

# Kalkaska County

## 2018–2019 ANNUAL REPORT

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## FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Kalkaska County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses and communities.



MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

This year, we've also welcomed Kalkaska County residents into our online community: we've offered online educational courses, answered questions on topics ranging from gardening to food safety, raised program awareness through social media and provided a library of research-based resources they've browsed on our website.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Kalkaska County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

Jennifer Berkey



District 3 Director

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## MEASURING IMPACT:



MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Dr. Jeff Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.



# DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

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.



## Learning life skills through fun, engaging, interactive projects and experiences!

### New program meets need for youth in 3rd—6th grades

Youth are often home by themselves or with an older sibling during summer months when school is out. With summer approaching, there was a need to provide education to youth in the areas of safety, healthy eating, first aid, boredom busters, community resources, and physical activity. Kalkaska County 4-H offered a new SPIN club for youth in June called Home Alone, geared towards 3rd through 6th grade students.

Bucket lists, summer boredom busters, and creating a visual schedule/breakdown of the way a summer day could be spent were the focus of the first meeting. For the next 5 meetings, youth were taught by community experts on various topics that included first aid, 911/Central Dispatch, safe food prep and healthy snacks, ways to get active and stay fit (including creating an at home “basic boot camp” workout), fire safety, and community service.

The Home Alone 4-H SPIN Club was a fantastic and fun experience for the youth involved, but also met a need in a community where youth often spend time at home alone or with an older sibling while parents are at work during the summer. The hope is to continue to offer the program annually, coinciding with the end of the school year.



### New projects introduced through Short Term 4-H Clubs

SPIN clubs are 4-H clubs that meet for 4-8 times and focus on a specific project or purpose. Several new SPIN clubs were held in the 2018-19 program year.

The Savvy Stitchers club met to sew a dress or shirt. Each participant measured, shopped for fabric, and learned how to sew with knit fabric to create a one-of-a-kind garment that they were very proud of.

The Spring Break Spectacular club gave youth a variety of activities during spring break. Projects included painting, decorating cookies, sewing a tote bag out of a livestock feed sack, and participating in a program called Ag Innovators. The Ag Innovators Experience guides youth through a soil test, teaches participants about soil health and modern farming techniques, then gives youth the opportunity to build and test a no-till tractor

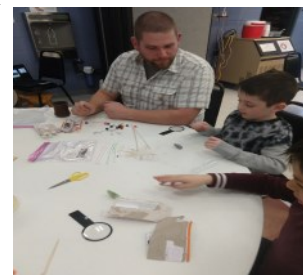


#### Youth Participation in new 4-H projects in 2018-2019

7	Youth involved in Photography	
13	Youth involved in Foods and Nutrition	
12	Youth involved in Health and Fitness	
12	Youth involved in Personal Safety	
12	Youth involved in Painting	
6	Youth involved in Culinary Arts	
13	Youth involved in Flower Arranging	
46	Youth involved in Soil and Soil Conservation	

## Developing Youth and Communities, continued

out of hex bugs, straws, skewers, beads, and pins. Darryl Willison and Tom Dixon, retired farmer and current farmer, were present to work with youth to help build and test their tractors. Our Spring Break Spectacular was held at the Kalkaska Senior Center, so that seniors could work on projects side by side with youth.



The summer Project Potpourri club met 5 times and youth were able to complete projects that were entered at the Kalkaska County Fair in the Exhibit Hall. A guided photography walk, jam-making, sewing, painting, flower arranging, and cupcake decorating meetings were held over the course of the first few weeks in August. Each youth then entered their completed projects in the exhibit hall. The highlight was the guided photography walk on the KART trail. Youth were led by Kalkaska Middle School Visual Arts Teacher Jill Vyverberg as she taught them how to take better pictures with their cell phones and tablets!

