

Collaboration Across MSU Extension

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, 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 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 Kent 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 Kent County!

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

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. Jeffrey W. 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. The 4-H Name and Emblem have special protections from Congress, protected by code 18 USC 707.



Kent County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

 377 residents reached with Financial or Homeownership Education

 3,409 youth participated in 4-H, early childhood or after school programs

 3,157 adults and youth benefited from health and nutrition programs

 249 individual stakeholder consultations with apple growers and industry professionals

 706 residents received Social and Emotional Health Education at 27 locations throughout Kent County

 3,125 residents reached with Consumer Horticulture Education

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Kent 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 Kent County residents need it most.



This year, we've also welcomed Kent 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.

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

Erin Moore, District 7 Director

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 Michigan State University Extension

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Program Highlights



MSU Extension offers many resources to decrease the stigma associated with mental health illnesses and raise awareness about tools and resources to stay mentally healthy.



MSU Extension's programming promotes healthy lifestyles and empowers Michigan residents to take control of their health.



MSU Extension helps to equip people with the knowledge and resources to make healthy choices for themselves and their families.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

In 2017, the Kent County Health Needs Assessment listed Mental Health as the number one issue facing the county's residents. MSU Extension offers a series of classes that support social and emotional health in the County. In 2018, over 700 Kent County residents attended these classes in over 27 different locations. The classes covered included "Stress Less with Mindfulness," "Relax: Alternatives to Anger," "Nurturing Parents," and "Powerful Tools for Caregivers." By using evidence-based curriculum and tackling particular subjects, MSU Extension Educator Holly Tiret and Program Instructor, Georgina Perry, work to take down barriers to accessing mental health education and to reduce the stigma surrounding them, helping Kent County families become socially and emotionally healthy so they can lead satisfying and productive lives.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

MSU Extension Nutrition and Disease Prevention Educator, Christi Demitz, delivers a myriad of health programming such as Matter of Balance for seniors, PATH for Chronic Pain (Alternatives to Opioids), Dining with Diabetes and Smarter Lunchrooms. Christi encourages individuals and communities to adopt healthy lifestyle choices. In 2018, in partnership with Kent Intermediate School District and the Kent County Health Department, MSU Extension hosted the Healthy Classroom for Healthy Kids training for teachers of students pre-K through third grade. Christi led sessions about creating policy, systems and environmental changes that support healthy learning experiences for children.

HEALTHY EATING HABITS

Obesity and poor nutrition are among the top health issues in Kent County, according to the 2017 Kent County Health Needs Assessment. In 2018, our team of MSU Extension's Community Nutrition Instructors reached 3,151 Kent County residents with nutrition education through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) as well as the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)– both federal programs that support low-income populations. Examples of curriculum delivered are Show Me Nutrition, Cooking Matters for Adults and Cooking Matters for Teens. These programs show the audience how easy and budget friendly healthy cooking can be. The recipes are quick and culturally adaptable.

MSU Extension staff located in Kent County

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FUTURE LEADERS

In 2018, Kent County youth attended the Agri-Science youth summit in Washington D.C., met with state legislators at the annual Capitol Experience, collaborated with leaders and experts to address food security issues at the World Food Prize held on campus, attended natural resource and renewable energy camps, and became leaders and mentors in their local clubs and communities. 4-H grows curious, confident and thriving youth from all backgrounds. Youth from farms, towns, cities, and suburbs are investing in their future and growing their hearts for civic engagement and giving back. Kent County 4-H youth leaders are leading the way for positive change. After all, true leaders aren't born: they're grown!



Each year 4-H youth from around the State of Michigan travel to the campus of Michigan State University for the annual Exploration Days adventure. Exploration Days is a three day campus-based pre-college program that is designed to help youth build the skills they need to successfully transition to college and to life as an adult. Youth stay on campus in residence halls and attend action-filled classroom and field trip sessions on a wide variety of topics.

One of the highlights of Exploration Days is the Awards ceremony where outstanding 4-H youth are acknowledged and awarded for

their contributions and service to their clubs, fellow youth and communities. In 2018, Kent County was well represented with six award delegates, of those six, Kent County had two State Award winners:

- * Shannon Good—Dairy Science Senior 4-H State Award
- * Haley Loehfelm—Healthy Lifestyles Junior 4-H State Award

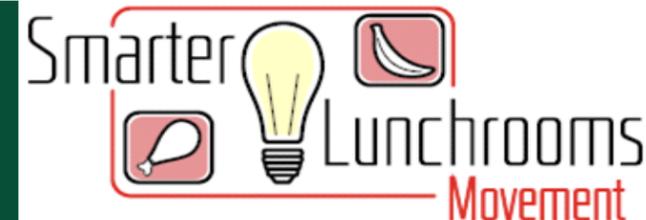
Way to go Shannon and Haley!

