



# Genesee County

## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**\$83,030,936**  
Total Economic Impact



**999**  
Enrolled Michigan Students



**\$8,372,210**  
Spending with Local Businesses



**7,129**  
MSU Alumni in Genesee County



**\$21,651,369**  
Financial Aid Disbursed



**6,044**  
Youth in 4-H

### Message from the District Director

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses. For more than 100 years, MSU Extension has helped grow Michigan's economy by equipping Michigan residents with the information they need to do their jobs better, raise healthy and safe families, build their communities and empower our children to dream of a successful future.



With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

Whether it's helping grow Michigan's agriculture economy, capturing opportunities that use our natural resources in a sustainable way, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness or preparing tomorrow's leaders, MSU Extension is creating opportunities and building communities that make Michigan strong, prosperous and a great place to live.

On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving *your* County, thank you for your continued support. I would also like to thank all of our partners, businesses, families and youth that we serve. It is a pleasure and honor to work with you and meet your needs in our community.

Mark Rankin, District Director



# Program Highlights



Genesee County 4-H member Hartley Sovis preparing her 2019 market lamb at the Genesee County fair for show day.



Genesee County 4-H provides a variety of youth enrichment programs throughout the city of Flint. Collaborating with local community partners, 800+ plus youth each year benefit from such topic areas that include but are not limited to the following: Fitness, Nutrition, Science, Mindfulness, Personal Hygiene, Arts & Crafts, Black History and Music Appreciation.

## 4-H Youth Development

**4-H** is the largest youth development organization in Michigan. In 2019, Genesee County has 22 traditional livestock and horse 4-H clubs serving 335 youth members ranging in ages 5 -19 years old with 220 adult volunteers contributing 8,742 volunteer hours for an added value of \$174,840 to the Genesee County community. 4-H also reaches a great number of youths through its afterschool programs, SPIN clubs and other short-term education programs reaching 5,389 youth in Genesee County. All 4-H programs offered to youth can learn valuable leadership and life skills for the future.

**2019 Genesee County** added an AmeriCorps Fellow to the 4-H team. During the past year the focus on the AmeriCorps fellow has been to add Spin clubs to the Flint area and engage in afterschool programs. By adding this additional person to the 4-H staff they have been able to reach 100 additional students and added new STEM programming to Flint area schools. Our AmeriCorps fellow will be returning for the 2020 4-H programming year to expand to more schools.

## Children and Youth

**MSU Extension** partners with the Flint River Watershed Coalition, General Motors, and the Genesee County Drain Commissioner's office to carry out Flint River GREEN. This program connects classroom education with hands-on learning in the field. Over 2,000 students from across the Flint River Watershed tested the water quality at 21 sites. Classrooms were paired with environmental professionals who served as mentors to help students, and provide insight into potential careers. Over 300 students, teachers, and mentors attended a summit at Kettering University, where student shared their data with peers and attended breakout sessions.

**Flint River Monitoring:** Evaluation data shows that participants improved their perception of the Flint River and wanted to make a positive impact on their ecosystem. From one of the student presentations, "We thought the Flint River was bad and was very unhealthy before we did water testing. We thought the water was gross and it was why a bunch of people got sick. After we did the testing our opinion on the Flint River changed tremendously in a good way."

For more information, look at the Flint River GREEN annual report at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fTpUSfFtquLmLimblsfTIZkMCzuc1JV0/view>

# Program Highlights

## Early Childhood

**MSU Extension** offers a variety of training, curricula and materials to support early childhood development in Genesee County. Resources in this area focus on preparing for School Success in Early Childhood, Social and Emotional Health in Young Children and Family Education and Support.

**During the 2019 year**, early childhood staff provided programming to over 225 parents, caregivers and early childhood educators. Many Presentations including “Inquiring Minds Want to Know: Science for Young Children”, “The Importance of Outdoor Play”, “Mindfulness for Young Children”, “What Children Need to Know to Start School” and “Advocating for Young Children” were offered in Genesee County. Beyond these presentations, early childhood staff also provided multiple five-week parenting series titled: “Guiding Principles for Highly Effective Parenting”. In Flint, staff especially focus on helping families to diminish the effects of lead exposure in overall child development including the areas of cognitive, social-emotional and motor skills. Our series includes topics of developing successful routines, handling behavioral challenges, being a calm and assertive parent, establishing supportive relationships and building resilience in young children. “Guiding Principles for Highly Effective Parenting” brings families together by offering parenting education and youth curriculum simultaneously with shared meal and activity times.

