



Eaton County

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



\$71,776,680 total economic impact in Eaton County



718 youth participated in 4-H and youth development programs



119 adults and youth benefited from health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension website received 33,613 visits from Eaton County residents, 73% first-time visitors



Eaton County students received \$11,049,761 in financial aid from MSU



\$5,668,530 spending with local business

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

In 2019, Michigan State University Extension helped its partner, Eaton County, meet needs of County residents through education, consultation and collaboration. Your local MSU Extension staff and the statewide network of Educators provided information and expertise to local farmers, government officials, local and state employees, as well as, County youth and adult residents. MSU Extension has over 200 programs and continually strives to meet the needs of Michiganders with research backed, unbiased information to help improve their lives. This annual report gives examples of some of MSU Extension's accomplishments and the impact that we continue to have in the County. Thank you for the opportunity to share our most valuable resource – our people. Whether taking phone calls, answering the many walk-in questions or providing education programs to groups or individuals, we strive to provide answers to questions that help solve real problems right here in Eaton County.



Bill Hendrian,
District 8 Director

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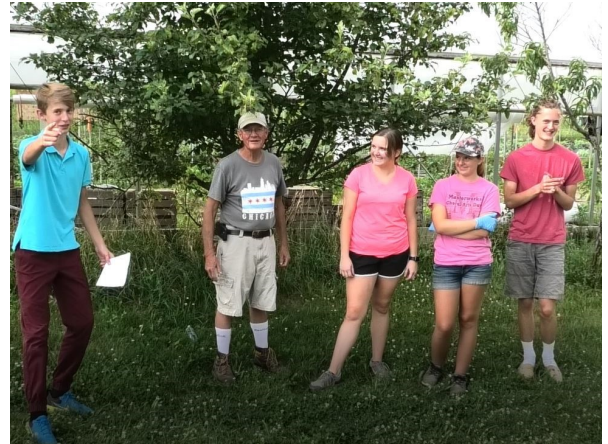
MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Program Highlights

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

MSU Extension's Health & Nutrition Institute continues to support healthy living by sharing nutrition, social emotional, and food safety information and resources on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Housed right here in Eaton County, Heather Dyer manages the MI Health Matters- MSU Extension social media accounts. In addition to sharing articles about current health and nutrition topics, this year, Heather has focused on a series of videos featuring Michigan Farmers, like Eaton County resident Mark Kastner. She has also recently added a new How-to series of videos which highlight quick day-to-day skills like how to boil an egg or how to add physical activity to your day.



Mark Kastner chats with MSU Extension and local students about growing cucumbers and encourages us to eat more cucumbers!

VIRTUAL FARM RESOURCES

Monica Jean, District 8 Field Crops Educator, and the MSU Extension field crops team have developed several online programs. Farmers and agribusiness across Michigan listen in to these programs which include the Field Crops Webinar series, Virtual Breakfast and "In the Weeds" podcast. The webinar typically has 90 attendees and offers nine different topics. In 2019, 50% of attendees reported changing an aspect of their farm, which affected 14,000 acres and saved farmers in Michigan \$99,000 by managing risk and improving production efficiency. In 2019, 921 people participated in the Virtual breakfast, a live presentation with specialists during the growing season. The "In the Weeds" podcast began in late 2019 and currently has 12 posted podcasts played 1,300 times.



"In the weeds" discusses critical issues facing our farming industry every other week. Farmers can participate by phone, mobile device or by playing the audio. <https://www.canr.msu.edu/>

OVER THE COUNTER

Many Eaton County residents like the personal touch or for a number of other reasons enjoy coming to visit with us at the office. Many 4-H youth, volunteers and parents attend meetings or drop off information, fees, or just stop in to say hello. Many local residents would like help getting a plant or insect identified. Gardeners and farmers often stop by to pick up soil test kits in fact, in 2019 Eaton County residents used 119 soil tests kits. When someone visits the local Eaton County MSU Extension office, our local support staff are the link to many Extension services. Whether it is by appointment, by phone, email, or by walk-in, our local office is here to serve the needs of Eaton County.



Michigan State University Extension continues to serve the residents of Eaton County and we welcome you to stop in and say hello.

Program Highlights



MSU Extension is working to raise awareness and to provide education regarding CWD through conversation and outreach.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

In 2015, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) was detected in Michigan. Since that date, 119 deer have tested positive for CWD across nine Michigan counties. In 2017, the Michigan Natural Resources Commission established the Chronic Wasting Disease Working Group to develop recommendations on steps and actions to mitigate or eliminate CWD in Michigan. A key recommendation proposed by the working group was the development of public education. Toward this effort, MSU Extension and the MDARD collaborated late in 2019 to hire Katie Ockert, MSU Extension Educator, to create, deliver, and evaluate local and statewide communication strategies and innovative educational programs that meet current and projected outreach needs related to white-tailed deer management and CWD.



