

# Emmet County

## 2015–2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

## CONTACT US

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 the Emmet County Board of Commissioners for another year of partnership. Together we bring dynamic and diverse educational events and programs to people right here in our communities.



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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 residents of Emmet County and the entire state of Michigan.

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

Lisa Anderson  
District Coordinator, District 14



## ISSUE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

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

### 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
- Bovine Tuberculosis Research



# DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

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

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

The Emmet County 4-H Program currently has an enrollment of 516 youth in 18 traditional 4-H clubs and 4 county committees. These clubs and committees are supported by 83 adult and 32 youth volunteers. Livestock, horse, crafts, visual arts, animal and natural sciences, community service, gardening, food preservation, Folk patterns, citizenship, junior leadership, character education, personal appearance, shooting sports, financial literacy and outdoor education are some of the project areas that the clubs offer.

Our National recruitment campaign for 2015-16 is titled - “4-H Grows Here.” Through that campaign, we will be working on volunteer recruitment, the development of 4-H clubs in the northern part of the county, creation of a 4-H alumni data base and an enrollment increase of 10% of our 4-H membership.

**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).**



## Developing Youth and Communities, continued

- » **Fall Awards Night** is the membership recognition component of the county 4-H program. The Halloween themed event is held each October for all 4-H families. Membership pins and certificates are presented to youth and adults, prizes are awarded for costume contests (for all ages) and a potluck dinner is shared. The highlight of the evening is the 'Leader of the Year' award which is presented to an adult volunteer, who has been nominated by their peers for their outstanding contributions to the 4-H program that year.



At the annual awards banquet, the 4-H Key Club award was presented to Katie Kurburski of Harbor Springs. The Key Club Award is the highest award a 4-H member can receive at the county level.



- » **4-H Achievement Days** was held on April 29-30 at the Emmet County Community Center. The 2-day event is designed to give 4-H members an interview-type experience and allows them the opportunity to share what they have accomplished in 4-H. This year, over 300 members were interviewed in the areas of personal appearance, junior leadership, visual arts and crafts, market livestock (beef, sheep, swine, veal and dairy), horsemanship, animal husbandry (rabbits, poultry and pocket pets), woodworking, dog care, and more. During the evening awards program, the personal appearance members participated in a dress revue fashion show and scholarships were presented to members who received the top honors from the interview process. This year, 12 scholarships were awarded, and they were sponsored by community organizations and businesses. Recipients used their scholarships to attend 4-H Exploration Days at MSU.



Receiving Exploration Days scholarships were:  
(back) Graci Standish, Rachel Armock, Katie Kurburski, Peter Kurburski and Colin Standish.  
(front) Shianne Daniels, Allison Shaw and Eleanor Jones.

*“One of the most important results of the 4-H members’ participation in the annual Achievement Day interviews is that over 80% reported an increase in their self-confidence and their ability to speak to others about their accomplishments in 4-H.”*

~ Diane Brazier, Emmet County 4-H Program Coordinator

## Making an impact at legislative level through 4-H

In the U.S. today, many youth are unaware of the role of county and state government, and how they can be part of the legislative process. 4-H provides many opportunities for youth to learn about the role of government, as well as what careers are available for those interested in public service.

- » In March 2016, Emmet County 4-H members attended a state level program called “4-H Capitol Experience”, a citizenship and leadership program for Michigan high school youth. Teens from across Michigan gathered at the state Capitol March 20-23 for the annual conference, which included 3 youth from Emmet County. The four-day event gave youth the chance to become involved in civic engagement and public policy as well as provide an in-depth look at state government. During their time in the capital city, attendees learned the responsibilities of citizens, explored different aspects of policy issues, discovered various career options available in public policy, attended a bill writing session and met people involved with state government. The goal of this conference is for youth to learn they can influence the government, even at a young age. “I’ve always been interested in how government works. My experiences through this program have helped me to see what’s involved in all aspects of our state government and it’s encouraged me to be more involved at the local level,” - second year participant, and Emmet County 4-H member, Emily Kurburski. When participants returned home to their counties, they were encouraged to become involved with local public policy issues, participate in service projects or carry out local projects.

