



# Montcalm County

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

### BY THE NUMBERS



\$7,012,964 total economic impact in Montcalm County



1,123 youth participated in 4-H, early childhood or after school programs



907 adults and youth benefited from health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension website received 11,712 visits from Montcalm County residents, 73% first-time visitors



Montcalm County students received \$1,427,998 in financial aid from MSU

100

MSU Extension has served Montcalm County over 100 years

### MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

In 2018, Michigan State University Extension partnered with Montcalm County to continue strengthening youth, families, farmers, caregivers, homeowners, business owners, and communities. Your local MSU Extension staff and the statewide network of Educators worked through local partners to bring the university's research and resources directly to our county residents. This annual report gives examples of some of MSU Extension's accomplishments and the impact that we continue to have in the county – helping to improve the lives of its residents. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve our stakeholders and partners and we are especially grateful for the partnership that we have with Montcalm County.



Bill Hendrian  
District 8 Director

### CONTACT



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Stanton, MI 48888



[canr.msu.edu/outreach](http://canr.msu.edu/outreach)  
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Michigan State University Extension



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@MSUEExtension

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# Program Highlights



MSU Extension is here to assist farmers, families and individuals with issues such as succession & estate planning, budgets, and managing farm stress.



MSU Extension recognizes that with farming comes emotional stress. [www.canr.msu.edu/managing\\_farm\\_stress/](http://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/)



Educator, Fred Springborn offers on-site farm visits and consultations. You may contact Fred at [springb2@msu.edu](mailto:springb2@msu.edu) or by calling 989-835-7509.

## FARM MANAGEMENT

Florencia Colella, Farm Business Educator with MSU Extension, joined the Extension family in late 2018. Her main area of focus is in farm management. Although she is housed in Newaygo Co., Florencia serves a large area that extends to Montcalm County. Florencia's focus is helping farmers to do planning, business analysis, impact evaluation, development, food chains and information technologies as applied to management. She also promotes creativity and leadership in agri-businesses, including the role of minorities in farming. The mission of the Farm Management team is to assist farmers, agriculturally related businesses, industries, families and individuals improve their lives and achieve their goals through an educational process that applies management, production and economic knowledge to critical

## MANAGING FARM STRESS

In 2018, MSUE Educator Abigail Cudney joined other professionals at Montcalm Community College to address the opioid epidemic in Michigan's rural communities. Abigail presented the Communicating About Farm Stress workshop. Abigail works with 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)

## FIELD CROPS SERVICES

MSUE Field Crops Educator, Fred Springborn, provides invaluable services to producers in Montcalm County. Fred offers consultant breakfast meetings, farm visits, pesticide certification reviews, community update meetings, Central Michigan crop and weather updates, and weekly reporting for Montcalm County to the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Fred consistently meets with producers and listens to their concerns and issues, and then works to provide them with the research, resources or information needed. Each year Fred monitors the progress of planting throughout the county in order to provide input when needed for disaster purposes and to keep the farming community informed of potential crop disease.



# Program Highlights

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## WATER QUALITY

MSU Extension works with community leaders to create water-protection strategies, landowners, and industry to reduce risks of water pollution, and state agencies to develop water quality information systems. Extension offers both in-person and online workshops, classes, and programs that help to make Michigan residents more effective stewards of one of our most precious natural resources. Michigan Lake & Stream Leaders Institute, Conservation Stewards Program, Michigan Water School: Essentials for Elected Officials, Introduction to Lakes Online, and Clean Boats Clean Waters are just a few examples of Extension offered programming. Visit [https://www.canr.msu.edu/water\\_quality/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/water_quality/) to learn more about the many water quality programs offered by MSU Extension.



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

## CHRISTMAS TREES

Christmas trees of various varieties continue to be an important crop in Montcalm County. MSU Senior Extension Educator, Jill O'Donnell, specializes in Christmas tree production and provides leadership in the development of Extension educational programs emphasizing integrated crop management and marketing. Her programs and research trials over the years have included fertilization, disease, insect and weed management, shearing, cone production, fir variety trials and plant material evaluation. Although Jill has a statewide focus, in 2018, Jill visited individual Montcalm County growers to discuss pest identification and management, soil tests and recommendations, disease identification and management recommendations.



Jill O'Donnell offers online or in-person grower events as well as one-on-one consultations.

