2013 YOUTH PROGRAMS GUIDE
Tollgate Education Farm Center

MSU Tollgate Education Center & Farm
28115 Meadowbrook Road
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248.347.0269
www.ExperienceTollgate.com
Welcome to Tollgate!

Welcome to the Michigan State University Tollgate Education Center and Farm. We are looking forward to hosting your school or youth group, leading them through an unforgettable educational experience.

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs, and opportunities. The MSU Tollgate Education and Farm Center promotes food system awareness through exploring the sustainable, nutritional, and cultural aspects of agriculture. Tollgate is committed to educating the community about food production while encouraging ethical food producers.

We are a 160-acre educational farm on rolling pastures. Thanks in part to the generous support of the Americana Foundation, the facility supports:

- Farm animals
- Orchard and apple press
- Wildlife pond
- Pastures and crops
- Hoop house and community gardens
- Themed gardens including heritage and xeriscape
- Conference and indoor activity centers

Our educational programs are designed from a background of experiential and inquiry learning. Hands-on, interactive, and engaging lessons are intertwined with real-life applications.

We create experiences that complement school curriculum and customize our programs to be relevant and enriching. As such, we align our lessons with GLCEs Standards and researched-based methods.

Call our office today to schedule a program and let Tollgate be your living laboratory. Programs fill quickly so don’t delay! Scholarships are available.

Please call us with any questions.

See you at the farm,

Alan Jaros and the Tollgate Staff
tollgateprograms@anr.msu.edu 248.347.0269

Maple Sugaring
February - March
During this hands-on program, participants will experience the sweet steps of maple syrup creation. Take a hayride to the woods and learn tree ID skills, how trees produce the pancake-topper, and join us in the Sugar Shack to prepare a batch of the sweet stuff! Participants will compare ancient and modern tapping tools and discover the math and science of turning sap to syrup.

Pre-K Hayride and Farm Adventure
Youngsters cluck with the chickens, quack with the ducks, bleat with the goats, and take in the farm environment with a hayride. We keep the groups small so that the experience can be engaging and hands-on.

Sheep to Sweater
Do “ewe” know how sheep stay cool in the summer with wool coats on? What happens when sheep get caught in a rainstorm? Get woolly with spinning, carding, and meeting our resident sheep friends!

Spring into Farming
April - June
Join us on the farm to celebrate the beginning of spring with the farm animals, seedlings, and hoop house. Participants will meet and learn about the farm animals and have an opportunity to get their hands dirty planting and learning in our hoop house.
School Field Trips
$6 - $10 per participant

Conservation Connections
What does a goat’s hoof have to do with erosion? How does the smallest plant in Michigan tell us that there are water problems? What do chickens and garter snakes have in common? Find out answers to these riddles and more during Conservation Connections.

Ecosystems and Interdependency
Would it matter if drought wiped out the hay fields? What would happen if the pond dried up? Find out how the pond, farm, forest, and apple orchard are all interconnected at Tollgate.

Orienteering and Map Skills
Do you fancy yourself an outdoors adventurer? Students will sharpen their map and compass skills throughout our orienteering course and even get the chance to hike forest trails! Take a hayride and find the farm animals along the way!

Harvest Farm Ecology
September - November
Ever wonder what happens on the farm after the harvest? Come join us to meet our resident farm animals and explore the gardens throughout the farm. Students will learn the lifecycle of the pumpkin and harvest their own to take home! Hayride, cider-making, and doughnuts will celebrate the journey.

Traveling Programs

Although nothing beats visiting the farm in person, we try to recreate experiences in the classroom. We bring a farm animal friend or two and customize the experience to fit your group’s age. Call today to inquire about all of our traveling farm possibilities.

Meet Tom Turkey
November
Did you know that the turkey almost won as national symbol over the eagle? Find out about our majestic turkey, its place in American history, and its lifecycle! Tom Turkey is a traveling program and will meet with individual and joint classes at school.

Traveling Winter Farm-to-School
December - March
Our chickens love to travel! Let the farm come to you! We customize our programs to complement current curriculum. Hands-on ecological, heritage history, food ethics, and life cycle lessons are some of our most popular programs.

Library Programs

Did you know, in addition to visiting schools, we also bring programs to libraries? Youth easily connect tactile experiences with reading selections ranging from our environmental science series to agriculture adventures to animal experiences. We love tying in literacy to our programs! We offer our existing Traveling Programs and can customize for ages and content. Please contact us for more information.
Community
Come participate in programs or events!

Home school, church, and scout groups are welcome to register for our listed programs and we are happy to customize experiences for your youth group or community organization. We encourage groups from all walks of life to experience the farm and we create special yearly events for families and the community.