Emmet County 4-H members with Rep. Lee Chatfield during their “Day at the Capitol.” Pictured are: (l-r) Emily Kurburski, Rep. Lee Chatfield, Peter Kurburski and Katie Kurburski.



**Interested in governance and how you can make an impact in Michigan?**

Join Michigan teens speaking out on the hot topics that matter to them in education, agriculture, health, crime, jobs, equality and the environment at...

**MICHIGAN 4-H CAPITOL EXPERIENCE**



## Developing Youth and Communities, continued

- » **Crooked Tree Leadership Academy** is a 12 week local Citizenship Academy, where youth meet with members of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians (LTBB) to learn more about Tribal government, and with Emmet County Commissioners and department heads to learn how county departments and government function. The group's final project included designing a survey to share with area high school students. The survey included questions about the student's knowledge of local and state government, their interest in being part of a local academy, their career interests and their thoughts on the governmental process. The information gathered from that survey will be used by the planning committee as they plan the 2017 academy schedule.



- » **4-H From A to Z Video Project** - for the past year, a group of 4-H youth and volunteers have been busy working on a first-ever Emmet County promotional video project, including writing scripts, uploading graphics, recruiting volunteers from within 4-H and the community and scheduling filming dates. Our team included the Emmet County marketing director, the assistant County Controller (who is a videographer), 4-H Council members, club volunteers and teens from several 4-H clubs. Together, we were able to create a video that highlighted all of the 4-H opportunities in Emmet County and Michigan. Filming dates were set for the week of spring break, the team set up a green screen in the commissioner's chambers and 30 segments were filmed from April 6-8. The finished product has been uploaded to the county's web site, Facebook page, and YouTube page, as well as to the Emmet County 4-H Facebook page and to the Michigan 4-H web site. The video premiered at the Michigan 4-H Conference in Bay Harbor and will be shown in the Community Center each day during the Emmet-Charlevoix Fair in August.



Being part of the video project was very exciting. I learned a lot about writing scripts, speaking in front of a camera, lighting and sound and choosing the right graphic or background for a scene. The adults were very helpful and I gained a lot of confidence in my speaking ability.

~ Rachel Armock / 4-H teen leader

## Preparing children for academic success



- » **4-H Exploration Days** is held on the campus of Michigan State University each June, and provides youth age 11-19 the opportunity to experience life on a college campus. The 4-day event gives over 2,400 4-H members a chance to live in the dorms, experience a college setting, and be self-directing and responsible for getting themselves where they need to be.
- » Members can choose from over 200 classes when they register for this event. Registration begins in mid-March and over 1,000 youth signed up on that first day.
- » This year, 26 youths and adults attended from Emmet County, as part of a 56 member delegation from Emmet and Charlevoix counties. Participants traveled by charter bus, visited the Michigan Adventure Park in Muskegon, stayed in the dorms, participated in classes and workshops, and attended the state 4-H awards ceremony.
- » The event is designed as a pre-college experience, and youth who will be entering the 8th, 9th or 10th grade following their involvement at Exploration Days are eligible to apply for a \$ 2,000.00 scholarship, which will be applied toward the student's first year at MSU as a degree-seeking student.



*"Exploration Days is one of my favorite things about being in 4-H. It's so much fun! I've learned that I can be self-reliant and responsible for getting myself to classes all over campus. I look forward to seeing the friends I've made from other counties, and I've been able to take some great classes and learn things that I can share with my club members back home. When I get too old to go as a member, I hope I can go as a chaperone!"*

~ Shianne Daniels  
4-H teen leader, 4 time Exploration Days attendee and future chaperone

# ENSURING STRONG COMMUNITIES

Through MSU Extension programs, participants learn how to implement best practices in good governance that keep communities productive and engaged; learn effective facilitation skills, communicate through conflict and work collaboratively on complex issues. All of these outcomes help lower the cost of government services, create and support personal empowerment and increase community stability, build stronger and safer communities.

