

LAPEER COUNTY 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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Message from the District Director



Karly Creguer
District 10 Director
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2025 was a year of reflection for MSU Extension. Due to federal funding cuts, we said goodbye to the SNAP-Ed program after recently celebrating 30 years of these efforts in Michigan. Staff delivering this nutrition and physical activity education played a pivotal role in teaching youth, families, and older adults to make healthier choices - impacts that will remain for years to come.

This devastating loss to our organization prompted us to reflect on the legacy we are leaving behind with all our programs. The lifelong skills youth are learning through 4-H programs to be ready for the future, improved yields and more efficient practices employed on farms, better budgeting practices to move toward homeownership, innovative ways for communities to enhance their assets to attract tourists and residents and, in turn, stimulate the local economy. Extension works alongside our neighbors and communities to help them address their unique needs and flourish now and into the future. It is my pleasure to share with you more ways we are doing so in the following pages.

Local Impact



2,480 participants from Lapeer County attending **379** programs



269 youth enrolled as 4-H members



1,844 participants attending **72** programs hosted in Lapeer County



2,107 youth reached by 4-H programming



410 county residents participated in health and nutrition programs



134 volunteers serving Lapeer County



811 participants in county agriculture programs



51 Ask Extension questions answered



144 county residents took part in community, food & environment programs



45,552 handouts and e-newsletters distributed

AGRIQUEST Homeschool Club Launched



Photo Credit: Sarah Griffin

A new 4-H SPIN club for homeschool youth, AGRIQUEST, launched in December. Designed for ages 5–12, the club blends ag-themed stories, creative crafts, and hands-on science. All **21** enrolled members are brand new to 4-H.

In December, participants learned about different conifer varieties, the history of Christmas trees, and the pros and cons of real vs. artificial trees before making their own tabletop tree. Upcoming topics include Hands on with Wool, Sap to Syrup, Milk–Sugar–Science, and Supreme Seeds.

Worms at Work: A Community Approach to Environmental Education

Worms are bringing science to life in the classroom through hands-on vermicomposting lessons. Last May, **18** students created a classroom worm farm to explore ecosystems, soil health, decomposition, and how food waste becomes compost.

The project soon reached the community. In June, the worm farm was displayed at the Ruth Hughes Memorial Library, and a follow-up workshop drew **29** participants who learned composting basics and built their own worm farms. One 5-year-old attendee still cares for his worms six months later—growing his colony from 10 to over 100—and proudly shares what he learned in the 4-H class.



Photo Credit: Sarah Griffin



4-H Ambassadors



Photo Credit: Sarah Griffin

4-H ambassadors represent and promote 4-H, as well as assist with planning and facilitating county-wide activities. Pictured above are Lapeer County's 2025 ambassadors, who coordinated a county-wide service project, collecting pet food, treats, toys, and blankets for animals in need.

4-H Camp Builds Skills, Friendships & Forest Magic

In July, Lapeer County 4-H youth gathered at Camp Lael for a three-day Summer Camp with **60** campers, **19** teen counselors, and **10** adult volunteers. The 2025 theme, *Wonderwoods*, brought fairy tales to life through activities like making fairy dough and dragon eggs, planting “beanstalks,” creating giant toothpaste, and racing handmade boats. Campers also enjoyed classic outdoor fun—swimming, canoeing, hiking, s’mores, and the tradition of hearing stories about “Brad,” the friendly forest companion.

The camp also serves as a leadership opportunity for teens, who meet year-round to help plan the event and complete trainings in CPR/First Aid, positive youth development, and behavior management. Through preparation and hands-on roles during camp, counselors build real-world skills in communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and responsibility.



Photo Credit: Sarah Griffin

Show Me Nutrition Sparks Healthy Eating Habits in Imlay City Pre-K Students

From April to May, the Show Me Nutrition program engaged with **7** Pre-K classrooms at Weston Elementary in Imlay City, teaching young children about balanced eating through fun, hands-on lessons. The impact extended beyond school—one parent shared that her previously grain-resistant children now eagerly request whole grains and remind the family that these foods give them energy.

This shift shows how early nutrition education can influence healthier habits at home. The program successfully taught students about balanced meals while empowering them to make healthier choices in their daily lives.

A total of **237** participants – **64** adults and **173** youth – took part in **53** SNAP-Ed nutrition education programs in Lapeer County.



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Building Stronger, Healthier Communities

MSU Extension Health programs promote physical and emotional well-being through research-based education on aging, chronic disease prevention and management, diabetes prevention, healthy communication, sleep, mental health, and stress management.