Representing Kent County at the 2018 4-H State Awards are:

- * Sydney Gladding - Rabbit and Cavy Science, Senior
- * Shannon Good - Dairy Science, Senior
- * Haley Loehfelm - Healthy Lifestyles, Junior
- * Eleanora Stoller - Group Awards
- * Ivy Stoller - Group Awards
- * Lena Stoller - Group Awards



Michigan Smarter Lunchroom Success



Northview Highlands Middle School

Smarter Lunchroom Principles Used:

1. Focus on Fruit
2. Lunchroom Atmosphere
3. Student Involvement

Goals:

- Use Smarter Lunchroom Detective Curriculum
- Engage students in Smarter Lunchroom assessment & recommendations for changes to lunchroom

Actions/Results:

- Students, Teachers, or administrators announce today's menu in daily announcements
- Display menu on new menu boards

Success Story:

Caitlin Eyestone, teacher of the regional emotional impairments program at Highlands Middle School, used the Smarter Lunchroom Detective curriculum with her 5th & 6th grade students. She wasn't sure how the students would feel about collecting and weighing food as part of the curriculum, but she was pleasantly surprised how much they enjoyed it! The students collected grapes as part of their project, and were quick to remind other students where to leave their extra grapes at the end of the lunch period. Eyestone's students distributed stickers to students who took the fruit during lunch, which helped increase participation. Eyestone's students also did a pre/post Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard, which showed an improvement in the areas of Students Involvement and Lunchroom Atmosphere.

The biggest success of the project was the confidence it gave Eyestone's students. She explained, "Some of my students aren't comfortable interacting with their peers. This project gave them an activity they had to do among the other students. One of my students was so excited about being in the lunchroom with others, collecting and weighing food, and getting barbeque sauce on his hands and shirt!" Her students suggested implementing a punch card to encourage students to make healthy choices during lunch. "I'm not sure how we'd do it, but I was proud of them for coming up with the idea!"



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Program Highlights



MSU Extension recognizes that with farming comes emotional stress. www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/.

MANAGING FARM STRESS

Taking care of crops and animals is hard on farmers and agribusiness professionals. Caring for ones own health and wellness in this high-stress profession is often overlooked but is just as critical as caring for the farm business. MSU Extension has created a team of educators who are working to provide information on managing farm stress, to reduce the stigma of mental health and to make sure that all farmers and farm families have access to the help they need. If you are dealing with thoughts of depression or anxiety, please talk to your physician. If you have suicidal thoughts, **please reach out for help, call 911.**

- ⇒ **National Suicide Prevention- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- ⇒ **Crisis Text Line- Text "GO" to 741741**

APPLE PRODUCTION

It's no secret that apples are at the core of the Agricultural Industry in Kent County. Michigan State Extension plays a critical role in providing Apple Growers with real-time research they need both for integrated pest management and horticulture to ensure their farms thrive. In 2018, Amy Irish-Brown, reached over 1,500 Kent County residents through individual consultations, educational sessions on pests and diseases and weather outlooks. She works side-by-side with Horticultural Educator, Phillip Schwallier, who for four decades has used his own research through MSU Extension on his farm. In 2018, Phil and his wife received the [2018 American Fruit GrowerSM Apple Grower of the Year Award](#).



With more than 900 million pounds of apples produced per year, apples are Michigan's largest fruit crop.

CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

Ever wonder why your tree stopped growing? Or why the leaves are dying? Or what type of pesticides should you use in your garden? MSU Extension's Consumer Horticulture team answers those questions and many more. Through their Smart Gardening Initiatives, they educate Michigan residents about the most environmentally friendly ways to Garden. In 2018, they reached over 3,000 Kent County residents through their classes, hotline, and conferences. They also maintain, through donations and Master Gardener volunteer hours, the publicly accessible Grand Ideas Garden and pond at the Kent County MSU Extension office, where people come to learn about pollinator friendly plants, new varieties and can spend time in a beautifully maintained garden.



The beautiful Grand Ideas Garden is maintained by Master Gardeners and is open to the entire Grand Rapids community.

Program Highlights

ÉXITO EDUCATIVO



Exito Educativo is a partnership-based program that promotes academic success and achievement among Latino families. It brings Latino parents and their high school-aged children together to learn about the value of post-secondary education. Offered in both English and Spanish, the program consists of six modules in which participants learn about the importance of higher education, how to facilitate family communication, the academic requirements for high school graduation, promoting career exploration, accessing financial resources, and navigating the college admissions process. Families leave E2 more comfortable with American educational systems and better prepared to access the opportunities therein. 2018 saw the continuation of this program for 15 new families through a \$15,000 4-H grant.

