettle canning. Because of the risk of foodborne illness, including botulism from failure to use safe home-canning techniques, it is important to continue to provide up-to-date guidelines for safe home food preservation.

Food Preservation—
People believe they know what is in their food if they plant it, cultivate it, grow and then preserve it in their own home. It many ways that is true. Science has taught us a lot in the way we preserve our home grown goods. In the past year many county residents participated in learning these USDA science based techniques. Participants learn about low acid and high acid foods, when to water bath or when to pressure can a product. According to Center for Disease Control (CDC) out of 214 botulism outbreaks in 2014, 145 of them were related to home prepared foods and 43 were from home-canned foods. MSUE Food Safety Team works to increase knowledge of properly canning foods by holding workshops and using a hands on approach.
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.

**Working to improve social and emotional health**

**Reducing anger, bullying and stress through social and emotional health programs**

Through MSU Extension’s Be SAFE: Safe, Affirming and Fair Environments initiative, young people and adults learn ways to reduce and prevent bullying and harassment behaviors. As a result of the education:

- 98% gained understanding about different types of bullying behaviors and how they can affect those involved.
- 98% developed new skills for interrupting behavior.

In an effort to promote prevention of child abuse and neglect, MSU Extension Educators have offered Nurturing Parenting series throughout the state. As a result of the 10 workshops involved in this program:

- 53% improved their adaptive skills and strategies to use in times of crisis.
- 41% of Nurturing Parenting participants improved their perceived informal support that helps provide for emotional needs.

MSU Extension’s RELAX: Alternatives to Anger program offers techniques for calming down and de-stressing, problem solving, communicating and letting go of the past. The program reaches low-income and racially/ethnically diverse audiences. As a result of the program:

- 70% now work hard to be calm and talk things through and 66% try to end on a positive note when they get upset.
- 68% reduced their frequency in yelling and screaming which is an indicator of improved strategies to address aggression and violence.
- 66% now take time to understand how others feel.

Stress Less with Mindfulness introduces participants to the experience and practice of mindfulness to reduce stress. Mindfulness can be defined as paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. As a result of the training, participants showed improvement on these key outcomes:

- 78% can describe how a mindfulness perspective changes reactions to daily stressors.
- 75% use mindful awareness when eating.
- 74% know three mindfulness tools to help them manage stress.

“I learned some different ways to model self-control. I intend to take what we learned and apply it in my home.”

RELAX Parent/Caregiver workshop participant
Teaching valuable healthy-eating skills

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 backpack programs of food distributed for the weekends, children and families receive recipes, resources and information to make a healthier choice an easier choice.

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

More than 1.7 million Michigan residents receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. SNAP-Ed is a federal/state partnership that supports nutrition education for persons eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). State agencies that choose to conduct nutrition education through their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program are eligible to be reimbursed for up to one half of their SNAP-Ed costs. State and local funding comes primarily from land-grant institutions which contract with SNAP agencies to deliver SNAP-Ed. They reach intended audiences by coordinating with state and local partners and with other contractors.

⇒ About 48% of all SNAP participants are in working families (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, 2011), and 22% of those who receive SNAP Benefits in Michigan are adults living with children (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, 2011).

⇒ Michigan has the 10th highest prevalence of obesity in the United States (Michigan Department of Community Health, 2011). Three out of every ten (30.3%) adults in Michigan are obese, while approximately 35% of adults are overweight (Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey & Weight Status Among Michigan Adults, 2009). 11.9% of Michigan youth are considered obese (CDC YRBSS, 2009).

In 2015, MSU Extension SNAP-Ed programs were presented to 415 adults and youth in Montmorency County! MSU Extension’s SNAP Education (SNAP-Ed) programs including Project Fresh, Jump Into Foods and Fitness, Show Me Nutrition, and Eat Healthy, Be Active teach Bridge Card eligible adults and children how to make the most of their food dollars, by developing skills such as menu planning, understanding recipes, food preparation and keeping food safe.

