



Alcona County

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



35 Alcona residents participated in home buyer education webinars



655 youth participants and 75 adult volunteers in Alcona County



\$16,528 spent with local businesses



15 Alcona County students enrolled at MSU fall 2019



\$1,489,331 total economic impact of MSU in Alcona County



195 MSU alumni living in Alcona (bachelor and graduate degrees)



\$289,300 financial aid to Alcona students



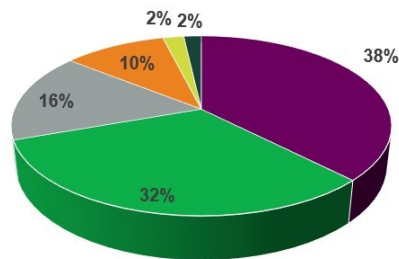
169,206 adult program participants statewide

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

During 2019, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension continued to partner with Alcona County to strengthen youth, families, businesses and communities. In this report, we will highlight local and statewide programs that made a difference in Alcona County residents' lives; including helping farmers with financial management and farm stress; providing opportunities for youth career and leadership development through 4-H; teaching families how to buy, cook and eat nutritious food; helping communities grow their tourism and community development opportunities; and providing a suite of online resources and programs.

Because of your continued support, we are able to help Alcona County residents improve their lives, their workplaces and their communities. It is an honor and a privilege to serve Alcona County and we're looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Finance & Operations



■ Grants
■ State appropriations
■ County investments
■ Federal Cooperative Extension
■ Federal special projects
■ MSU general fund



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Program Highlights

Nutrition Education

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education is a free nutrition education program to reduce hunger, food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits. MSU Extension instructors teach youth, teens, adults and seniors how to make health a priority. In 2019, we continued to strengthen our partnerships with the Alcona Health Center by providing classes such as Cooking Matters for adults and working with Alcona Community Schools food service department and elementary classrooms to provide additional health education to local youth. Our goals continue to be increasing the likelihood that residents eligible for SNAP benefits will establish healthy eating habits and increase their physical activity, all while staying within their food budget.

Making the most of our natural assets

In 2019, we partnered, supported and/or delivered regional MSU Extension/Sea Grant/NEMIGLSI place-based stewardship education program activities, where 672 students across seven counties, **214 from Alcona County**, engaged, through their learning, in Great Lakes and natural resources stewardship projects. To date, this initiative has cumulatively engaged more than 26,503 Michigan youth in place-based stewardship education opportunities. **Twenty Alcona County teachers** participated in professional development activities and/or in place-based stewardship Education efforts with their students during the 2019/2020 school year.

Fostering Strong Communities

MSU Extension offers evidence-based programming that focuses on the socio-economic potential of the area while addressing the needs of residents and community leadership.

In 2019, programs like Money Management, and Home Buyer Education focused on helping households, while programs like Fiscally Ready Communities, Preparing for the Census, Understanding Citizen Redistricting, and Opportunity Zone education were valuable to government officials and local leaders in Alcona County.



Participants in the Cooking Matters Program at the Alcona Health Center learned about MyPlate, increasing physical activity and making healthy food choices on a budget. Pictured, participants are learning how to make The Works Pizza with whole wheat pizza dough.



Teacher Institute program participants learning how decision makers must balance the cost and reach of effectiveness when making land use changes to improve water quality.



MSU Extension offered a Collective Impact Workshop in August of 2019 to help engage the community in economic development.

Program Highlights

Supporting Healthy Communities

In partnership with the Commission on Aging, MSU Extension was able to provide grant-funded wellness programming. **Forty-nine residents participated in Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention** over 16 weeks and received DVDs to continue their healthy habits at home. By request, Stress Less with Mindfulness was offered and had 8 participants who gained skills to manage stress and chronic conditions.

One participant shared ***"I took the Tai Chi class for fun not realizing the benefits I would receive. The ankle flex during warmups prevented an ankle sprain when I stepped wrong off my stairs. I have since acquired more leg strength and balance awareness..."***



Studies show that tai chi can reduce falls by nearly 70%. Other benefits include improving relaxation, vitality, posture, and an improved immune system.

