



# Ontonagon County 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## BY THE NUMBERS



3 Extension professionals based in the county, 50+ providing educational opportunities



\$555,553 total economic impact in Ontonagon County



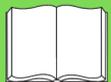
382 youth involved in 4-H, early childhood or after school enrichment



\$1,328 spending with local business



35 alumni (bachelor and graduate degree)



MSU disbursed \$282,225 in financial aid to county students

100+

MSU Extension serving Ontonagon County over 100 years

## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

During 2020, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension continued to partner with Ontonagon County to strengthen youth, families, businesses and communities. In this report, we will highlight local and statewide programs that made a difference in Ontonagon 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 Ontonagon County residents improve their lives, their work places and their communities. It is an honor and a privilege to serve Ontonagon County and we're looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Paul Putnam, District 1 Director



# ONTONAGON COUNTY

## **Additional MSU Extension Reach**

- Michigan State University Extension staff have been actively serving the residents of Ontonagon County.
- Services from across all reaches of Extension are accessible because of the Gold Standard commitment Ontonagon County has made with Michigan State University Extension.
- Ontonagon County residents are able to access services in the areas of Agriculture & Agribusiness; Children and Youth; Community, Food and Environment; and Health and Nutrition.

**640**

Ontonagon County Residents Served

**93**

# of Programs Ontonagon County Residents Attended



# ONTONAGON COUNTY

## MSU Extension Reach Breakdown

**93**

Programs Ontonagon County  
Residents Attended

**6**

Agriculture &  
Agribusiness  
Programs

**11**

Community, Food &  
Environment  
Programs

**317**

Children &  
Youth  
Programs

**306**

Health &  
Nutrition  
Programs

# Program Highlights

## **SPRING AND FALL BREEDING SOUNDNESS EXAMS**

Frank Wardynski, Extension Educator, coordinated spring breeding soundness exams on May 2 in Ontonagon County.

Eight producers from 3 farms had a total of 27 bulls tested.

Fall breeding soundness exams were coordinated on October 16. Three producers from two farms had a total of 18 bulls tested.



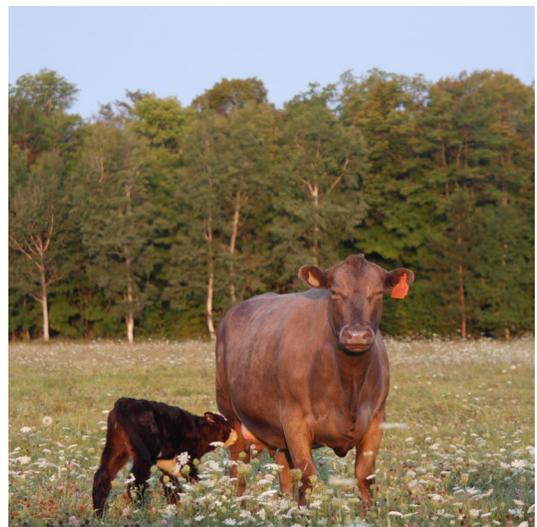
## **COPPER COUNTRY FARM BUREAU CONFERENCE CALL UPDATE**

Frank Wardynski met with Copper County Farm Bureau to discuss updates to Covid-19 programs available to farmers.

In particular, the Payroll Protection Program was discussed.

The group also talked about future plans for MSU Extension programming.

Frank Wardynski shared his plans to develop videos on a chute side beef and dairy health program which would replace an in-person program that had to be canceled because of the pandemic.



# Program Highlights

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## What has been happening in the SNAP-Ed program in Ontonagon County?

This past year has been a challenge with COVID. There are many reasons for this, however, MSU Extension SNAP-Ed program did not stop. In March 2020 all MSU staff were required to work from home during the pandemic. MSU Extension did an outstanding job training and preparing resources. This was an opportunity for us to make a difference in people's life and keep them safe.