## POTATO FIELD DAY

The 2018 Potato Field Day was held at the Montcalm Research Station. It was well attended and provided insights and information into the latest research plots. Producers, industry representatives, campus-based researchers and local staff got together just northwest of Stanton to view various varieties response to nutrition and management, as well as pest and disease control. This annual event highlights some of Montcalm County's most important crops and gives an opportunity for all to hear the latest updates related to growing and storing potatoes. The event also gives attendees the opportunity to connect with each other and share their experiences and compare that with what the researchers are discovering. Many helpful articles can be located at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/> and searching the term "potato."



Michigan potato and dry bean producers are the main beneficiaries of the research conducted at the 57-acre Montcalm Research Center.

# Program Highlights



Brenda Long, Senior Extension Educator, offers many educational and counseling options related to financial services.

## MONEY MANAGEMENT

MSU Senior Extension Educator, Brenda Long, continued to serve the residents of Montcalm County. Brenda teaches Money Management Education, trains trainers in Your Money, Your Goals, as well as meets one-on-one with many individuals or couples who are facing possible foreclosure and loss of their homes. In 2018, Brenda helped 11 homeowners in Montcalm County receive more than \$21,000 in Step Forward Michigan dollars in order to put an end to potential foreclosure proceedings. In addition to working with the County Treasurer and Step Forward Michigan, Brenda worked with the Greenville Area Community Foundation to receive a \$22,000 grant to help deliver money management lessons at Heartland House, a daytime clubhouse for persons with mental illness supported by the Montcalm Care Network staff.

## FUTURE LEADERS

In 2018, Montcalm 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. Montcalm 4-H youth leaders are leading the way for positive change. After all, true leaders aren't born: they're grown!



4-H is Michigan's largest youth development program serving over 200,000 youth each year.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Montcalm County 4-H offers opportunities that help prepare youth for real life situations. From the local club experience to the statewide workshops and events, all youth have the chance to participate and develop skills that last a lifetime. In 2018, Montcalm County Outdoor Adventure Teen Leader, Anna Thompson, was part of a life-changing 42 mile backpack trip along the rugged trails of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. Montcalm Teen Leader, Anna Thompson, had this to say about the experience, "I will be able to use these skills wherever I go in life. I can use my leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills at college and in my future occupation. My time management skills, independence and self-confidence can be applied to any aspect of life, at home, at work or in school."



Anne Thompson poses on top of a cliff above Lake Superior.

Photo credit: Liz Wiener MSU Extension



# Program Highlights

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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

One of the growing areas for MSU Extension, Health and Nutrition instructor Bonnie Havlicek is the relationship with local farm markets and nutrition education. Taught on location at the markets, participants get hands-on instruction on preparing healthy, nutritious meals using fruits and vegetables that they may otherwise skip past in the grocery store. Bonnie offers a series of six classes over a six-week period and a side benefit of doing it at the farmers market is that a tour is given showcasing the produce that is available from our local farmers. Sometimes people avoid using a fruit or vegetable because they do not know how to prepare it. Bonnie helps bridge that gap by not only providing the nutrition information but showing and inviting the participants to prepare a sample for themselves.



With help from Extension Nutrition Instructor, Bonnie Havlicek, both participants and vendors at the Market benefit from market programs.

## FOOD SAFETY

MSU Extension offers high-quality, affordable programs that help Michigan residents learn the importance of safe food and water in their everyday lives. In 2018, Extension Food Safety Educator, Joyce McGarry, offered ServSafe certification training and Food Preservation classes to Montcalm residents. Joyce is also part of a work team that responds to inquiries to our Food Safety Hotline and offers information on disaster preparedness through a collection of educational articles and resources that help families and communities deal with food safety and related issues during severe weather, power outages, or localized flooding. Contact Joyce at [mcgarry@msu.edu](mailto:mcgarry@msu.edu), to schedule a food preservation workshop or ServSafe training.



It is important to stay up to date on the latest research for home food preservation processes, as they are constantly under review and updated.

## TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS

Tools for Caregivers is An evidence-based program designed to help caregivers take care of themselves and to learn a range of self-care tools to help reduce personal stress and communicate effectively with family members and healthcare providers. Nutrition and Disease Prevention Educator, Christi Demitz, has been busy making contacts in Montcalm County to bring this critical program to families and caregivers. Caregiving can be physically and emotionally stressful. This is a free six week workshop. Several of the topics covered include, understanding depression, hiring in-home help, helping the memory impaired, making legal and financial decisions, helpful ways you can relax, and reducing anger and guilt. To schedule contact Christi Demitz at [demitzch@msu.edu](mailto:demitzch@msu.edu) or by calling 616-632-7881.