## Assessing staff personality differences and increasing teamwork in the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians Natural Resources Department.

This past summer, MSU Extension Educators Ann Chastain and Bethany Prykucki worked with the LTBB Natural Resources staff to identify and understand individual personality differences and implications for working more effectively together on various projects.

Real Colors is a personality typing system that enhances communication and the understanding of others. Real Colors is grounded in the theory of Carl Jung and validated in the research of Myers-Briggs and Keirsey-Bates. It is important to understand why we do the things we do and why others do what they do. The instrument combines experience and research into an interactive approach that is extremely accurate, understandable and easy to apply in everyday life.

We explored various aspects of working together as a team, such as:

What strengths does your color bring to the team?

What are the limitations of your predominant color ?

What skills of a different color would you like to possess?

What behavior of others pushes your hot buttons and frustrates you when working on a team?

What can you do to temper your hot buttons and lower your frustration level?

What are the color/personality limitations of your team?

We finished the day by sharing lessons learned and discussing opportunities for increased teamwork throughout the department to better serve the LTBB community.

**MSU Extension conducted targeted outreach to residents, small businesses and farm owners to increase knowledge, understanding and confidence in the ability to purchase health insurance.**

**MSU Extension helps youth and adults alike learn the skills they need to increase their savings, manage their spending, and avoid predatory lending and reduce mortgage defaults.**



## Ensuring Strong Communities, continued

### Readmond Township Planning Commission Hosts Facilitated Community Discussion

MSU Extension Educator Ann Chastain assisted the Readmond Township Planning Commission to facilitate a meeting to discuss overall local land use preferences, traffic patterns, highway speed limits and other related issues in a meeting of state and local governmental officials, local business owners and private property owners.

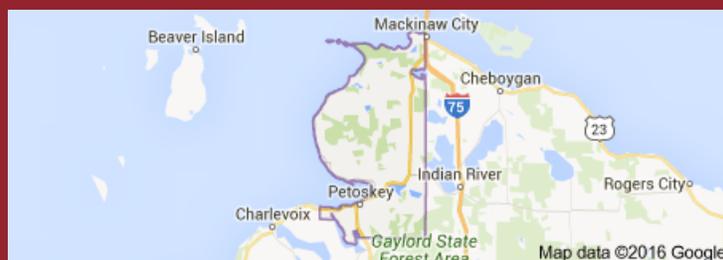
Every individual in attendance was encouraged to share their viewpoint while listening to understand what others were saying. Prior discussions were sometimes dominated by stronger voices, with some people feeling frustrated that their divergent comments were not encouraged.

MSU Extension Educators often provide skilled facilitation services including public forum moderation and community consensus building upon request to local units of government and non-profit organizations.



#### Planning & Zoning Center at MSU

The Planning & Zoning Center (PZC) at MSU is a multi-disciplinary team of professionals devoted to research, education and consultation on best practices for community planning and development control. It works both independently and in cooperation with many other groups both on and off campus to build an economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable Michigan.



# KEEPING BUSINES STRONG

MSU Extension and the MSU Product Center help Michigan entrepreneurs develop and commercialize products and businesses in the food, agriculture, natural resources and bio economy sectors. You also help young people develop business skills that will help them succeed as adults and help communities capitalize on their ecological, social and cultural assets. This fuels the economy by creating and retaining jobs, and helps ensure a healthy tax base.