We are here in Genesee County to provide trainings, classes and information to increase the importance and understanding of early childhood development to those in the lives of children.



MSU Extension shines a spotlight on emerging literacy, provide tools to help parents and caregivers get children ready for school, and offer programs and events that promote social and emotional health in young children.



## Healthier Black Elders Program

**Through** a collaboration with Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, and the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, MSU Extension has continued outreach to senior residents in Flint. Through the Healthier Black Elders program, we are creating lunch and learn sessions tailored towards health topics that interest local seniors. By bringing in experts to educate the public on aging-related topics, we look to create environments that empower and excite seniors to embrace the aging process. Our first event was held at Hasselbring Senior Center in November with over 30 seniors in attendance. We will be hosting three more events in the Spring and Summer of 2020.

**Promoting** health and wellbeing includes understanding important connections between physical, mental, social and emotional health. Emerging research and recommendations confirm ancient wisdom and science in showing that the false distinctions made between people's emotions, mental and physical health are both artificial and harmful. Wellness describes the entirety of one's physical, emotional, and social health; this includes all aspects of functioning in the world (physiological, intellectual, social, and spiritual), as well as subjective feelings of well-being. (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2014). In 2019, 122 residents of Genesee County participated in classes to improve their own skills.

# Program Highlights



Cooking Matters Graduation!!

Congratulations to the participants at Genesee Health Plan.



Participants learn to make healthy food choices and incorporate balanced menus into the family dining experience. Classes include research-based education, cooking demonstrations and healthy recipe tasting.



Social media and distance learning is a new and exciting way for people to communicate and provides different opportunities to learn.

## Health and Nutrition

Genesee County Health and Nutrition provides nutrition education to children, youth, adults, and families with limited financial resources and are eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), WIC, AFDC, or Head Start.

Through our partnerships with Crossover Ministry, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Carriage Town, Corcoran House, the Flint Community Schools, Head Start, Genesee Health Plan, Hamilton Clinic, Beecher Schools, WIC, Michigan Works, New Path, The Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village, and Rosewood Manor to just name a few, we have reached:

625+ adults in 6 week series

400+ youth in 6 week series

300+ adults in One Time Presentations

The Genesee County MSUE Office houses a State-Wide Extension Educator who provides state oversight to social media, distance education, policy, systems and environmental change efforts. Our MI Health Matters Social Media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) provide health and nutrition information to thousands of Michiganders annually through news articles, infographics, and videos. An excited distance project is the creation of a nutrition and physical activity course in American Sign Language (ASL).

Currently there is oversight and staff training across the state for policy, systems and environmental change initiatives which aim to make the healthy choice the easy choice. These initiatives work together with our direct education classes to allow residents of Flint, Genesee County, and Michigan to make healthy choices that are right for them.

## Breastfeeding Program Updates

MSU Extension's Breastfeeding Program has partnerships with - Reach, Traverse Place GISD (Skip), NFP (nurse family partnership), and Headstart.

The program consists of play groups, community outreach, home visits as well as Baby Café. The Breastfeeding Program has been able to serve and positively impact well over 300 families in the Genesee County community.

We have had over 100 moms successfully breastfeed until baby reached 12 months of age.

# Program Highlights

## Edible Flint

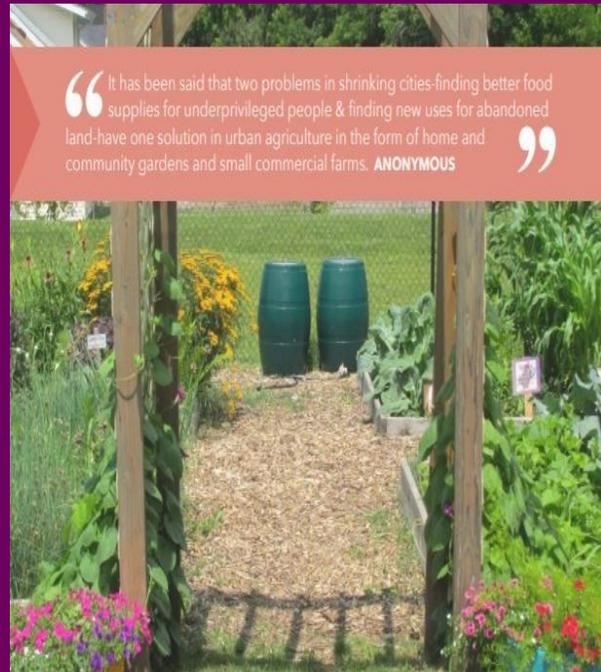
**One of the first efforts** of the group was a garden tour that featuring vegetable gardens of people around the community who were digging in and establishing roots by cultivating gardens. Some gardeners were feeding their families, some were sharing with neighbors and others were feeding the community through donations. In the years since, Edible Flint has hosted 11 Food Garden Tours. MSU Extension volunteers and programs have been a key component of these efforts since 2009. In 2019, the tour featured 15 garden locations across our community.

