



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY | Extension

MSU Tollgate Farm July 2021

Upcoming Events

- [MSU Tollgate Farm to Table Livestock Luncheon](#): July 31st: 12-3 PM
- [MSU Tollgate Farm Grand Re-Opening Celebration](#): July 31: 2-8 PM
- [Openings for Campers 12-14: Vet Science Camp: July 26 - 30 & Outdoor Adventure Camp August 16-20](#)
- [MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Gardening Series Sponsored by Bordine's](#): Second Saturdays 10 am through September 2021
- [Volunteer Appreciation Picnic](#): August 21st: 12-3 PM
- [Pumpkinfest 2021: October 2-3: 11-5 PM](#)
- [Pumpkinfest 2021: Volunteer Sign Up](#)
- [Fall Farm Stand](#): October 9, 16, 23, 30, November 13, 20, December 4: 10 am – 3 pm
- [School to Farm Visits: In Person Visits Resume at MSU Tollgate Farm](#)
- Decorators Need For Holiday Lights at the Farm: December 16-20th
- [Goat Shouts Are Back!](#) All Year Long



MSU Tollgate Farm Farm to Table Livestock Luncheon: July 31st, 12-3 PM

Enjoy an afternoon outdoors on the farm with scenic hills and countryside practically unknown elsewhere in present-day Oakland County. This event is a fundraiser to support the livestock education taking place at MSU Tollgate.

Livestock play an important role in all MSU Tollgate programs - from camps, to school field trips, and the [Tollgate Farm 4-H Club](#). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been significant setbacks in delivering these programs. We need your support so we can continue these exceptional agriculture education efforts into 2022 and beyond.

The luncheon will feature:

- Hearty small dishes will be prepared by Chef De Cuisine of [Toasted Oak](#) and the Baronette Hotel Jesse Miller and [Chef Ken Miller](#) at Toasted Oak using MSU Tollgate raised meat and fresh produce.

News & Announcements

- [MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H Club has Record Year at Oakland County Fair](#)
- [MSU Tollgate Beginner Farmer Training Program](#)
- Eagle Scout Project: Insect Nesting Boxes

- [Who Has Been Playing in Our CSA Fields?](#)
- [Interested in Volunteering at Tollgate?](#)
- [July Oakland County 4-H Newsletter](#)

If you can't attend but would like to support the MSU Tollgate Farm, you can make a donation [here](#) or by mailing a check to Michigan State University:

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center
C/o Mike Mathis
28115 Meadowbrook Rd.
Novi, MI 48377

Opportunities & Spotlights

- [Meet our Staff and Volunteers July 2021](#)
- [MSU Tollgate Kid's Corner Make Your Own Butter and Yogurt Activity](#)
- [Rent MSU Tollgate Farm for Your Next Event](#)

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Upcoming Events



MSU Tollgate Farm Grand Re-Opening Celebration: July 31st: 2-8 PM

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center is re-opening to the public after being closed for more than a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Join us to celebrate at our family friendly event! Guests can enjoy live music, wagon rides, kids crafts, yard games, concession stand with ice cream, tours of the gardens, plus meet and greets with our goats, sheep, and horses. Pre-registration is required.

A concession stand will be available with hotdogs, ice cream, water, pop, and popcorn,. All proceeds will support the education programming taking place at the farm.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Spots Still Available for Vet Science Camp & Outdoor Adventure Camp

There are still a few openings for 12-14 year old campers in our Vet Science and Outdoor Adventure Camps:

VET SCIENCE CAMP July 26-30

Come explore the Tollgate animal barns as you experience lots of hands-on learning adventures related to the world of farm and domesticated animals. Learn about veterinary tools & technology and have the opportunity to explore various animal-related career fields with visiting vets and animal care specialists.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP August 16-20

