



Montmorency County

2019–2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Residents attended over 32 programs between January and July 2020, including remotely during COVID-19 shutdown



4-H youth in Montmorency County enroll in college at a rate 18.1% higher than non-4-H youth.



49 soil test kits purchased by Montmorency County residents



3 Extension professionals based in Montmorency County



246 Montmorency County residents were reached through MSU Extension Health and Nutrition programs



704 County Residents utilized over 93 different programs and services.

100

Over 100 years of Extension in Montmorency County.



MSU Extension website received 2437 visits from Montmorency County.

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

During 2019, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension continued to partner with Montmorency County to strengthen youth, families, businesses and communities. In this report, we will highlight local and statewide programs that made a difference in Montmorency County residents' lives; including helping farmers with financial management and farm stress; providing opportunities for youth's career and leadership development through 4-H; teaching families how to buy, cook and eat nutritious food; helping communities grow their tourism and community development opportunities; and providing a suite of online resources and programs.

Because of your continued support, we are able to help Montmorency County residents improve their lives, their work places and their communities during the novel coronavirus pandemic. MSU Extension Montmorency County staff members have been working diligently to create virtual programs and resources for residents. Many of the programs in this report that we're highlighting took place last year, in-person, and many of these experiences are now being offered virtually while residents are staying home and staying safe. It is an honor and a privilege to serve Montmorency County and we're looking forward to another successful year ahead.



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Extension

4-H PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



- This year 82 youth and 19 adult volunteers participated in Montmorency County 4-H programs. 109 non 4-H youth participated in 4-H activities.
- In January, Bonnie Hardies, 4-H Program Coordinator, worked with Sara Keinath, Extension Educator, to bring both Atlanta and Hillman Schools a Financial Success Class. They taught the youth how to write a check and balance a checkbook, showed the youth how to calculate simple interest rate, and set a budget for themselves. All of the teaching lessons were hands on. Candy and prizes were awarded throughout the class to keep it interesting. 31 youth from Hillman and 27 youth from Atlanta participated.
- Montmorency County held their annual Mock Interview/ Resume Workshop. 36 youth from Hillman and 42 youth from Atlanta participated in the programs. Youth from 10th and 11th grade were able to take part in this amazing event. In preparation for the mock interview, youth learned about handshakes, how to dress for an interview, had their resumes reviewed, and much more!
- As Michiganders began to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, Michigan State University Extension quickly created virtual opportunities for 4-H youth to stick together while being physically apart. See the attached report addendum for virtual classes that have been attended by Montmorency County residents.
- Every summer a five-county Summer camp is held which is attended by Montmorency youth. Since all in person events had to be cancelled this year due to COVID-19, the team that puts on summer camp got to together and decided to adapt to the situation and give 4-H youth an alternative summer camp experience. The group provided two virtual summer camps. The first camp was all about gardening. Youth got the chance to make a bird house, learn about butterflies and make an herb garden. The second camp was about camping. Youth got the chance to learn survival skills, stars, and what animals can be found out in the wild. Youth received a box sent home with all the materials needed for camp.
- **A recent addition is the Virtual Learning Showcase and Auctions, an online experience that allows 4-H members to show off their summer project, including an opportunity to exhibit and market livestock. This event replaced the county fair and allowed all the 4-Hers hard work to come to fruition and have their projects presented.**

4-H PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



- In the last fiscal year, the Montmorency County Youth Mentoring Program has continued to see changes and grow within the community.
- In August 2020, Michelle Eagling took over coordinating Mentoring program activities and is focusing on providing 4-H virtual SPIN Club opportunities in Montmorency County. Michelle is also the 4-H program coordinator in Alpena County. Welcome Michelle!

The 4-H Virtual Showcase allowed part of the county fair to carry on Virtually! All of the livestock pictures shown are from 2020 Virtual fair presentations.



- With a move to online curriculum, the Youth Mentoring Program Partnered with “Capturing a New Normal: A Michigan Teen Photo Project” to bring new and educational photography ideas and challenges to the creative youth of Montmorency County. While youth were able to participate as a large group with the MTPP we also focused on local subjects and how to maximize the use of a smart phone camera! Through social media we were able to reach not only the youth of Montmorency County but youth around the state as well!



