



# Alcona County 2021 Annual Report

## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



It is once again my pleasure to provide you with a snapshot of the work that Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is doing in your community. The circumstances of the past two years have presented new and unique challenges for us and many others. However, because of your continued support, MSU Extension has been able to continue its long tradition of providing programming and educational resources that help to enhance the lives of Alcona County residents, contribute to community prosperity and address critical issues as they arise in communities.

In 2021, MSU Extension provided **635** points of contact to Alcona County residents through articles, virtual and online programming and in person experiences. We worked with local audiences and community partners to deliver our services in the safest way possible and expanded our reach to new audiences through the use of technology.

Your support of:

- MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development allowed over **184** youth to learn lifelong skills, develop leadership abilities, explore new interests and discover the value of community service.
- MSU Extension food programs allow residents to learn about the safety, security and affordability of local fresh foods, how to use them, where to find them, or how to start a cottage food business of their own.
- MSU Extension nutrition and physical activity programs allowed over **57** county residents to improve the quality of their diets and become more active.

We hope you are as proud of this important partnership as we are. We thank you for another great year and the continued opportunity to serve this great community.

Julia (Julie) Darnton, District Director

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

### YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Michigan 4-H is the largest youth development organization in Michigan and provides more than 200,000 young people with experiential learning opportunities to explore new interests and discover their passions. In 2021, **184** Alcona County youth participated in **26** 4-H programs delivered both virtually and in-person (as COVID-19 precautions shifted).

4-H:

- develops youth as current and future leaders by providing programs that instill young people with knowledge and skills to become positive agents of change through leadership development, civic engagement and education, global citizenship, and cultural competency programming;
- assists youth in preparing for and finding gainful employment opportunities through entrepreneurship, financial literacy, career exploration, and workforce preparation programs; and
- excites youth about future science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) careers and build critical STEM skills. These programs seek to increase aspirations and attitudes toward science, interest and engagement in science, and skills in critical thinking, problem solving and decision making.



6 youths participated in the new Alcona 4-H Pen Pal SPIN Club where they learned about writing and sending letters

### STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES

As leadership partners of the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant supported local schools in fielding place-based stewardship education projects. In 2021, **518 students and 15 teachers** from Alcona County were engaged in Great Lakes and natural resources stewardship programs.



More than 90 Alcona youths played on 11 soccer teams over the course of a 10-week season. 15 team sponsors from the business community supported the program by providing over \$2,000 worth of financial support/products and service



Sea Grant Educator Brandon Schroeder taught youth about the importance of biodiversity in Michigan's lakes and streams. Youth went fishing and catalogued and charted their catch with species, length, and frequency




Alcona 4-H Day Camp participants sampled and identified macroinvertebrates from Badger Lake



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS






## HEALTH & NUTRITION



### ADULT Physical Activity Improvements


**44%** increased moderate physical activity participation

**38%** increased strength training activities

YOUTH	Health & Nutrition Impact	3rd-5th Grade	6th-12th Grade
	increased vegetable consumption	<b>31%</b>	<b>34%</b>
	decreased soda consumption	<b>29%</b>	<b>27%</b>
	increased physical activity	<b>33%</b>	<b>37%</b>
	washed their hands more often	<b>27%</b>	<b>22%</b>
	decreased screen time	<b>31%</b>	<b>27%</b>

### YOUTH K-2nd Grade Impact

- 79%** Washed their hands more before handling food.
- 43%** Bring more fruits and veggies as snacks.
- 95%** Can identify healthy food choices.
- 83%** Increased physical activity.
- 77%** Are now eating more fruits and vegetables.



MSU Extension partners with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to provide SNAP-Ed, a nutrition education program designed to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits for SNAP-eligible populations. MSU Extension SNAP-Ed community nutrition instructors teach youth, individuals, and families how to make health a priority. The goal of SNAP-Ed is to improve the likelihood that SNAP-eligible persons will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA food guidance. In 2021, **57 Alcona County residents** participated in SNAP-Ed programs, such as Show Me Nutrition, Cooking for One, and Senior Project FRESH.

## SUPPORTING STRONG COMMUNITIES

As a result of MSU Extension's social-emotional programming, **34** Alcona residents learned how to manage their anger, reduce stress, thrive as caregivers, practice mindfulness and strengthen their families' and communities' understanding of and response to mental health crises. Residents participated in **25** programs including RELAX: Alternatives to Anger, Sleep Education Program for Everyone, Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention, and Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

MICHIGAN DRHS AGING & ADULT SERVICES AGENCY

SENIOR FARMERS NUTRITION PROGRAM

MARKET FRESH 2021

\$2

May only be used at farmers markets and roadside stands displaying the sign "Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Welcome Here"

Market Number: 002491

Signature of Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_

COUPON EXPIRES OCTOBER 31, 2021

Senior Project FRESH provides participants free nutrition counselling and \$20 in coupons that can be exchanged for fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy snaps sold at local farmers markets and roadside stands

## SENIOR PROJECT FRESH

Senior Project FRESH, which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Bill, is a program aimed at older adults, helping them incorporate more fresh fruit and vegetables in their diet. The program was created to benefit the restricted income senior and as a secondary benefit to the Michigan farmer. **16** Alcona residents participated in Senior Project FRESH classes in 2021.



## IMPACT AT A GLANCE



**\$1,545,533**

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT



**111**

PROGRAMS HOSTED IN  
ALCONA COUNTY



**134**

YOUTHS ENROLLED IN 4-H



**57**

RESIDENTS SERVED IN  
SNAP-ED PROGRAMMING



**200**

ALUMNI RESIDENTS IN  
ALCONA COUNTY



**23**

STUDENTS ENROLLED AT  
MSU



**\$324,570**

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSED  
(2020-2021)



**\$4,266**

SPENT WITH LOCAL  
BUSINESS



**47**

ASK AN EXPERT CONTACTS



**194**

ALCONA COUNTY  
EXTENSION WEBSITE VIEWS

## CONTACT US

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