

See what's happening at Tollgate this month!



MSU Tollgate Farm October 2020



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Save the Date! Upcoming Events



MSU Tollgate Farm Needs Your Help!

Like many community organizations, MSU Tollgate relies on program and event revenue to make budget goals. With the

many cancellations in 2020, it is likely MSU Tollgate Farm will miss out on almost \$600,000 - 50% of our annual operating budget - in revenue generated from our programs and events. MSU Extension supports our efforts through state and federal funding, but even at the highest levels there is uncertainty about our financial future. We need your help to ensure that the farm continues to operate in 2020. Please consider donating to one of our four giving funds. Questions can be directed to Mike Mathis, MSU Tollgate Farm Director at mathismi@msu.edu.

Save the Date! Holiday Lights at the Farm

Celebrate the holidays with a cruise at farm! Guests will enjoy holiday light displays built by volunteers and businesses from the comfort of their cars. Add to the fun by pre-purchasing a cookie and cocoa to-go box for your cruise. \$10 a car, registration opens November 16th. All proceeds will support educational programming. Click [here](https://www.carr.msu.edu/tollgate/events/holiday-lights) for more details.



Local Businesses and Organizations: Help us Decorate Tollgate Farm!

We welcome community organizations, businesses, non-profits, and government

organizations to select a display location at the farm to decorate in a theme of their choosing.

Decorators provide all their own decorations, lights, artificial or live cut trees, extension cords, and any other supplies and will set up and take down their display in the designated time frame. Event and lead sponsors are able to decorate a large display area of the farm, place their own signage within the display, and be cited in extensive event marketing.

For more information see our [flyer](#) or visit our [website](#).

Individual and Family Decorators Needed for Holiday Lights at the Farm

Want to decorate a part of Tollgate Farm for the Holidays?

We welcome individuals, families, and volunteers to select

a display location at the farm to decorate in a theme of their choosing. This opportunity is FREE to participate in.

Decorators will provide all their own decorations, lawn decorations, lights, artificial or live cut trees, extension cords,



and any other supplies on their own. They will also be responsible for setting up and taking down their display in the designated timeframe. We ask all interested parties to complete an application so we have more information about your potential display. In your application, you will select your preferred decoration location on the farm by viewing the photos in the image gallery here. All participants must comply with the MSU Community Compact when on site for decorating and clean-up. Got questions? Please email Mike Mathis, MSU Tollgate Farm Director. We can't wait to see what all our wonderful volunteers create!



October Curb-side Farm Store is now open!

Would you like a beautiful pumpkin grown at Tollgate Farm? How about some Mums, Honey, or 4-H Goat Milk Soap? We have that and so much more

at our October Farm Store open Thursdays 3 - 6:30 PM, Fridays 12 - 4 PM, and Saturdays 10 - 12 PM. Online payment is preferred at the Farm Store but we will allow payment with exact change onsite. All proceeds will support educational programs.

Free Fall Virtual School Garden Education Series

Designed for formal and non-formal educators including school and community garden organizers, this series of four interactive, educational garden sessions will be held every other Wednesday through November 18, 2020 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.



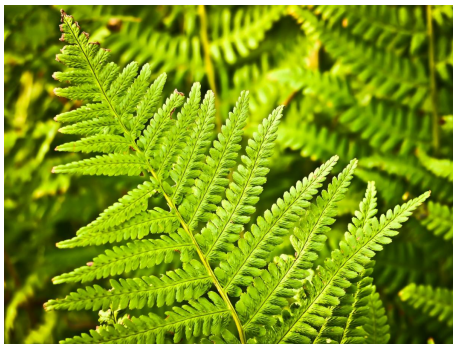
October 21, 2020: *Indigenous Gardening* - Nichole Biber, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa: Nichole has been an organic gardener for more than 20 years, is a mother of three, a public elementary school librarian, and an activist for environmental justice and a jingle dress dancer. Learn about Three Sisters, indigenous gardening methods and native

foodways in this engaging session.

November 4, 2020: *Interesting Plant Experiments that Engage Kids* - Dr. Norm Lownds, Director 4-H Children's Garden, MSU: Join Dr. Norm as he demonstrates how to involve students in fun experiments that connect them to important plant science concepts.

