



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY | Extension

MSU Tollgate Farm January 2021

Welcome to the New and Improved MSU Tollgate Newsletter!

Upcoming Events

- [4-H Virtual Vet Science Interactive Series for Grades 4-8](#): February 1-5, 2021
- [Now Hiring: Beginning Farm Apprentices for the Community Supported Agriculture Program](#)
- [MSU Extension Winter 2021 Virtual School Garden Sessions](#): February 3, 17, March 3, March 17, March 31, April 14, 2021
- [Collaborative Teacher Support Network](#): February 8th, March 8th
- [MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Series Sponsored by Bordine's](#): Second Saturdays 10 am, February – September 2021
- [Virtual Stewards Winter Series](#): Starting February 18th
- Evenings in the Garden: Winter & Spring Sessions: February 25th - April 2021
- [4-H Virtual Interactive Maple Sugaring Series for Grades 1-5](#): March 1-5
- [Goat Shouts Are Back!](#) All Year Long
- [Building Leaders: A Summer Leadership Adventure for Ages 13-19](#): Summer 2021
- [Steward Sustainability Leadership Institute for Ages 15-19](#): Winter-Summer 2021
- [In Person Summer Camp 2021: Complete the Survey](#)
- Specialty Camps: Winged Wonders, Vet Science, Outdoor Adventure: July 12-16, July 27-31 and August 16-20, 2021



MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center Has Virtual Programs for All Ages!

MSU Tollgate Farm has been working hard to meet our mission during COVID-19. One of the many ways we have adapted our programs is by creating virtual series for all ages. Like our in person programs, our virtual series allow participants to explore agriculture, the joys of gardening, and the natural world with research based curriculum and methods. This winter and spring we have Evenings in the Garden, the [Collaborative Teacher Network](#), and the [MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Series](#) for adults. For youth, we have [4-H Virtual Vet Science](#) and [4-H Maple Sugaring](#), along with programs for teens like our [Steward Sustainability Leadership](#)

News & Announcements

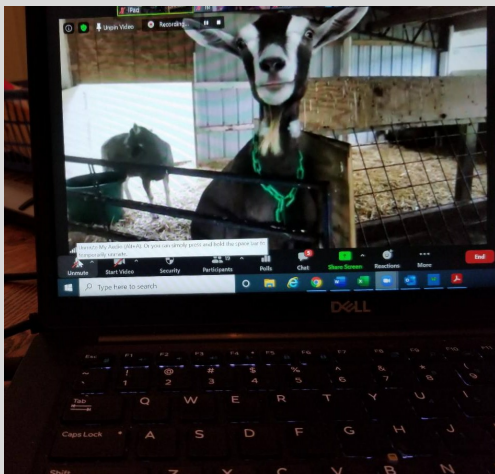
- [MSU Tollgate Virtual Farm School: Learning Fresh From the Farm](#)
- MSU Tollgate Farm Videos Featured on the Michigan Learning Channel on Detroit Public Television
- [Tollgate Farm 4-H Club Awarded a Micro-grant from the Livestock Conservancy](#)
- Community Supported Agriculture: Summer 2021 Registration Starts Soon!
- [January Oakland County 4-H Newsletter](#)

[Institute](#) and the [Virtual Steward Winter Series](#). For the whole family, we have [Goat Shout Outs](#) from our Toggenburg goats in the barn. The hope is that in-person programming is able to resume by summer 2021 with COVID-19 precautions in place but until then, we will continue to adapt and create new virtual offerings for our community.

