



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY | Extension

MSU Tollgate Farm January 2022

Upcoming Events

- [MSU Dairy Store Cheese Still Available at MSU Tollgate Farm](#)
- [Wild Winter Break Camp](#): February 21-22nd: Registration Open!
- [S.T.E.A.M. Break Camp](#): March 28 - April 1: Registration Open!
- [2022 Tollgate Farm Camp Registration](#): Registration Open!
- [2022 Tollgate Specialty Camps: Winged Wonders, Vet Science, and Outdoor Adventure Camp](#): Registration Open!
- [Stewards Teen Leadership Program](#): Registration Open!
- [Steward Sustainability Leadership Institute](#): Registration Open!
- [Perspectives: Culturally-Responsive Place-Based Education Virtual Panel Discussion Series](#): First Thursdays of the Month: February 3rd: 6:30 - 8:30 PM
- [MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Vegetable Gardening Series 2022](#): First Session February 12th at 10 AM EST
- [Maplefest](#): March 5-6th: Registration Opens Monday!
- [Save the Dates: Evenings in the Garden Returns Spring 2022](#): Starting March 31st
- [Educational Programs for School and Community Groups 2022](#): Reserve your Visit Today!
- [Virtual Educational Programs for School and Community Groups 2022](#): Sign up Today!
- [Summer CSA Registration Starts](#) February 1st
- [Send a Goat Shouts](#): All Year



Tollgate Farm Welcomes the First 2022 Lambs

Lambing is underway once again at Tollgate Farm! Six of our ewes were bred at the end of summer 2021 and three of them have already delivered seven beautiful, healthy, and playful lambs. While we expect our other three ewes to deliver any day, we wanted to take this opportunity to share a bit about the lambing process as well as some cute photos of the babies who have already arrived.

A sheep's pregnancy lasts 5 months (152 days). And like in humans, nutrition is an incredibly important component of a healthy pregnancy for both mom and babies. Unlike humans, however, the bulk of the fetal development happens in the final month of pregnancy. That means expecting moms don't need any kind of adjustment to their diets for the first four months of pregnancy! In the final month, a helpful rule to consider is adding about 1 pound of grain per baby per day to mom's diet. Of course, this is a generalization as things like protein content of grain, breed of sheep, pre-existing comorbidities, and forage quality are also factors that affect this calculation. But, "a pound per baby," is a lot easier to say.

Long

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- [Join the Fun: Become a MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteer](#)
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- [Join our Team for an Unforgettable Summer](#)
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- [Rent MSU Tollgate Farm for Your Next Event](#)

As we reach a week before the target due date, it's time to start watching for signs of early labor. These range from behaviors like pawing at the ground to build a nest to cessation of eating. And sometimes mom will show no signs at all. But if she does show signs of early labor, those lambs will be delivered within the next 24 hours.

Once in labor, we farmers are only there to support mom. A normal presentation of labor will see mom deliver, clean, and encourage nursing of all of her lambs. And if we've done everything right up to this point, we have maximized the chance for each delivery to present as normal. But the transition from a pregnant ewe to a mothering ewe is never without risk. And that's why we're always standing by to step in and assist however mom needs us. Sometimes a lamb isn't in the correct posture to be born and needs to be adjusted. Other times a lamb may be born and not know it. This is called a dull lamb and that brand new baby is at great risk of many problems if we don't encourage it to call out to mom. But whatever the case, we're always ready to intervene.

Fortunately, we are 50% of the way through lambing this season and all three deliveries have been normal. Our Tollgate Farm 4-H Club has selected Celestial Bodies as the naming convention for our 2022 lambs. Here are our lambs so far: One of our Suffolk ewes named Poppy was the first mom to deliver, giving us a HUGE ram lamb named Titan and his twin sister Polaris. Tulip delivered second, giving us a beautiful set of Dorper twins: a ram lamb named Ganymede and a ewe lamb named Europa. And most recently was another Suffolk ewe named Bea who is our current over-achiever. Bea delivered triplets: a ram lamb named Sirius and his sisters Virgo and Callisto.

Want to see more photos of the lambs? Check out our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for updates and photos.

