



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

MSU Tollgate Farm April 2021

Check out our new MSU Tollgate Kid's Corner in the Opportunities and Spotlights!

Upcoming Events

- [MSU Learning From the Farm to You](#): From the Farm-to-School Virtual Programs Now Available
- [Virtual Sustainable Stewards Series for Ages 15-19](#): April 23rd and May 21st
- [Virtual Stewards Series](#): June 3: 4-5 PM
- [MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Series Sponsored by Bordine's](#): Second Saturdays 10 am through September 2021
- [Evenings in the Garden: Spring Sessions](#): April 29th, 2021
- [4-H Virtual Interactive Follow the Nutrient Trail \(Grades 3-5\)](#): weeklong from April 26-30
- [4-H Virtual Interactive Plants and Their Partners \(Grades 1-3\)](#): weeklong from May 3-7 OR weekly May 4-June 1
- [Goat Shouts Are Back!](#) All Year Long
- [In Person Summer Camp 2021: Complete the Survey](#)



A Sweet Start to our Virtual Programming this Spring: Maple Sugaring Michigan's Sweet Treat

During 2021, students have experienced fewer opportunities to experience place-based and outdoor learning. At MSU Tollgate Farm, we knew we could help teachers and families by providing students with an opportunity to connect with and learn from the farm.

Our staff have recreated school and community programs in an interactive virtual format bringing the farm to life for the learner in new ways. With MSU Tollgate Farm's remote learning adventures, students in their home or classroom have been able to explore agriculture and the natural world as they explore science phenomena happening on the farm. Replicating our in-person programs, inquiry learning is utilized through interactive sessions in which students are encouraged to share their ideas,

News & Announcements

- Updates from the Sustainable Agriculture Team
- Meet the Newest Addition to the Farm: Malcolm
- [April Oakland County 4-H Newsletter](#)

Opportunities & Spotlights

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[Tollgate?](#)

- [MSU Tollgate Kid's Corner April Goat Milking Activity](#)

draw, act things out, write, collect, categorize, and experiment. A blog with accompanying lessons, journal pages, extended the experience to provide deep authentic learning.

The History and Science of Maple Sugaring Adventure, one of many such series, brought experiential farm-based learning and social emotional connection to classes of 4th and 6th grade Hamtramck students at Dickenson East Elementary and students at Niji-Iro Japanese Immersion School in Livonia. Students explored the pivotal role of Native and Indigenous communities in maple sugaring now and in the past. Want to learn more about this program? Click the button below.

READ MORE

Upcoming Events



Thank You For Your Donations to the MSU Tollgate Farm Wheelchair Accessibility Initiative!

Thank you for all of your generous donations to the MSU Tollgate Farm Wheelchair Accessibility Initiative on Give Green Day. This initiative raised \$5,980, including \$1,000 from [Oakland County Farm Bureau](#) that will support installation of a permanent path to the MSU Tollgate animal barn. We are currently considering a number of options for maximizing the impact of the Give Green Day donations to improve accessibility at the farm. Improvements could include a wheelchair lift for our wagons, roll-able walk-ways, permanent pathways, or even a specialized accessible trailer. We are grateful for all these donations that will help make MSU Tollgate Farm accessible to more visitors in the future.

Interested in Volunteering at MSU Tollgate Farm?

We are grateful and appreciate our volunteers at MSU Tollgate Farm. Did you know in the month of March our volunteers logged 677.25 hours at the Farm? This included garden volunteers, sustainable agriculture volunteers, maple sugaring volunteers, and educational program volunteers. Would you like to volunteer at Tollgate? Check out the PowerPoint from our April 12 Volunteer Orientation with details on how to start the process to become a MSU Tollgate Volunteer. Question? Email [Carmen Hamilton](#).





Exploring Stewardship with Teens: For Ages 13-19: April 23, May 21

MSU Tollgate Farm is offering this **free** virtual Sustainable Stewards Series for those teens who want to explore how to be a strong environmental steward. Join peers and community partners for these panel discussions and Q&A to help you prepare for college and career and discover how sustainability will impact your future in meaningful ways.

Water World - April 23, 2021 4–5 p.m. EST – Erin Cassidy and members of Friends of the Rouge
Friends of the Rouge seek to restore, protect, and enhance the Rouge River Watershed through individual and community actions. Along with other teen leaders and Friends of the Rouge staff and volunteers, explore issues facing a local watershed and how you can make a difference in the health of your water.