November 18, 2020: *Engaging Community Partners* -Parkview Elementary Second Grade Teaching Team: Learn how these teachers gained the involvement and support of significant local partners for their school garden.

[Register here.](#)



Virtual Evenings in the Garden

Evenings in the Garden places a focus on a wide range of gardening and environmental topics hosted by regional experts. These virtual sessions are held on Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

October 29

Angie Lucas - *Ferntastic!*: Learn some fascinating facts about ferns of the NW Lower Peninsula by joining us for a presentation by Angie Lucas, Senior Land Steward and botanist at the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, as she presents an overview of the native fern species found in the Grand Traverse region and how land protection and stewardship efforts benefits rare and declining species, as well as some identification tips and resources to use while exploring the northern forest and wetland trails of northwest lower Michigan. Additionally learn how GTRLC uses various tools like floristic quality assessments to prioritize restoration, protection and other nature preserve projects.

November 12

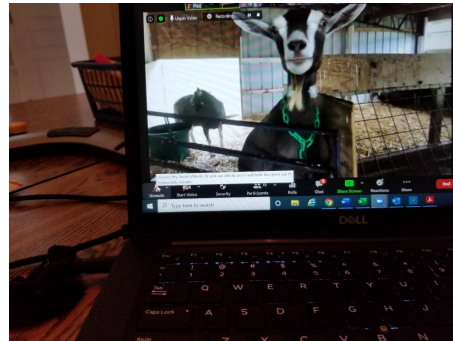
Will Jaquinde - *Integrative Pest Management for Home*

Gardens: Will Jaquinde, Tollgate's former Sustainable Agriculture Instructor and current Operations Specialist at Bowers School Farm, leads this session on pest management. You will learn how to identify common pest problems in your garden and determine the best control with the least harm to non-targeted species.

Register for these upcoming virtual sessions [here](#).

Learning Fresh From the Farm

Fall has proven to be an active season on the farm with well over 20 weekly virtual programs for area elementary students. A virtual classroom series with MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center is designed for students to explore natural resources and agriculture while learning about sustainability and the environment. Aligned with literacy, math, and Next Generation Science standards, programs utilize inquiry place-based learning and action projects. Life cycles and systems interdependency are revealed as students virtually visit the fields, forest, greenhouse, and farm animals to investigate science phenomena taking place on the farm. Virtual series with Tollgate Farm are scheduled September through early June. Series for 2021 will include Maple Sugaring, Sheep to Sweater, Plants and Their Partners, and Vet Science. Sustainable Agriculture and Soil Science programs can be tailored for high school students. A financial aid process is available. For questions or to tailor a program to meet your teaching goals, please email [Ellen Koehler](#). For more information or to register, click [here](#).



Join us for Goat Story Time on select Fridays!

Join us select Fridays on the farm (virtually of course!) from 4-5 PM to hangout with our doelings, read a beautiful story,



SELECT FRIDAYS IN SEP, OCT, NOV

Goat Story Time

Register on our website!

We aren't "kidding" around about how excited we are to have you!
-Ms. Sam, Ms. Sara, and all the goats

All ages welcome

\$10 a family

and learn about all our goat friends on the farm. Do you have a younger child in your family who has also been missing MSU Tollgate Farm? Well, our *kids* want to share some of their favorite books with your kids!

Find more information or register

Collaborative Teaching Support Network

Teachers, are you interested in exploring the potential for - and challenges to - incorporating experiential learning and outdoor education for students during this COVID-19 adapted school year? MSU Tollgate Farm and North Farm at the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center are partnering with Kellogg Biological Station to have a state-wide conversation about place-based outdoor teaching and learning. Please join us on November 9th from 4-5 PM! Register [here](#).



MSU Tollgate Farm Leadership Opportunities for Ages 15-19

Stewards Teen Leadership Steering Committee

Stewards ages 15-19 interested in serving on a steering committee for the Winter Virtual Stewards Series, please contact Ellen Koehler by November 10, 2020.