Take survival camp to a whole new level and challenge yourself with exciting wilderness skill-



building experiences. Test your limits in the forest and fields of Tollgate as you develop a survival mindset. Try your hand at fire-building, wilderness first aid, outdoor cooking, shelter-building, climbing, and team-building trust initiatives.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)



Join the Fun at the 2021 MSU Tollgate Farm Pumpkinfest: October 2 and 3, 2021

With event features too many to count, the MSU Tollgate Pumpkinfest sponsored by Vibe Credit Union and Barton Malow offers a u-pick pumpkin patch, farm animals, wagon rides, games and activities, music, cider and donuts, a pumpkin trebuchet, harvest cooking demonstrations, and so much more. Gather friends and family and join us October 2nd and 3rd from 11 am – 5 pm. Come explore the importance of agriculture in our daily lives through lots of family fun! Proceeds benefit educational programming at the farm. Cost \$5 per person, 2 and under free.

[CHECK OUT OUR FLYER](#)

Come Join the Team! Be a Volunteer for Pumpkinfest

Pumpkinfest, our biggest fundraiser for educational programs, needs your help! We are looking for volunteers to help support our staff on October 2nd and 3rd. There are so many different supporting roles where Tollgate visitors would appreciate your help. For adults and youth 16 and older, we would like to invite you to consider volunteering in one of the many roles available for this event. Proceeds from Pumpkinfest help support educational programming on the site. Our financial aid fund helps provide scholarships for research-based programming for struggling schools and families. We hope to have you on board as part of the fun and excitement of Pumpkinfest 2021 and thank you in advance for your continued support of Tollgate and its programs!



[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic and Annual Meeting: August 21st from 12 -

Michigan State University Extension
Tollgate Farm and Education Center

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PICNIC

August 21, 2021
12PM - 3PM

[HTTPS://EVENTS.ANR.MSU.EDU/VOLUNTEERAPPRECIATION/](https://events.anr.msu.edu/volunteerappreciation/)

3 PM

The MSU Tollgate Farm staff would like to welcome any volunteers and community supporters from 2019, 2020, or 2021 to the farm for a free appreciation picnic. Staff will be grilling hotdogs, veggie burgers, and provide summer time favorite side dishes. Volunteers, both youth and adults, from the various work areas around the farm will be leading tours to show off their hard work. There will also be yard games and tractor rides. Significant others, family, children, or one non-family guest are welcome to accompany a farm volunteer. Registration is required so we can prepare the right amount of food.

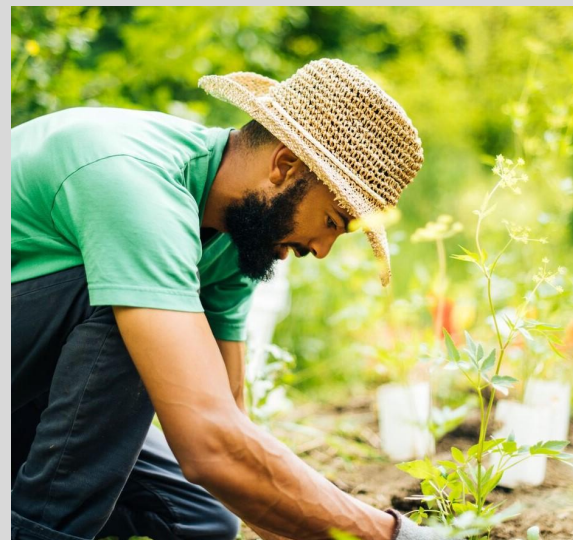
COVID-19 UPDATE: We are planning for an in-person program however, we continue to monitor the evolution of the pandemic and how this might impact the event. We will decide as to whether it is necessary to postpone or change the format of the event based on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recommendations/guidelines from MSU, the State of Michigan, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health departments. You will be contacted regarding any changes or updates through the email you use to register.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

August 14 - Companion Planting with Extension Educator Naim Edwards

Extension Educator Naim Edwards joins us to explore the value of companion planting. Naim will highlight the fundamentals of companion planting and show examples of common crops to grow together. Participants will leave with an understanding of why some plants grow well together and be able to determine how to apply companion planting in their garden.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Save the Dates! Fall Farm Stand:
October 9, 16, 23, 30, November
13, 20, December 4: 10 am – 3 pm

Join us on select weekends in October, November, and December for our Fall Farm Stand. Stock up on pumpkins, mums, seasonal produce, cider, donuts, holiday wreaths, 4-H Club products, and more! Check



out our Shopify website in September to see what will be offered at each Farm Stand date.