Opportunities & Spotlights

- [Staff and Volunteer Spotlights January 2020](#)
- [Volunteer Opportunities](#)

Upcoming Events



Registration is now LIVE for Tollgate Farm's 4-H Virtual Vet Science Interactive Series for Grades 4-8, February 1- 5th

MSU Tollgate Farm Virtual Vet Science will bring a splash of color to the long winter ahead for kids in grades 4-8 as they connect with other animal lovers to explore the world of vet science. Spend time exploring the Tollgate barn and pastures virtually as you get to know how Tollgate cares for our livestock up close and personal. Share your animals with the group, explore the five freedoms, engage in STEM challenges, and learn about veterinary tools & technology. Interactive real time sessions with MSU Extension Animal Science educators, Tollgate Farm staff, and visiting vets complement investigations and activities.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Now Hiring: Beginning Farm Apprentices for the Community Supported Agriculture Program

We are happy to announce that we will be hosting our Beginner Farmer Apprenticeship Program this year! The 2021 season will be the 5th year the Apprenticeship Program has been hosted at Tollgate in conjunction with the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program. Apprentices are an essential part of our CSA

program as they help with all the day to day operations including transplanting, weeding, harvesting and processing the produce. The Apprenticeship is an intensive introduction into small-scale sustainable agriculture where participants can gain knowledge, skills and experience needed to begin their own operation. We mix the hands-on instruction in the field with more formal learning opportunities that will connect the hands on technical training to larger concepts necessary to understand the operation of a farm. We think that the textual formal learning opportunities make us stand out as a well-rounded apprenticeship program! More information about our Sustainable Agriculture program can be found [here](#).



JOB DESCRIPTION HERE



Join the Collaborative Teacher Network!

The Collaborative Teacher Network offers peer-to-peer support for educators at monthly meetings designed to refresh your mind, take you outdoors, and connect you with other teachers. Together, we share and learn ways to venture outdoors confidently, safely, and joyfully with children and use nature for teaching and learning in virtual and/or in person settings. Program is free and open to all Michigan-based educators and teachers. Focus is on K-12 but can be used with preK and college audiences, too.

February 8th: Using 5 Senses to Explore: Practice quiet observation to create a sound map, using words or pictures to describe your experience. Materials needed: paper, writing utensil, outdoor clothes and shoes, access to the outdoors.

REGISTER HERE

MSU Tollgate Farm is Excited to Welcome Bordine's as a Lead Sponsor of the MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Second Saturday Series

Join Tollgate and Extension educators from across the state for this virtual interactive series designed to encourage and support home vegetable gardeners. Our first session on February 13th Vegetable Gardening 101 will explore how to choose a site and garden layout, what crops grow best at different times of the year, and maintenance needs including watering and soil development. Even if you've been gardening for a while, this session can be a great refresher!

[REGISTER HERE](#)



MSU TOLLGATE FARM

HOMEGROWN GARDENING

A series designed for families and individuals to explore the joys of home vegetable gardening

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension



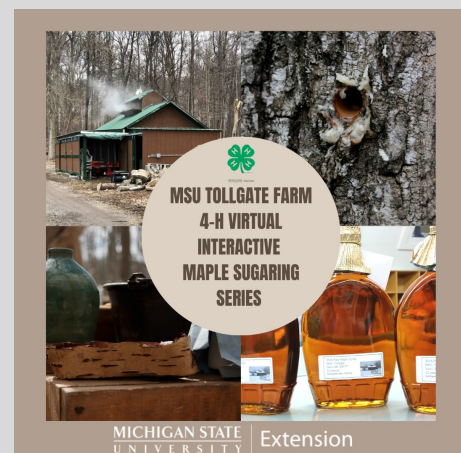
Growing in Community: A Virtual Stewards Winter Series

This winter, MSU Tollgate Farm is offering a virtual collaborative youth-led series for past, present, and future stewards and stewards-in-training ages 13-19. This is a safe place to connect and explore resiliency and growth as youth leaders during this time. Virtual sessions include a chance to relax, engage in peer-to-peer conversation, have fun team-building, and prepare for future leadership opportunities. Thursdays, 4 - 5 p.m. EST February 18, March 18, April 15, June 3, 2021. Register or learn more below.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Registration Now Open: 2021 Tollgate Farm 4-H Virtual Interactive Maple Sugaring Series: Grades 1-5: March 1-5

