



Huron County

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 100 years MSU Extension staff have provided education to Huron County residents



\$48,109 spending with local businesses in Huron County



726 MSU alumni living in and contributing to Huron County, and 99 students currently enrolled



MSU disbursed \$1,631,487 in financial aid to Huron County students



MSU Extension website received 29,296 visits from Huron County residents; 79% were first-time visitors



839 youth involved in 4-H and other youth development programs



\$5,598,955 total economic impact in Huron County

Message from the District Director

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is part of the national Cooperative Extension network, which is housed at land-grant universities across the country. MSU Extension is funded through a partnership of federal, state and county governments, and works with individuals, businesses, organizations and communities to identify and address Michigan's existing and emerging priorities. From Great Lakes water levels and protection of our natural resources to industrial hemp farming as an emerging business enterprise, from workforce preparedness and youth instruction to nutritional education for low income adolescents and adults, from tourism and economic growth to training for newly elected county commissioners, MSU Extension delivers evidence-based education for the benefit of Huron County. This report highlights the work done through out the past year.



We're passionate about addressing the current and emergent needs of Huron County. Thank you for supporting MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Jerry Johnson, District Director
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canr.msu.edu/huron/index



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MSU Extension District 10
Huron County 4-H
Family Nutrition Program



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Ensuring Safe and Secure Food



Huron County Health and Nutrition Staff

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MSU Extension efforts in ensuring safe food lead to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care costs in check and our communities viable.

ServSafe Manager Training

ServSafe Manager Training certification and education was provided for 64 foodservice employees representing local schools, churches and restaurants. This course provides education for the ServSafe Food Protection Manager course and proctoring of the certification exam. Through ServSafe, participants learn how to help prevent foodborne illness throughout the flow of food and set up food safety management systems.

Food Safety Education and Presentations

One hundred fifty one youth engaged in food safety presentations which provided information about staying healthy by keeping germ free. Handwashing was the focus for the students. One food preservation session for 10 adults was also offered in Huron County.

Cooking for Crowds

Classes were held for 36 volunteers at three local organizations. Cooking for Crowds is designed for non-profit groups that run food fundraisers and events such as meals, bake sales, sub sales and dinners. There are a range of food safety risks that develop when cooking large volumes of food and participants learn to reduce those risks and help prevent the conditions that may lead to a foodborne illness.

Following are testimonials and comments from the participants:

- ♦ *"Learned a lot of food safety practices we should do, some we had never thought of."*
- ♦ *"I am now aware of many needed changes at our church kitchen."*
- ♦ *"Very informational. It opened my eyes to what we need to do better at our church."*
- ♦ *"Reminded me of how important time and temperature are, and I learned about the importance of sanitizer."*



It's Michigan Fresh...for you!

What's the best way to cook? These vegetables you bought at the farmer's market? Learn about the best that the Great Lakes State has to offer with help from Michigan State University Extension's Michigan Fresh educational campaign. Michigan Fresh helps people explore the state's bounty of fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, meats and more. On the Michigan Fresh website (michiganfresh.msu.edu), you'll find information on recommended varieties, storage, food safety, and growing techniques for fruits and vegetables, and on planting and maintaining your lawn and garden. Michigan is the nation's leading producer of blueberries, cucumbers for pickles, huckleberries, and tart cherries. The state produces more than 300 commodities on a commercial basis, making Michigan second only to California in agricultural diversity. Michigan's food and agricultural system generates billions of dollars in economic activity each year. Production agriculture, food processing and related businesses employ more than 1 million Michigan residents. With dozens of fruits and vegetables produced in Michigan, enjoying Michigan produce from and vegetables is possible year round. The goal of Michigan Fresh is to help you and your family eat, preserve, grow and learn about all that's Michigan Fresh.

Learn or garden questions? Visit michiganfresh.msu.edu or call 1-800-275-5844. Fact sheets are available on the Michigan Fresh website at michiganfresh.msu.edu and at many farmers' markets across the state. Video demonstrations at bit.ly/michfreshvid.

Michigan Fresh FACT Sheets

These resources provide valuable information on the safe use, storage and preservation of Michigan grown fruits and vegetables. They are available at local farm markets as well as the MSU Extension office and food safety programs. They can also be found online at:

http://www.canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh/

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food, continued

Safe Food = Healthy Kids

Safe Food = Healthy Kids is a program which focuses on providing food safety education for childcare providers. The goal of the program is to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness in young children. In Huron County, 32 childcare providers attended this new, innovative training which incorporates hands-on learning with an educational texting campaign to enhance learning after attending the program.

TEXT: SafeFood to 797979 to sign up and receive food safety tips every week.

