

THE 2022

MSU EXTENSION

ANNUAL REPORT

NOTE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Embedded in communities across the state, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension brings the science, programs and resources of Michigan's land grant university to organization, communities and individuals throughout the state.

Over the past year, MSU Extension has continued to provide exceptional programming in Allegan County. MSU Extension works to meet community needs by partnering with local organizations to bring programming that directly impacts county residents' lives. In 2022, we onboarded three new staff to the team to tackle community nutrition and health education. We also welcomed an AmeriCorps member over the summer months to bring science and outdoor education to our 4-H community. In 2022, we continued to expand our program offerings to meet the needs of the residents of Allegan County.



We're excited to present the 2022 Annual Report that gives an overview of MSU Extension's accomplishments and ongoing work. We're passionate about serving Allegan County and we look forward to a new year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Erin Moore, District 7 Director

BY THE NUMBERS

Served 1544
Allegan
residents

Answered 71
Ask an
Expert
Questions

Hosted 50
program
activities in
Allegan
County

27 Active
4-H Clubs

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Left to right: Sawyer Maurer - 2nd Junior Individual Division, Katelyn Williams - 3rd Senior Individual Division and Lena Germain - 7th Senior Individual Division. This team was coached by Heather Maurer.

The goal of the 4-H Youth Development model is 4-H is to "provide kids with community, mentors, and learning opportunities to develop the skills they need to create positive change in their lives. "

You need to look no further than the amazing youth in the Allegan County 4-H program. In 2022, there were 347 registered in club programs, along with 135 adult volunteers and 19 youth volunteers.

One success this year was the 4-H feature in Farmers Exchange. Each year, the Farmers Exchange - a Michigan weekly newspaper since 1925 - accepts nominations for the Exceptional 4-Her of the year. In 2022, Allegan county nominated Lena Germain a 15 year old 4-H member. Lena has demonstrated leadership, personal growth and team spirit. The July 1st Farmers Exchange edition came out and in it was the Exceptional 4-Her and finalists - Lena Germain was named one of 3 finalists! Congratulations, Leah!

Another success for the county was with the Allegan County 4-H/FFA Horse Judging Team for their placing at their very first competition March 26-27 at the Michigan 4-H/FFA Horse Judging competition at Michigan State University. Congratulations to these wonderful 4-H youth!

4-H Livestock Judging

The Allegan County 4-H Livestock Judging Team began meeting in February of 2022. They met at various farms to practice judging and delivering their reasons. The group attended Judging event in March 2022 as well as the State 4-H event in July. The Senior Team placed 1st! And several participants placed individually in top 20 youth. They will get the opportunity to represent Michigan in Kansas City this Fall



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



4-H CLOVERBUDS Day Camp

4-H Cloverbuds

MSU Extension utilizes 4-H Cloverbud Camps as a developmentally appropriate experience that targets youth ages 5-7 years old. This year, 4-H program coordinator, Dian Liepe, alongside 5 volunteers held a camp with 12 cloverbuds - offering many activities to engage the budding 4-Hers. In addition, she gave a presentation to parents and volunteers about projects that are age appropriate to get the youth started in 4-H such as painting rocks, identify parts of a plant, creating bird feeders and making fun snacks!

4-H Way

4-H empowers young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime. It's a research-based experience that includes a mentor, a hands-on project, and a meaningful leadership opportunity.

SPIN Clubs

In 2022, the Allegan County 4-H team has branched out to offer additional special-interest (SPIN) clubs to meet youth where their interests lie. Over the summer, we welcomed an AmeriCorps volunteer, Rosemary Graham, to help grow outdoor education for youth in the county. Rosemary has a specific skillset in composting and recycling and set to work creating opportunities for youth to learn about these two important topics.



Pictured on the left are the campers and staff at Camp Kidwell creating composting compartment facilities. She also created a graphic to help teach staff and campers tips and tricks for composting effectively.

Our 4-H team also engaged in afterschool programs and SPIN clubs at the Linking Center in Pullman. The team led "fun fitness," "cultural education," and "recycling" with the youth at the center.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

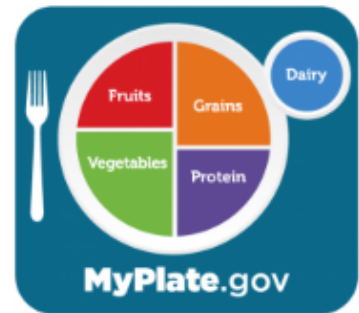
SUCCESS STORY

Each time I start a new class, we begin with the absolute basics. Such was the case with my first meeting at Renaissance High School in Plainwell. I adhered almost rigidly to the curriculum to see what the kids already knew, what would be most useful to them to go forward, and in general, assess how I could be of the most service to them. They did great—they knew their way around the utensils we worked with and were content with the fruit dip and apple slices we prepared. As we were cleaning up, they asked what we would be making next week in class.



