



Oceana County

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 2,000 Oceana County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



623 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



101 youth and adults participated in health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension helped 84 community members with economic development, natural resources and local government education



1,050 Oceana County residents stopped in to the office or called in for direct assistance.



1,202 Oceana County residents participated in agricultural and gardening services



More than \$61,081 was spent with local businesses



\$3,842,512 total economic impact in Oceana County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Once again I am delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Oceana 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.

Again this year, we've welcomed Oceana 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 Oceana 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.

James Kelly, District Director

Program Highlights



4-H members heading off to Lansing for Exploration Days at MSU.



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



Extension Educator, Dr. Ben Werling, visits the Asparagus Research station in Hart, MI.

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 Oceana County, we had 81 adult volunteers and 533 enrolled youth participating in 33 established 4-H clubs. One of the highlights of the year was taking 23 youth to Exploration Days to the three day event on the campus of MSU.

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 Oceana County MSU Extension office provides assistance to many customers with basic home gardening concerns. Additionally, 31 soil tests were completed for Oceana County residents in 2019.

RESEARCH STATION SUPPORT

In Oceana County, the MSU Extension supported asparagus research station is having a significant impact on the commercial viability of that commodity. Research centers and on-campus research facilities provide growers, natural resource managers, and commodity groups with critical information they need to remain viable and competitive in the global economy.

Program Highlights

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND LAND USE EDUCATION

MSU Extension provides accurate information on basic planning and zoning techniques, as well as current “best practices.” Classes address land use, community development, and environmental issues facing Michigan communities today. Extension educators assisted over 20 local officials in Oceana County by offering training in planning and project management, funding tools, budgeting, and record keeping.



Local Leadership groups discuss zoning and planning needs.

WATER RESOURCE EDUCATION

MSU Extension’s focus on lakes, streams, and watersheds brings together educators and researchers with local, state, regional, and federal agencies and stakeholder organizations to protect and promote the sustainable use of the state’s distinctive aquatic resources. In 2019, Oceana County projects included invasive species identification, herbicide research, shoreline preservation, and more.



Research on inland lakes in Oceana County provides data for statewide reports.

FARM BILL EDUCATION

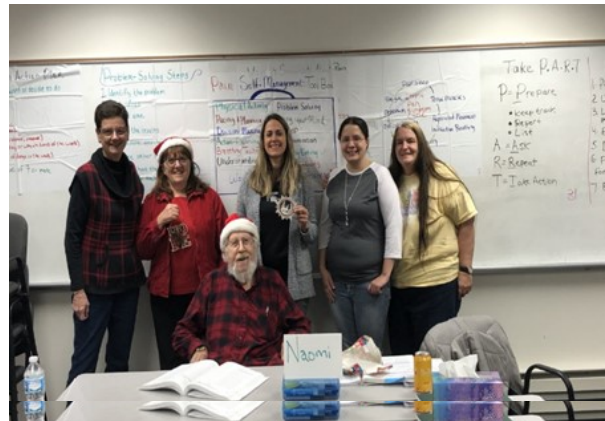
Multiple Oceana County farmers participated in various workshops designed to provide farmers with information to navigate 2018 Farm Bill programs. To help farmers navigate the best plan for their farm, Michigan State University Extension and the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) teamed up to offer meetings throughout Michigan.



Program Highlights

HEALTHY LIVING

MSU Extension helps people apply research to make positive changes in their lives. We empower individuals with the knowledge they need to make healthy choices. Programs such as the Matter of Balance program, taught at the Oceana Council on Aging Hart, MI, reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. Chronic Pain PATH (Personal Action Towards Health), held at the Oceana County Services building, introduces participants to various self-management tools which empower them to take an active role in managing their pain.



Chronic Pain PATH participants in Oceana County.

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.”

FARM CONSULTATIONS

Providing support to dairy and beef farms in Oceana County resulted in improved quality of livestock, savings on investment in feed, and time-saving efficiencies, all of which result in better financial performance. Other farm visits in Oceana County focused on succession planning with farm financial analysis, Farm Bill education sessions, and Farm Stress consultations.



Beef and dairy farms benefitted from consultation visits from MSU Extension educators

Agriculture



MSU Extension supports Oceana County agriculture by helping local farmers learn research based business and production practices, along with sharing how to optimize and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

This education leads to better use of time, money, and human capital, and helps retain and create agricultural jobs.

MSU Extension works to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets, and advancing agriculture through applied research. That work is evident on many levels in Oceana County through the efforts of in-County educators David Jones and Ben Werling, as well as through the support of other MSU Educators in surrounding counties that provide extensive support to the farming community.

From Tree Fruit School to supporting the Midwest Chestnut Producers, and from researching Fruit Tree disease resistance to managing disease and insect issues, the fruit and vegetable growers recognize the importance of a strong Extension presence in the area. In 2019, over 415 Oceana County residents participated in tree fruit/nut workshops and training series. The biggest of these interactions in Oceana County was the spring horticulture meeting, hosted in Shelby, and attended by over 100 fruit farmers from the area.



Drone demonstration in Hart, during Oceana research station tour.

Vegetable growers in Oceana County were supported by research tours that covered topics such as pesticide trials, the use of drone imagery, cultivation tools, sorting machinery, and controlled atmosphere storage. At Asparagus Day, growers were exposed to regional research results, market trends, and international trends as well as predictive spring emergence models. Overall, 437 Oceana residents participated in vegetable focused events in 2019.

All of the programming combined resulted in over 1,200 contacts with local farmers with impacts on farming practices and commodity gains valued in the millions of dollars.

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities, and businesses. For more than 100 years, MSU Extension has helped grow Michigan's economy by equipping Michigan residents with the information they need to do their jobs better, raise healthy and safe families, build their communities, and empower their children to dream of successful futures. For more information about the programs we offer please refer to the contact information below.

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