Stewards Sustainability Leadership Institute

The Stewards Sustainability Leadership Institute (SSLI) is a workforce development program that provides 15-19 year-

olds from Tollgate Farm a chance to gain career and workforce preparation in fields related to sustainability. Through a tiered mentorship model which includes professional adult volunteers, MSU Extension faculty, college students, and younger campers, the 4-H teen stewards will execute place-based capstone projects. The program will place an emphasis on improving the communities where participants live, gaining mastery in important career skills, serving others through mentorship, and being a leader at camp. This experience includes a virtual meetings January through April, a weeklong in depth training, campus visits, a wilderness trip (if in person programs are possible) and a leadership role in the Tollgate summer camp program. To indicate interest in SSLI, email Ellen Koehler.

Virtual Goat Experiences

Last time we checked goats can't use phones very well, but luckily our MSU Tollgate staff can! Want a personal goat encounter? Sign up for Goat to Meeting or Goat Shout Outs! Learn more about our new virtual goat experiences [here](#).



Helping kids become critical consumers of media calls for self-focus by adults

Janet Olsen, Michigan State University Extension - January 1, 2014

According to a 2010 study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, young people aged 8 to 18 spend more than 7.5 hours a day, seven days a week with various forms of media, including television, music, computers, video games, print and movies. When considering that young people often use more than one of these at a time, the study found that many youth are packing in 10 hours and 45 minutes of media use each day!

Given this amount of time, coupled with the sheer number of media messages and images involved, it's no surprise that many educators and researchers advocate the importance of helping kids become critical consumers of this media. This is particularly important when we consider how media messages can affect how we feel about ourselves, other people and the world around us.

It's way too common to think about these messages as "normal" and "just the way it is," making it incredibly hard for any of us (no matter what our age) to notice the unhealthy, toxic and destructive aspects of so many messages.

When helping young people build skills for analyzing, evaluating and responding to media messages, many experts stress the importance of adults doing their own self-focus and reflection related to these kinds of issues. This process of adults "doing their own work" is one that encourages us to examine our thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs and behaviors so that we're better positioned to work alongside young people to explore these issues. Asking yourself the following key questions can help guide and inform your conversations with kids:

- Am I willing to do my own work in order to understand what young people may be watching, reading and listening to? Am I willing to pay attention to thoughts and feelings that come up for me as I do this exploration?
- Am I trying to tell young people what the

This Month's 4-H Newsletter is Here!

Oakland County 4-H Connections is a monthly newsletter for 4-H members, families, and the general community with news and information about 4-H youth development activities in Oakland County.

October Newsletter

Holiday Donations needed!

We are getting in the holiday spirit here at MSU Tollgate Farm but we are asking for your help! Do you have bins or a garage filled with outdoor holiday decorations? Would you like your holiday gear to be used in a way that brings the community together during a troubling and isolating year? We are seeking holiday decorations donations for our Holiday Lights on the Farm Drive Thru event this winter!



Donations include, but are not limited to lights, extension cords, holiday displays, and generators. Please contact [Mike Mathis](#) to schedule a drop off or [click here](#) to learn more about the Holiday Lights on the Farm Event.



MSU Tollgate Educator Newsletter

Formal and non-formal educators, be sure to check out the MSU Tollgate Educator Newsletter with educational resources and articles on outdoor learning during covid times. Included is a link to an Extension-wide survey for teachers, school administrators, and support services. Read the newsletter [here](#).

Meet Our Staff & Volunteers!

Curious about everyone who works at MSU Tollgate Farm? Every Monday on our Facebook and Instagram we feature a staff member or volunteer. The last

month we have featured John Woodrich, a Maple Sugaring volunteer, Sara Mund, our Day Camp Coordinator, Susan Walters-Klenke, a 4-H Club volunteer, and Mike Mathis, MSU Tollgate Farm Director. Read more about these staff and volunteers [here](#).

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS



Susan Walters-Klenke



Interested in Volunteering at Tollgate?

We are grateful and appreciate our volunteers at MSU Tollgate Farm. We are now able to allow Extension Master Gardeners and Non-Extension Master

Gardener volunteers to return to the farm once they have completed our new volunteer selection process. If you would like to begin the steps to volunteer, please [visit our blog](#) for the full instructions. Please remember that we cannot allow volunteers to enter the farm until they are completed this process and have permission from our Farm Manager, Roy Prentice, or Education Coordinator, Ellen Koehler.

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center offers programs throughout the year designed to allow adults and children to experience learning hands-on, explore the joys of gardening and the natural world, appreciate and promote locally grown food, and build community.

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