## Increased State 4-H Program involvement by Kalkaska County 4-H Members

### Michigan 4-H State Awards Delegates

### 3 members honored as 4-H State Awards Delegates

A select number of 4-H State Award applicants are invited to attend the prestigious 4-H

**Anna Winn**  
Senior Leadership & Service



**Annie Ponstein**  
Junior Creative & Expressive Arts

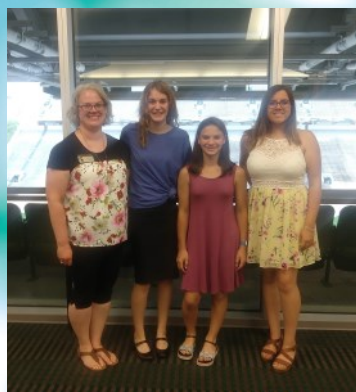


**Amy Saxton**  
Junior Sheep Science

State Award Recognition Event held during 4-H Exploration Days as State Award delegates. 4-H State Award delegates are selected through an application process that showcases their knowledge, skills, and experiences in their chosen 4-H project area. The 4-H State Awards Application includes a cover letter, resume, 4H Story, and questions that highlight the life skills, project content knowledge, leadership development, and civic engagement experiences 4-H members have gained through their 4-H projects. Participation in the State Awards Program helps all applicants develop workforce preparation skills such as communication, time management, goal setting, and record keeping. The three members from Kalkaska represented our program and our community well throughout the application process and the awards ceremony.

### Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience

Three Kalkaska County 4-H youth members attended Capitol Experience this year: Cheyenne Weir, Katherine Nation, and Amy Saxton. 4-H Capitol Experience is an annual four-day conference that helps prepare youth for active citizenship by focusing on civic engagement and public policy. Up to 130 teens from around the state converge on Lansing, Michigan to experience state government in action and learn how they can



**4-H Coordinator Karie Saxton And State Awards Delegates In Lansing**



## Developing Youth and Communities, continued

influence policy issues. Participants interact with legislators, state agency staff, lobbyists and other resource people to learn how policies are created. Simulations and activities are incorporated to reinforce and apply what is learned about government. Teens leave the conference with the charge to share what they have learned and get involved with other leadership and civic engagement activities in their communities!

### Michigan 4-H State Youth Leadership Council

Kalkaska County 4-H member Amy Saxton applied to the 4-H State Youth Leadership Council and was selected as a member through a competitive interview and application process. Established in 2015, the Michigan 4-H State Youth Leadership Council (SYLC) is a statewide leadership opportunity for 4-H youth. SYLC members serve as representatives of the Michigan 4-H program, promoting 4-H through state and local activities, and can provide youth voice and perspective on the development of 4-H programs and curricula. SYLC members receive training on public speaking, advocacy, communication and leadership skills. SYLC is Michigan's highest youth leadership opportunity and is a goal that older youth can aspire toward. SYLC members get to broaden their network and expand their knowledge of 4-H programs beyond their counties. As a SYLC member, Amy has been able to be part of the planning for the Michigan 4-H Dare to Serve Challenge, a community service challenge across MI 4-H in April 2019, as well as participate on planning teams for 2 other state-wide programs, the 4H Leadership and Citizenship Spectacular and the Goosechase scavenger hunt at 4-H Exploration Days.

## Local 4-H volunteer honored for 50 years of service!

For the past 50 years as a Michigan 4-H volunteer, Sandi Pyle has been a leader in 3 counties, served on numerous county committees and councils, guided hundreds of youth in projects, and served in statewide capacities that include animal science programming development, International 4-H Exchange, and Kettunen Center Development. Sandi is a member of a four-generation, active Michigan 4-H family. She is also "Mamma Sandi" to hundreds of 4-H members and alumni around the state. Her 50 years of 4-H mentorship and guidance have developed youth into community, business, and organizational leaders across the state of Michigan and beyond.

Sandi served several years on statewide strategic planning efforts providing value in advocating for support for our work with local and state decision makers. She has chaperoned Exploration Days and Kettunen Center events for years, has served as 4-H barn superintendent at fairs for several counties, has traveled across the state with 4-H youth interested in attending livestock shows, sales, fairs, educational events, state-wide rabbit expos, and more.

While a member of the Kalkaska County 4-H Leader's Association and Kalkaska County 4-H Livestock Council in the '90s, Sandi encouraged a youth voice and perspective addition to both groups. She was ahead of her time encouraging youth to be participants, not recipients of 4-H programs. She worked with county 4-H staff to allow 2 teen leaders to completely coordinate and host the county's 4-H Achievement Day, giving them the entire responsibility for event planning, coordination, and facilitation. MSU Extension is pleased to announce that Sandi will be honored as the 2019 ESP Friend of Extension in October 2019!



**Sandi Pyle**  
**2019 ESP Friend of Extension**

# KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY & ENSURING SAFE FOOD

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn safe food handling practices, increase their physical activity and improve the quality of their diets. Extension programming also helps decrease incidents of violence and bullying. Encouraging these 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.