Following are testimonials and comments from the participants:

- ♦ *"I liked learning about the cooking temperatures for safe food."*
- ♦ *"I learned about the food prep and using a food thermometer."*
- ♦ *"Class helped me a lot with food safety tips and techniques that I didn't know."*

Food Safety Course for Processors

Many food processors are required to have food safety plans, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) or Preventive Controls for Human Food. These important industry trainings that provide participants with a certificate at the end of the course were hosted by MSU Extension and co-taught by Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer and a team of Campus specialists including Dr. Les Bourquin, Dr. John Partridge and Mr. Jason Hofman. Two HACCP course participants were from Huron County.



Keeping People Healthy



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Encouraging healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs by helping prevent chronic health conditions and providing safe environments throughout a person's life span.

Cooking Matters

Cooking Matters, a series of interactive cooking and nutrition classes for teens and families, was offered in partnership with Laker Schools with 84 children and adults participating. Cooking Matters for families is offered to parents, grandparents and guardians of children ages 6 - 13. This series is designed to help children get involved in the kitchen. Families prepare a recipe side by side each week. At the end of class, they receive groceries to take home and prepare that meal together again. Both groups learn new skills and benefit from the time spent together.

Cooking Matters for Teens focuses on children ages 13 - 17 and is also interactive. Teens gain hands on experience preparing healthy recipes which they get to enjoy in class. They also learn the benefits of eating healthy and how it will impact them as adults. Not only do they learn about nutrition; they also gain life skills such as budgeting, working with others and accountability.

Senior Market FRESH

Educational presentations for more than 250 county residents over the age of 60, in partnership with the Huron County Health Department, were held. Seniors learned the importance of fruits and vegetables in their diets as well as receiving \$40 in coupons to be used to purchase fresh Michigan fruits and vegetables at local farm markets to enhance their nutrition and health.

Farm Stress Program

In collaboration with the Ag and Agri-Business Extension Educators in District 9 and 10, Kris Swartzendruber presented the Farm Stress program: *Weathering the Storm in Agriculture - How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset* at five Thumb Ag Review meetings in December of 2018, reaching area participants including several from Huron County. Kris also presented this program to over 100 farmers at a late-planting emergency meeting for farmers, held in Memphis, Michigan on June 13, 2019.

Farmers know how to care for their animals and crops, however they don't always take the same care in monitoring and managing their own mental and physical health. Weather related issues, commodity prices, financial issues, etc. make stress especially palpable for the farmers in the thumb area.

MSU Extension puts a high emphasis on making sure farmers care for their own health and wellness. The Farm Stress program provides information and resources to help farmers, their families and those who work with farmers to identify the signs and symptoms of stress, provide healthy strategies to help manage stress and outside resources for additional help.



Diabetes PATH (Personal Action Towards Health) Series

Diabetes PATH was conducted at the Huron County MSU Extension office for 11 participants. The Diabetes PATH program is designed for people with prediabetes, type 1 or type 2 and members of their support system. During the six-week series, participants learn self-management skills such as dealing with the challenges of not feeling well, effectively talking to healthcare providers, overcoming stress, increasing energy, staying independent and setting goals.

Following are testimonials and comments from participants:

- ♦ *"The class has been so very beneficial to me! It has given me an understanding of what diabetes is and how to live with it. I have learned not only what to eat, but how often, along with portion size and control. I also gained knowledge about being more active and taking control of my feelings. I do feel so much better about myself since taking this class. I am no longer at a loss as to what diabetes is and how to live with it."*
- ♦ *"Being the wife of someone that has diabetes, I have learned so many things. Because the information didn't come from me, his wife, he is more open to the ideas. He is learning to make better choices and eat smaller portions. I have learned that some of his problems could be from diabetes so together we're trying to make changes to improve his health."*

Healthier Childcare Environments

This initiative helps childcare providers identify areas for improvement related to nutrition and physical activity policies and environmental best practices. A trained nutrition education coach from MSU Extension helps childcare providers through the process and connects them with resources to work towards best practices. Areas of focus include: active/inactive play time, fruits and vegetables, screen time use, menus and variety, physical activity policy and nutrition policy. After four to six months of assessing their environment, action planning and implementing new nutrition and physical activity best practices, the result is a healthier childcare environment for the childcare providers and the children they care for. In Huron County, two childcare sites began this program impacting more than 27 children as well as their families.

Eat Smart, Live Strong (ESLS)

This nutrition education series for seniors was held at the Huron County Senior Center for nine senior citizens. The series combines both education about eating more fruits and vegetables with adding more daily physical activity.

Show Me Nutrition

Ninety-seven youth engaged in a series of classes learning about eating healthy fruits and vegetables, MyPlate and trying new foods.

Eat Healthy, Be Active

Eat Healthy, Be Active is a nutrition and physical activity program for adults promoting healthy living to reduce the risk of obesity and chronic disease. Participants learn the skills needed to make healthy eating and physical activity a part of their lifestyle!