## Providing education, technical assistance and support to food and agricultural professionals

- » Emmet County has experienced a surge of food and farm related business start-ups or expansions over the past twelve months. The free and confidential business counseling and technical assistance offered by the MSU Product Center can be accessed through an Innovation Counselor, who is housed at the Emmet MSUE office and is also an MSUE employee. Taking advantage of that opportunity were 24 individuals from the county, representing 16 unique businesses, which met for 183 sessions, totaling over 213 hours of contact. There were 4 business start-ups and 8 business expansions from Emmet County. Businesses range from those new to both agriculture and to business, to experienced entrepreneurs that may or may not have a farming background, to seasoned agricultural professionals looking to diversify or grow.
- » In addition to one-on-one assistance, many benefited from the classes taught by MSUE staff in and around the area through strategic partnerships with other institutions. One of those is with North Central Michigan College, which now routinely features *Food, Farms & Garden* classes as a part of their Corporate and Community Education offerings. MSUE staff taught 4 courses at NCMC, with 14 of the 30 students attending coming from Emmet County. Classes range from topics targeted to specialty food entrepreneurs as well as farm business basics.
- » Classes taught elsewhere in the region also benefited Emmet's farming businesses. In January 2016, staff partnered with Crosshatch, a local non-profit, and the area's Small Business Development Center, (SBDC) to offer three *Picture your Business* classes to the 126 attendees of the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference's Farm School pre-session. The 13 farmers from Emmet County learned an innovative way to plan their business through use of a business model canvas.
- » The number and variety of food and farming business opportunities is predicted to stay strong for NW Lower Michigan. Almost all of this growth comes from the non-commodity sector as entrepreneurs seek out unique business opportunities in niche markets such as specialty herbs, wine, agri-tourism and others well-suited to our unique agricultural and natural features.

When you support MSU Extension, you help consumers understand the economic, environmental and social benefits of purchasing local and regional foods.



The new MSU Extension internship program provided students with a valuable networking opportunity with farms and within the agriculture industry, and allowed them to gain important skills in vital areas of agriculture.

# TRIBAL EXTENSION EDUCATION

MSUE Tribal Extension Educator coordinated the spring Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians (LTBB) constitutionally mandated Annual Community Meeting. This is a time for LTBB Tribal Citizens to engage with their elected and appointed officials, participate in discussions, and to conduct official business as defined in the LTBB Constitution.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, MSUE Staff collaborated with Michigan Tribal Nations to offer the Building Strong Sovereign Nations: Anishinaabek Leadership for Seven Generations half-day training. Newly elected and appointed tribal leaders attended this training prior to the fall quarterly meeting of “United Tribes of Michigan” meeting at Soaring Eagle Casino Resort. Those in attendance included three elected, appointed and government employees from Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians.

The MSUE Tribal Extension Educator, a Board Member of the Michigan Indian Education Council (MIEC), assisted with the planning and delivery of the 2015 two day state-wide Critical Issues Conference. The theme of the conference was *Anishinabe Education: Community Relation and the Native Voice*, held at the Ziiibiwing Center, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. The goal of the Council is to provide leadership to foster continued improvement of academic achievement and to address school-related variables that adversely affect the educational outcomes of Native youth. Individuals from Michigan Tribal Nations, native organizations, community partners, and families attended to learn more about college preparation, increase suicide awareness, and Anishinabek history.



# KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY

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.

## Teaching valuable healthy-eating skills

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) provides nutrition education to income-eligible adults and children. This program focuses on improving dietary quality and increasing physical activity while stretching food dollars. The ultimate goal of these programs is to promote healthy weight maintenance and obesity prevention. During the past year in Emmet County, 186 adults and 100 youth were reached through nutrition education classes at various venues in the county.

One of the many classes MSU Extension staff teach each year is through a partnership called Project FRESH. In collaboration with the Emmet County Health Department, MSU Extension nutrition staff provide nutrition education to families involved in the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC) on the benefits of including more fruits and vegetables in their diet. Coupons were provided to these participants to purchase locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables from Emmet County farmer's markets through Project FRESH.