I began telling them about tzatziki, a dip that is almost always in my refrigerator at home, that is rich and wonderful, but surprisingly nutritious. I said that I would like to make it, but we really needed something to eat it on. We discussed what we could do in the time we had available to us and while we all agreed that baked potatoes sounded good, we really didn't have time to bake them.

As the students began to trickle away on to the next parts of their days, one, Celia, came to me and asked whether, if she came early next week, I would teach her how to bake potatoes so that we could make what they started calling my "special sauce." We ran her idea past the head of school, who was thrilled with Celia's initiative and said that of course we could come early.



The next week, I arrived 2 hours before class was scheduled to start to find that Celia had not only kept her word, but had recruited some friends (some of whom were not even in the class!) to come in early to learn how to make baked potatoes. We began a sort of makeshift assembly line and soon had them in the oven.

And then, we waited. But in that two hours, I got to learn a lot about these kids—their lives, their interests, their homes. The potatoes were done in plenty of time for class to start, so I had them turn off the oven but leave the potatoes in to stay warm. Another student, Cailey, asked if the potatoes could stay that way for an hour without getting bad. I told her that they probably could, depending on how quickly the oven cooled. She beamed the most exuberant smile at me and told me that that's what she was going to do for her dad for dinner tonight. In our long wait for potatoes to bake, I learned that Cailey did not have a mom at home that her dad worked second shift, so she often made a sandwich for him to have when he got home because she went to bed before he got there. But tonight she was going to surprise him with a baked potato. Her pride in her new skill was radiant.



And the tzatziki? They were very skeptical, but it turned out to be a big hit!

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS

Soybean Production



Soybeans are raised by approximately 245 farmers on 42,000 acres in Allegan County. MSU Extension Soybean Educator, Mike Staton, conducted educational programs and research trials in Allegan County in 2022 that will help these producers be more profitable. One of the six Michigan Soybean On-farm Research Updates was held in Hamilton on January 5th. There were 49 producers and agronomists that participated. A follow-up survey determined that 82% implemented the new information and nine producers actually increased income by \$10.16 per acre on 4,760 acres, generating a total financial impact of \$48,245 in 2022 alone.



A successful soybean harvest equipment field day was also conducted near Hopkins on September 15th. More than 70 producers and agronomists participated in the event. A follow-up survey showed that 78% implemented the new information and 13 producers actually increased income by \$11.35 per acre on 7,142 acres, generating a total financial impact of \$81,082 in 2022 alone.

Lastly, a tour of the MSU Soybean Variety Performance Trial in Hopkins was conducted on September 23rd. More than 30 producers and agronomists participated in the program and were able to visually compare all the varieties. Variety selection is one of the most important decisions producers make as it can increase yield by 5 to 10 bushels per acre. Allegan soybean producers also actively participated in the Michigan Soybean On-Farm Research Program again in 2022. Four Allegan County producers conducted six on-farm research trials. All of which were published in a 32-page research report that was mailed to more than 11,000 soybean producers across the state.

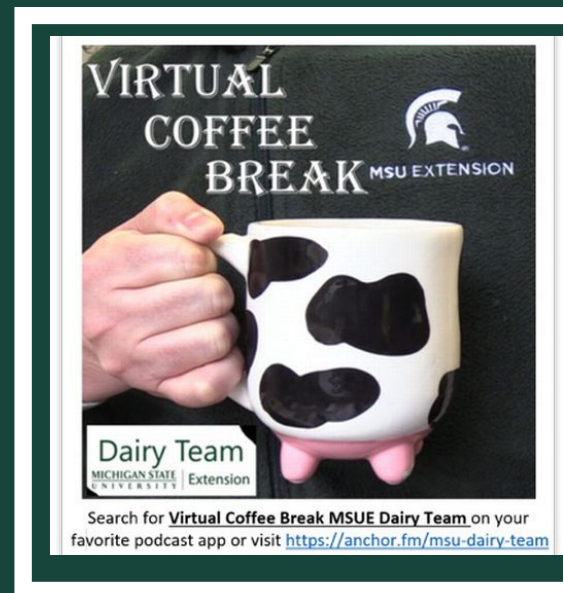
SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS

Virtual Coffee Break Podcast

Reaching people where they are is one of the cornerstones of our outreach work at MSU Extension. During 2020 The MSU Extension Dairy team started exploring a new way to deliver some of our educational programs in newer formats. The goal was to develop an on-demand program that was flexible for folks to join on their own time, at their own pace, and on the topics, they wanted to learn about. With this in mind, The Virtual Coffee break podcast began. The podcast is produced by dairy educator Martin Mangual, with support from the entire MSU Extension dairy team.

