



Oceana County

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 2,100 Oceana County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



484 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



105 youth and adults participated in health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension helped 176 community members with economic development, natural resources and local government education



224 farmers subscribed to the MSU Extension West Michigan Veggie Notes



1405 Oceana County residents participated in agricultural and gardening services



More than \$119,757 was spent with local businesses



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

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I'm 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.

This year, we've also 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

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Program Highlights



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

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 86 adult volunteers and 305 youth enrolled. One of the highlights of the year was taking 16 youth to Exploration Days at MSU.



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



Actively researching fruit and vegetable crop issues is resulting in higher crop yields.

COMMERCIAL FRUIT & VEGETABLE CROPS

Operating the Tree Fruit Extension Lab out of the Oceana County office allows MSU Extension to bring in growers and local crop consultants for in-person consultations and diagnostics. The lab also allows MSU Extension to contribute data to the West Central region of the Apple Maturity Program. That resource is a key component of successful crop management decisions in Oceana County.

Program Highlights

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 4 county regional trail plan for Oceana, Lake, Newaygo and Mason Counties to enhance regional economic development. As a result, funding has been secured for an economic impact study through a partnership between the USDA's LEAD program and MSU's Center for Economic Analysis.



Helping organizations develop functional regional trail plans is just one of the many ways to strengthen communities.

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."

ANIMAL FARM EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Providing assistance to animal farmers to make sure they are in compliance with State and Federal regulations is a hallmark of cooperative extension services across the country. In Oceana County, we provided audit preparation workshops that included an audit overview, pig care and identification of pig issues, mortality management and timely euthanasia standards.



Learning to operate farms to meet audit requirements results in increased compliance and better resource management.

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.

Oceana County has multiple host sites for ongoing monitoring and trapping of the invasive spotted wing drosophila, a serious pest of sweet and tart cherries. The Oceana County sites included in this work are part of a larger network stretching across the West Central region that informs on-farm decision making for tree fruit farmers. With a grant from the Michigan Cherry Committee, Oceana County fruit farms hosted a 2018 field research project to reduce orchard suitability for spotted wing drosophila.

MSU Extension's Apple Maturity network includes multiple Oceana County fruit farms, providing weekly updates on the maturity status of 12+ varieties of apples from mid-August through the end of October, ensuring that area farmers are able to harvest each variety at peak maturity for maximum longevity and quality.

Farm visits to Oceana County were conducted each week since early May, providing information to growers who have requested diagnosis on declining trees and pest management information.

With research funds secured from the Michigan Tree Fruit Commission, processing peach farms from Oceana County participated in a widespread effort to determine if processing peaches need to be managed for spotted wing drosophila. Thanks in part to contributions from Oceana County growers, we now know that growers do not need to manage these fruits for this pest, reducing cost of production and pesticide use.

Farmers in Oceana County also participated in a "Project GREEN" (Generating Research and Extension to meet Economic and Environmental Needs) funded effort to categorize the status of resistance to a common commercially used antibiotic on their farms.



Roots of a sick tree that MSU Extension educator David Jones helped to diagnose earlier this year.

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