



Iron County

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Iron County to continue strengthening youth, families, businesses and communities. Your MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, serve by bringing the university's research and resources to provide outreach and education in the areas Iron County residents need it most.

In this report, we're excited to share about the people and programs that are improving the lives of Iron County residents in many ways, including helping grow Michigan's agriculture economy, encouraging sustainable use of our natural resources, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness and preparing tomorrow's leaders. From an in-person workshop to online education, MSU Extension professionals work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure their success—in the workplace, at home and in the community.

We're passionate about serving Iron County and are looking forward to another year serving. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Paul Putnam, District Coordinator



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MEASURING IMPACT

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

4-H Community Clubs.....	71
Special Interest/Short Term.....	109
School Enrichment.....	48
TOTAL YOUTH IMPACT.....	228

MSU EXTENSION'S EXPANDED DIGITAL REACH

Through combined face-to-face trainings, online webinars, social media, website interaction and electronic newsletters, MSU Extension has made more than 12.1 million connections. More than 149,000 adults* and 212,000 youth† participated in MSU Extension programming in the 2016-17 programming year.

More than 5.3 million people viewed more than 9.8 million pages on the MSU Extension website.‡ Of those, more than 1 million were Michigan residents. MSU Extension remains one of the most visited Cooperative Extension System education websites in the country.

MSU Extension also distributes a series of electronic newsletters that cater to residents' unique interests. Last year, nearly 1.9 million newsletters covering 90 topic areas were distributed to

about 53,000 email addresses.‡ You can sign up for these informative newsletters by visiting msue.anr.msu.edu and clicking on "Newsletter Sign Up" or texting MSUE to 22828.

MSU Extension uses social media channels to reach people with educational content. Currently, Extension reaches more than 4,300 Facebook followers and more than 3,200 Twitter followers.‡ In addition, Michigan 4-H families and volunteers stay informed about activities through social media channels, including on Michigan 4-H Facebook with more than 4,700 likes and on Twitter with more than 1,456 followers.

*From ES237 Federal Report – Oct. 1, 2015, to Sept. 30, 2016

†From Michigan Extension Planning and Reporting System – Jan. 1, 2016, to Dec. 31, 2016

‡From July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017

Developing Youth and Communities



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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.

Iron County 4-H Happenings

The Iron County 4-H Council did have a meeting this month. The Council members were able to hear an informal presentation from Marjia Cornelia regarding her trip to Atlanta, GA during Thanksgiving break. Marjia had an awesome time at the National 4-H Congress. She met youth from all over the United States and was able to visit and participate in many educational experiences. This was a once in a life time opportunity for Marjia: her first plane ride and first time being away from home.

The Iron County 4-H is bringing a DIY workshop to the Crystal Falls Senior Center on Saturday, March 18. The idea for a DIY workshop begin during a discussion last year regarding what adults and youth within Iron County would like the 4-H program to sponsor. This DIY will consist of 3 different classes: building with wood, basic electricity, and basic plumbing. Each class will last approximately 30 minutes and then the youth will rotate to the next class. So in 1.5 hours each youth will have the opportunity to experience 3 different workshops. The cost for this DIY is \$5.00 to cover the materials for the Bat House. Also, coming soon will be a Basket Weaving class in Crystal Falls.

Great news!!! One of the benefits of attending Exploration Days for freshmen and sophomores is the opportunity to apply for a \$2000.00 scholarship to attend MSU after high school graduation. I am happy to announce that one of our 4-H youths who attended last year, Marjia Cornelia, has received this \$2000.00 scholarship. All of the leaders and youth in Iron County are very proud of Marjia. She is taking advantage of every 4-H opportunity available to her. If you would like, I know Marjia would be happy to share all of her 4-H opportunities with the Iron County Board of Commissioners. Think about this and get back to me. You would be amazed at what she has done with her 4-H membership, which is all due to the county's support of the 4-H program.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued



May was a very busy month for 4-H. The Spring Achievement program held at the Iron County Museum went very well. Carol Callovi, Lynn Aho, and Carrie Nelson did a fantastic job putting the program together—Kudos to them all. There was a Bake Sale and a Silent Auction at Spring Achievement plus the pick-up of those delicious Cinnamon Rolls. Lots going on that day. Also, the Community Kids and Young Pacesetter modeled their sewing projects—they were beautiful—pajama pants, skirts, dresses, and pillows that turn into blankets. Our youth are quite talented. Marjia Cornelia from Animal House presented a Power Point presentation on all of the 4-H adventures that she has done this year. The hope is that other youth will be as enthused as Marjia and want to participate in these adventures when they become old enough. The Market Steers Plus club demonstrated how to make no-bake cookies. Unfortunately, the audience did not get an opportunity to taste test them. Marvin Hill spoke to the audience about the upcoming shooting events for his club. A good time was had by all.