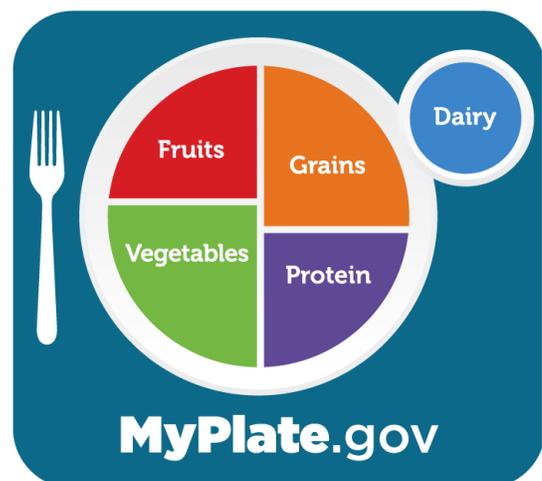
Through this year there have been many successes. The SNAP-Ed program provided school programs this year for Ontonagon County in the Ewen Trout Creek and Ontonagon Area Schools. I also had a new collaboration with the Gogebic Community Action Agency Head Start in Ontonagon this year. Each class would meet each week for 6-7 weeks and learn about My Plate, healthy snacking, vitamins, minerals, food safety and handwashing. Then we would spend time doing a physical activity each time. The students enjoyed it. I try to make it fun and engaging. We played nutrition jeopardy with older students. We use approved curriculum for each class.

For adult programs, I have promoted and provided training for Cooking for one Classes, Mindful Wellness for One, and Understanding Food Labels. Adults could join these classes free and they were offered via zoom.

I provided a monthly commodity recipe for the Gogebic Community Action Agency for Gogebic/Ontonagon Counties that receive the monthly commodity food boxes. I provided handouts and recipes for the St. Vincent De Paul Food Pantry customers.

Another committee that I am honored to be part of is the St Nicholas Project. Due to Covid, we mailed out gift cards to the families, children, and adults to their home. I heard many good things about this. I attend the Great Start Collaborative, Children Trust Fund and FEMA boards.

As we transition back into our offices, I will always be thankful for the outstanding job that MSU Extension did for me during tough times in our life. I look forward to face to face programming in Ontonagon County in 2021. Thank you for all your support and dedication to MSU Extension.



# Program Highlights

## 4-H

Ontonagon 4-H provided book walks several times this year in both Ontonagon and Ewen schools. 4-H PC, Paula Maloney, laminated and placed pages along a path and the playground for the youth to find and read. This activity was enjoyed by pre-schoolers through 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. The youth thoroughly enjoyed searching and discovering the pages hidden along the trail. Each youth received a copy of the book to read at home. Each book had a lesson involved such as the Berenstain Bears "How to Help with Chores." Literacy is so important and what a fun way to read a book in the great outdoors.

The 4th grade class in collaboration with 4-H and Art Teacher Betsy Guilbault, a long-time volunteer, were provided the opportunity to make the ever popular "gnomes." 4-H provided the materials while Betsy guided the youth on how to create the cute little friendly gnomes. With social distancing, 4-H had to become especially creative but success was accomplished when we worked together.

Easter chicks and bunny puppets were made by the little hands in the daycare centers and 1<sup>st</sup>/<sub>2</sub><sup>nd</sup> grades in both schools. Ontonagon County 4-H provided the materials for over 100 kits to make these cheery creations. All aged youth participated and this was another fun endeavor which allowed youth to express their individuality during the pandemic. Being creative was uplifting for many youth and allowed them to focus on a positive during the pandemic.



# Investing in Ontonagon County Youth with 4-H & MSU Extension

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.



Our main focus in 2020 was to provide community service to the Long Term Care facility in the Aspirus Ontonagon Hospital. Many youth enjoyed doing these projects and it included 4-H youth, preschoolers and an art class at the school. It was a great collaborative effort and one youth stated so proudly, ***"I love to make people happy!"*** He was a 1<sup>st</sup> grader so even the young members of our communities can become involved in caring for others. Our "4-H hands to larger service" certainly was accurate during the pandemic. Although it was difficult staying home and away from others, the best came out in the youth wanting to provide joy to others who were lonely.



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.

**ONTONAGON COUNTY MSU EXTENSION STAFF**

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