## Fostering Health through Nutrition and Physical Activity

### Our Challenge

Obesity has important consequences on our nation's health and economy. It is linked to a number of chronic diseases including coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers. Among adults, the medical costs associated with obesity are estimated at 147 billion dollars. According to The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America released in 2017, Michigan has the 10th highest adult obesity rate in the nation. Michigan's adult obesity rate is currently 32.5 percent, up from 22.1 percent in 2000 and from 13.2 percent in 1990.

### Healthier Lives through Nutrition Education

MSU Extension supports individual and community level, or public health approaches, to prevent obesity. Through the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), we provide exemplary nutrition and physical activity education for limited resource participants where they eat, learn, live, work, play, and shop. Program and outreach efforts aim to increase the likelihood that limited resource youth, adults and seniors can make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

MSU Extension Community Nutrition Instructors work in collaboration with local partners to deliver nutrition and physical activity promotion. Staff draw from evidence-based curricula to build knowledge, confidence, and skills around healthy food and beverages and regular movement, or exercise among youth, adults and seniors throughout Kalkaska County. In March of 2019, MSU Extension was able to fill a vacant full-time Community Nutrition Instructor position. Lanae Bump, an MSU Dietetics graduate, joined our vibrant northwestern Michigan team this spring. Lanae has been busy building a strong foundation of local knowledge and building confidence in delivering MSU Extension nutrition and physical activity community interventions to target Kalkaska County youth, adults and seniors.



**"As the new Community Nutrition Instructor in Antrim and Kalkaska counties, I am excited to combine my background in dietetics, health promotion and cooking with the education provided by MSU Extension.**

**Nutrition education can have a lasting impact on people; I want to be a part of that!"**

**– Lanae Bump.**





## Keeping People Healthy, continued

### Making the Healthy Choice Easier - Supporting Changes to Policies, Systems, and Environment (PSE)

MSU Extension works to create a culture of health and wellness by providing coaching at the organization level. We provide technical assistance in assessing the environment, including policies and the physical space, creating an action plan, and implementing the action plan to work towards best practices related to nutrition and physical activity.

#### Childcare

MSU Extension provides childcare providers with health and wellness education and environmental coaching. Whether it's a family-care home-based or center-based provider, MSU Extension nutrition programs help incorporate the best practices for feeding children and creating place that support healthy living.

#### Worksites

Healthy employees are proven to be happier and more productive. MSU Extension health and nutrition staff work with employers to create a culture of health and wellness within the workplace. To have the most profound impact on individual health behavior is to make the healthy choice the default or easy choice in all environments. Focusing on healthier worksite environments as opposed to only one time programs is recognized as best practice. The DHEW assessment and process is considered a policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change strategy. PSE is used to improve the health of the workforce through long-lasting, sustainable change.

#### Schools

The school environment has shown to be a ripe opportunity to make meaningful impact. As the places where children spend much of their time and often eat at least half of their calories, schools are a primary driver in young people's knowledge of, attitudes about, and access to food. MSU Extension works with food service staff, teachers, principals, and youth to facilitate sustainable changes to school policies, systems, and environments so that healthy choices are easier.

In Kalkaska County, PSE changes are happening through the Fuel Up to Play 60 initiative. This free, in-school nutrition and physical activity program implemented by MSU Extension allows teams of students to make PSE changes that encourage other students, staff members, and administrators to lead healthier, active lives. The changes within our schools cause a ripple effect of positively impacting our communities as students incorporate their leadership skills to motivate and encourage family and community members to properly fuel their body so they can be active every day.



#### Birch St. Elementary School

By partnering with MSU Extension to help implement Fuel Up to Play 60, Birch St. received \$3,978 in grant funding and students have been more apt to brainstorm and lead several new healthy lifestyle initiatives. To encourage students to make healthy food choices, environmental improvements were made to the school cafeteria. This included



**Grant funds to  
Kalkaska County  
Schools through  
Smarter Lunchrooms  
& Fuel Up to Play 60:  
\$7,833**

## Keeping People Healthy, continued

adding new posters, highlighting healthy food options. Students also participated in several new food tasting adventures! Birch St. was also able to add small fitness equipment to the playground as well as a storage shed. The new equipment provides students with more options to be active during recess! Fuel Up to Play 60 student leaders have enjoyed encouraging their classmates to be more active, eat healthier foods, and serving as role models for younger students.