Two of our youths Marjia Cornelia, from Animal House, and Autumn Weeks, from Community Kids, received the Danforth Award. They were nominated for this award because they both are “emerging” leaders.

I hope you have noticed the 4-H Community Garden on Route 2, you can see that the garden is in full swing. In the rain, volunteers were able to put together the pergola which is in the apple orchard; lay out twenty 4 X 8 raised beds, made by Dave and Diane Grondin into the shape of a star; put together 4 picnic tables; and erected a small shed for tools. At big thank you to the Guardian Angels Knights of Columbus—Dennis Divoky, Mike Onderak, Dave Borsch, and Marty Gittens, Forest Park teachers Chandra and Erich Ziegler, Community and Garden Members—Russ Bailey, Donna Keen, and Donna Nelson, and 4-H member—Jacob Peterson and 4-H adult volunteer—Pat Bonetti. It is amazing what can happen when volunteers with a purpose and pride get together. Great Community Spirit!! Still to come if not this year than next year—will be an American Flag on a pole on the inside of the star (looking for donations) and small star shaped planter boxes. Let the planting begin!!!!



Seeds for Harvey

The Iron County 4-H Clubs and the Iron County Girl Scouts have joined together to collect “Seeds for Harvey”. These two organizations decided to help the schools and 4-H and Girl Scouts Clubs in Texas by providing seeds to replant gardens. All the vegetable gardens within Hurricane Harvey’s path were destroyed. Budgets throughout this area have been slashed to help with the devastation. Schools and clubs are in desperate need of seeds.

Marjia is also collecting monetary donations to help pay for the shipping. If any of you would like to donate please just put your items by my office. I would love to come in one day and NOT be able to get to my door because of all the donations. Again, another youth within our community who is willing to help others in need. What a great 4-H experience!

Developing Youth and Communities, continued

Whether it is written, spoken or visually represented, the way we express ourselves makes a big impact on our daily lives at home, work and play.

Incidentals for Puerto Rico

Marjia Cornelia, from the Animal House Club, last year attended the 4-H Capital Experience in Atlanta, GA. During this trip Marjia met and made friends with a 4-H youth who lives in Puerto Rico. Marjia's friend is asking for help after the recent devastation that hit Puerto Rico. Marjia asked the Iron County 4-H Council for assistance and they acknowledged to help her with her collection of specific items needed. I emailed all of the counties in the UP for their assistances. Within the next two weeks Marjia will be asking for donations from the 4-H Councils in the entire state of Michigan. This is an exciting project for Marjia and especially for our council. The Iron County youth and adults are not just thinking about themselves but others. Especially others in need.

Marjia is also collecting monetary donations to help pay for the shipping. If any of you would like to donate please just put your items by my office. I would love to come in one day and NOT be able to get to my door because of all the donations. Again, another youth within our community who is willing to help others in need. What a great 4-H experience!



Molina Foundation Books

I spent a morning at the West Iron County Library helping the children choose a book. The event was a success. The Director of Children's Programs, Stephanie Swenski, picked a great day and time for this event. The children from the West Iron School District were on vacation so they spent their morning at the library. Stephanie and her assistant had a craft for the children to do, she supplied the ingredients for the children to make their own Trail Mix, and she had board games for the children to play with their friends or parents. A good time was had by all. Those who choose a book signed a large banner thanking the Molina Foundation for their book. All the parents came up to me to thank me for bringing this opportunity to their community for their children. They were so grateful to the Molina Foundation and hoped that this program will continue next year. I took a picture of each child who took a book. Stephanie will have these pictures on the library website—so take a look when you get a chance.

Share Your Skills



Become a Volunteer!

I was at the Crystal Falls Senior Center helping the third, fourth, and fifth grade students from Forest Park choose a book. These students and their teachers walked over to the center and left with a great book. This event was successful also. When the students returned to school they signed another banner. I also took many pictures. The students from first and second grade and maybe kindergarten will also have an opportunity to choose a book. I will be set up in the school in the multipurpose room. If there are any books left over, they will go to the Crystal Falls Library to be given to the younger children who come to the library for story time.

Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Programs



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

When you support MSU Extension's efforts to enhance residents' access to an adequate supply of safe, affordable food, program participants will focus on food safety measures in the field and at harvest, learn proper food preparation and food preservation techniques, and bring community partners together to strengthen access to healthy food supplies. This leads to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care costs in check and our communities viable.