COOK ARTS CENTER

In 2018 a partnership was formed between the Kent County 4-H program and the Cook Arts Center in Grand Rapids. 4-H staff attended an open house night and met with the youth and their families to answer any questions they had regarding 4-H and the enrollment process. They also presented information on other workshops and camps that are available to their children. Approximately 50 youth participated in the first SPIN club. The youth were part of the Cook Arts Center summer camp. The interest focus for the club was on Energy, which tied into the summer curriculum. Kent County 4-H is excited to continue this partnership and to provide other exciting opportunities in areas of STEAM to the youth at Cook Arts Center.



BYRON TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER



4-H Program Coordinators, Nana Temple and Susan Fenten, along with 4-H staff member Nicole Grabowski, led several SPIN (special interest) clubs with youth participating in the Byron Township Community Center's summer drop in program. SPIN clubs are short term clubs that meet for six weeks. The youth at the center participated in an Emergency Preparedness club which they titled "Preparing for the Zombie Apocalypse". The group explored topics such as first aid, safety and other practical skills. Other popular SPIN clubs offered were Kitchen Science and a Gardening Club. The highlight of the summer was the week long Outdoor Adventure Camp. This was a day-camp style program that engaged youth in activities such as orienteering, outdoor adventure and emergency preparedness.

Program Highlights



A Kent County 4-H Cloverbud enjoys showing off his chia Monster! Part of a garden project, youth learned what it takes to grow their plants.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP

The 4-H program offers many camps and workshops both around the state and locally. All youth have an opportunity to participate in the numerous events each year regardless of cost or ability to pay. Scholarships are an option for most 4-H events. Families are encouraged to talk to their local Program Coordinators for funding options. In July 2018, the Kent County 4-H program offered the first Explorer Day Camp. The camp, a two-day event held at Fallsburg Park in Lowell, was designed to engage Cloverbuds, youth aged 5-8, in various projects such as outdoor exploration, gardening, animal sciences, STEM, physical activity, and healthy snacking. The camp was a success and plans to continue it annually are being made!



Spartan Dollars and Cents teaches participants how to prepare a usable budget.

JUBILEE JOBS

MSU Extension Children and Youth Career and Mentoring Educator, Frank Cox, partnered with 4-H Program Coordinator, Mary Newman to offer a series of Money Management classes to participants of the Jubilee Jobs Summer Learning Academy. The group met twice a week during the months of July and August. The session topics were: Spartan Dollars and Cents, Budgeting, Writing Checks, Keeping Track of Money (Transaction Register), and Interest Rates. Emphasis was put on life skills such as writing a check and how to reconcile a bank account. Participants were also given financial scenarios to practice response and proper transactional recording.



Kent County 4-H'er Haley Loehfelm poses with her alpaca at the 2018 Youth Fair.

KENT COUNTY YOUTH FAIR

The annual Kent County Youth Fair is one of the most anticipated events of the year for many 4-H'ers. Youth begin prepping for fair nearly a year in advance. Plans are made, money is raised and managed, projects are planned for and finished, and animals are raised and cared for. In 2018, new friendships were formed, old ones strengthened and experiences were had that will not soon be forgotten. The 2018 4-H staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure a great time for all. One highlight this year was adding goats along side the rabbits and cavy to the quiz bowl. The quiz bowl was so popular that parents wanted to have one of their own! The youth really enjoyed watching the adults participating and trying to answer the questions.

Program Highlights



An Extension Master Gardener stops to take a closer look at a plant in the Kent County MSUE Grand Ideas Garden.



MSU Extension offers workshops, grower meetings and updates to support the ornamental plant production in Kent County.

Photo credit: Heidi Lindberg, MSU Extension Floriculture Educator



Michigan is home to more than 11,000 inland lakes and 36,000 miles of rivers and streams.

MASTER GARDENERS

In 2018, the Kent County MSU Extension office was one of thirteen Extension locations to offer the Master Gardeners Program. 213 residents participated in the program led by Educator, Rebecca Finneran. The program offers an opportunity to improve lives through life skills and community based-service. The program has five focus areas:

- Environmental stewardship
 - Improving food security
 - Improving community
 - Youth development through gardening
 - Supporting MSU Extension gardening education
- According to the 2018 Statewide Summary Report, the 157,430 state-wide volunteer hours recorded, had a \$3.89 million economic value!

FLORICULTURE EDUCATION

MSU Extension Educator, Heidi Lindberg, serves the greenhouse businesses and ornamental production in Kent County. In 2018, Heidi offered several workshops and hosted webinars from the Kent County Extension office. These workshops provided information on topics ranging from how to maintain the proper substrate pH balance for optimal crops to diagnosing and dealing with bacterial blight. Heidi worked closely with and provided on-site visits and consultation with several Kent County growers who were experiencing an outbreak of *Xanthomonas*, a disease that causes blight, on their begonia plants. She provided them with information on disposal of the infected plants, how to prevent spread to healthy plants, and how to document their losses.

