



Newaygo County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Almost 6,000 Newaygo County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



4,343 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



115 youth and adults participated in health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension helped 1045 community members with economic development, natural resources and local government education



1243 Newaygo County residents participated in SNAP education programs



279 Newaygo County residents participated in agricultural and gardening services



More than \$61,714 was spent with local businesses



\$4,740,648 total economic impact in Newaygo County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Newaygo County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses, and communities.



MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

This year, we've also welcomed Newaygo 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.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Newaygo county, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

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James Kelly, District Director

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MSU Extension District 5



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Program Highlights



Development of the Dragon Trail will further establish Newaygo county as a destination spot for eco-tourism.

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 regional economic development effort that will provide a truly unique hiking and mountain biking experience in North America with nearly 50 miles of looping trail on undeveloped lands along Hardy Dam, which is expected to provide an estimated \$3.2M direct economic impact, 100K+ annual visitors and 60+ new jobs into our local communities.



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

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 Newaygo County MSU Extension office provides assistance to many customers with basic home gardening concerns.



Financial management analysis helps farmers understand the best practices to operate successful farm businesses.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Farmers often struggle with economic decisions including tax planning, financial analysis of their farm operation, switching to alternate enterprises, and succession planning. MSU Extension provides help and training in those areas, including access to financial analysis software so farmers can make data driven decisions that lead to a more successful business operation. The Newaygo County MSU Extension office provides assistance to many farm owners across West Michigan.

Program Highlights

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. See the expanded article on page 4 for more details.



Newaygo County youth at National Conference in Washington, D.C.

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. In Newaygo County over 1200 residents participated in this programming.



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

GLOBAL & CULTURAL EDUCATION

Helping young people to explore and to appreciate what people around the world have in common and what makes them unique is critically important in society today. Michigan 4-H offers a variety of opportunities for kids and adults to learn more about our global community. In some cases, that perspective is gained through activities or projects that include art and letter writing. In Newaygo County 125 students were able to experience this programming first hand.



Fifth grade students at Grant Elementary school participate in Global and Cultural studies lead by MSU Extension.

Investing in Newaygo County Youth with 4-H

*According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University 4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2X** more likely to be civically active, and **2X** more likely to make healthier choices.*



In Newaygo County, we believe in the power of young people. By providing opportunities to learn and lead, 4-H helps youth become informed and engaged community members. While exploring new topics and activities in an experiential way, youth build the skills they need for life.

In 2018, Newaygo County 4-H had a total of 127 screened adult volunteers, 500 youth enrolled as 4-H club members and 2 youth who attended a national summer camp. In addition, 4,343 children or 66.7% of Newaygo County youth aged 5 to 19 took part in learning opportunities with MSU Extension. Essential skills youth develop while participating in 4-H include problem solving, decision making, leadership, resiliency and communication.

4-H is unique in that it offers experiences to young people who live in cities or rural areas by providing the opportunity to participate in community 4-H clubs, learning experiences in school classrooms, day and overnight camps and other special interest events. One example includes MSU 4-H Exploration Days, a pre-college program where over 2500 youth stay in MSU residence halls, take a variety of action packed classes and experience other aspects of a major university. In 2018, 26 youth from Newaygo County attended MSU 4-H Exploration Days.

“Exploration days was fun because I got to see a university and what it is like to stay there and attend classes. It makes me want to go to college.” - 4-H youth member

Beyond the excitement of learning something new through a project, youth have the opportunity to participate in leadership conferences, travel the world, become involved in their community through service, and meet new friends in a safe and comfortable setting. A young person's experiences in 4-H makes a difference for a lifetime by allowing them to grow and appreciate the importance of being a good citizen, strong leader and person of character.

Leaders also help youth achieve their personal goals and provide encouragement and a support system. The relationships built among adult volunteer leaders and youth also have lasting effects. From 4-H experiences, youth gain important leadership, citizenship and life skills that can be applied to daily living, used in their community, in future jobs or when they continue their education. Although it may be years

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