Iron County Consumer Horticulture Report 2017

Michigan State University Extension's Smart Gardening initiative focuses on providing earth-friendly, sustainable practices for gardeners. Messages focus around smart soils, smart plants, smart lawns, smart vegetables, and smart gardening for pollinators. Various resources are available that include over 25 different tip sheets and other gardening information on the Gardening in Michigan website at www.migarden.msu.edu. A number of Smart Gardening educational and outreach opportunities were provided in Iron County in 2017. They included a 'What is Michigan State University Extension? And what is MSU's Institute of Agriculture Technology?' presentation to 25 Forest Park Environmental Science students in February. In March, a seed starting activity was provided to over 30 participants at the West Iron District Library's Parenting Fair. A Smart Gardening informational booth complete with free tip sheets focused around vegetable gardening was placed at the West Iron District Library from April through May. During the Iron County Fair at the Down on the Farm event, two different MSU Extension staff provided 'hands-on' workshops on creating a Mason bee hotel and a bat house. Mason bees are one type of the 450 native bees within Michigan that aid in pollination. In August, an informational Smart Gardening outreach booth was set up at the Aspirus Women in the Outdoors Event, with 96 women directly obtaining with Smart Gardening information. Michigan State University's Consumer Horticulture Educator continues to provide support and guidance to the Forest Park School Orchard and Contemporary Center's Garden Camp through educational programs.

Additional statewide horticulture programs that Iron County residents can also participate include the Smart Gardening with Vegetables 101 Webinar Series offered annually. It is a 6-week on-line introductory vegetable gardening course offered since 2014 and has reached over 600 participants. From the comfort of their home and a high-speed connection, participants learn what is necessary to start growing their own vegetables.

Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Programs, continued

Tune into the live sessions or view recordings when more convenient. Offered in various Upper Peninsula counties, the Extension Master Gardener program is available for those interested in learning more about gardening and helping others learn more about proper gardening practices; go to www.mg.msue.msu.edu to learn more.



Contemporary Center Garden Camp participants check out their worms after learning about composting with worms.

Photo credit: Rebecca Krans, MSU Extension

Supporting Food and Agriculture



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

Michigan agriculture continues to be a growing segment of the state's economy. The production of commercial food and nonfood agricultural operations is growing rapidly. The number of households raising a portion of their own food and raising livestock or gardening for pleasure or relaxation continues to increase. When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices. Participants also learn how to optimize and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and how to conserve and protect water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, and helps retain and create agricultural jobs. These measures strengthen Michigan's economy while connecting farmers to local food opportunities and global markets. In this way you help MSU Extension encourage growth in a sustainable and prosperous Michigan food and agriculture system.



The [North Farm](#) continues to grow – creating jobs, offering local food to more people, supporting farm businesses through the [Apprentice Farmer Program](#), and providing educational opportunities about farming for kids and adults. From July 2016 through June 2017, the North Farm reached 6,239 people.



⇒ 18 school visits reaching 814 students with hands-on activities that put their everyday food decision in real-world food system context

⇒ Hosted on-farm [Short Courses](#) on topics like Whole Farm Health, Seed Saving, Soil Health, and Perennial Fruit Crops, reaching 156 beginning farmers and home gardeners looking to scale up and deepen their knowledge

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

- ⇒ Hosted the Apprentice Farmer Program, a [farm business incubator](#) supporting 4 farm businesses
- ⇒ Walked the farm with 319 people so they could see [season extension and Organic practices](#) in action
- ⇒ Offered 22 presentations to 1,036 people across the state on special topics in agriculture and technical assistance to 39 organizations and individuals with specific questions about food and farming
- ⇒ “Took the show on the road” to reach 3,875 people in the upper Midwest at conferences like Midwest Organic Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) in LaCrosse, Wisconsin and the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference in Traverse City, Michigan
- ⇒ Secured more than \$265,000 in grant funding to support [Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources education](#) at the middle and high school level in the Upper Peninsula



Cover crops have become a very targeted focus for agronomy research in the U.P. – leading to greater on-farm sustainability, productivity and potential for improvements to soil health

- ⇒ Researchers from the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center have helped establish various [cover crop research trials with on-farm cooperators in Menominee County](#)
- ⇒ Technical guidance and has been offered to farmers and increased acreage in cover crops has been witnessed throughout the service area
- ⇒ Two field days have been hosted to demonstrate cover crop use and to share resources with local stakeholders with 75 in attendance over the two events
- ⇒ MSU research and Extension staff secured a seed grant from the MSU Project GREEEN program to assemble data and build partnerships in preparation for submission of a much larger cover crop research effort to the NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant program in 2018



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Home Lawn & Garden Questions?	Contact the MSUE Garden Hotline - Toll-Free	888-678-3464	

Additional MSU Extension Staff Serving Iron County:

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Extension Educators Serving Iron County, Continued

Additional MSU Extension Staff Serving Iron County

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