4-H Youth Development

4-H is the largest youth development organization in the country, with programs for youth to explore their passions and interests while growing confidence, leadership skills and a sense of responsibility.

Throughout 2019, Alcona County 4-H partnered with the Alcona County library to promote literacy as well as the Commission on Aging, Lost Lake Woods Club, Alcona Community Schools and Alcona County to provide clubs, camps, school enrichment and much more to **655 Alcona County youth, 242 of which were registered 4-H members.**



48 Alcona youth attended Exploration Days and took classes from Model Rocketry to Small Engines and everything in-between, including Goat Yoga!

Aspen Wortley, eight grade student at Alcona Middle School was one of the attendees. After attending, Aspen applied and was awarded a \$2,000 pre-college achievement scholarship to attend Michigan State University.

Supporting Food & Agriculture

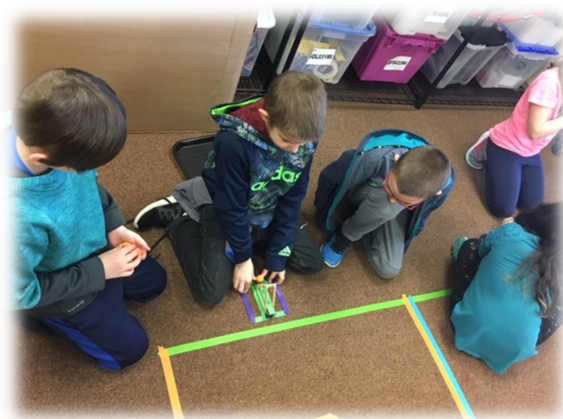
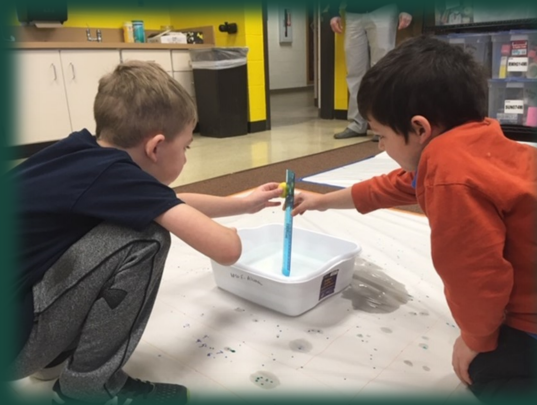
11 residents from Alcona County attended the 2019 Beef Cow-Calf seminar at Alpena Community College to learn from industry experts including Dr. Lowell Midla from Merck Animal Health, about cow-calf enterprise challenges and management decisions to increase the likelihood for success in the industry.

Residents also participated in programs that focused on Christmas trees, hemp production, dealing with pests like Lantern Fly and addressing destructive weeds, and purchased **34 residential and commercial soil test kits** to better address soil health.



Smart Gardening is a campaign to help novice and experienced gardeners in their yards and gardens to save time, money, and the environment. In 2019, Alcona residents utilized the gardening hotline (1-888-678-3464) as part of the 6,500 calls received.

Alcona County, MSU Extension & SUPPORTING YOUTH & COMMUNITIES



Third grade students testing different size catapaults and determining the average distance their cotton balls traveled to learn observation and trial skills.

Tracy D'Augustino is a statewide MSU Extension Educator from the Children & Youth Institute and has been providing STEM (science, technology, engineering, & mathematics) education to the youth of Alcona County for five years. She also delivers education to K-12 teachers about engaging students in hands-on science and place-based education.

In 2019, Tracy engaged **393 students** in 5+ events such as the Alcona County Library Bookworm Garden, Science Day, Habitat Exploration, the State Park Clean Up, the Boating Access Site Clean Up and more.

From first grade through high school, Tracy provided Alcona County youth with hands-on learning experiences that enriched school offerings, strengthened local partnerships and improved the community. She has also strengthened the partnership with Michigan DNR Parks and Recreation supporting natural resource education. For example, second graders worked to evaluate and plan enhancements for the boating access, a designated birding site. Students picked up trash at both the DNR boating access and Harrisville State Park and learned about our responsibility to care for our publicly owned land.



Students making seed balls to attract native birds.



A first grade student preparing the garden for winter.

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