[VISIT THE FARM STORE](#)

School to Farm Visits: In Person Visits Resume at MSU Tollgate Farm

Explore big ideas and investigate phenomena with our programs designed for schools that are aligned with Next Generation Science Standards. Tollgate offers hands-on interactive learning opportunities in the historic farm setting where participants explore science phenomena while making important interdisciplinary connections to place and gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of natural resources and agriculture in their daily lives. Sign up now for your Fall 2021 visit. A Tollgate financial aid process is [available](#) for schools.



For more information email [Ellen Koehler](#).

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)



Decorators Needed for Holiday Lights on the Farm 2021: December 16-20th

The team at MSU Tollgate Farm would like to thank all of the people who decorated at last year's Holiday Lights at the Farm! This year we welcome individuals, families, friend groups, non-profits, businesses, etc. to create a lighted holiday display at the farm. Everyone is welcome to invite friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to decorate with them.

This year's Holiday Lights at the Farm is December 16-20th with set-up between December 10-14th. Decorators are responsible for taking down their displays from December 21st through January 1st.

If you are interested and would like to set up an appointment to come to the farm to see

the available spots for decorating, contact Kari Heughens at heughen3@msu.edu and she will be happy to assist you. We can also provide pictures of the many different locations for displays.

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](#)

News and Announcements



MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H Club has Record Year at Oakland County Fair

It is that time of year when across Michigan thousands of 4-H youth are taking their livestock projects to county fairs. This year feels particularly special after the COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to fairs in 2020. The [Tollgate Farm 4-H Club](#) has had a challenging 16 months like so many other youth programs. COVID-19 restrictions meant a stop to in-person club activities until June 2021 and no access to MSU Tollgate Farm. Unlike many youth living in rural areas on farms, the Tollgate 4-H Club's members from metro-Detroit communities, depend on access to MSU Tollgate Farm to work with their animals. However, due to strong youth and adult leadership, the Club members came prepared to the fair and exceeded expectations with a record year.

[READ MORE](#)

MSU Tollgate's Beginner Farmer Training Program

Every season, Tollgate's Sustainable Agriculture Program hosts a Beginner Farmer Training Program. We welcome those interested in getting a hands-on introduction to small-scale diversified vegetable production. Our Apprenticeship and CSA work in tandem to both offer a training facility for beginner farmers, and provide local produce and educational opportunities to our community. The Apprenticeship runs for 24 weeks from mid-May to the end of October. Through those 24 weeks, apprentices get to experience all the daily tasks of the operation such as seeding in the greenhouse, transplanting out in the field, harvesting, weeding and irrigating. In addition to just the hands-on learning out in the field, we dedicate time to talk more in depth about topics such as business planning, crop rotation, nutrient and water needs, as well as general decision making when running a farm. This year we welcomed Nicole, Patty and Jim to join our small but mighty crew for the season. They are all interested in taking their interest in agriculture to the next level and we are excited to be a part of their journey in agriculture!



[LEARN MORE](#)



Eagle Scout Project: Insect Nesting Boxes

BSA Eagle scout candidate, Matias Gazzarri, recently completed the field portion of his Eagle project at MSU Tollgate Farm. In normal years, Tollgate hosts four to eight Eagle projects per year. The work of scouts working toward their Eagle rank, along with their crew of volunteers, is a wonderful way of improving the Tollgate facilities and educational opportunities. Matias' project was unique in that, due to COVID restrictions, his work was conducted almost entirely off-site. Matias' project focused on the importance of mason bees as pollinators and on promoting ladybugs as an effective control measure for pest insects. Matias made a number of nesting and shelter structures for mason bees and ladybugs and also developed some great educational material. Thanks Matias!