### Kalkaska Middle School

For their first year participating in Fuel Up to Play 60, Kalkaska Middle School (KMS) was awarded \$3,855 in grant funding with assistance provided by MSU Extension. This grant money was used to conduct food waste audits in the school cafeteria. The student leadership team decided to use funding to help implement a cafeteria food waste audit. The grant allowed students to purchase equipment necessary to conduct the audit including a scale, aprons, buckets, and a camera to document their work and progress. The KMS Fuel Up to Play 60 team also built a 3-bin compost structure which will allow the school to compost appropriate food waste on site. Students are working closely with food service to make sure foods offered in the cafeteria reflect student food favorites. Through their work, Fuel Up to Play 60 KMS student leaders noticed students were not very active during lunch recreation time. To change this, grant money was used to provide more physical activity options for their peers. The team purchased items such as soccer nets, “cornhole,” volleyball nets, storage shed, and more! All of the new equipment has really ramped up free time for these Blazers.

### Connecting kids to healthy food in schools – FoodCorps service

MSU Extension serves as one of seven FoodCorps service sites in Michigan. FoodCorps is a national organization working to connect kids to healthy food in school, so they can lead healthier lives and reach their full potential. Through this program, MSU Extension staff member Sarah Eichberger provides leadership and acquires financial support for a FoodCorps service member. Service members support Farm to School strategies through delivery of hands-on nutrition and food systems education in classrooms, support healthy school meal, and work with the whole school community to support a school wide culture of health. Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, MSU Extension’s FoodCorps service member Sarah Perez-Sanz served Rapid City Elementary School. During the year, Sarah facilitated regular hands-on learning with 50 students in three classrooms, led an after-school program and teacher and parent workshops, and coordinated and led 11 cafeteria taste-tests. Garlic roasted asparagus was the most popular taste tested seasonal item among Rapid City Elementary students. Many of the taste-tested items became regular items on the cafeteria menu. Sarah played a critical role in supporting Rapid City Elementary cafeteria Kitchen Manager with support and motivation to try and experiment with local, seasonal vegetables.



**Rapid City Elementary Kitchen Manager Nikole, a student at the Great Lake Culinary Institute and MSU Extension FoodCorps partner, prepared homemade gnocchi pasta for her students and served with roasted veggies.**



## Keeping People Healthy, continued

### Partners

Local Partnerships are critical to the success of our work. Relationships with Kalkaska Public Schools, District 10 Health Department, the New Horizons Clubhouse, and the KAIR food pantry are some of the partners that help support and host MSU Extension nutrition and physical activity interventions throughout Kalkaska County. A special thank you to United Way of Northwest Michigan and Oryana Food Cooperative for financially supporting MSU Extension FoodCorps service at Rapid City Elementary.

“Your lessons have made a difference in my students. Thank you for all you do.” - Rapid City Elementary Kindergarten Teacher

“If you tell them [the vegetables] are roasted, they’re happy.”  
- Nikole Jimenez, Rapid City Elementary Kitchen Manager

### Social Emotional Health

Promoting health and well-being includes understanding important connections between physical, mental, social and emotional health. Social and emotional health encompasses forming and maintaining satisfying and healthy relationships, taking another’s perspective, resolving interpersonal conflict, feeling capable and whole, expressing emotions, navigating stress, having supportive relationships, and having a positive sense of self. As is true for all aspects of human development, social and emotional health must be addressed across multiple levels, including the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural levels.

#### Stress Less with Mindfulness

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 and physical tension, and may be helpful in managing chronic conditions such as cardiac disease and diabetes. By offering people of all ages alternative ways of relating to life experiences, 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 more.

In 2018, Social Emotional Educator Patty Roth collaborated with the Traverse Bay Area ISD to offer 5 Stress Less with Mindfulness Series. Over 100 students from the Life Skills Center participated in Stress Less classes. The Life Skills Center serves students age 16-26 with moderate to severe cognitive impairments, emotional impairments or autism. The students in this class often work with outside agencies to gain skills that will assist them with independent living.

Simultaneously, 12 teachers from the Life Skills participated in their own Stress Less with Mindfulness classes to practice mindfulness and support and learn new skills to support their own self-care efforts as well as incorporate into their classrooms.