Here are a few impacts achieved through the MSU Extension nutrition education classes:

### Impacts with Adults:

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 (Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Presque Isle Counties)

### Reaching Youth

Show Me Nutrition offers students six weeks of in-class nutrition education to students by bringing hands on learning into the classrooms. Students are able to try new foods and learn the importance of good nutrition and physical activity. In Emmet county this program has been brought to Petoskey Head Start and Pellston Elementary School.

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



After learning the five food groups on the first day, a Pellston Elementary first grader was very excited upon my return the next week. He remembered all the food groups and proudly listed them for me.

# Working to Improve Social and Emotional Health:

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.

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. In the fall of 2015, A Keeping Kids Safe workshop was held in collaboration with Great Start in Char EM- ISD reaching Emmet County childcare providers. Workshop attendees were able to take home children's literature reinforcing and applying the content.

As a result of the education (statewide):

- 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

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



**"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

# Making the most of our coastal water resources

*Michigan Sea Grant helps to foster economic growth and protect Michigan's coastal, Great Lakes resources through education, research and outreach.*

- Michigan Sea Grant programs bring science to the shore. Four strategic focus areas are: Healthy Coastal Ecosystems; Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture; Resilient Communities and Economies; and Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development.
- Key interest areas for Emmet County residents include:
- Changing Lake Michigan Fishery – Michigan Sea Grant worked with MDNR Fisheries, Little Traverse Band fishers, Chippewa-Ottawa Resource Authority, commercial fish processors and others to understand possible changes in the fishery ecosystem; for 2016, an integrated assessment research project “Cisco Restoration in Lake Michigan” has been funded by Sea Grant research.
- Dangerous Currents and Beach Safety – Michigan Sea Grant personnel worked with State Park personnel at Petoskey State Park; Traverse City State Park, Ludington State Park and numerous Southern Lake Michigan coastal state parks on understanding dangerous currents to prevent swimming tragedies.
- Lake Level Variation and Coastal Impacts – from a record low in 2013 to a historic rise during 2014-2015, Lake Michigan continues to change heights. Combined with key storms, beaches and bluffs continue to move. Preparing for the “lucky”, the “likely” or the “perfect storm” scenario is a significant part of planning for coastal resilience in waterfront communities.
- Other key topics of interest just out or in the works are a new small harbor sustainability toolkit; ongoing work with water trails and fisheries heritage trails; and the ongoing Michigan Clean Marina Program with numerous Emmet County facilities participating.



## Making the most of our water resources, cont.

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.

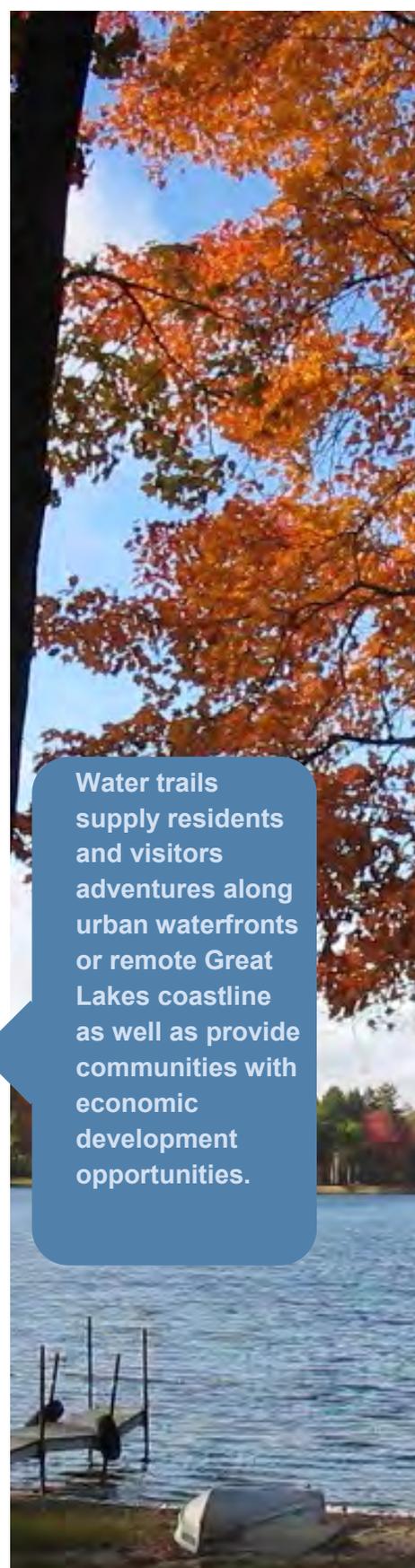
### Helping Michigan residents become better stewards of our inland water