Self-care is essential to caregivers. Powerful Tools for Caregivers will help caregivers take care of themselves while they care for a relative or friend.

# Featured County Story

Montcalm County MSU Extension is fortunate to have Community Nutrition Instructor, Bonnie Havlicek. Bonnie enjoys working with and serving local residents. Whether it is partnering with local schools or other community service providers, Bonnie serves both youth and adults by delivering research-backed health and nutrition information to help participants make better choices concerning what they eat, where they access food and how they pursue their overall personal health. Bonnie is excited about helping residents gain access to healthy foods by equipping them with the knowledge and resources to help them break free from the mundane and make the most of their food dollars.



The Montcalm County investment in MSU Extension allows MSU to leverage an increase in private investment in annual MSU Extension programming. One great example from 2018 brought together the Central Montcalm Middle School and MSU Extension to participate in the 2018 Fuel Up to Play 60 Rally. The Detroit Lions, Michigan State University Extension, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Michigan Department of Education, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Health & Nutrition Services and the United Dairy Industry of Michigan all presented the event that was held at Ford Field in Detroit. What a great opportunity for our youth to be inspired, to take part in fun activities and to learn important health and nutrition information!

Six Montcalm area students and their teachers were able to travel to Detroit with MSU Extension's Bonnie Havlicek for this exciting event featuring Lions great, Herman Moore, Lions cheerleaders and others as they learned information that they will be able to bring back to their schools and personal lives. Bonnie Havlicek travels throughout Montcalm County working with local partners to provide health and nutrition information that is critical to both our youth and adults. Good nutrition is important not only to the body as fuel, but also to the mind. Bonnie delivers this critical information in conjunction with programs like Fuel Up to Play 60, Cooking Matters, Eat Healthy Be Active and more.

Bonnie has also developed critical partnerships with local farmers markets, senior centers and community centers to help introduce healthy eating to some of our most vulnerable and underserved residents who receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP Education provides not only nutrition information, but offers hands-on classes and guidance. Many times it helps connect participants to healthy food sources and helps participants make the most of their benefits.





## MSU Extension staff located in Montcalm County

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Bonnie Havlicek	Community Nutrition Instructor	989-831-7506	havlice2@msu.edu
Bill Hendrian	District 8 Director	231-843-4395	hendria2@msu.edu
Tarin Minkel	4-H Program Coordinator	989-831-7514	minkeltj@msu.edu
Vicki Newcomb	Office Manager	989-831-7500	newcombv@msu.edu
Fred Springborn	Crops Educator	989-831-7509	springb2@msu.edu

## Additional MSU Extension staff serving Montcalm County

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Laura Anderson	Disease Prevention Educator	269-945-1388	ander359@msu.edu
Diane Brown-Rytlewski	Horticulture Educator	517-676-7292	rytlewsl@msu.edu
Florencia Colella	Farm Business Educator	231-224-6439	colellaf@msu.edu
Katie Courtade	CYI / 4-H Supervising Educator	616-527-5357	courtad3@msu.edu
Faith Cullens	Dairy Educator	989-224-5249	cullensf@msu.edu
Charles Gould	Bioenergy Educator	616-994-4547	gouldm@msu.edu
Kevin Gould	Beef Educator	616-527-5357	gouldk@msu.edu
Tom Guthrie	Equine Educator	517-788-4292	guthri19@msu.edu
Abigail Harper	Community Foods Educator	517-676-7298	harperab@msu.edu
Becky Henne	Health & Nutrition Educator	517-543-4468	henner@msu.edu
Brenda Long	Housing & Financial Educator	616-527-5357	longbr@msu.edu
Joyce McGarry	Food Safety Educator	517-887-4587	mcgarry@msu.edu
Erica Rogers	Environmental Mgmt. Educator	989-875-5296	roger392@msu.edu
Jill O'Donnell	Christmas Tree Educator	231-779-9480	odonne10@msu.edu
Dan O'Keefe	Sea Grant Educator	616-994-4572	okeeefed@msu.edu
George Silva	Crops Educator	517-543-4467	silvag@msu.edu
Diane Smith	Product Center Educator	989-875-5293	dismith@msu.edu
Holly Tired	Social Emotional Educator	616-632-7893	tired@msu.edu
Eric Walcott	Government & Public Policy	517-353-9106	walcott3@msu.edu
Casey Zangaro	Swine Educator	989-875-5292	zangaroc@msu.edu

# Collaboration Across MSU Extension

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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 and 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](http://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 Montcalm 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 Montcalm County!**

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**MISSION:**

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

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