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Keeping People Healthy, continued

Dining with Diabetes

Two classes were conducted at the Huron County MSU Extension office for 24 participants. Both series were sponsored by a grant received by the Lions of Michigan from Lions Clubs International Foundation. Dining with Diabetes is an interactive series for individuals with prediabetes, type 1 or type 2 diabetes and members of their support system. During each class, participants learn how to make healthier food choices and incorporate balanced menus into their family dining experience. Classes include research-based education and cooking demonstrations from the recipes in the take-home book. Participants also get to sample and taste the delicious foods that are made during each of the four classes.

Following are testimonials and comments from participants:

- ♦ *"I have become more educated, active and have lost 20 lbs. since I began taking the two diabetes classes (Diabetes PATH and Dining with Diabetes). Also, I mentioned these classes to my primary doctor and he was interested in the classes so I sent him information."*
- ♦ *"I am not a diabetic but am so much more aware of eating healthier. Focusing on the 'Plate Method' idea is very beneficial for me! Knowing that when I can't walk my usual distance, that even walking some is a plus to exercise."*
- ♦ *"I have lost 7 lbs. and my A1C is down. I am using less salt, eating less and eat fruit instead of potato chips. I have taken diabetes classes before (twice), but this one was more user friendly. It actually got me interested in watching my carbohydrates more. I can now see how certain foods affect my blood sugar."*
- ♦ *"Learning the Plate Method and using half the plate for veggies was really helpful for me. I enjoyed preparing some of the recipes in my participant booklet."*
- ♦ *"The classes have made me more aware of watching the labels on prepared foods. Using a smaller salad plate as opposed to the full sized dinner plate has also been helpful."*

Stress Less with Mindfulness

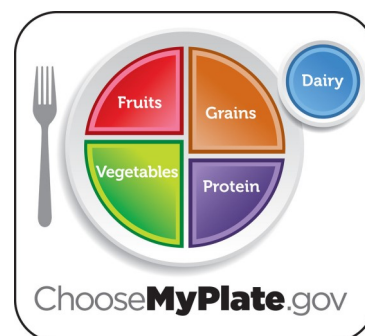
Stress Less with Mindfulness was held in Bad Axe for 18 participants. This series was funded by a MSU Extension grant geared toward older adults. Mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment without judgement. Research has shown that practicing mindfulness is effective in reducing stress-related symptoms such as worry, depression, physical tension, and may be helpful in managing chronic conditions such as cardiac disease and diabetes. By offering alternative ways of relating to everyday life experience, including thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and events, Stress Less with Mindfulness teaches and encourages the use of mindfulness self-care skills to help one feel better and enjoy life.

Following are testimonials and comments for the participants:

- ♦ *"The class was helpful in getting me to live in the present."*
- ♦ *"I would recommend this class because it can positively change things in you and how you react."*
- ♦ *"This class was enlightening!"*

Nutrition Presentations

Nutrition presentations on various nutrition topics were held for 109 participants. They were given healthy eating tips during the 35 - 60 minute presentations. Topics vary from fresh fruits and vegetables to picky eaters and healthy snacks.



Supporting Food and Agriculture



When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices.

Happy Cows Live in Michigan

Happy Cows Live in Michigan was the 2019 dairy team winter program. This half-day program was geared toward dairy farm owners and managers with finding low-cost solutions to improve productivity as the goal. Happy Cows Live in Michigan discussed the latest research and strategies to improve efficiency with animal welfare in mind. Topics included: the importance of continual improvement in efficiency, heat stress and its implications, the impact of stocking density on health and profitability, strategies to maintain a stable rumen, and calf and heifer management for improved well-being and profit. The 14 farms who participated in the *Impact of Various Cooling Systems on Cow Comfort and Production Efficiency on Michigan Dairy Farms* project received individual farm reports. Research findings were shared at the winter meetings, Happy Cows Live in Michigan, after the project was completed.

The Happy Cows Live in Michigan winter program meetings were held in six locations, including Bad Axe with 40 producers attending. An exit survey asked participants to indicate the level of increased knowledge on the presented topics on a scale of 1 = low to 5 = high. The average for participants in the program was 3.9. Some of the changes that farms indicated they would implement because of their new knowledge were improving labor efficiency, reevaluating feeding procedures, stocking density, heifer culling, calf nutrition, improve rumen stability, calf nutrition and colostrum testing, as well as decrease heat stress with more fans allowing better airflow and wind speed.

Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days

Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days held its eighth and ninth events on Saturday(s), June 22 & July 13. Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days, which began in 2016, continues to be a unique event that brings youth together from all over the state to learn about dairy. 4-H'ers Milan Forrester and Annie Bowman helped organize the events. Youth were able to go to two different local dairy farms. They learned about animal science, agriculture and most importantly some of the career possibilities they present. Many farms across the state of Michigan struggle to find those who want to work on farms or work in agribusiness. The youth were also encouraged to try showing animals at fair or attending events like Dairy Days held at Michigan State University. This year, more than 80 people attended Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days.