4-H is Michigan's largest youth development program serving over 200,000 youth each year, including youth like Savannah shown above.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Eaton County 4-H through MSU Extension, helps to prepare youth for real life situations. From the local club experience to the statewide workshops and events, all youth have the chance to participate and develop skills that last a lifetime.

4-H helps to prepare current and future leaders by offering numerous opportunities for leadership development that will prepare youth and empower them to stand up today as true leaders in their schools and communities.

Here is what some Eaton County youth said about Eaton County 4-H:

Savannah: "I started 4-H when I was 10 years old, joining because my parents said that I could get a rabbit, but only if I joined 4-H. I had started losing interest in Girl Scouts and was looking for something new. Little did I know that decision would be one of the best decisions I would ever make and would possibly affect the rest of my life."

Leo: "4-H has taught me leadership skills and given me a chance to step out of my comfort zone and try new things."

Jael: "4-H has shaped me into a confident, able leader and facilitator. I am able to speak in front of large groups, work with other youth, adults and animals, and help others. 4-H has presented me with so many opportunities that I could get nowhere else, at the club, county, and state levels."

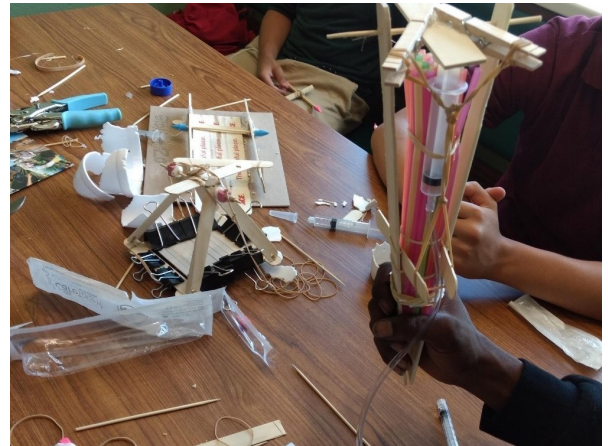


Through structured 4-H activities, Eaton County youth like Leo gain a variety of skills to help them become successful in communication, teamwork and organization.

Program Highlights

4-H ROBOTICS & STEM

4-H volunteers and Teen Leaders interested in robotics gathered in March of 2019, for a 4-H Robotics Youth training. 4-H Program Coordinator, Kristy Oosterhouse, helped put on a program designed to increase awareness of STEM and how 4-H Robotics adds value to in-school science by increasing problem solving and critical thinking skills. Trainings like this help youth to connect their interests and skills to career opportunities and to work towards a career goal. Using hands-on activities, 4-H youth develop the skills that help them be successful in many areas of life. The robotics is another example of a fun activity that helps youth learn beyond what is in front of them in the moment and equip themselves for life ahead.



Through fun, hand-on projects in robotics and other 4-H programs, youth are able to explore the world of science, technology, engineering and math.

TEACHING ACROSS CULTURE

Eaton County MSU Extension Community Nutrition Instructor, Ali Parker, provides health and nutrition education to some of our most vulnerable populations. Working with a group of teens from the Samaritas Teen Refugee Center provided an opportunity for Ali to get to know youth from Central America and Africa. Ali incorporated physical activities – using “American style” sports as the platform. The similarities of ultimate Frisbee and soccer provided a great bridge to understanding. Ali and the youth learned the different cultures from each other and using the Teen Cuisine series, the youth learned how to cook and prepare their own nutritious meals. The program helped the youth adjust to living here in the United States.



MSU Extension aims to improve the knowledge, skills and behavior of how individuals view nutrition.

HEALTH & NUTRITION PARTNERSHIPS

Eaton County MSU Extension is proud of its work in the area of Health and Nutrition. Teaching healthy eating and the skills needed to prepare healthy meals plays a big role in helping our participants have more healthy lives. The benefits of good food and good habits contribute toward a healthy life. Our MSU Extension Community Nutrition Instructors work hard to deliver information based on good science. Each program promotes hands-on learning to benefit a broad audience with differing learning abilities. MSU Extension is thankful for partners like AT&T who helped to provide healthy foods for many classes in 2019.



MSU Extension Health & Nutrition staff partnered with AT&T to offer the Cooking Matters class at the Eaton Rapids Medical Center.

Featured County Story



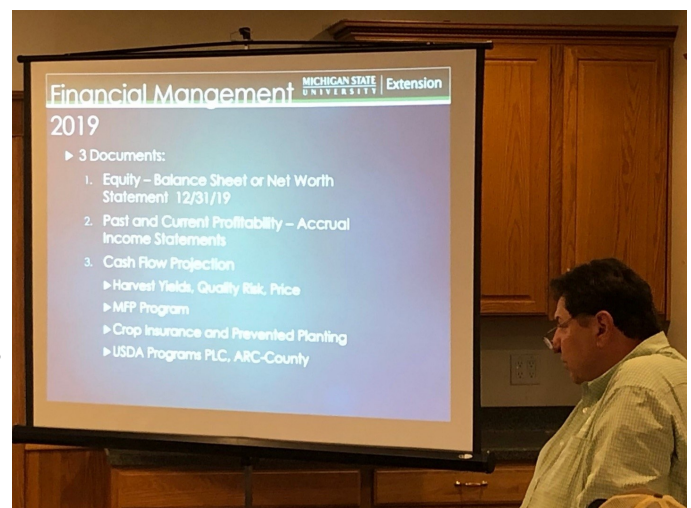
Pictured above the agriculture community in Eaton County, joined the Eaton County Board of Commissioners, other elected officials and MSU Extension professionals, in conversations related to the lasting implications of the delayed planting season.