Join us for a maple sugaring adventure as we discover how maple sap becomes maple syrup. Explore the fascinating science and history of making maple syrup from sap as you virtually visit Tollgate Farm's sugarbush and sugar shack. You'll have a chance to explore how and why a tree produces sap in the first place, how to identify a maple tree, and how we tap maples for sap. Observe a modern day maple sugaring operation and explore the regional history of making this sweet treat by getting to know the history of the land, its peoples, and the tools. Be food scientists as together we explore



the science of sweetness and steam in your very own testing lab. Series is accompanied with journal pages and a special maple sugaring blog with extension activities. Choose between two sessions: 2 - 3 p.m. or 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. EST. \$40 for first student/\$25 for additional students.

[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](#)

Winter 2021 Virtual School Garden Education Sessions

Michigan State University Extension is offering a free Winter 2021 Virtual School Garden Education series for formal and informal educators including school and community garden organizers. This series of six interactive, educational garden sessions will be held every other Wednesday starting February 3, 2021 to April 14, 2021 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. By registering for the entire series, you will be able to attend each session using the same link. Please contact [Kristine Hahn](#) with any questions.



Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 4:00 pm: African Agriculture Influences with Shakara Tyler, Ph.D. who will discuss the many influences and contributions of African agriculture on the U.S. and the world. This presentation will be an inspiration and resource for educators for use in their classrooms.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Save the Dates: Virtual Evenings in the Garden Registration Coming Soon!

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.



February 25 - Ana Heck, Apiculture Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension: Getting started with beekeeping: Are you curious about what it takes to become a beekeeper? Learn about the many factors to consider before deciding if beekeeping is right for you. This presentation will cover the first steps for getting started with beekeeping, basic honey bee biology, and steps everyone can take to support pollinators.

April 15 - Dr. Bert Cregg, Professor of Horticulture and Forestry
Christmas Tree Production in Michigan: Michigan ranks third in the US in Christmas tree production and Christmas trees are grown in nearly every county in the state. Michigan's Christmas tree industry is diverse and ranges from small-scale choose-and-cut operations to some of the largest wholesale producers in the country. In this presentation, Dr. Bert Cregg, Professor of Horticulture and Forestry at Michigan State University and Christmas tree Extension Specialist, will discuss the current state of the Christmas tree industry in Michigan and the challenges that growers face in growing a conifer seedling to the 8'-tall Christmas tree in your living room.

April 29 - Dr. Wynne Wright, Associate Professor, Dept. of Community Sustainability "A New Way to Farm: Why is Lavender Farming Growing in Michigan?" Dr. Wright covers the growth and popularity of lavender farming in Michigan from an agro-sociological perspective. With personal experience as a lavender farmer herself, Dr. Wright includes guidance on how to get started growing and marketing the popular aromatic plant.

MSU Tollgate Farm Stewards Teen Leadership Program Calling all 13-19 year olds!

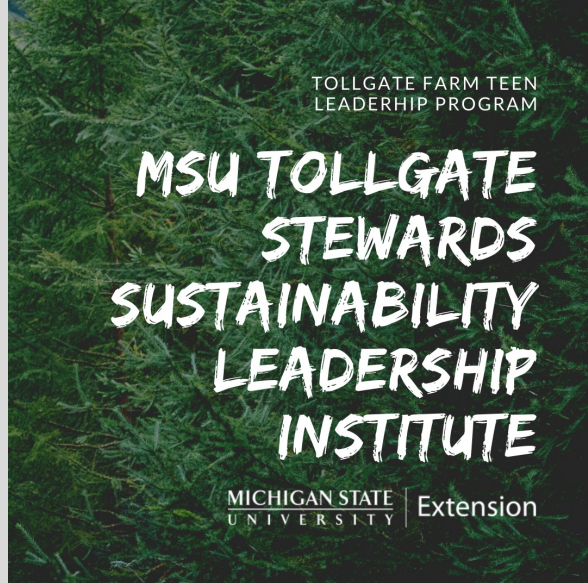
The MSU Tollgate Farm Stewards Teen Leadership Program offers teens a chance to mentor and lead at camp while gaining valuable leadership and life skills. Stewards-in-Training (13-14 years old) and Stewards (15-19 years old) assist the educational leaders and serve as role models for campers and peers. Fun adventures await teens as they make new friends while developing a deeper understanding of the farm and what it means to be a leader.