At the conclusion of the school year, a final presentation of Mindfulness was conducted



**Total Nutrition  
Education  
Participants:  
1,795**

## Keeping People Healthy, continued

with the TBAISD for 65 students and staff as they set off into their summer. Prior to the sometimes stressful holidays, Patty was invited back to teach a self-care workshop for 52 students and staff to refresh their skills in managing stress through mindfulness.

### RELAX: Alternatives to Anger

This is an educational program that actively engages participants to gain knowledge and skills to constructively deal with anger. Participants learn to better manage their anger and stress at home, in the workplace and in school.

In 2018, a RELAX series was taught at the Kalkaska Alternative Program to students identified by the principal. Students participated in weekly classes learning the core concepts of recognizing anger signals, empathizing, listening, accepting that others' anger is not about you, and letting go of the past in order to maintain a present perspective.

In addition, two RELAX series were conducted at Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, Life Skills students and their teachers. Participants left with improved knowledge or new skills designed to promote social and emotional well-being with others in their lives and immediate social environments.

### Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset

Numerous factors may cause stress for farmers. Many farmers face financial problems, price and marketing uncertainty, farm transfer issues, production challenges and more. Farmers and their families may struggle with stress, anxiety, depression, burn out, indecision or suicidal thoughts. This workshop was designed to help participants understand the signs and symptoms of chronic stress and includes resources about how to handle stress for a more productive mindset on the farm.

In 2018, 85 fruit producers learned to:

- Identify stress signs and symptoms.
- Practice three everyday strategies for managing stress
- Find out where to go for additional help and resources
- Make an action plan for managing stress



### Mindfulness Training Participant Outcomes:

- 95% are more positive about dealing with stress in their lives by using mindful tools
- 99% now use mindful breathing to calm themselves in the face of stress

### As a result of the RELAX program:

- 92% now work hard to be calm and talk things through
- 81% can now identify their anger triggers





# SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS

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

## Supporting Fruit Production

The 2018 Northwest Michigan Orchard and Vineyard Show attracted 305 participants over the course of the two-day educational program held at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme, Michigan. This meeting was a collaborative effort among the Grand Traverse Fruit Growers' Council, Parallel 45, the Cherry Marketing Institute, and MSU Extension and AgBio Research. The 2018 show provided producers with the latest in fruit-related research and extension including research updates for tart cherries, sweet cherries, apples, wine grapes, and berry crops that addressed production and marketing. Topics included spotted wing drosophila (SWD) monitoring and management strategies, opportunities for fresh market sweet cherries, trends on cherry imports, worker protection standards, farm transition, labor, fire blight, plant growth regulators, pollination, and emerging pests. The show was a great success and attendees provided many positive comments and feedback. Each year the show is supported by many local, statewide, and national sponsors. This program was coordinated and hosted by Emily Pochubay, Nikki Rothwell, Erwin "Duke" Elsner, and Thomas Todaro. These Educators also provided presentations in their respective areas of expertise.

### Tree Fruits

Tree fruit integrated pest management works toward optimizing economic and environmental sustainability for orchard growers. The seminar series, "2018 IPM Updates," was coordinated and hosted by MSU Extension Educator, Emily Pochubay, and provided tree fruit producers and crop consultants in northwestern lower Michigan with timely pest and disease information related to fruit production during the 2018 growing season. Eight of the 32 seminars held during the 2018 growing season were held in Kalkaska county. Each seminar was a two-hour session in which educational information such as factsheets, articles, presentations, and quizzes were presented by Emily Pochubay and invited speakers. Over the course of this program, Pochubay hosted 454 participants comprised primarily of northwest Michigan fruit growers and local crop consultants. A post-series survey polled 48 participants who represented approximately 1,576 acres of apples and 7,413 acres of cherries in northwest Michigan. All participants reported that attending IPM Updates improved their knowledge of practices that helped them to reduce production risks.

### Home Horticulture

Through volunteer outreach, Extension Master Gardeners shared science-based gardening knowledge, engaged citizens and empowered communities in environmentally responsible gardening practices, improving food security, improving

## Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

community, and developing youth through gardening.

This past year, Master Gardeners volunteered for more than 224 hours on various projects in Kalkaska County valued at over \$5,396. The bulk of these hours were spent on projects benefiting the community like environmental stewardship, therapy gardens, community beautification, youth gardening, and growing food for donation to local food banks. The remaining hours were spent sustaining the program with volunteer management and recruitment and/or supporting MSU Extension in its mission to bring the University's resources closer to our local residents.