**The next effort** involved creating a garden kit: seeds, transplants, and instructions for a 1500 sq. ft garden were gathered and shared. In the years since the Garden Starters Kits began, Edible Flint has sold more than 2,600 garden kits. The program has also offered services including tilling (263 gardens), soil tests (600 soil tests), and delivery of compost (~2800 yards of compost). In the wake of the water crisis in Flint, the organization has sold hose filters and rain barrels at a reduced cost. The program has supported more than 1,300 gardens since 2009. In 2019, Edible Flint distributed 150 garden kits, completed more than 50 soil tests in Flint, and helped gardeners amend their soil with the addition of more almost half a ton of compost. MSU Extension has worked to coordinate the inclusion of Master Gardener Volunteers and youth programs with Edible Flint efforts.

**Edible Flint** has also trained new gardeners to meet their neighbors and cultivate the soil. The training program has graduated more than 200 gardeners. This year, the program will focus on helping people connect the health of their soil with their health. In 2019, Edible Flint trained more than 15 new people through the Garden Starters Training Program.

**In 2018**, Edible Flint receive the donation of land from an established urban farm. In 2019, improvements to the property included an outdoor learning space on the farm to host programs and classes at the site. The Educational Farm will offer an opportunity for people from Genesee County and beyond to learn about the opportunities of urban agriculture. MSU Extension is hosting educational programs in partnership with the Edible Flint Educational Farm.

**In the coming year**, Edible Flint will be looking ahead to the next horizon to meet our mission to support residents in growing and accessing health food in order to reconnect with the land and each other.



Edible Flint grew out of efforts in Flint to address issues of food insecurity and challenged access to healthy food, increasing rates of health problems resulting from inadequate nutrition, and increasing amounts of abandoned property and vacant land. Early partners like the Ruth Mott Foundation, the Genesee County Land Bank, Michigan State University Extension, Genesee Conservation District, and countless others began collaborating and built a network that was called Edible Flint. MSU Extension has played a key role in the organization providing a point of contact, office space, and other collaborations.



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# Program Highlights



Through ServSafe, participants learn how to help prevent foodborne illness throughout the flow of food and set up food safety management systems.



Cooking for Crowds curriculum is designed to show the food safety risks that can develop when preparing and cooking larger volumes of food and how to reduce those risks.



A homeownership seminar from MSU Extension will equip you with valuable information about the home-buying process that will help you navigate the technicalities and avoid costly mistakes.

## ServSafe Classes

**Michigan State University Extension** offers ServSafe, a national certification program for those working in food service, specifically managers and other leaders. This course provides participants education to successfully pass the ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification exam.

ServSafe teaches about foodborne illness, how to prevent it and how to train employees about the latest food safety issues. The ServSafe Manager course uses proven techniques, provides new Food & Drug Administration food code rules and content related to the food industry.

Topics include providing safe food, forms of contamination, the safe food handler, the flow of food, food safety management systems, safe facilities & pest management, cleaning & sanitizing.

In 2019, six 8-hour classes were held in Genesee County, reaching 52 participants.

## Cooking for Crowds

**Cooking for Crowds** is an educational program for nonprofit groups that prepare food for their members or for the general public as fundraisers. The curriculum is designed to show the food safety risks that can develop when preparing and cooking larger volumes of food and how to reduce those risks.

Participants will learn how to prevent unsafe conditions that may cause foodborne illness when planning, purchasing, storing, preparing and serving food. Participants in the workshops will receive a manual and a food safety participation certificate of completion.

In 2019, four Cooking for Crowds classes were held. Three sessions were taught in local churches, and one at a drug and alcohol recovery community center. Forty-eight participants received certificates.

## Homeownership Education

**MSU Extension Genesee County** offers a no cost Homebuyer Education Class that is MSHDA and HUD certified. MSU Extension hosted 7 completed classes with 46 individuals in Genesee County in 2019.

**You will learn:**

- The advantages of homeownership,
- The steps in the home-buying process
- The costs of home ownership
- The importance of good credit
- How to determine how much house you can afford
- Mortgage loan basics
- How to maintain your investment.