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Educational Opportunities for Beef Producers

Michigan State University Extension provided educational opportunities for Huron County beef producers. From July 2018 to June 2019, five programs related to beef feedlots were held in Huron County with 87 participants attending those programs. Topics included industry trends and statistics on beef carcasses, injected vitamin supplement at vaccination time, Enogen corn and the impact of feeding it, the impact of dairy beef calf rearing on feedlot performance and carcass quality, corn silage, emerging technologies to assess health of incoming cattle, summaries of feedlot research, U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef and benefits of it to the feedlot industry, research findings to reduce the prevalence of bovine respiratory disease, feedlot enterprise economics, and outlook for corn and beef prices.

Beef Quality Assurance Certification

Michigan State University Extension Educators and Specialist have conducted Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certification programs for 1,437 beef producers from across the state of Michigan. Certified producers will continue to have full market access in private bids and through auction yards. Most producers trained were first-time certifications. In Huron County, there were 97 producers certified by MSU Extension. In addition to in-person certification meetings, 1,641 producers from throughout Michigan certified online at <https://www.bqa.org/>.

Cargill Inc. and Tyson Foods announced in early 2018 that they would require producers be certified in the BQA program in order for them to buy cattle from those producers starting January 1, 2019. Cargill and Tyson make up a major part of the finished beef cattle harvest capacity in the United States. Producers that eliminate them from the bidding pool are likely to receive severe discounts for their finished cattle.

The BQA program has been instrumental in improving beef quality in the United States since its inception over 45 years ago. However, while producers have learned much of the BQA concepts through an educational process, relatively few producers have taken the time and effort to become certified.

Educators and specialists conducted 28 certification programs across Michigan from September 2018 – June 2019. Each session consisted of a presentation and followed with a 15-question test. Producers needed to obtain 80% correct to achieve certification. Certified producers received a unique certification number and certificate that is valid for 3 years.

In early 2019, reports from Michigan auction yards indicate that producers who were not certified received heavy discounts as compared to cattle being sold by certified producers. Consequently, Michigan producers are finding important economic value to the certification program. A total of 3,078 beef producers certified in Beef Quality Assurance from Michigan between July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 via in-person and online trainings.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Cattle Feeders & Producers attend Annual Picnic

Cattle feeders and producers from throughout the Thumb attended a summer picnic hosted at a St. Clair County beef feedlot. The event was held to allow cattle producers to network, tour the host farm, learn about vaccination types and importance, and share MSU Extension research and updates. It occurred on August 8, 2018 at Lewis Farms, North Street, Michigan, in St. Clair County. An industry speaker spoke on vaccinations. Additionally, Elizabeth Frey, graduate student at Michigan State University, shared a project overview of her on-farm research that is being done at Lewis Farms "Utilizing White Blood Cell Counts to Improve Response to Antibiotics and Reduce Prevalence of Bovine Respiratory Disease". Dr. Schwehofer organized the event, gave an update with various Extension programs, promoted upcoming Beef Quality Assurance trainings and the buyer requirements that are occurring related to BQA training.

Thumb Ag Day

MSU Extension hosted its annual Thumb Ag Day on Wednesday, December 12, 2018, at the Ubly Heights Country Club. Approximately 200 visitors from 10 different counties met with 83 vendors at the event. Participants also had the chance to attend educational sessions, including: making production costs fit today's markets, commodity market update, and ways to combat nutrient transport from agricultural fields and downstream water bodies. MSU Extension Field Crops Educators Martin Nagelkirk, Phil Kaatz, and Bob Battel also presented an agricultural review with results of the 2018 field trials including an update on RoundUp resistant marestail. Thumb Ag Day for 2019 will be held on Wednesday, December 11.



Pesticide Education

Huron County MSU Extension offered two sessions of pesticide education during January and February to restricted use pesticide (RUP) users. Participants were then able to test with the Michigan Department of Agriculture. This education serves to keep RUP users applying pesticides in a safe as well as economic fashion.

Virtual Breakfast

MSU Extension specialists and educators including Bob Battel and Phil Kaatz have teamed up to bring agribusiness professionals and farmers a series of "Virtual Breakfast" meetings. These meetings start with discussion of current field and weather conditions, timely crop production tips and the latest information on emerging issues likely to affect growers across the state. These live, online meetings run 7–7:30 a.m. every Thursday from April 25 to Sept. 5, 2019.

Participants join by using a computer, mobile device or regular phone line. Follow the Zoom link at <https://msu.zoom.us/j/552324349> to join online, or call in by dialing 669.900.6833, Meeting ID: 552-324-349.

To receive a weekly email reminder of the Virtual Breakfast, sign up at <http://eepurl.com/gm-Plv>. Participants receiving an email can opt in or out at any time.



Farm Business Succession Workshop

A Farm Business Succession workshop was offered in Pigeon on February 21, 2019, with 18 attendees from area farms and agribusinesses. Farm Management Educators Corey Clark and Dan Ochs discussed goals, strategies, and tools for families wanting to transfer their farm businesses to the next generation.

