

Developing a Food Council



Working to improve health in the community through nutrition and physical activity.

The issue: A local food policy council works to address needs related to food access, security, and health. By assessing what the local needs are, food councils can work toward making community improvements one step at a time.

Actions taken: MSU Extension has been working in Lake County for the past few years to form the Lake County Community Food Council (now an independent 501c3), to conduct nutrition education programs and to convert the Bread of Life Food Pantry to a client choice pantry through a USDA AFRI Voices for Food multi state grant.

The results (from the Food Council's annual report): St. Ann's Food Pantry is well into enjoying their enlarged pantry and are now a choice pantry which gives their applicants more control over the food they receive. With the guidance of both MSUE and DHD #10, the pantries are offering more healthy choices. The folks who come there are given some nutrition education as to their options for healthier eating.

The canning classes have been a big success. Classes have been offered at three locations: Irons, Baldwin, and Chase. Canning kits were developed to help families with start up materials to do their own canning. These continue to be distributed.

The Photo Voice Classes held at the high school helped the participants see the importance of the old phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" MSUE's Kendra Gibson guided the participants with good instructions and challenged them with voting on their final display project.

Another Class that Kendra Gibson brought to us was Diversity Training. All the participants thought the class was tremendous and helped our awareness to the different ways we respond to each other, not only from cultural differences but also generational mind-sets.

The Food Council meets on the second Monday of the month at St. Ann's Church in Baldwin from 2:00 – 3:30 PM.

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MISSION:


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Lake County 2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT


BY THE NUMBERS

 Almost 600 Lake County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs


 450 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs


 Over 185 youth and adults were reached through health and nutrition programs

 MSU Extension helped nearly 100 community members with economic development, natural resources and local government education

 Over 100 residents participated in agricultural and gardening services

 \$734,035 total economic impact in Lake county

 MSU disbursed more than \$444,800 in financial aid for Lake County students

 More than \$16,400 was spent with local businesses

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

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



During the past year, we have made great strides in revamping our 4-H program and reaching out to areas in the county not traditionally served by MSU Extension.

We're passionate about serving Lake 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.



Shari Spoelman, Interim District Director

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Program Highlights



Crafty 4-H'ers showing off their accomplishments.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H is the largest youth development organization in Michigan. Connected at the national level, MSU's program promotes traditional 4-H clubs as well as many other leadership and life-skills development opportunities for youth. 4-H provides experiential learning opportunities that allow youth to explore new interests and discover their passion. In 2017 and 2018, in Lake County we have focused on rebuilding the 4-H program and training adult volunteers. One of the highlights of the year was taking 20 youth to Exploration Days at MSU.



One of the many plant disease samples brought into the Extension office for

GARDENING & CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

Homeowners often have insect infestations or plant diseases that they are unfamiliar with and need help addressing. MSU Extension provides soil testing, plant and insect identification, disease identification and treatment, Smart Gardening resources, and a toll-free Lawn and Garden hotline. The Lake County MSU Extension office provides assistance to many customers with basic home gardening concerns.



Budgeting classes help residents understand their limited resources and provide skills to help plan for homeownership.

FINANCE & HOMEOWNERSHIP

MSU Extension's team of knowledgeable financial pros demystify common money and homeownership best practices with university-backed, research-based programs and resources to help Michigan residents navigate through whatever fiscal challenges life throws their way. In 2017, the team provided homeowner education, money management and foreclosure counseling in Lake County.

Program Highlights

Community Development & Natural Resources

Strong counties recognize and promote their natural assets. Providing education and technical support to help create successful commissions and teams is the foundation of the work of MSU Extension's Government and Public Policy Educators. Together, we have assisted in the development of a recreation plan for the county, provided land-use trainings, assisted with a watershed plan for the Little Manistee River, and partnered with the conservation district for a "What's in the Forest?"



Helping organizations develop community gardens is just one of the many ways to build community.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

MSU Extension's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides basic nutrition education and hands-on activities for all ages. Core curricula are designed to help low-income families stretch their food dollars while maintaining good nutrition. Some instruction includes physical activity and cooking techniques that help instill life-long skills. It is estimated that every \$1 spent on nutrition education saves as much as \$10 in long-term health costs.



Kids learn to make healthy snacks during "Cooking Matters for Teens."

FOOD SAFETY

Providing assistance to help residents and businesses keep food safe is a hallmark of cooperative extension services across the country. In Lake County we provided ServSafe education for restaurant staff, home food preservation (canning, freezing and drying,) assistance with food pantries, and "Safe Food Healthy Kids" for childcare providers.



Learning to can using up-to-date safe methods reduces the risk of food-borne illnesses.