Supporting Food and Agriculture



MSU Extension facilitates the growth of agriculture, Michigan's second largest industry. Locally, we help our farmers increase their efficiency and productivity through consultation and on-farm research conducted right here in Montmorency County. We also serve the agriculture industry by connecting our producers to MSU faculty and experts across the State to identify solutions to their production challenges. In addition to serving farmers, we also serve the sportsman, home gardeners, and the general population at large by providing consultation, expertise, and education in agriculture related ventures.

Northern Michigan has so much to offer in terms of its natural resources. Our counties are homes to beautiful woods and waters, as well as many acres of productive farmland. In addition to growing the food that feeds many families across our towns, our state, and our nation; our farms are also the livelihood of many families that call our counties home. Agriculture is an essential component of building and maintaining rural economies. As an organization, we work diligently to provide our local farms with up to date, useful information, and research that contributes to their growth, economic security, and environmental sustainability.

Farming in Northern Michigan poses challenges that are unique to our area. Because of these unique challenges and isolation from many agricultural services, MSU Extension works to bridge the gap between our farms, and other areas of agriculture that our farms compete with. One way we help our farms in this respect is through multiple on-farm research projects. These local research projects give our area producers management and crop variety data that is specific to our area. No two farms are alike, therefore providing this data on the local level helps our county's farmers to be more competitive and more profitable.

Supporting MSU Extension also gives our local producers increased access to information and expertise from faculty and specialists within Michigan State University's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In turn, faculty and specialists also receive insight into issues facing agriculture in our area, which can aid or steer their research, to our local benefit. We also work to inform our area producers and agribusiness professionals of current issues facing agriculture through multiple forms of communication including newsletters, press releases, grower meetings, field days, and web meetings. This helps our producers to be prepared for any production issues that can affect their farms.



Supporting Food and Agriculture



In addition to serving farmers, MSU Extension also serves our local community at large. We field many questions from homeowners, gardeners, landowners, and sportsmen regarding any issues they face in their lawns, gardens, orchards, and wildlife plantings. So far in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, over 111 of these questions were directly answered through our offices.

2019-2020 FY Highlights:

- 7 area on-farm research projects covering our most widely grown commodities as well as prospective commodities.
- 4 area field days, drawing 94 participants.
- 4 area producer meetings, drawing 39 participants.
- Participating producers reported a total economic impact of \$77,725 in our area in the form of increased revenue or cost savings as a result of local MSU Extension programming this fiscal year.
- Over 111 agricultural and landowner questions directly answered so far this fiscal year, impacting 147 individuals.



MSU Extension works to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets and advancing agriculture through applied research. Agriculture is now one of the fastest growing sectors of the Michigan economy.

MAKING THE MOST OF OUR NATURAL ASSETS

Connecting with our Lake Huron fisheries-past and present-for ecological, economic, and community values

Michigan Sea Grant Extension promotes research, education, and outreach to enhance responsible and sustainable use of our diverse Great Lakes resources. Through MSU Extension, Michigan Sea Grant works with Michigan citizens, industries, and coastal communities to encourage their use, benefits, and enjoyment of Great Lakes resources that positively influences our state's economy, environment and quality of life.

Of highlight:

Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops

Three virtual **Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops** webinars hosted online in April/May 2020 brought together over 418 anglers, charter captains, and others with fisheries researchers and managers from across Michigan. Participants gained better understanding of Lake Huron fisheries ecosystem changes, and connecting these stakeholders with information, research and management activities relating to Lake Huron and local communities. Workshop recordings are accessible online: <https://bit.ly/misgfish>



The Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative

(NEMIGLSI) is a place-based education network and partnership that:

- engages youth in Great Lakes and natural resource stewardship projects
- provides support for schools and educators
- facilitates school-community partnerships.



In 2019, 4,033 *Northeast Michigan youth* were engaged in hands-on learning through variety of Great Lakes and natural resource stewardship projects

supported through this NEMIGLSI partnerships; and 85 *educators from 26 schools* were supported through partnerships and sustained professional development facilitated by MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant.