# Program Highlights

## Michigan Sea Grant Extension

**Michigan Sea Grant Extension** promotes research, education, and outreach to enhance responsible and sustainable use of our diverse Great Lakes resources. Through MSU Extension, Michigan Sea Grant works with Michigan citizens, industries, and coastal communities to encourage their use, benefits, and enjoyment of Great Lakes resources that positively influences our state's economy, environment and quality of life. Here we highlight our investments with Great Lakes fisheries stakeholders and engaging youth in Great Lakes stewardship opportunities.

### **Saginaw Bay Sturgeon Reintroduction Effort:**

Sturgeon are a unique Great Lakes species. They can grow up to 7 feet long and can weigh up to 300 pounds. The slow-maturing fish do not begin reproducing until they are 15-20 years old. Once abundant in many Michigan lakes and rivers, lake sturgeon were nearly eradicated due to overfishing and habitat loss, particularly the destruction of rocky reefs in rivers that sturgeon and other native fish species use for spawning. Lake sturgeon are also now considered threatened or endangered in 7 of the 8 Great Lakes states.

**To reintroduce** Lake Sturgeon in the Saginaw Bay watershed, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and many local partners are working together to re-establish Lake Sturgeon in the Cass, Shiawassee, Tittabawassee, and Flint Rivers.

**MSU Extension** and Michigan Sea Grant supported this effort by helping facilitate 7 public release events in across the Saginaw Bay Watershed, which brought together +500 people to learn more about Lake Sturgeon and release +875 sturgeon fingerlings into four Saginaw River tributaries.

**In September 2020**, we collaborated with the Flint River Watershed Coalition for sturgeon release into the Flint River and ribbon cutting of the new kayak launch at Mott Park's Paddlers' Landing. We also supported the launch of the Saginaw Bay Adopt-a-Sturgeon program. By "adopting" a lake sturgeon released into the Saginaw Bay Watershed, people receive the PIT tag number of a released fish, and if recaptured, receive an update on the status of "their" fish. Money from the adoptions will support food for rearing the fish and connected education opportunities including the Sturgeon in the Classroom program.

[www.saginawbaysturgeon.org](http://www.saginawbaysturgeon.org)



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Michigan Dept of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MSU Extension and many local partners worked together to reestablish Lake Sturgeon in the Cass, Shiawassee, Tittabawassee, and Flint Rivers.



MSU Extension, with other partners, supported a gathering to release 125 juvenile sturgeon into the Flint River on Sept. 21, 2019 at Mott Park's Paddlers' Landing in Flint.

# Extension Providing Master Gardener Program

**Our Mission** - To further the land-grant university goal of disseminating scientifically based information via a network of trained volunteers who receive support and guidance from MSU Extension to educate Michigan residents on the most current and environmentally sound horticulture information.



## Master Gardener Program

**MSU Extension** annually trains Genesee County residents in horticulture principles using environmentally sound growing practices. Once volunteers are trained, they are required to complete 40 hours of community service to become certified MSU Extension Master Gardeners. This 14 week course empowers volunteers to serve their community through lawn and garden education.

## Helping People and Communities Grow

**In 2019** The Extension Master Gardener (EMG) Program consists of community volunteers that have been trained to educate the public and support their communities. This is done through horticultural projects that contain educational components. In 2019, nearly 200 EMG volunteers contributed 12,203 volunteer hours at over 50 projects, representing an economic value of \$310,322. Across the state from 2009-2018, over 1,873,497 hours were contributed by volunteers trained in the EMG program. Examples of the many local projects include four highway rest areas, gardens at Crossroads Village, outreach tables at three Farmer's Markets, gardens at five local Libraries, and the Junior Master Garden Program. The Junior Master Gardener program has trained over 120 Genesee county youth since its inception over 20 years ago. This program is run by both EMG and 4-H volunteers and is part of the 4-H program.



*Extension Master Gardeners being awarded the Michigan Nursery and Landscape Community Landscape Beautification Award at Flint Public Library.*

## Consumer Horticulture

**Homeowners** often have insect infestations or plant diseases that they are unfamiliar with and need help addressing. MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture provides community education through its Smart Gardening resources, soil testing interpretation, disease identification, and a local MSU Extension Lawn and Garden hotline. This hotline is part of a toll-free Lawn and Garden hotline system that serves both the state and Genesee County. 1-888-678-3464

**In addition** to managing the Lawn and Garden Hotline and administering the Extension Master Gardener Program, Consumer Horticulture also provides educational opportunities and horticultural guidance for consumers and local organizations in Genesee County. This includes classes on gardening and plant topics that are open to the public.

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