Making the Most of Our Natural Assets

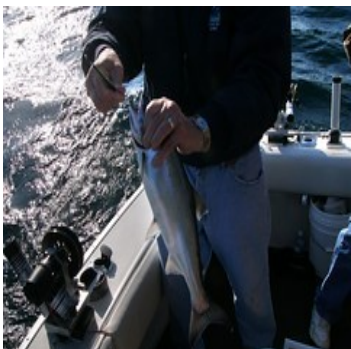


Photo Credit:
Michigan Sea Grant

**Sea Grant Staff
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Better land stewardship benefits communities by protecting and enhancing Michigan's natural resource assets.

Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops

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. In 2018, Michigan Sea Grant Extension hosted four Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops – including one in Bad Axe. These workshops brought together over 300 anglers, charter captains, and others with fisheries researchers and managers from across Michigan. At the Bad Axe workshop, there were over 100 participants including more than 50 attendees from Huron County. Participants gained a better understanding of Lake Huron fisheries ecosystem changes, how people are interacting with and affect these resources (e.g. fishing trends, management issues) and connected-research and management activities relating to Lake Huron and local communities.



Photo Credit: Michigan Sea Grant

Huron County Household Hazardous Waste Collection

In 2018, a household hazardous waste collection was held on Saturday, July 14 after an earlier event had to be rescheduled due to an ice storm. The three hour event collected over 12,516 pounds of toxic waste from Huron County residents to prevent it from going into local landfills and potentially contaminating ground water. This amount was up 4,500 pounds over 2017. Included in this collection, residents dropped off nearly 4,000 pounds of miscellaneous toxic products. Some of the most popular items included batteries, yard and garden chemicals, oil based paint and cleaners. This collection is a collaboration between the Huron Conservation District and Huron County along with MSU Extension where the program is coordinated.



Ensuring Strong Communities

Serving the State of Michigan

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- * Sustainable Tourism Development
- * First Impressions: Tourism Assessments
- * Planning for Tourism
- * Community Vitality
- * Leadership and Facilitation



MSU Extension understand that building civic engagement and healthy economic structures leads to greater opportunities and stronger communities.

First Impression Tourism Assessment (FIT)

After four years, Andy Northrup, Community Vitality and Tourism Extension Educator still co-chairs Prosperity Region 6 (PR6) - a seven county partnership comprised of Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, and Tuscola counties - tourism and quality of life subcommittee. The regional subcommittee has been responsible for facilitating a number of quality of life projects in partnership with county and various community leadership. Some of those projects include"

- ◆ I-69 Thumb Region Local Crafty Agricultural/Agritourism Directory (2015,2018) highlighting 150 breweries, wineries, farms, farmers markets, and specialty stores and businesses such as orchards and U-pick farms. More information on these can be located at:

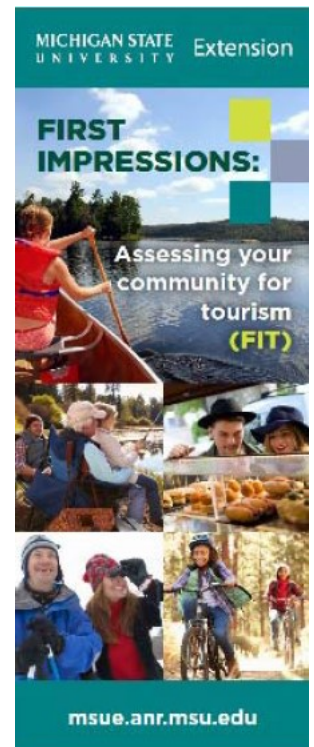
<http://i-69thumbregion.org/agritourism-directory/>

- ◆ Art in Place (2018) - A program designed to create a livelier, engaging and interesting place using art. District 10 communities were provided the opportunity to apply for Art in Place.

Port Austin, (Huron County) was selected in 2018.

Launched by Community, Food, and Environment Institute's tourism team in late 2016 and offered in partnership with PR6 since 2017, FIT has proven to be a widely successful assessment program for communities across District 10 in need of new concepts to make their community places people want to live, work, play, learn and return. Building from four successful FIT's in 2017 which included the Huron County villages of Elkton and Sebawaing, MSU Extension, in partnership with PR6 tourism subcommittee, launched a second round of FIT assessments in 2018. Neighboring Cass City (Tuscola County) was one of the locations selected to undergo the FIT program. Like the communities of Elkton and Sebawaing, Cass City received \$2,000 in funding from the PR6 tourism subcommittee to spawn new developments and actions after participating in FIT.

The FIT program is now in it's third and final partnership cycle with Prosperity Region tourism subcommittee and



Serving the State of Michigan

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- * Fiscal Sustainability for Michigan Municipalities - Statewide
- * New County Commissioner Training - Statewide
- * Non-Profit Community Grocery Store Model - St. Clair County
- * Plant Science laboratory - Yale Public Schools

benefitting the District 10 community of St Clair. In addition, the FIT communities to date are regularly promoted statewide and nationally as successful examples of community collaboration and leadership when addressing placemaking, tourism, and quality of life for rural America. MSU Extension's Community Vitality and Tourism educator continues to work across District 10 building off these successes and fostering new programs as well.