In 2022, the program continued to grow. Two new seasons were published with additional hot-topic episodes. Hot topics episodes are focused on special events that are happening in Michigan. Some examples include the Michigan Manure Hauler certification program or the Michigan Dairy Health symposium Teaser, among others. In total 21 new episodes were released through 2022. In 2022, 1,852 people tuned in to listen to podcast episodes. Additionally, the information shared in some of the podcasts was featured in multiple articles in the online Hoards Dairyman, which increased the reach of the podcasts.

This year, we also featured high-profile guests inside the dairy industry, including Krysta Harden, President and CEO of the US Dairy Export Council, and AG Bio Research Director Dr. George Smith. To date, 5,669 listeners have benefited from this teamwide effort. The program will continue to grow as the dairy team improves our reach and increases the value of each podcast for our listeners.



FOSTERING STRONG COMMUNITIES

FIRST IMPRESSION TOURIST ASSESSMENT

Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) bridged a two-year partnership with Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) in early 2021 for the purpose of offering the award-winning First Impressions Tourism (FIT) assessment program to select Redevelopment Ready Certified (RRC) communities. The partnership made available four FIT assessments for four RRC communities between 2021 and 2022. The four communities selected were Grayling (2021), Cassopolis (2021), Allegan (2022), and Hart (2022).

Each participating community received their FIT assessment costs covered in full via the MSUE/MEDC partnership. As part of the FIT program process, each community is responsible for hosting a community forum. These forums are, at most, three-hour events open to anyone interested in learning what first-time visitors experienced in their respective community. Community forums are organized and hosted by Community Leadership Teams (CLT), which are almost always comprised of a combination of public, private, and/or non-profit sector leaders from the host community. Each RRC community hosted a forum approximately three-to-five months after receiving a team of first-time visitors from MSU Extension.

MSU Extension Educators, Andy Northrop and Garrett Ziegler, presented the results of the City of Allegan's FIT assessment in September 2022 at a community forum.

The City of Allegan's forum attracted nearly 90 participants from the community and surrounding around. Of those that attended 31 (n=34%) voluntarily participated in MSUE short-term survey designed to evaluate learning and awareness as well as gauge foreseeable actions and limitations to acting.

Survey questions posed to participants included –

- My awareness of community assets increased as a result of participating in this program.
 - 84% (n=26) Strongly Agreed/Agreed
- My knowledge of how to maximize assets increased as a result of participating in this program.
 - 84% (n=26) Strong Agreed/Agreed
- The program information shared will help strengthen collaboration within the community.
 - 81% (n=25) Strongly Agreed/Agreed
- I envision myself or community using the information shared to advance tourism in my community.
 - 90% (n=28) Strongly Agreed/Agreed

The summary report is available to the public at www.canr.msu.edu/tourism_first_impressions.



CONTACT US:

3255 122nd Ave Suite
#103, Allegan, MI 49010

Phone: (269) 673-0370

Facebook: [facebook.com/District7MSUE](https://www.facebook.com/District7MSUE)

STAFF LIST:

Jan Brinn
Youth Development Educator
269-673-0370 Ext. 2555
brinn@msu.edu

Rebecca Simonds
Office Manager
269-673-0370
simondsr@msu.edu

Dian Liepe
4-H Program Coordinator
269-673-0370 Ext. 2557
liepe@msu.edu

Mike Staton
Soybean Educator
269-673-0370 Ext. 2562
staton@msu.edu

Erin Moore
District 7 Director
269-673-0370 Ext. 2553
mooree16@msu.edu

Abbey Strop
Community Nutrition Instructor
269-673-0370 ext. 2559
stropab@msu.edu

Eilish McGhee
4-H Program Instructor
269-673-0370 ext. 2547
mcgheeei@msu.edu

Madee Thorburn
Health Program Instructor
269-673-0370 ext.
thorbu18@msu.edu

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal- opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension