

See what's happening at Tollgate this month!



MSU Tollgate Farm September 2020



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Save the Date! Upcoming Events



Tollgate programming and events during Coronavirus COVID-19

Michigan State University has made the decision to cancel or postpone all in person activities until further notice. This means

the farm will be closed to the public, but select volunteers have been given permission to work in the gardens on the farm. Although this may make it appear that Tollgate is now open to the public, we remain closed. If you are interested in volunteering at Tollgate, [see the article below](#) on instructions for steps to volunteer. We appreciate your help in keeping our staff and volunteers healthy and safe by not entering the farm during this time.

NEW! Virtual Series for Home-Based Learners

Registration is live for MSU Tollgate Farm's 2 new Fall weekly interactive virtual series.

The Secret Life of Trees (Grades K-2):

October 5, 12, 19, 26, &
November 2
11 a.m. EST

- Explore the secret life of trees as we investigate big ideas - how trees have unique and diverse life cycles and how they have amazing structures and functions that help them survive and grow. Do trees compete or cooperate as they use resources in their own environment to survive? Which trees grow at Tollgate Farm and why? How are they alike and different from the trees in the students yard, park, or schoolyard? Interact with MSU Tollgate Farm staff, visit the fields and gardens, engage in STEM challenges. Register [here](#).



Follow The Nutrient Trail (Grades 3-5):

October 8, 15, 22, 29 & November 5
3:30 p.m. EST

- How do plants and animals depend on their parts and on other living things to help them survive? Let's follow the nutrient trail of consumers, producers, and decomposers as we meet our goats, chickens, and red wiggler friends, the worms! Visiting the garden, greenhouse, orchard, and animal barn, students will investigate how plants depend on animals and insects for their survival and how the energy of the sun and nutrients travel through the nutrient cycle. Students interact with Tollgate Farm staff as they question, hypothesize, experiment, analyze data, conclude and question again through hands-on STEAM challenges. Register [here](#).

Financial aid process available. For more information on

these programs, visit our school and community programs page [here](#).



Learning Fresh From the Farm

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. Life cycles and system 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. Financial aid process is [available](#). For questions or to tailor a program to meet your teaching goals, please email [Ellen Koehler](#).

Sign up now for our Fall series:

- **The Secret Life of Trees** (Grades K-2) October 5, 12, 19, 26, & November 2: 10 a.m. EST
- **Follow the Nutrient Trail** (Grades 3-5) October 8, 15, 22, 29 & November 5: 1 p.m. EST

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Join us for Goat Story time on Fridays this September!

Join us in the barn via Zoom on Fridays at 4 PM in September to kick your weekend off with some quality time with our Toggenburg ladies. They will just be getting ready for their dinner, so it will be the perfect opportunity to



learn about what they eat, how they have dealt with this heat, how they spend their days on the farm and what fall means if you are a dairy goat. 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! So be sure to tune in to see what story our early learning team chooses to read to our baby goats.

Find more information or register [here](#).



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](#).

Coming Soon! Pumpkin Sales Starting September 28th!

Would you like a beautiful pumpkin grown at Tollgate Farm? We will have all sizes available for curb-side pick-up starting September 28th. Online payment is preferred at the Farm Store but we will allow payment with exact change onsite. All proceeds will support educational programs.



Evenings in the Garden presents: Race, Food, & Land in Detroit.

Across the United States Black farmers and Black communities face major barriers related to farmland acquisition and food sovereignty. These issues often

go unseen. MSU Extension and MSU Tollgate Farm is facilitating a three-part lecture series to investigate the past, present, and future of race relations in Detroit and how it has impacted land acquisition and food sovereignty. The last part of this series will be September 24th. During each session, a team of MSU Extension facilitators, will be joined by panelists from across the Detroit food systems landscape to share their lived and learned experiences. Registration fees, minus the cost of stipends for the panelists, will go toward initiatives that support the needs of Black/African-American farmers in Detroit. Individual sessions are \$10 each or \$25 for all three.

Pre-register for these Zoom sessions [here](#).

Each session is eligible for 2 hours of continuing education for Extension Master Gardeners.

If you would like to attend but are unable to contribute financially, scholarships are available for qualifying participants on a first come first served basis.

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 starting October 7 through November 18, 2020 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.



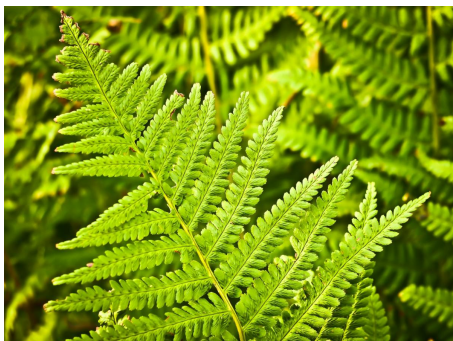
- **October 7, 2020:** *Seed Saving* by Ben Cohen, Small House Farm
 - Join author, seed farmer and founder of Michigan Seed Library Ben Cohen as he shares the importance of saving our garden seeds, sharing their stories, and giving the gift of seed to others. See how easy and rewarding it can be for gardeners and youth to collect and save seeds to create their own local seed bank. Learn the basics of this traditional skill and start saving seeds from your own gardens.

- **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

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

October 15

Jae Gerhart - *The Impacts of Covid-19 on Local Food Systems*: Washtenaw County Food Systems Coordinator, Jae Gerhart, explores the impacts of the coronavirus on local food systems - from production and processing to distribution, effecting the economy and health of the region.

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:* Tollgate's own Sustainable Agriculture Instructor Will Jaquinde 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.

Tollgate Farm Highlighted at the Michigan State Fair, LLC

Tollgate partnered with the Michigan State Fair, LLC to provide videos from the farm for their Virtual 2020 Fair. These videos included segments on vermicomposting, an egg dissection, a goat encounter, how to put your garden to bed, a farm tour, and a cooking demo with Chef Ken Miller from Toasted Oak.

You can still see the videos on the Michigan State Fair, LLC Facebook [here](#).



Fall CSA Registration Open!

Are you interested in a weekly supply of seasonal, sustainably

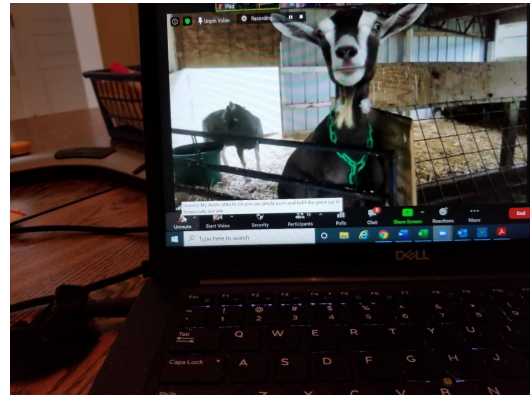


grown produce? Join us for our Fall CSA, which starts October 21st and runs for 10 weeks. Space is limited so please

email MSUE.TollgateCSA@campusad.msu.edu to check for availability before sending in the registration form and a check. Click [here](#) for more information or to register.

Virtual Learning Takes Shape At Tollgate: Experiential Learning in a Virtual World

How does the farm take experiential farm-based education into the world of remote learning? This summer, Tollgate's education staff ventured into the world of synchronous virtual programming with nearly one hundred campers to find out. Read more [here](#).



Want a look inside one of our virtual programs? Check out the Virtual Vet Science Blog with all the fun interactive activities and videos [here](#).



Congratulations to Tollgate Farm 4-H Club Members!

At this year's Michigan State Fair, LLC, Tollgate Farm 4-H Club members Aaron Hutka, Susanna Khanuk, Chloe LaBelle, and Rachel Siporin received urban farming

scholarships. Interested in joining the Tollgate 4-H Club? Check out their [facebook](#) and [website](#).

Get your Tollgate swag from our new Farm Store!

We still have limited T-shirt sizes available. Check out our new Farm Store for two t-shirt options, the one seen here and the 2020 camp t-shirt.

Visit the Farm Store [here](#).



Oakland County Youth & Families

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension September 2020

Back to school, back to the routine

Carrie Shrier and Michelle Neff, Michigan State University Extension - August 12, 2019

It's back to school time! As we approach this upcoming school year and students return to school in many different formats including virtual and in person, it is so important to give youth a routine. It is important to establish routine for things like having a mask and proper hygiene.

For many families, summer means a break from the routines and structures that the school year brings. Bedtimes slip later and later and children are sleeping in. Baths might not happen every night, and some of the chores are just going undone as you and your children enjoy the last warm days. With school starting, it's time to get back into the swing of a consistent and predictable routine for your children. Research shows that children with predictable routines at home have stronger social and emotional health. Michigan State University Extension recommends the following routines for school success.

- 1. Morning**
Set up your mornings for success. Have your children lay out their clothes the night before, right down to their shoes and socks in order to limit the morning confusion. Children should review their assignment notebooks, or discuss the next day with you as they pack their backpack before bed. Do they have gym the next day? Need lunch money or a library book? Take time to find all those things and pack bags before lights out.
- 2. After school**
Once children arrive back home, it's helpful for them to have the same expectation daily. Perhaps that means snack then homework before going outside to play. Or, maybe you let your children play for a little before settling in for their homework. Whatever works for your family is fine, but be consistent with your expectations of your children so they know what to expect. Have a quiet place for your children to do school work away from the distractions of siblings, television and other noise.
- 3. Bedtime**
Tame the bedtime battles with predictable bedtimes and bedtime routines. Turn off the TV and all electronics two hours before lights out to allow

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.

September Newsletter

Tollgate News & Announcements

MSU Tollgate Farm is featured in a newly published book, *The Sky Above and the Mud Below: Lessons from Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens*, by David Sobel

Brooke Larm, former Early Childhood Coordinator at the farm, wrote two case studies focused on Farm Sprouts, the

preschool program she founded and led from 2016-2020. These case studies are included in the book and were completed as a part of a fellowship funded by the George B. Storer Foundation to coincide with Brooke's graduate studies with Antioch University New England. They highlight the Farm Sprout program's efforts to support dual language learners, as well as the collaboration with the Tollgate's Sustainable Agriculture team. The book is intended to guide educators in utilizing the outdoors to support whole child development and includes research to illustrate the benefits of farm- and nature-based education.



MSU Tollgate Happenings for Teachers and Their Students This Fall

Check out our newest newsletter for educators with information on our newest programming and learning opportunities. Read the newsletter [here](#).

Check the Quilt Raffle History Compilation

The Tollgate Garden volunteers have been hosting a quilt raffle fund raiser for many years. Tollgate volunteer, Darretta Ferasin, has been a part of the Tollgate quilters who created quilts for our raffle for all of that



time. Darretta recently compiled images for all of the many beautiful work-of-art quilts that have been created through the years. Check out these amazing quilts [here](#).

MEET OUR STAFF



Darby Anderson:
Production Manager

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 Deanna Wagner, an Agricultural Laborer, Kari Heughens, our Event

Coordinator, organization, John Ross MacInnis, a maple sugaring volunteer, and Darby Anderson, the production manager for the sustainable agriculture program. Read more about these staff and volunteers [here](#).

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.

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center
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