Thumb Food Policy Council Established

In 2018, MSU Extension received a seed grant from the Michigan Local Food council Network funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Although many local food councils concentrate on one county or small geographic area, the council proposed to include the five Michigan Thumb counties of Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, St. Clair and Tuscola (District 10).

The council spent the last quarter of 2018 organizing itself and collecting human resources in the area of food insecurity (food banks, pantries), agricultural producers, farm market and farm market organizers. The council focused on the development of larger food system needs and developed a mission statement:

"Identify, develop, and connect resources to support local food communities in Michigan's Thumb"

The Thumb Food Policy Council's purpose is two fold: A) to create meaningful educational programming through community partners of the role of the food system in Michigan's Thumb and it's interaction to the overall food system in Michigan from a producer and consumer point of view and, B) provide recommendations and advocate for changes related to the Thumb food system specifically that will enhance the food security and food needs in the region.

Two community food summits were conducted, one in Cass City in partnership with the Meeting the Need for Our Village in Cass City and another in Port Huron. The results of these summits identified specific action steps to undertake moving forward, some of which have been completed and others in the preliminary stages of development. Some of those specific actions include:

- ◆ Advocating for a grocery store in the Cass City area which has none.
- ◆ Develop a community garden to produce fresh vegetables for food pantries.
- ◆ Create new opportunity for food insecure consumers to have greater access to affordable, healthy, diverse, safe food.
- ◆ Discover successes within schools feeding children and develop opportunities to showcase these to other school districts for replication.

The council looks forward to 2020 to create and deliver programs regarding food and agricultural literacy development of sustained and coordinate food pantries in the Thumb and creating new educational opportunities in the communities that the council represents.

New Commissioner Trainings

Since 1968, MSU Extension and the Michigan Association of Counties (MAC) have offered an educational program for new county commissioners following the November election. That program has come to be known as the New Commissioner School (NCS). The 2018 workshop marked the 50th year of this program. In 2017 a long term evaluation of NCS was conducted to assess long-term change in commissioners' knowledge, skills, and confidence, as well as inform program revisions. Participants responded to questions rating their change in individual competencies, board competencies, and board culture. Information from that evaluation led to changes in the 2018 workshop, including fewer topics, more depth, and a move to a 2-day workshop.

This year, a team of MSU Extension educators offered New County Commissioner Workshop at four locations around the state. The workshop consists of two-half day sessions on the fundamentals of county government and included time for networking with other county officials, MAC staff, and MSU Extension educators and directors. Overall, the response to the format change was positive. Attendance was down only 10 following an election that yielded 24 fewer new commissioners.

A total of 191 people attended the workshops. Based on immediate post-workshop evaluation, 70% of reporting participants were newly elected county commissioners, 20% were experienced commissioners, and the rest were administrators, other county staff, and Michigan Department of Treasury staff. Commissioners from Huron County attend one of these workshops.

MSU Extension's government, leadership, and community engagement programs engage participants in learning skills of good governance, how to communicate with purpose, and how to collaborate on solving complex issues in order to improve their communities. Participants leave MSU Extension educational programs with:

- ♦ a deeper understanding of their civic responsibilities and roles within their own communities
- ♦ increased confidence to make decisions
- ♦ skills and information to better manage community resources
- ♦ knowledge of how to implement best practices

The application of knowledge and skills gained from good governance programs builds a stronger civic infrastructure.



Food Summit Attendees

Production of maple syrup at Battel Sugar Bush



Developing Youth and Communities



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Bad Axe, MI 48413

When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Extension programs help children develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. They learn leadership and decision-making skills in 4-H that increase their likelihood of becoming civically active.

4-H'ers also demonstrate reduced high-risk behaviors such as drug use, and learn to complete tasks, solve problems and seek any help they might need from peers and adults. 4-H involvement also helps participants avoid or reduce involvement with the court system. This helps ensure more young people succeed in school, attend college and contribute to their communities. More successful young people in communities results in greater tax revenues and consumer spending and increases the likelihood that young people will stay in, or return to, their communities.

4-H Youth Exploration Days

Michigan's largest annual 4-H event is designed to help students:

- ♦ Learn new ideas and techniques
- ♦ Increase their interest in and readiness for college
- ♦ Explore career options
- ♦ Develop decision-making skills
- ♦ Develop independence as well as teamwork

Participants also meet and interact with people from different backgrounds and areas throughout Michigan. 4-H volunteers and staff are on hand to provide oversight and guidance. Participants pre-register, choosing from more than 200 session options which they attend throughout their three-day stay. Huron County's delegation consisted of seven youth and two adult chaperones. 2018-19 had two first-time delegates attend.