MSU WATER PROGRAMS

In 2018, Kent County residents participated in a variety of water programs including the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program, the Michigan Inland Lakes Convention, Great Lakes Education Program for teachers and students, and Botany classes on Aquatic Plants. Additionally, MSU Extension offers Water School: Essential Resources for Elected Officials. Through both in-class presentations and interactive field work, elected officials and decision makers learn how they can protect Michigan's most precious resource and how it affects both the economy and the environment. This policy-neutral, fact-based program is a partnership between MSU Extension and Michigan SeaGrant.

Program Highlights



With a CSA, consumers receive regular fresh produce and the peace of mind of knowing where and how their food is grown, and farmers have a consistent cash flow.

CSA FARE

For the past few years Michigan State University Extension has been one of several partners helping to support Michigan Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farmers, a popular form of direct to consumer marketing used by farms of varying size across Michigan and the country. In its simplest form, the model pairs a customer with an individual farm through the purchase of a share in the farm's annual harvest. Each year, our Community Food Systems Educators work with this group to expand their marketing reach. Hosted at the Grand Rapids Downtown Market, 2018 saw over 600 people in attendance at the 4th Annual Grower's Fair. MSU Extension also organizes tours to the CSA farms in order to strengthen the CSA marketing model, which boasts the relationship that consumers can have with the farmer's themselves.



Kent County currently leads the state with 11 participating institutions! For a complete list go to <https://www.cultivatemichigan.org/map>.

CULTIVATE MICHIGAN

Cultivate Michigan is a campaign of the Michigan Farm to Institution Network (MFIN) with a goal of having 20% of food served at Michigan institutions locally grown by the year 2020. Community Foods Educator, Garrett Ziegler, hosted the Growing Good in Grand Rapids Cultivate Michigan Marketplace event at the Blanchard Center on March 1st. The event was one of four held around the state in 2018. With planning from Garrett the event brought together local buyers and sellers who have an interest in farm to institution and provided networking and partnership opportunities. As of January 2018, 42 k-12 schools, 13 hospitals and health care systems, and three universities, along with several other smaller businesses including child care and senior centers have signed on to participate in the campaign.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

According to the 2015 National Financial Capability Study by FINRA, in Michigan, 49% of residents lack a rainy-day emergency fund to cover expenses for three months. MSU Extension offers a variety of programs that help Kent County residents build their financial literacy. Included in our class offering are Money Management, Homebuyer Education, Student Loan Repayment as well as individual foreclosure intake. In 2018, our Financial and Homebuyer Educator, Jinnifer Ortquist, reached over 300 individuals with classes, webinars, one-time presentations and individual consultations. In a post-survey, 93% of participants in homebuyer education series and classes reported having reduced stress regarding finances and 95% reported a change in savings and spending habits.



MSU Extension helps to equip people with the knowledge and resources to make sound financial decisions.

MSU EXTENSION - AT THE MARKET

One of the Product Center clients, Brian Mosby, co-owner of Mosby Popcorn based out of Kentwood, whose product is now displayed at the Bridge Street Market in Grand Rapids stated that, "The MSU Product Center provided assistance with Nutrition Facts labeling and helped connect our popcorn business to Bridge Street Market. Getting into Bridge Street has given us some great exposure and increased sales."



Brian Mosby, co-owner of Mosby popcorn, with his daughter in front of their product at the Bridge Street Market.

MSU Extension Product Center – The MSU Extension Product Center helps to improve economic opportunities in the Michigan agriculture, food and natural resources sectors. Located at the Grand Rapids Downtown Market, our primary Innovation Counselor and Community Food Systems Educator, Kendra Wills, assists local entrepreneurs to develop and commercialize high value, consumer-responsive products. Together with her Counseling team, Kendra conducted 344 counseling sessions in 2018.



In 2018, MSU Extension also worked with the Bridge Street Market on sourcing Michigan products. Ken Bair, the Manager at the Bridge Street Market stated that "the MSU Product Center was instrumental in sourcing local products during the inception of Bridge Street Market and continues to identify and connect us with new and upcoming local vendors and products. Not only did they facilitate private food shows to showcase their local vendors during our local product procurement search, but they also provided UPC labeling and label graphics resources for a number of our other local vendors who weren't initially connected with MSU, which was essential in our ability to carry and sell their products. MSU Product Center's work connected us with a multitude of amazing local vendors and products that are now thriving here at Bridge Street Market"