⇒ 121 adults and 294 youth participated in either a six-week series of nutrition lessons or a one-time lesson on healthy lifestyle choices.

⇒ 1162 contacts were made with adults and youth in 2015.
As a result of programming, Michigan adults demonstrated adoption of healthy eating in 2015 through participation in SNAP-Ed programming:

The percentage of adults eating fruits and vegetables as snacks increased:

- by 6.7% across the state of Michigan
- by 10.0% within District 14 (Montmorency, Otsego, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Presque Isle, and Alpena)

**Show Me Nutrition (SMN)**

Show Me Nutrition (SMN) is a research-based curriculum that features six sessions to help kids grades Pre-K to 8 learn the importance of nutrition, increased physical activity and food safety. SMN invites kids and teen volunteers to participate in fun new physical fitness and nutrition activities that promote a healthier lifestyle! Kids have fun while they jump, learn and run! SMN was offered in Montmorency County as a school enrichment class in Atlanta and Hillman schools.

**Healthy, Be Active**

Eat Healthy, Be Active is a nutrition program where participants will learn how to find ways to stay active, eat healthy, and grocery shop on a limited budget. There was also a walking portion of the class that culminated in a 5K. The program consisted of seven lessons, lasting approximately one hour each. With the help of a nutrition educator, participants gain the skills and confidence to make healthy, budget friendly meals for their family. Each week, participants receive tip sheets and other resources to take home.

Class series are taught throughout the community, including but not limited to community centers, churches, schools and local MSU Extension offices. Group series are available and at least half of the group is Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligible.

In 2015, MSUE Montmorency County offered Eat Healthy, Be Active to 21 adults in Lewiston, Hillman, and Atlanta.
When you support MSU Extension’s natural resources education programs, participants learn about income-generating opportunities, ecological principles, natural resource issues and the role of natural resource professionals. They also explore public policy issues related to environmental stewardship. Our programs can lead to increased income for families that retain their natural resource assets, help landowners become better stewards of their land, and protect land management opportunities for future generations. Better land stewardship benefits communities by protecting and enhancing Michigan’s natural resource assets.

Collectively, our Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI) network, NOAA B-WET water education partnerships, and Center for Great Lakes Literacy trainings have invested in promoting Great Lakes Literacy and supporting a growing place-based education network and culture among our Northeast Michigan schools and communities. During 2015, nearly 60 Montmorency County youth were engaged – through their learning – in water stewardship projects supported through this NEMIGLSI partnership. Three teachers from Atlanta and Hillman schools were supported in professional development or fielding place-based stewardship education (PBSE) projects with their students.

The NEMIGLSI network engages youth in Great Lakes and natural resource stewardship projects, provides support for schools and educators, and facilitates school-community partnerships. PBSE brings students into closer contact with their communities, empowering youth-led stewardship projects that enhance their environment and community. This education strategy allows schools to enrich the learning and lives of their students; and when schools and communities work together, they produce powerful partnerships that are beneficial to all. This PBSE strategy also fosters Great Lakes literacy learning and environmental science, technology, engineering, and math (E-STEM) opportunities applied by youth in their stewardship service. With funding through the statewide Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative and Great Lakes Fishery Trust, the Northeast Michigan GLSI (NEMIGLSI) is facilitated by Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Sea Grant, 4-H Youth Programs, Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, and several other area partners.

The Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI) is a regional network of education and community partners working to promote quality place-based or community-based education opportunities in northeast Michigan for the benefit of our youth, our community, and our environment.
During the 2015-2016 school year, the NEMIGLSI supported 94 educators in 32 schools across eight northern Lake Huron counties, involving more than 4,100 youth (more than 20% of the region’s total student population) in stewardship projects. Since 2009, more than 19,000 students have engaged as Great Lakes stewards, E-STEM learners and valued community leaders through the NEMIGLSI. Recently this network was honored with a national Environmental-STEM innovation award from the North American Association for Environmental Education and UL Innovation for empowering youth through E-STEM experiences applied to accomplish place-based education stewardship projects. This award includes $25,000 contributed to the NEMIGLSI network, through the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan, which will be reinvested in supporting Environmental-STEM learning and place-based stewardship education opportunities among area schools and youth.
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.