Climate Science and YOU - May 21, 2021 4-5 p.m. EST - Lindsey Kemmerling, MSU PhD Candidate, MSU Kellogg Biological Station
What do you know about how climate change impacts you and how you impact climate change? Explore climate science and climate change with PhD candidate Lindsey Kemmerling and explore your own carbon footprint and engage in conversation about how you can make a difference.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Virtual Evenings in the Garden

Our popular Evenings in the Garden series is now virtual. These sessions are held on Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. All sessions will be held digitally. A video link will be sent prior to the session and a recording will be made available after the meeting.

April 29 - Dr. Wynne Wright, Associate Professor, Department of Community Sustainability at MSU - A New Way to Farm: Why is Lavender Farming Growing in Michigan?

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Learning Leadership Together June 3, 4-5 PM

All teens ages 13-19 are invited to join us for



our final spring virtual Tollgate steward/SIT training for music, fun, leadership development, and teambuilding at the All Steward/SIT Virtual Leadership Training June 3 at 4 PM.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Growing Fun: Vegetable Gardening With Kids: Saturday, May 8, 10 am

Join the MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Series and Dr. Norm Lowds, MSU 4-H Children's Garden Director, for some fun with vegetable gardening ideas. Explore how to put kids, vegetables, and the garden together. Connect to some of the vegetable theme gardens and plants in the Children's Gardens. Join us for an hour of veggio fun!

[REGISTER HERE](#)



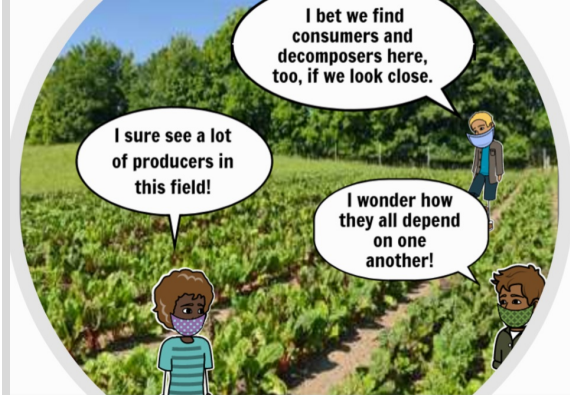
Learning Fresh from the Farm Sustainable Agriculture Programs for School and Home-Based Learners

This Spring, join us at Tollgate Farm for two virtual interactive farm-based series. Programs are guaranteed to be interactive, hands-on, educational, and of course, FUN! Standards-aligned and coupled with projects that allow learners to make a positive difference in their world, there's also a blog, videos, and follow-along journal pages. For teachers or homeschool group leaders who want to offer this opportunity for their students, email [Ellen Koehler](#). A financial aid process is [available](#).

MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H Follow the Nutrient Trail
Mon-Fri, April 26 - 30, 3:30 – 4:45 pm
Let's follow the nutrient trail of consumers, producers, and decomposers as we meet our goats, chickens, and red wiggler friends, the worms! Visit the garden, greenhouse, orchard, and animal barn to 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.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H Plants and Their Partners
Mon-Fri, May 3 - 7, 2 – 3 pm



Tuesdays, May 4 – June 1, 3:30 – 4:30 pm
How do plants grow and how do they depend on other living things? Students explore plant structure and function and what plants need to grow. Visit the garden, greenhouse, gardens, fields, and animal barn, students will carry out fun investigations on pollination, pollinators, seed dispersal. Through lots of STEM learning activities, students take a close look at where our food comes from as we explore ways we can make a difference in our world.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Goat Shout-Outs are Back!

Send a fun message to a loved one or friend for their special occasion with the help of the MSU Tollgate goat herd. Write a brief custom message and a staff member will craft a 30 second private video link from our goats to your recipient. Messages like, "Happy Birthday Jack. You are no longer a kid!" or "Congratulations on your graduation from doe and buck!", are a perfect way to share some love. Requests will be fulfilled within 7 business days and will be sent by email. All proceeds from the \$20 fee go to supporting the care of livestock at the farm.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



2021 Summer Camp Update: Hopeful to Host Camp at a Reduced Capacity

MSU Tollgate Farm is waiting for determination from campus regarding whether or not we will be able to host in-person camp this summer. While we remain hopeful, MSU Extension is currently accepting requests for in-person programs on a case by case and month by month basis. We will learn if we can host program for a specific month in the preceding month.

Despite this uncertainty, we are still offering this interest application as a way to gauge interest in our hopeful summer schedule. Given the rising numbers COVID-19 cases in the local area and the university approval process, we are planning to host all the camps listed in this survey at a reduced capacity. If summer camp programs are able to move to forward, pending approval to return to in-person programming from the University, we will give those who fill out this application early-bird access to our registration. Fill out your interest application with the button below.