Striving to support educators in times of uncertainty, the NEMIGLSI partnership and our Sea Grant Center for Great Lakes Literacy is currently supporting local schools and nearly 30 formal and non-formal educators participating virtually this summer in the Lake Huron Place Based Education Summer Teacher Institute. This course traditionally a 3-day in-person course has been adapted and now offered as an online, interactive. 'Go with the Flow' (learn at your own pace) course for educators.

Great Lakes Literacy Principles

#30 Summer Institute Coffee Hour, 6/...	Optional	Edited Jun 23
#29 Reflecting over Time (Exit Ticket) #3	Exit Ticket	Due Jun 30
#28 Resources to Connect to Great Lakes...	Do	Due Jun 30
#27 Relationship Building Assignment #3	Discussion	Due Jun 30
#26 Great Lakes Literacy 101	Do	Due Jun 30
#25 Great Lakes Literacy 101	Study	Due Jun 30
#24 This Week's Flow!	Watch	Due Jun 30
#23 Weekly Check-In #3	Check In	Due Jun 30

Place-Based Stewardship Education 101

#22 Summer Institute Happy Hour	Optional	Edited Jun 26
#21 Reflecting over Time (Exit Ticket) #2...	Exit Ticket	Due Jun 22
#20 Amplifying Youth Voice	Do	Due Jun 22
#19 Amplifying Youth Voice	Study	Due Jun 22
#18 Deepening the Impact of PBSE	Do	Due Jun 22
#17 Deepening the Impact of PBSE	Study	Due Jun 22
#16 Embracing PBSE Teaching & Learning...	Do	Due Jun 22
#15 Embracing PBSE Teaching & Learning...	Study	Due Jun 22
#14 Connecting With Your Community	Do	Due Jun 22
#13 Connecting With Your Community	Study	Due Jun 22

Nutrition Program Highlights

Hillman and Atlanta 2nd and 3rd graders completed the 6 week series Show Me Nutrition. Then both schools participated in a Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change. *Communicating Healthier Messages* is an initiative offered by Michigan State University (MSU) Extension aimed at promoting healthy messaging in the environment. There are a variety of ways to improve health messaging including hanging posters that promote taking the stairs, providing nutrition and physical activity newsletters, of having a nutritious tip on the morning announcements. Both schools were reading a tip of the day over announcements and hanging healthy message around the school. Well done!

Did you know that children and adolescents should get 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day (<http://www.choosemyplate.gov>)? Atlanta Elementary School 2nd graders were challenged by our Nutrition Instructor, Sandra Westover, to keep track of their daily physical activity. One student brought her log back to the last day of class. She had completed all 4 weeks of tracking. She proudly handed the completed log to me and said I could keep it. "I'd say this student is working hard at staying active and understands the importance of exercise" stated Westover.



Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program-education in Montmorency County served 254 residents in Jan-Dec. 2019.



Cooking Matters for Adults

In partnership with Thunderbay Health Services - We finished another round of Cooking Matters for Adults in Atlanta, Lewiston and Hillman. Word has gotten around that attending CM is well worth the time. Classes were held at the Atlanta Fire Station, the Lewiston Congregational Church, and Hillman United Methodist.

Success Stories

On the last day of class we asked "how did this course affect your life" and we received exciting feedback. One participant stated "It helped me get back on track with healthier choices and I've learned more ways to cook different things. I loved this course, it was well presented and the instructor was easy to follow and helped explain any questions I had. This class taught me that less is more!"

Nutrition Program Highlights



In total, six Cooking Matters for Adults classes were held in Montmorency County. The following represents the reported changes in behaviors from participants that completed the program:

Demographics

The program enrolled 22 *adult participants* over three classes (21 females, 1 chose not to respond). In total, 45% (10 of 22) participants were between the ages of 18-64 years old and 55% (12 of 22) were 65 years old or older. A majority of participants (95% or 21 of 22; 1 chose not to respond) identified as white and 73% of participants (16 of 22; 6 chose not to respond) identified as non-Hispanic/Latino.