Photo courtesy: Roger Betz, MSU Extension Educator

Farmers Forum

In 2019, Eaton County MSU Extension was proud to assist the Board of Commissioners and other state and local partners in responding to the prevented planting crisis. As part of the response, the Eaton County Board of Commissioners organized the inaugural Eaton County Farmers Resource Forum. Experts, county and state officials all converged to address important topics made relevant due to the crisis. The farmer's inability to plant certain crops due to excessive amounts of spring rain had implications that were long lasting. MSU Extension educator, Roger Betz, and MSU Specialist, James Hilker, organized an early review of the farm bill and farm financial management. MSU Extension educator, Bruce Mackellar discussed weed management concerns, and MSU Extension educator, Eric Karbowski address important mental health topics that many farmers were experiencing. The MSU Extension experts, County treasurer, Bob Robinson, MDARD and Governor's office representatives and other agricultural industry representatives provided insight and resources for our Eaton County farmers to help navigate the difficult road forward after experiencing this crisis. Nearly every attendee surveyed found topics of interest and expressed an interest in attending similar programs in the future. The participants appreciated the MSU Extension presenters. MSU Extension was able to bring locally housed experts as well as educators from across the state and MSU's campus to provide and apply relevant researched back information to improve the lives of Michigan farmers. Local partners make it possible for MSU Extension to build capacity and serve Eaton County residents.



Roger Betz, Eaton County MSU Extension Educator, presents on financial management specific to producers.

MSU Extension staff located in Eaton County

Roger Betz	Farm Management Educator	269-781-0784	betz@msu.edu
Heather Dyer	Community Nutrition Instructor	517-543-4405	dyerh@msu.edu
Lori Eccles	Nutrition Supervising Educator	517-543-4472	ecclesl@msu.edu
Bill Hendrian	District 8 Director	231-843-4395	hendria2@msu.edu
Becky Henne	Community Foods Educator	517-543-4468	henner@msu.edu
Rachel Ochylski	AmeriCorps Service Member	517-543-4469	ochylski@msu.edu
Kristy Oosterhouse	4-H Program Coordinator	517-543-4420	oosterh6@msu.edu
Ali Parker	Community Nutrition Instructor	517-543-2310	parke339@msu.edu

Additional MSU Extension staff serving Eaton County

Laura Anderson	Disease Prevention Educator	269-945-1388	ander359@msu.edu
Isabel Branstrom	Consumer Horticulture Educator	517-676-7301	branst2@msu.edu
Katie Courtade	CYI / 4-H Supervising Educator	616-527-5357	courtad3@msu.edu
Faith Cullens	Dairy Educator	989-224-5249	cullensf@msu.edu
Paige Filice	RIPPLE Invasive Species Educator	517-676-7291	filicepa@msu.edu
Kevin Gould	Beef Educator	616-527-5357	gouldk@msu.edu
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Monica Jean	Field Crops Educator	989-224-5240	atkinmon@msu.edu
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Katie Ockert	Chronic Wasting Disease Educator	517-527-5357	ockertka@msu.edu
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Jade Richards	Behavioral Health Instructor	517-887-4575	richa572@msu.edu
Erica Rogers	Environmental Mgmt. Educator	989-875-5296	roger392@msu.edu
Dave Rowley	Govt. & Public Relations Educator	989-875-5233	rowleyd2@msu.edu
Dan O'Keefe	Sea Grant Educator	616-994-4572	okeeefed@msu.edu
Holly Tiret	Social Emotional Educator	616-632-7893	tiret@msu.edu
Casey Zangaro	Swine Educator	989-875-5292	zangaroc@msu.edu

Supporting MSU Extension

For more than 100 years, MSU Extension staff have been helping people in our communities. MSU Extension values the opportunities made possible by our federal, state and local partners. In addition, our staff often seek grants that focus on particular needs that enable us to focus our efforts where necessary. In fact, grants made up the largest percentage of our statewide funding in 2019. Another important resource comes from donors. MSU Extension receives generous support from individuals and organizations who are passionate about specific work we do and want to make possible even more education. Donors fund local programs or offer opportunities to youth to participate in activities beyond the local program. Gifts sometimes fund research positions or just help boost local operations. To learn more about giving to MSU Extension, visit extension.msu.edu/giving.

Through successful partnership and collaboration with Eaton County, MSU Extension is able to continue its local presence and to provide vital educational resources and programming in such areas as community and economic development, agriculture, land use, health and nutrition, and youth development.

Thank you Eaton County!



MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

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