



# Ionia County

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

### BY THE NUMBERS



\$14,116,065 total economic impact in Ionia County



1,208 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



474 adults participated in health and nutrition programs



Reached 363 youth through health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension website received 6,723 visits from Ionia County, 77% first-time visitors



Ionia students received \$4,166,206 in financial aid from MSU



Over 8,000 gardening questions answered statewide



More than \$914,320 was spent with local businesses

### MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

In 2018, Michigan State University Extension partnered with Ionia County to continue strengthening youth, families, farmers, caregivers, homeowners, business owners, and communities. Your local MSU Extension staff and the statewide network of Educators worked through local partners to bring the university's research and resources directly to our county residents. This annual report gives examples of some of MSU Extension's accomplishments and the impact that we continue to have in the county – helping to improve the lives of its residents. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve our stakeholders and partners and we are especially grateful for the partnership that we have with Ionia County.



Bill Hendrian  
District 8 Director

### CONTACT



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Michigan State University Extension



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# Program Highlights



Tammy Fletcher demonstrates making healthy smoothies with an IMS student.

## TEEN CUISINE

Tammy Fletcher, Community Nutrition Instructor, led over one hundred 7th graders at Ionia Middle School through the “Teen Cuisine” curriculum. The class shows students how to make healthy food and drinks taste great! Students also learned about food safety, knife skills, portion sizes, and the benefits of daily exercise. MyPlate was used to teach students about eating the correct amount of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy and protein. Also discussed was the importance of eating a healthy breakfast, limiting screen time to two hours per day and getting at least eight hours of sleep. Many students were shocked at how much they loved the taste of the healthy snacks. SUCCESS!



In 2018, over 30 Ionia County youth traveled to the campus of Michigan State University to for Exploration Days.

## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

In 2018, the close to 50 Ionia County 4-H Clubs and Committees were active on any given day, night or weekend each month. Controversies were resolved, plans were made, money was raised and managed, projects were planned for and finished. Many 4-H'ers participated at the Ionia County fair. Many new friends were made and other friendships were deepened. In addition to local activities and meetings, over 30 youth traveled to the campus of Michigan State University to explore their futures while many others took advantage of one of the many special events or programs experts offered from campus throughout the year.



Morgan Hubbert shows off her entry in the 2018 4-H Ionia County Bake-Off.

## 2018 IONIA CO. 4-H BAKE-OFF

The Bake-Off was held April 28 at the Ionia MSUE office. It is open to both 4-H and non 4-H members. In addition to baking, the youth must write-out their recipe and pay close attention to presentation. The youth are asked several questions regarding their entry and must stand in front of the judges and other participants to answer. The 4-H Bake-Off is just one example of the fun activities offered to Ionia youth throughout the year designed to encourage career exploration and workforce preparation. Judges had an especially great time sampling all of the delicious treats baked by the 36 youth who participated!



# Program Highlights

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## FORECLOSURE PREVENTION

Foreclosure can have devastating impacts on families and the local economy. Senior Extension Educator, Brenda Long, works to find solutions for these families. One success story that stands out from the past year is a man whose wife recently passed away after an expensive illness. He had fallen behind on his property taxes and was facing foreclosure. After working with him on several applications to find a qualifying hardship, Step Forward Michigan approved \$8,685 to his county Treasurer to bring his property taxes current. In 2018, Brenda assisted 11 homeowners receive \$36,860.66 in assistance to keep their homes!



Brenda Long, Senior Extension Educator, offers many educational and counseling options related to financial services.

## TEACHING ACROSS CULTURE

In July, Tammy Fletcher, was able to teach 50 Migrant students about nutrition. At the school in Belding, Tammy taught six nutrition lessons to migrant children ranging in age from pre-school to high school. She taught the 5 food groups from My Plate-fruits, vegetables, grain, dairy and protein. At the end of each lesson, students were given a healthy snack that focused on the food group theme of the day. Students also participated in various forms of physical activity during each lesson. The students really enjoyed making smoothies with a "bike blender". Each of the youth were given an opportunity to pedal the stationery bicycle that powered the blender to make delicious smoothies.