Preparing for MSU Tollgate Farm Pumpkinfest: October 2-3, 2021

Are you interested in being a part of the 2021 Tollgate Farm Pumpkinfest volunteer team? We're excited to invite you to join a group of dedicated volunteers who help bring this fun fall community event to life. Our hope is that in-person programming is able to resume by fall with safety precautions in place. As more is known, the size and format of Pumpkinfest 2021 will be determined by university and state guidance related to Covid. Come for a shift, come for day or two, or join us to lead an area as key volunteer. Proceeds from Pumpkinfest help support educational programming at the farm. Join us to help make a difference! Extension Master Gardeners, be sure to sign up for select roles marked 'EMG credit' to qualify for volunteer hours. If you are not currently a volunteer at MSU Tollgate Farm and want to learn more about becoming one, check out the article at the top of the newsletter for information on the volunteer selection process.

SIGN UP NOW



News and Announcements



Updates from the Sustainable Agriculture Team

Spring is here and as always it is a busy time for the Sustainable Agriculture Program! Planting and preparations are already in full gear for the first CSA distribution of the season at the end of May. This time of year, we are busy planting cold tolerant crops out into the fields such as kale, collards, pac choi, head lettuce, kohlrabi, etc. Despite the warm spring we have had this year, we still adhere to May 4 being the annual last frost date. You never know what Michigan weather might throw at us!

Even if you cannot predict the weather, you can predict the emergence of the garlic! This garlic was planted in October 2020, started to emerge at the end of February, and has put on almost a foot of growth in the proceeding time. This patch will provide the CSA will green garlic

in May, scapes in June, garlic bulbs throughout the late summer and fall and the seed stock for the 2022 garlic patch!

Meet the Newest Addition to the Farm!

Please help us welcome our new herd side, Malcolm! Malcolm, a 75% Dorper ram, joins MSU Tollgate Farm from Willowcreek Farm in Webberville, MI. Dorpers are a hair breed originating in South Africa, and have all the qualities we are looking to infuse into our flock. They are hardy, good mothers, and VERY squat with incredible muscling. Malcom was born in February and is already around 75lbs! Malcolm's 25% non-dorper genetics means that while maintaining the "meaty" dorper quality, he has some extra height that will allow him to more easily breed our tall Suffolk-ewes. Malcolm is pictured here with our Interim Livestock Coordinator, Sam Stokes.



Oakland County
Youth & Families

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension April 2021

**MICHIGAN 4-H
VIRTUAL EMBRYOLOGY SERIES**

Kathleen George, Michigan State University
Extension - March 9, 2021

Michigan 4-H introduces virtual embryology series to support teachers and parents

New Michigan 4-H course can reach students in a variety of educational settings.

Spring is the time when nature "comes back to life" or new life begins. This means it is the perfect time to introduce youth to embryology, the study of the development of embryos. Michigan State University Extension is making this easier than ever before through their newly launched Michigan 4-H Embryology Course.

Whether you are a teacher or parent, experienced or not, this free online course has all the information you need to bring youth an in-depth, educational experience during the pandemic and beyond. The course contains a curriculum complete with background information, worksheets, videos and a space to ask questions. As an optional supplement, attendees may choose to incubate their own eggs as part of the course. Or individuals can simply use the course videos and worksheets to

demonstrate all things embryology, from the parts of an egg to caring for freshly hatched chicks and everything in-between.

The program is conveniently located on the D2L (Desire2Learn) platform, where teachers or parents can register and have access to the entire curriculum. By participating in this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the parts of an egg and their functions.
- Explain what is required to hatch an egg, how it hatches naturally and artificially.
- Describe different methods to observe a developing embryo and different stages of development.
- List what a chick needs to live and how to care for them.
- Explain how record keeping is important in science.

How to participate:
Learn more and register for the [Michigan 4-H Embryology Course](#). Registration is easy and classes or pods can be registered all at once. Youth do not need to be a 4-H'er to participate in this course. To learn more about Michigan 4-H, visit the [4-H website](#).

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.

[READ MORE](#)

Opportunities and Spotlights

MSU Tollgate Kid's Corner

Do you have kids at home looking for some fun hands-on seasonal activities? We have you covered! Each month we will feature a seasonal activity from the farm. Last month we had many new "kids" join us on the farm and we are now busy milking their mamas. Click below to see the video and follow along to practice milking at home!

[GET THE ACTIVITY](#)



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