[RESERVE YOUR SPOT HERE](#)

Stewards Sustainability Leadership Institute for Ages 15-19

This fun and challenging leadership summit is the advanced level in the progressive Tollgate teen leadership programs. For ages 15-19 who love adventure, SSLI includes virtual sessions on sustainability, a multi-day outdoor



wilderness team-building experience, leadership roles at camp, a mentorship model, a certificate of completion, and a capstone sustainability action project. Take the next step in your Tollgate teen leadership experience in 2021! For more info, email [Ellen Koehler](mailto:Ellen.Koehler@msu.edu).

RESERVE YOUR SPOT HERE

Feeling Hopeful for In Person Summer Camp 2021

We are currently dreaming of hot summer days filled with kids exploring and learning outside at our farm. However, due to the pandemic and with still so much uncertainty, it is impossible for us to provide a definite plan of what 2021 summer programs will look like at our farm.

Despite this uncertainty, we want to offer this interest application as a way to gauge interest in our hopeful summer schedule. 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.

INTEREST APPLICATION



July 12-16, 2021

MSU Kellogg Bird Sanctuary
and
MSU Tollgate Farm

Winged Wonders Camp

Our Favorite Birds and Birding Stories







MSU TOLLGATE FARM
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension



Specialty Camps: Winged Wonders, Vet Science, Outdoor Adventure: Save the Dates!

Specialty camps at MSU Tollgate Farm are designed with the slightly older camper in mind and involve challenge and adventure as well as opportunities for leadership development. Young teens and pre-teens, be sure to mark the following dates for these adventures!

- Winged Wonders (ages 10-14), July 12-16
- Vet Science (ages 12-15), July 27-31
- Outdoor Adventure (ages 12-15), August 16-20

The hope is that in-person programming is able to resume by summer camp season 2021 with COVID-19 precautions in place. Programming format for spring/summer programs will be

News and Announcements

Virtual Farm School: MSU Tollgate Meeting the Mission in New Ways

Tollgate offers farm-to-student interactive virtual series for school and home-based learners. Fun, engaging STEAM experiences provide children with the opportunity to connect with one another and with educators to explore the living laboratory of the farm. Extended standards-aligned programs include an accompanying blog, journal pages, and videos recorded on the farm. Teachers may request these farm-to-school visits here. Financial aid process is [available](#). Questions? Email [Ellen Koehler](#).

RESERVE YOUR SPOT

Also check out these programs for home-based and after-school learners.

- 4-H Virtual Vet Science (Grades 4-8)
Feb. 1-5, 1 pm or 3:30 pm: [REGISTER NOW](#)
- 4-H Maple Sugaring (Grades 1-5)
March 1-5 2 pm or 3:30 pm: [REGISTER NOW](#)
- 4-H Follow the Nutrient Trail (Grades 3-5) April 25-29, 3:30 pm or weekly
Thursdays, April 8 – May 5:
Registration Coming Soon
- 4-H Powerful Plants and Their Partners (Grades 1-3), May 3-7, 1 pm or weekly
Tuesdays, May 4-June 1, 3:30 pm:
Registration Coming Soon

Registration coming soon for Follow the Nutrient Trail and Powerful Plants!



MSU Tollgate Farm Videos Featured on the Michigan Learning Channel on Detroit Public Television

This January, the new [Michigan Learning Channel](#) on [Detroit Public Television](#) began airing Tollgate Farm educational videos. The Michigan Learning Channel is a statewide public television partnership offering instructional content to support the education of students and to provide alternative resources for families and teachers. We are excited for our videos to be available to youth

Tollgate Farm 4-H Club Awarded a Micro-grant from the Livestock Conservancy

Tollgate Farm 4-H Club would like to thank [The Livestock Conservancy](#) for awarding a \$2000 youth micro-grant to the Club! This grant will enable the construction of an enclosure for our Heritage Breed Silver Appleyard ducks. These ducks are heavy weight birds and will be used for fair projects, education, eggs and meat. Thanks also to our Club President, Chloe Labelle, for working on and submitting the grant request, making this possible. We are planning to increase the size of our flock this spring. Construction of the "Duck Palace" is planned for April.