Food Resource Management

53% of participants **planned meals in advance** more often (8 of 15)
40% of participants **compare prices when shopping** more often (6 of 15)
33% of participants reported **using a grocery list** when shopping more often (5 of 15)

Food Safety Practices

13% were less likely to **thaw frozen meat at room temperature** (2 of 15)
7% of participants improved **hand washing** behaviors (1 of 14)

Diet Quality

47% of participants reported an increase in **fruit** consumption (7 of 15)
47% of participants reported an increase in **vegetable** consumption (7 of 15)

Physical Activity

31% increased their participation in **moderate physical activity** (4 of 13)
33% of participants increased participation in **muscle-strengthening activities** (5 of 15)

Michigan Cottage Food Law

Keeping the public safe!



One of my very important jobs is educating restaurant managers and food service workers in serving food safely to the public. ServSafe is a national program that provides 8 or 16 hours of education in serving foods safely. At the end of each program there is an exam given to all participants. A 75% passing rate is required in order to receive the certificate. Montmorency County has many restaurants and food service areas that require one or more persons at each establishment to have passed the national exam and have a current certificate. This certificate has an expiration date that requires re-certification every five years.

This past year I was able to hold trainings in Hillman, Atlanta, Lewiston and Canada Creek Ranch. That equates to 8 establishments and 32 managers or food service workers educated in food safety. With 98% of participants that have taken the exam passing at 85% or higher score. The local Health Department has been a great partner when recruiting and promoting the need for food safety training.

There is also a 4-hour food safety training class that provides basic food safety education for food service workers that are not in the manager positions. This training can assist restaurant owners and managers to provide valuable and on-going education to anyone working in their establishment. If serving food is not taken seriously, many people can become very ill very quickly. Therefore, ServSafe training is important.



Cottage Foods creates a new business!

Our economy can always use a boost. One way that can happen is through local entrepreneurs. In the past year financial challenges have been faced by individuals that have begun a Cottage Food Business. This has become a popular request by local vendors at farm markets. This program serves two valuable purposes for vendors. They can add value to fruits that may be thrown out if they were not able to make them into a jam or jelly, correctly label the product and sell it at the market the following week. This expands the vendor's product base and keeps them from considering some fresh foods as unmarketable product. Many local vendors and some raising funds for future endeavors participated in practicing and following the rules within Michigan's Cottage Food Law.

Food Safety Program Highlights

Preserving food for future use!

This year food preservation was able to be taught to both youth and adult participants. Working together to learn and practice safe food preservation techniques. This year inexpensive methods were the focus such as; blanching and freezing. This is common for many however, blanching vegetables prior to freezing is not always practiced. Participants learned the importance of blanching including the science behind this method. They also learned the importance of using research-based recipes and the science behind all the changes that have occurred. Another favorite project was making freezer jam. They learned how much fresher it can be and easy to make. There was fun for all and tasty treats to enjoy.



Potlucks and Picnic's!

Community members have special events, like the Montmorency County 4-H Fair, that we all like to attend and participate in. Also local churches participate each year in trainings that are provided through the MSU Extension. This class is called "Cooking for Crowds". During this class community members come together to learn and practice safe methods to provide food through public gatherings and fundraisers. This year three classes were held for communities educating 25 volunteers in safe handling of food. Participants expressed their appreciation for the class through comments; "I had no idea bacteria grew so fast, thanks for the awareness", This was an informative class, thank you", and "Wow, there is a lot to know in food safety" and freezing. This is common for many however, blanching vegetables prior to freezing is not always practiced. Participants learned the importance of blanching including the science behind this method. They also learned the importance of using research-based recipes and the science behind all the changes that have occurred. Another favorite project was making freezer jam. They learned how much fresher it can be and easy to make. There was fun for all and tasty treats to enjoy.



Extension Professionals Serving Montmorency County

Staff Located in Montmorency County Office:

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Michelle Eagling	4-H Youth Mentor Coordinator	(989) 354-9878	eaglingm@msu.edu
Patricia Makins	Office Manager	(989) 785-8013	makinspa@msu.edu
Sandra Westover	Community Nutrition Instructor	(989) 731-0272	westov13@msu.edu

Additional MSU Extension Staff Serving Montmorency

Name	Role	Phone	Email
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