### Plant & Pest Diagnostic Services

Residents were welcomed to bring in samples of plants, insects, diseases and other problems. MSU Extension staff, county employees and Master Gardener volunteers provided the expertise to diagnose problems and provide management recommendations.

Other Consumer Horticulture programming and services available for residents of Kalkaska County include:

- Gardening Hotline
- Gardening in Michigan website
- Ask an Expert online system
- Smart Gardening programming
- Soil tests for home gardens, yards and landscape plants

### 2019 Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference

The 20th Annual Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference (NMSFC) was held on January 25 and 26, 2019 at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme. Over 1,042 farmers, growers, and food enthusiasts from all around the state, Midwest, and Canada took part in numerous activities which included 3-intensive pre-conference sessions, 34-main Conference workshops, and a large trade show. Topics covered included Soil Health and Nitrogen Return from Cover Crops, Veterans in Farming, Saving Historic Barns, Grafting Fruit Trees, and Ways to Get Youth Involved in Agriculture, Conference attendees also enjoyed great local food, with both lunch and dinner menus having well over half of their products sourced from either "hyper local" (40 miles or less) growers or farmers from elsewhere in Michigan. The Conference has deep roots with MSU Extension, starting as a University-led grazing conference in 2000. This past year, 9 MSU and MSU Extension Educators led workshops, while additional staff answered questions and provided resources as a part of the Trade Show. Two MSU Extension staff also participate on the Conference Planning Committee.



This past year,  
Master Gardeners  
volunteered more  
than  
 224 hours  
on various projects in  
Kalkaska County  
valued at over  
\$ 5,396





## Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

### Assistance to support beginning farmers across MI

The MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assists county residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio economy. The innovation counselor has special training to deliver these services to local residents. Business counseling is conducted on a one-on-one basis and may take place at the MSU Extension office or the client's home or business location. The assistance provided is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include things like developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain or seeking funding options. The innovation counselor also assists clients in accessing specialized services they may need that are offered through Michigan State University like feasibility studies, food processing, nutritional labeling and packaging assistance.

Businesses assisted in Kalkaska County included food processors, wineries, a café, nursery, and value-added agriculture producers. Seven county businesses participated in the Product Center's Making It In Michigan Trade Show held in Lansing where they showcased their products to retail buyers and made connections that will lead to increased sales in the coming year .



**32 Counseling  
Sessions**



**1 Venture  
Launched**



**3 Jobs  
Created**



**2 businesses  
Increased**



**Value of  
Increased  
Investment  
\$49,500**

**2018-19 MSU Product Center Impacts in Kalkaska County**



# FOSTERING STRONG COMMUNITIES

When you support MSU Extension, participants learn how to implement best practices in good governance that keeps communities solvent, productive and engaged; learn effective conflict management skills that help leaders and residents work collaboratively on complex issues; and engage youth leaders in decision-making. In the personal finance area, MSU Extension helps youth and adults alike learn the skills they need to increase their savings, manage their spending avoid predatory lending and reduce mortgage defaults. All of these outcomes help lower the cost of governmental services and lead to personal and community stability, strong neighborhoods and safe communities.

Kalkaska Village leaders participated in a Conflict of Interest and Ethics workshop in 2018 and another on Robert's Rules of Order and Effective Meetings in 2019 provided at their village hall by MSU Extension.

New Commissioner School is a program designed especially for newly elected county commissioners and also attended by experienced commissioners as a refresher. The program is held following commissioner elections in even numbered years. This 50 year old program debuted a new overnight format in 2018 and has been recognized this year with several awards. Kalkaska County participated in 2018.

Northern Michigan Counties Association is a group of county commissioners from about 35 northern lower peninsula counties that meets 8 times each year to learn about topics that are relevant to county government and to share information between the counties.

**Building Strong Sovereign Nations** was designed by tribal leaders to give tribal council members an introduction to serving on a governing council. The program is offered every year in the fall in conjunction with the United Tribes of Michigan meeting and is open to leaders of all tribes in Michigan. Tribal leaders from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians have participated as students and instructors.

The MSU Extension **statewide ballot issues** education program held a Traverse City location for a statewide interactive presentation about the 2018 proposals.



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