Aerial Cover Crop Interseeding

MSU Extension, in partnership with three Michigan Conservation Districts, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and local field crop producers received $29,810 in grant funds from the Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) Partnership Grant Program to investigate and demonstrate cooperative aerial seeding as a method of timely cover crop establishment on Northeast MI corn and soybean acres.

Cover crops contribute to cash crop production through improvement of soil health and fertility, pest management and water availability. Keeping the soil covered can also reduce erosion and increase nutrient cycling on farmlands, thereby decreasing the soil and nutrient loads entering our waterways. However, timely cover crop establishment on local farms is frequently precluded by harvest operations that carry-on into November and poor late-season field conditions.

Alternative seeding technologies (aerial and high clearance ground equipment) are available to address this barrier by overseeding a cover crop prior to fall harvest of corn or soybeans. Our Northeast Michigan Aerial Cover Crop Seeding Demonstrations project used aerial overseeding to establish cereal rye, an oat-radish blend and winter wheat in 662 acres of corn and soybeans across Presque Isle, Montmorency, Alpena and Otsego Counties prior to harvest in 2015. 400 acres were managed as research and demonstration sites highlighted by a comprehensive outreach campaign and series of four extension events designed to educate producers on the potential benefits and challenges of aerial cover crop overseeding.

46% (13 responses) of those responding to our evaluation survey reported that they increased their use of cover crops by an average of 22 acres each as a result of participating in our Aerial Seeding project.

“This program gave us an opportunity to use a technology that we were interested in, but could not previously justify given our small acreage.”

-Participating grower
White-tailed Deer Exclusion Research

White-tailed deer are among the most beloved creatures on the landscape. However, deer feeding, trampling and bedding on Michigan farms can damage crops and reduce harvestable yields. Soybean acreage has increased in Northeast MI over the last 25 years and soybeans are a favorite food of deer. Yet, no information on soybean yield losses to deer has been available.

In 2015, MSU Extension, with support from the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee, measured soybean yield lost to white-tailed deer by constructing and installing exclusion cages in eleven soybean fields across Presque Isle Co. In our study fields, deer browsing significantly reduced soybean yields. Yield loss averaged 10% or 3.89 bushels per acre across all fields and cages. With about 9,000 acres of soybeans planted in Presque Isle Co., we estimate that approximately 35,000 bushels were consumed by deer in 2015 with a farm gate economic impact of $307,388. In 2016, MSU Extension will partner with local producers to trial plantings of sacrificial crops along wooded field edges as a strategy for reducing damage to soybeans.

Western Bean Cutworm Monitoring

Western bean cutworm (WBC) is a pest of dry beans and corn that first migrated into Michigan from the Western United States in 2006. Adult WBC moths emerge from the soil in July and lay their eggs on the leaves of dry bean and corn plants. Once hatched, developing larvae feed on the blossoms, pods and immature seeds of dry beans ultimately reducing crop yield and quality.

In 2015, MSU Extension recruited five local dry bean producers to participate in the Western Bean Cutworm Trap Network managed by MSU Field Crop Entomologist Dr. Chris DiFonzo. Last year Western Bean Cutworm catch numbers did not reach the economic threshold for treatment, allowing participating growers to avoid insecticide applications on 928 of 1775 dry bean acres assessed. This information was also available to non-participating growers with the potential to impact as many as 6,700 dry bean acres in the region.

On August 11th, 2015 MSU Extension partnered with the Michigan Bean Commission, ADM Edible Bean, and Freeland Bean & Grain to offer a Dry Bean Field Day at Smolinski Green Acres Farm in Lachine, MI. Thirty-six producers and partners attended the event to hear presentations by MSU and dry bean industry experts. Following these presentations, participants had an opportunity to view an on-farm dry bean variety trial including several classes of edible beans.
### Extension Staff Serving Montmorency County

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