Fall Family Fun Days
September - October
Learn the difference between apple cider and juice while making your own, taste doughnuts with warm cider, hunt for chicken eggs, shake a hoof with goats, and enjoy the fall colors of our 160-acre farm while taking a hayride!

Baby Farm Animals
Spring
The joys of goat milk have a rival...baby goats! Meet our kids, but don’t forget to check in with the hatching chicks. Check for chicken eggs in the coop and hold baby chicks.

Personal Farm Tour
Year-round
For families and community organizations especially, we offer a personal farm tour for groups of 5 or more. Take a hayride, meet the farm animals, and engage in a special, season-specific activity!

Scout Programs
Earn Scout badges at Tollgate Farm!

We offer customized programs to fulfill merit badge requirements. Programs are $6-$10 per scout. Please call to schedule your group.

For Girl Scouts
Tollgate Farm with its animals, pond, hoop house, camp fire pit, and Garden Kitchen offers numerous opportunities for Girl Scouts to learn and practice skills. We offer Brownie, Junior, Cadette, and Senior Badge Programs.

Badges available:
• Brownie Badges
  o Bugs
  o Home Scientist
  o Letter Boxer
  o Pets
• Junior Badges
  o Gardener
  o Animal Habitats
  o Flowers
  o GeoCacher
• Cadette Badges
  o Trees
  o Animal Helpers
  o Night Owl

• Senior Badges
  o Local-vore
  o Textile Artist

For Boy Scouts
Tollgate is familiar with Boy Scouts and its community has benefitted from an array of Eagle Scout projects. Our farm has resources valuable to merit badge programs including pond ecosystem, farm animals, acres of forest, hiking trails, camp fire pit, and pasture fields.

Badges available:
• Animal science
• Bird study
• Environmental science
• Gardening
• Fish and Wildlife Management
• Insect Study
• Hiking
• Geocaching
• Farm Mechanics
• Forestry
• Nature
• Orienteering
• Plant Science
• Textile
Summer Camps
June 24 - August 19
Ages 4 - 12
With the success of our Green Science Adventure Camp, we are expanding to include five themed weeks. Create fresh, nutritional snacks in the Garden Kitchen, hike, take care of the resident farm animals, and spend time in the gardens—but each week will have a special focus. Expect updates as we reveal the camp themes! Register participants for week-long adventures by visiting our website.

School Break Farm Camps
These camps are offered throughout the school year for youngsters who want to beat the indoor-blues. Hike through the forest, warm up in the Garden Kitchen making nutritional snacks, enjoy and discover the seasonal farm—along with the games, animals, and experiments that roll with the seasons! Our week-long camps coincide with school breaks in the winter and spring.

We are excited to announce that Counselors (ages 17-18) and Junior Counselors (ages 15-16) will be added to our summer camps this year! We are looking for young people who are enthusiastic about nature, making meaningful connections to youth, and spending a fun summer outdoors! These positions are for dedicated and passionate teens who will fulfill their volunteer hours hiking, facilitating youth games, and having quality time with farm animals. Interested parties, please contact us to begin the application process.

Volunteers
There are many ways to get involved at Tollgate! Do you enjoy working outside? Caring for animals? Gardening? Website management? Do you have a special skill to share? Please contact us to arrange a meeting!

Adult Chaperones for Youth Groups
The role of parents and chaperones is an important one and we invite all accompanying parents/chaperones to join in on the field trips and encourage them to help shepherd the students in their group. With their help, the guides will be free to focus on field trip activities, not crowd control. Also, keep in mind that the field trip is oriented towards children, so please ask chaperones to refrain from asking "adult" questions during the program. We’ll be happy to answer more technical questions after the program.

Weather
If it looks like there is light rain, please encourage your students to bring rain gear and boots if they have them. Please dress appropriately for the outdoor portions of the program. Light rain is no problem, but heavy rain will cancel a field trip and we will call the morning of the field trip if the rain is too heavy. Please make sure the trip organizer indicates a phone number at which they can be reached.

Cancellation
Please call us at 248.347.02696 as much in advance as possible if you need to cancel your field trip. If you cancel your field trip less than two weeks prior to the field trip date, the field trip fee will not be refunded or credited to later field trips.

Scheduling and Payment
Please contact us at tollgateprograms@anr.msu.edu or call the Tollgate Programs Office at 248.347.0269 to schedule your group. Payment is accepted as cash or checks made out to: Michigan State University Extension

We appreciate your cooperation with our policies. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or comments. We look forward to improving our program in all aspects!

Please mail payments to:
MSU Tollgate Education Center
28115 Meadowbrook Rd
Novi, MI 48377