Tollgate Farm 4-H Members Learn About Lambing

The start of lambing season is the perfect backdrop for our youth members to learn about lambing. We have done a virtual walk through of the barn, learning about the changes made to support the new arrivals. These changes include the setup of a special pen, a jug, to give dam and lamb some personal space, encouraging bonding. We have also examined the contents of a "Kidding Kit" filled with all the necessities to attend to newborns and their mom. Naturally, the virtual visit included meeting the newly arrived ewe lambs. Interested in joining the Tollgate Farm 4-H Club? Learn more on their [Facebook](#) or their website below.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Community Supported Agriculture: Summer 2021 Registration Starts Soon!

Registration for the 2021 CSA will launch February 1st! [Email our Sustainable Agriculture Team](#) to be put on our contact list so that you are notified as soon as registration goes live. We can't wait to see all the tasty produce coming soon!



Oakland County
Youth & Families

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension
January 2021

YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT DAY

Civic Engagement and Leadership in 4-H

4-H Civic Engagement and Leadership

With the national spotlight on Washington DC and inauguration day this month, it is important to remember that our country's next leaders are right here in our communities. 4-H is committed to growing the next generation of leaders by giving them a platform to speak directly with today's decision makers at all different levels of government while learning important leadership skills.

For more than 100 years, 4-H has welcomed young people of all beliefs and backgrounds, giving kids a voice to express who they are and how they make their lives and communities better. 4-H gives a voice and provides opportunity for civic engagement and leadership to youth and provide experience with all levels of government.

Local Government

Next month the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, in partnership with Oakland County 4-H, will offer students from across the county an opportunity to discover how local government functions at its annual [Board of Commissioners Day](#).

This exciting program encourages students to learn about, engage with and participate in their local government - and maybe even consider a future career at Oakland County! Attendees have the opportunity to interact with Oakland County elected officials and judges and learn more about their role in the democratic process.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this school year's event will be hosted virtually on February 9, 2021. For more information, contact Sarah Moore at (248) 858-0255 or smoore@tolllgate.msui.edu.

State Government

Oakland County 4-H with the generous support of the Oakland County Farm Bureau provides high school age youth who wish to attend the [4-H Capital Experience](#).

4-H Capital Experience is an annual four-day conference that helps prepare youth for active citizenship by focusing on civic engagement and public policy. Up to 200 youth from around the state converge on Lansing, Michigan to experience state government in action and learn how they can influence policy issues that impact their communities.

Participants will:

- Understand the responsibilities of a citizen
- Explore different aspects of a policy issue that may affect individuals and communities
- Explore various careers in public policy
- Attend bill-writing session
- Have an in-depth meeting with someone in (or involved with) state government

Simulations and activities are incorporated to reinforce and apply what is learned about government. Youth leave the conference with the charge to share what they have learned and get involved with their community and civic engagement activities in their communities!

The 2021 Capital Experience date is TBD. If you want to learn more, you can check out this [link](#).

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

Staff and Volunteer Spotlights January 2020

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 Dawn Snook, an educational programs volunteer, Laura Steiner, a metal artist and volunteer, Dave Komraus, our area garden leader for the pond, Mindy Hitchcock, a Tollgate Children's Garden Volunteer, and Norbert Leppanen, an agricultural laborer.

READ MORE

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS



Dawn Snook



Interested in Volunteering at Tollgate?

We are grateful and appreciate our volunteers at MSU Tollgate Farm. Would you like to volunteer at Tollgate? Check out the steps to become part of the Tollgate volunteer team.

LEARN MORE

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