Tammy Fletcher keeps a lid on it as one of the youth from the migrant school works hard to make a healthy smoothie.

## BREEDING SOUNDNESS CLINICS

Through the efforts of the MSU Beef Team, the College of Veterinary Medicine and private Veterinarians collaboration, bull breeding soundness examinations (BSE or "semen check") were conducted this spring on 187 bulls owned by 72 different Michigan cattle producers. Of those bulls, 82% were judged to be satisfactory potential breeders, while 18% did not pass but judgment was deferred and 4% failed the exam due to major problems. The MSUE Beef Team continues to have new producers testing each year.



Clinics coordinated MSU Beef Team and supported by Dr. Dan Grooms, Dr. Jennifer Roberts from MSU CVM and by private veterinarians.

# Featured County Story



Ionia County MSU Extension is fortunate to have Educator Kevin Gould on staff. Kevin resides in Ionia and enjoys working with and serving local residents and beef related businesses. Through his work on the MSUE Beef Team, Kevin serves the Michigan beef industry by engaging in research, education and outreach that enhances the quality of life for the constituents not only in Ionia County, but across the state.



## Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)

**The issue:** In 2017, processor / packer Cargill Meat Solutions announced that they would be requiring BQA certification starting January 2018 for all meat processed through them. Tyson Fresh Meats soon followed suit and announced they would have the same requirements beginning January 2019. BQA is a voluntary program that educates beef producers on accepted management skills and scientific knowledge to prevent beef product defects.

**MSU Extension actions taken:** Although the BQA program is well established, the MSU Extension Beef Team moved quickly to ensure that beef producers had access to the updated information, training and education needed in order to be in compliance with new requirements and did so quickly in order to reduce any negative economic impact to our Michigan beef producers. The MSU Extension Beef Team scheduled 12 BQA training and certification sessions between September 5 and December 6, 2018 in association with livestock auctions throughout the state. In addition, they referred people to the BQA course that is available on-line. For one individual, it was impossible for him to attend in-person or take the course on-line, one of Kevin's team members was able to work one-on-one with the gentleman until he was BQA certified.

Whether its in-person trainings, on-line courses or one-on-one farm visits, MSU Extension Educators like Kevin Gould provide timely, relevant information and education to improve the lives of Michigan farm families. "Farm profitability is important to rural communities. When challenges arise, MSU Extension often can help with resources and information to solve those problems," said Kevin.

**Summary:** BQA certification programs have been conducted in-person for over 800 beef producers throughout the state of Michigan and another 684 producers received their certification on-line. The vast majority of participants indicated that this was the first time that they had been certified. Having full market access in private bids and through auction yards is not possible without certification. The BQA program had its inception over 45 years ago and has been instrumental in improving beef quality in this country yet relatively few producers have become certified. Having the resources and Educators in place to act quickly when access to markets are in question for Michigan meat producers is just one of the ways MSU Extension improves the lives of our farmers.

# Collaboration Across MSU Extension

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MSU Extension is an organization comprised of individuals with broad knowledge of subject matters related to a particular discipline, such as field crops, nutrition, or youth development. Having four MSU Extension Institutes gives the ability to bring together cross-disciplinary expertise to address issues that are multifaceted and complex. For example, MSU Extension Educators and Program Instructors have worked together on physical and financial health issues, agricultural and stress issues, economic and community development and conservation issues, and issues that span generations.

Your local office is housed with experts in particular fields. Individuals may serve in the Agricultural and Agribusiness Institute, the Children and Youth Institute, the Health and Nutrition Institute or our Community, Food and Environment Institute. However, even if you do not have a local expert for the issue that you need addressed, MSU Extension has the unique functionality of drawing from a statewide pool of experts to make sure that you have the information that you need. In addition, the MSU Extension website [www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu) is maintained and updated on a regular basis. We are always looking for ways to collaborate with each other to apply knowledge to the critical issues you face.

**Through successful partnership and collaboration with Ionia 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 Ionia 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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## MSU Extension staff located in Ionia County

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Katie Courtade	CYI / 4-H Supervising Educator	courtad3@msu.edu
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## Additional MSU Extension staff serving Ionia County

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