Who Has Been Playing in Our CSA Fields?

There was a mystery in the MSU Tollgate CSA vegetable field recently. The fabric row covers were torn and some of the irrigation piping had been damaged, almost as if someone (or something!) had been playing



with it. A walk around the field revealed a gap under the back gate that looked like the probable entry point for the culprit. Lucky for us, we have a trail camera. Want to find out the perpetrator? Find out the whole story in the link below.

READ MORE



Saturday MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteer Work Days

Our group volunteer garden work days have resumed on Saturdays. Volunteers under the direction of an area garden leader maintain our wonderful gardens while enjoying the companionship of others and learning about the gardens' plants. A hot dog lunch is provided after the morning activity and of course more conversations on gardens. Interested in becoming a garden volunteer? Check out our volunteering page below.

LEARN MORE

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

Oakland County
Youth & Families

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY Extension July 2021

TAKE TIME TO EXPLORE
NATURE WITH YOUR
CHILDREN THIS SUMMER

Understand the importance of time outdoors for children by trying one—or all—of these outdoor experiences.

Children today are spending so little time outdoors that author Richard Louv established the term "nature-deficit disorder." Although no one will be formally diagnosed with this "disorder," it clearly describes the increasingly large separation between children and nature. Summer offers a wealth of opportunities to get outside and experience nature. Michigan State University Extension offers the following suggestions for family outdoor experiences.

- **Plan a camping trip.** Instead of heading to a hotel for a family summer vacation, consider camping. New to camping? You can find rental cabins or RV units to reduce the need to gather supplies. Leave the electronics at home and send children out to play, hike and bike at your campsite. Enjoy a bonfire under the stars. Take time to tell stories and share time together, unplugged.
- **Explore a park.** Michigan offers a wealth of county, state and national parks, many of which are free or low cost for local residents. Search for county parks near you at <http://www.michiganparksapp.com>. Find Michigan state parks [here](#). Visit <http://www.michiganparksapp.com> for a list of the national parks and landmarks in Michigan. Hike, bike, swim, picnic, camp and explore these beautiful locations with your family.
- **Visit a Great Lake.** Did you know that no point in Michigan is more than 85 miles from one of the Great Lakes? In fact, the name "Michigan" stems from an Ojibwa word for "large lake." The Great Lakes are the planet's largest bodies of freshwater. They are visible from the moon. How many Great Lakes have you visited? This summer plan a trip to one of our beautiful Great Lakes. Find dunes to hike, beaches to explore, shipwrecks to observe and lighthouses to climb. Learn more about our beautiful Great Lakes at michiganlakes.com.
- **Check out a lake or river.** Michigan has approximately 51,438 miles of river and 26,266 inland lakes greater than 1 acre in size. In fact, wherever you are in Michigan, you are no further than 6 miles from an inland lake! What lake is closest to you? What river? Visit "Michigan water facts" to learn more. Plan a visit to your local lake. Many state and local parks offer public beaches and rental canoes or kayaks. Don't forget life jackets!

Opportunities and Spotlights

Meet our Staff and Volunteers July 2021

Curious about everyone who works and volunteers at MSU Tollgate Farm? Every Monday on our Facebook and Instagram we feature a staff member or volunteer. The last month we featured Roy Hybl, a garden volunteer.

MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS

[READ MORE](#)

Roy Hybl

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. Hungry for some homemade butter? Follow these simple instructions to make your own butter. Add herbs and veggies to make it even more special.

[GET THE ACTIVITY](#)

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center
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<http://tollgate.msu.edu/>



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