Drug Prevention Education

A partnership has been established between the Huron County Health Department and Huron County 4-H to educate area youth by implementing two research based curriculum within the school setting to introduce drug prevention. The programs utilized are:

- ♦ **Too Good for Drugs™** is designed to promote life skills, character values, resistance skills to negative peer influence, and resistance to the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

4-H Council Officers

President -
Mary Aymen
Vice President -
Jeff Gillig
Secretary -
Tammy Daskam
Treasurer -
Kelly Hundsanger

- ♦ **Project ALERT** is a free classroom-based substance abuse prevention program for 7th and 8th graders that's proven to reduce the experimental and continued use of drugs. Through a series of comprehensive lessons, Project ALERT motivates students against drug use, cultivates new non-use attitudes and beliefs, and equips teens with the skills and strategies they'll use to resist drugs. Project ALERT is proven to motivate students against drug use, provide skills and strategies to resist drugs and establish new non-use attitudes and beliefs.

4-H School Enrichment Program

Huron County youth developed critical life skills during 4-H school enrichment programming. A partnership continues to occur between Bad Axe Middle School and Huron County 4-H to provide programming throughout the school year. Every six weeks a new group of students receive one hour weekly sessions. During these sessions, students learn various lessons focusing on 4-H life skills such as, sewing, nature, character education, nutrition, crafts, leadership, plant science, and animal science. Approximately 100 students participated in this enrichment programming.



Proud Equestrian Program (PEP)

The 4-H Proud Equestrian Program is a therapeutic horseback riding program that offers riding lessons to youth with special needs. In 2019, 14 youth participated in the 4-H PEP horseback riding program. Not only do they get riding time, but they also spend time in a stable management class where they learn more about the horses and do arts and crafts projects. Numerous 4-H leaders volunteer their own horses for the program.



4-H Projects Galore Workshop

The 2019 4-H Projects Galore workshop was held at the Bad Axe High School on Saturday, February 2, with 29 youth and 23 adults attending this workshop. 4-H members, as well as non-4-H youth, ages 5 to 19, had many sessions to choose from at this year's workshop. Bath & Body Works; Bleach T-Shirts; Garden Picker Basket; Glass Etching; Hot Pad Weaving; Line Dancing; Painted Canvas; Public Speaking; STEM Activities and Wreath Making were among the sessions held. Miscellaneous crafts were available for youth to complete in between sessions and during lunch. Quilt squares were also available and decorated by those in attendance.

A great deal of planning goes into hosting the 4-H Projects Galore workshop each year; and gratitude goes to the Huron County 4-H Council members who assist in planning & implementing the workshop. This 4-H workshop for youth is made possible by the assistance of volunteer instructors and their dedication to the 4-H program of Huron County. The goal behind 4-H Projects Galore is for the youth to learn new skills and proudly exhibit their projects in the 4-H building during the Huron Community Fair.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

Additional 4-H Workshops were offered throughout the year to allow all youth ages 5 to 19, 4-H and non-4-H members, to experience how to use their skills and gain new ones as well as letting their creativity flow through making different arts and crafts and other projects. This 4-H year, workshops featured different project areas such as Jam Making, Beef Nutrition and Showmanship Workshop, and Outdoor Plant Workshop. These workshops were attended by area 4-H members in 2018-19 and organized by the Huron County 4-H Council and the MSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Program.

4-H Camp

The main purpose of 4-H camp is to get youth ages 9 to 14 involved in an outdoor-living experience. Thumb Area 4-H camp offers an excellent opportunity for 4-H'ers and non-4-H'ers from Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola and St. Clair counties to make new friends and share experiences in camping, all while building and developing life skills. Camp activities include Great Lakes ecology, tree climbing, mud hiking, swimming, archery, outdoor survival skills, teambuilding



skills, skits, games, crafts and more. There were 18 youth from Huron County in attendance along with adult chaperones/volunteers. There were also 22 teen counselors, eight of whom were from Huron County, attending the 2019 Thumb Area 4-H camp held July 1-3 at Camp Cavell in Lexington, Michigan. In order to become a teen counselor, teens must go through intensive trainings and be responsible for planning and implementing activities for Thumb Area 4-H Camp each year.

A 4-H Cloverbud day camp was offered for 5 - 8 year old 4-H and non-4-H members on August 7, 2018. The camp was held at Camper's Haven Family Camp Ground near Bad Axe. Fifteen youth from Huron and Tuscola counties participated in activities that provided an opportunity for them to build friendships and develop skills. The 4-H Cloverbud Camp theme was the "Olympics." The participants enjoyed activities that included; swimming, hiking, fishing, and the jumping pillow. They made flags, fishing poles, and a STEM project that was an Olympic torch. The campers enjoyed a lunch that included a food item representing each color of the Olympic rings.

4-H Fall Family Social

The Huron County 4-H Leaders' Association, in cooperation with MSU Extension, hosted their annual 4-H Fall Family Social with approximately 80 4-H adult and teen volunteers, youth members and their families along with Friends of 4-H gathering together on Sunday, November 4, 2018 at the Pasta House in Kinde.

