

Michigan State University Extension in Alcona County: Solving Problems & Increasing Opportunities for Today & Tomorrow

On August 6, 2024, Alcona County residents will be asked to continue investment in MSU Extension programs that help families, businesses and professionals gain the knowledge they need to be healthy and safe, do their jobs better, build strong communities, protect local environments, and help young people gain the confidence and skills needed to be successful. MSU Extension programs in Alcona County help reduce the cost of public investment in health care and other governmental remediation services and increase the educational resources that help families and local communities thrive.

Empowering and Equipping Youth Success

Enrollment data from National Student Clearinghouse shows that Michigan 4-H alums are more likely to enroll in college in the fall after high school than other Michigan students. Since 2012, 61% of Michigan 4-H youth have enrolled in college the fall after high school, a number that is higher than the rate for Michigan students (55%). This is important as an investment in Alcona County MSU Extension and 4-H is an investment in the positive development of Alcona County's young people.

In 2023, Alcona County MSU Extension 4-H programs enrolled 202 Alcona County youth in 4-H programs. In total, 1,723 county youth participated in 51 programs. 4-H club participation has proven to help prepare young people for work, especially for jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math. Alcona County MSU Extension has engaged young people in short-term, special interest, and 4-H club learning opportunities.

Educating to Fight Foreclosure

Michigan has the 11th highest foreclosure rate of any U.S. state with 857 foreclosure filings in 2021.

MSU Extension educators help prevent homelessness by providing financial and homeownership education to Alcona County families. Extension works to provide education that helps to prevent mortgage and tax foreclosures, improve household budgets, and help families become viable homeowners and/or stable housing renters.

Educating for Greater Farm Profitability and Sustainability

Alcona County is home to 223 farms and 36,431 acres of farmland producing hay, soy, corn for grain, dry beans, and wheat; according to 2017 data.

In 2023, 132 residents from Alcona County participated in agriculture and agribusiness programs.

Access to research-based information is critical when business decisions depend on it. MSU Extension is a leader in discovering information and helping farmers apply tested solutions that benefit their farms, their families, and their communities. Alcona County MSU Extension educators provide access to articles, webinars, and timely social media posts designed to help producers manage the challenges of disruptions to agriculture, prepare for tax season, and manage the ongoing financial and business planning needed for farming.

MSU Extension's Farm Stress programs provide behavioral health and financial management, and planning support and services to farmers and their families to help manage the emotional and financial ups and downs of farm production. Online access to teletherapy, resiliency tools, and assistance resources were expanded to ensure Alcona County families had what they needed especially during the challenges of the pandemic.

Helping Families Make Healthy Decisions

By December 2021, Alcona County had 1,295 residents receiving federal food and nutrition assistance. MSU Extension educators provide nutrition and health education programming to individuals and families proven to improve family diet and physical well-being.

MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to help adults, young people, and families eat well, consume food safely and stay healthy.

Stewardship of our Natural Resources

In 2023, 870 Alcona County residents participated in local and regional natural resources programs including the Wild About Conservation Webinar and Michigan Birding 101.

MSU Extension's natural resources programs improve public understanding, help landowners and communities use those assets for sustainable long-term social and economic development and conserve natural resources for future generations.