The Great Lakes Education Program (GLEP) introduces fourth-grade students to the unique features of the Great Lakes through a combination of classroom learning and hands-on experience. The program is designed to stimulate interest in the Great Lakes and help students understand their role in protecting their freshwater resources.

### A Suite of STEM Resources to Enhance Curriculum

The Teaching Great Lakes Science website features a suite of lessons, activities and data sets all focused on Great Lakes science, technology, engineering and math. Any of these resources may be easily incorporated into formal and informal educational settings and many are multidisciplinary. All the lessons, activities, teacher tools and data sets are free.

Water trails supply residents and visitors adventures along urban waterfronts or remote Great Lakes coastline as well as provide communities with economic development opportunities.



Michigan Sea Grant Extension offers expertise to coastal communities and partners interested in developing and enhancing water trails.



# SUPPORTING FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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 consumers understand the economic, environmental and social benefits of purchasing local and regional foods.

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.

## Bridging the gap between farm to fork

MSUE staff is once again a planning partner of the Northern Michigan Small Farms Conference, held each year at the Grand Traverse Resort. The 2016 conference was the 17<sup>th</sup> annual, with 89 of the 1021 attendees reporting Emmet County as their home. The conference is sponsored by Crosshatch, a Bellaire based non-profit that builds strong communities through the intersections of art, farming, ecology and economy." The Crosshatch/MSUE partnership demonstrates the impacts that University staff can have when deeply connected to community organizations. Several educators from MSUE and MSU conducted workshops and staffed informational booths during the trade-show.



Photo Gary Howe

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



17th annual  
**NORTHERN MICHIGAN  
SMALL FARM CONFERENCE**



## Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Another community collaboration that is working to connect growers to eaters is that of the Local Food Alliance, LFA. The Alliance was formed in 2012 as a follow-up to that year's Small Farm Conference in an effort to catalyze work surrounding food and farming in the Northern Farms Foodshed, the area that comprises parts of 5 counties located at the northern tip of the Lower Peninsula. After 4 years of building awareness, extending education through seminars, films and conferences, the initiative has recently kicked off a fundraising campaign to enhance the impacts of these efforts.

This initiative has been led by staff and volunteers at the Petoskey Harbor Community Foundation and represents a coalition of representatives from the grower community, as well as MSUE, NCMC's Corporate and Community Education Department, Crosshatch, the Friendship Center, The Health Department of NW Michigan, Grain Train Natural Food Natural Foods Market, and a core group of the hundreds of concerned citizens that participate in LFA events throughout the year.

MSUE staff also works to support local Farmers Markets with education and marketing assistance for both growers and market organizers. With four new markets in Emmet County alone, the competition for customers and growers is at an all-time high.

MSU Product Center staff also is supporting Michigan's maple syrup industry, which is experiencing an exciting upswing in both products and producers. *The Business of Maple*, hosted by the new Commercial Maple Syrup Producers of Michigan Association, was the group's first trade-show and educational conference, held in late August of 2015. Staff presented a workshop session to growers and was also available to offer counseling services to the many northern Michigan businesses.



## Extension Educators Serving Emmet County

### Staff Located in Emmet County Office:

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### Additional MSU Extension Staff Serving Emmet County:

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