The program began with a welcome from the 4-H Council President Mary Aymen. 4-H youth who were in attendance led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge, with the invocation given by 4-H member Ellexia Puvalowski. A moment of silence was held in remembrance of 4-H volunteers and alumni who recently passed.

A pasta and salad bar dinner, along with assorted desserts provided by the 4-H Council members, was enjoyed by all who attended this annual event. During the program, sponsors who supported Huron County 4-H programs during the year were introduced and certificates were presented to the Friends of 4-H who



were in attendance. In addition, 4-H youth were recognized for their outstanding work in project areas, competitive activities, and leadership roles in the Huron County 4-H Youth Program. Following dinner, Darren Bagley, Children and Youth Educator from Genesee County, did a presentation on 4-H and Science all the while interacting with the audience including hands on participation.

SPOTLIGHT

Meet Laken Polega, a 4-H Success Story

Laken Polega of 4-Leaf Clovers 4-H Club of Sebawaing is in her final year of 4-H and what an outstanding career it has been. Laken has participated in 4-H since the age of six when she began showing horses. While in 4-H as a Cloverbud, the Huron Community Fair allowed young 4-H members like Laken to participate in Clovebud shows to learn and gain experience with various species. This experience allowed Laken to get a feel for showing feeder steers and pigs. She began her livestock showing career with prospect feeders, then Market Steers, swine, and breeding heifers. Over the years, she has been very successful in showmanship and market classes and even had the top honor of winning the Sweepstakes Contest at the fair. Showmanship has always been very important to Laken. Over her 4-H career, she had perfected her skills showing at more than just the local fair. Laken has participated for many years in the Thumb Area Beef Jackpot Shows as well as being instrumental in starting the Thumb Swine Jackpot show in Huron County, along with showing hogs statewide. She has also had the experience of showing swine and lambs at the national level. Last year, Laken decided to challenge herself and enter the world of small livestock and took a market goat to the fair. As her years as a 4-H member come to an end, Laken is very proud of all of her accomplishments from the show ring, to earning 4-H scholarships, being a 4-H club officer, attending 4-H camp, Exploration Days at Michigan State University and the Kettunen Center for leadership training, mentoring countless 4-H youth, expanding her knowledge of livestock, choosing an Animal Science field as her post-secondary path and developing leadership skills she will use for the rest of her life. 4-H has led Laken to many amazing opportunities, friendships, and experiences and for that, she will always treasure her time as a Huron County 4-Leaf Clover 4-H member.

Laken's 4-H Accomplishments:

2009 Reserve Dairy Feeder	2015 Champion Senior Mkt. Steer Showman
2010 Champion Dairy Feeder	2015 Champion Pen of Hogs
2010 Champion Jr. Showman- Mkt. Beef	2015 Reserve Individual Hog
2011 Champion Jr. Showman -Mkt. Beef	2015 Champion Mkt. Steer
2011 Champion Jr. Showman - Dairy Feeder	2015 Champion Steer Showman
2011 Reserve Dairy Feeder	2015 1 st Place Senior Livestock Judging Team
2011 Champion Mkt. Steer	2016 Reserve Pen of Hogs
2012 Champion Novice Swine Showman	2016 Reserve Swine Showman
2012 Champion Hog	2016 Champion Hog
2012 3 rd Place Junior Livestock Judging Team	2016 1 st Place Senior Livestock Judging Team
2012 Champion Individual Livestock Judge	2017 Champion Senior Mkt. Steer Showman
2013 Champion Intermediate Mkt. Steer Showman	2017 Champion Mkt. Steer
2013 Champion Intermediate Swine Showman	2017 Champion Senior Swine Showman
2013 Champion Hog	2017 Champion Mkt. Steer Showman
2013 3 rd Place Sr. Livestock Judging Team	2017 1 st Place Livestock Judging Team
2013 3 rd Place Sr. Individual Livestock Judge	2017 1 st Place Individual Livestock Judge
2014 Champion Intermediate Mkt. Steer Showman	2018 Reserve Champion Mkt. Steer Showman
2014 Champion Intermediate Swine Showman	2018 3 rd Overall Mkt. Steer
2014 Champion Hog	2018 Champion Barrow
2014 Champion Pen of Hogs	2018 Champion Swine Showman
2014 Champion Swine Showman	2018 Champion Sr. Livestock Judging Team
2014 3 rd Overall Steer	2018 Champion Sr. Individual Livestock Judge
2014 2 nd Place Livestock Judging Team	2018 Reserve Champion Heifer
2014 Sweepstakes Winner	2018 Grand Champion Beef Breeding Stock Showman



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Garden or Yard Question?

Visit the Gardening in Michigan website:
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smart soils and other smart gardening
topics OR call **MSU Extension's toll-free**
Hotline: 1-888-678-3464

Food Safety Hotline

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Want to know how long leftovers will last? The MSU
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