Two recent grants expanded District 10's reach. The ACL grant supported the six-week Walk With Ease program, engaging **46** participants. The RHSE grant funded Tai Chi for Better SLEEP and Mindfulness for Better SLEEP, which reached **97** participants while addressing the link between pain, sleep, and opioid misuse in rural communities.

District 10 (including Lapeer County) health educators reached:

- **218** participants in the 18-session Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention program, and **6** participants in the 8-session Matter of Balance program
- **185** participants in mental health programs
- **115** participants in disease self-management one-time presentations
- **411** participants in Mental Health First Aid
- **5** participants in the 6-session PATH (Personal Action Towards Health) programs



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Strengthening Rural Michigan: 2025 CEC Conference Highlights

The 2025 Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC) Conference in Lapeer brought together **103** participants from **46** communities to explore strategies for strengthening rural entrepreneurial ecosystems. Attendees valued the practical sessions, networking, and relevant content.

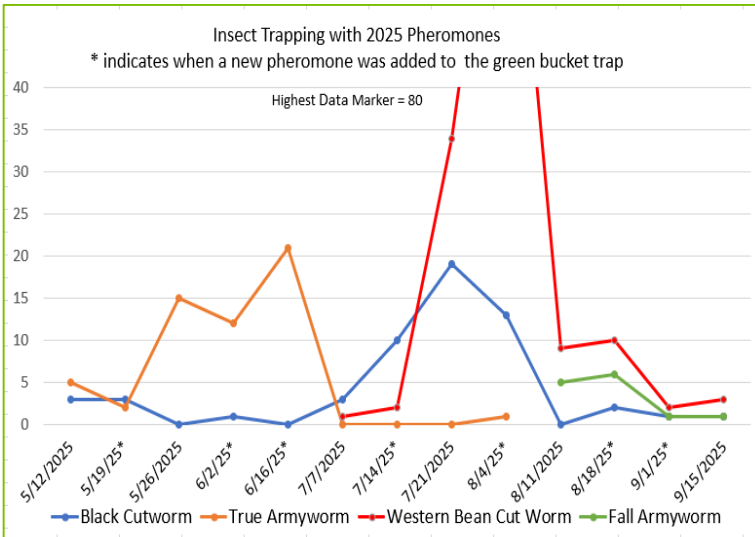
A new Youth Entrepreneurship Market showcased **8** young entrepreneurs from Sanilac, St. Clair, and Lapeer counties, adding an energetic intergenerational element. The diverse mix of participants—from education and economic development to government and business—enhanced discussion and idea sharing. Overall, the conference reinforced the importance of cross-sector collaboration and youth engagement in driving local innovation in rural Michigan.



Insect Trapping in Lapeer County

Corn earworm traps were placed on **2** Lapeer County farms and monitored from late June to October, while leafhopper populations were tracked on **3** additional farms. Leafhoppers are a major concern because they feed on plants and spread harmful diseases.

Leafhopper sampling ran from mid-May to early August, with fields scouted every other week. Insect traps were checked weekly throughout the season to track pest numbers and trends. All data was uploaded to the Great Lakes and Maritimes Pest Monitoring Network to support regional pest-management efforts.



Statewide Impact



\$244.2 billion annual impact of food and agriculture on Michigan's economy



298,135 participants from across Michigan attending **7,997** programs



13,661 total volunteers in the state of Michigan



170,438 total 4-H participants in Michigan



206,346,096 contacts through social media, web activity, e-newsletters and handouts statewide



Check out MSU Extension's Strategic Directions Report!

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Our Social Impact

Annual Report

Lapeer County 4-H Social Impact				
101,208 Views	2,000 Content Interactions	613 Link Clicks	4,700 Visits	142 Follows

MSU Extension – Lapeer County Social Impact				
77,403 Views	972 Content Interactions	318 Link Clicks	1,200 Visits	71 Follows

Building Knowledge in Michigan's Beef Sector

MSU Extension Beef Feedlot Systems Educator Dr. Jerad Jaborek led multiple efforts to advance beef education and research. **8** Beef Quality Assurance trainings were held—three in the Thumb—with **37%** of attendees new to BQA and over **90%** reporting increased knowledge and planned on-farm changes.

Dr. Jaborek's team also completed their **third** beef-x-dairy feedlot trial and shared results widely, helping producers make informed purchasing decisions during high feeder cattle prices.

Nearly **50** youth and adults attended a beef nutrition workshop, many planning to apply the info to their fair projects, and another **40** took part in a meats workshop focused on slaughter, grading, and carcass quality.