Upcoming Events

Another Successful Holiday Lights at the Farm

Thank you to all that attended our 2021 Holiday Lights at the Farm sponsored by [ITC](#). This year we saw 25 businesses, organizations, and families decorate the farm alongside the MSU Tollgate Farm Staff. From December 16-20th we had more than 1,000 cars cruise through the Farm to enjoy our Holiday Lights displays. All proceeds from this event will contribute directly to supporting the Farm's educational programming. This revenue makes programs like our farmer apprenticeships, gardening education, school programs,



4-H club, teen leadership programs, and camps possible. Even though Holiday Lights is over, you can still support the Farm by donating to one of our four giving funds. Thank you all for your continued support.

GIVE TO MSU TOLLGATE FARM

Wild Winter and S.T.E.A.M. Break Camps are Now Open!

Don't waste your school breaks staying inside-- join us outside as we embark on adventures learning and exploring with camp friends at the farm. A typical camp day will include making yummy and nutritious snacks, caring for our farm animals, sowing seeds, and investigating the natural world of field, forest, and pond. Our camps fill up quickly, so register early. [Financial aid available.](#)

Wild Winter Camp: Feb 21-22, 2022

S.T.E.A.M. Break Camp: March 28-April 1, 2022



REGISTER HERE



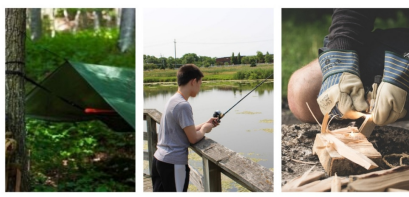
Summer Camp Registration is now OPEN!

Our farm and nature-based camps will provide your camper with a unique summer experience with opportunities for hands-on animal experience, cooking, and gardening. With eight weeks and fifteen themes to choose from, there is a camp suited for everyone. Learn something new; develop your horsemanship skills; be a citizen scientist; study water quality; milk a goat; catch a fish; paddle a canoe, and so much more. Our camps fill up quickly, so please register early!! [Financial aid available.](#)

REGISTER HERE

MSU Tollgate Farm Summer Specialty Camps: Register Now!

Sign up now for our specialty camps for the slightly



**MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H
Outdoor Adventure Camp**



**MSU Tollgate Farm 4-H
Vet Science Camp**



**MSU TOLLGATE FARM 4-H
WINGED WONDERS CAMP**

July 11-15, 2022

older campers ready to take on new challenges!
[Financial aid process available](#). Questions? Email Ellen Koehler at koehle43@msu.edu.

Winged Wonders Camp: July 11-14: Ages 10-13

For the first time since 2019, Tollgate will take summer camp on the road to Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners, MI. Through interactive hands-on learning, become an ornithologist and explore wild and domestic birds and their amazing feats as we hike fields and forests at Tollgate and the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. Gather Monday and Friday at Tollgate for farm-based birding adventures. As field scientists, travel by bus to camp out under the stars at KBS Tuesday-Thursday where you'll meet raptors up close and personal, make new friends, and have lots more fun! For ages 10-13. For a recap of our 2019 Winged Wonders Traveling Camp, check out our [blog](#).

Vet Science Camp: August 1-5: Ages 12-14

Learn about our farm animals up close and personal at Vet Science Camp August 1-5. Explore the worlds of veterinary science and animal medicine with veterinarians, vet students, and MSU Tollgate Farm staff. Investigate principles, tools, and technologies with lots of interactive STEAM learning and time spent with the Tollgate chickens, horses, ducks, sheep, cattle, rabbits, and goats. Our specialty camps are for the slightly older campers ready to take on new challenges, even a trip to campus to visit the campus barns! Solve case studies and experience diagnostic tests as you explore animal-focused careers and fields of study. At Tollgate Farm, learning about working with animals is lots of hands-on fun!

Outdoor Adventure Camp: August 15-19: Ages 12-14

Take survival camp to a whole new level and challenge yourself with exciting wilderness skill-building experiences. Outdoor Adventure Camp Aug 16-20 is for ages 12-14. 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, paddling, and team-building trust initiatives. Take a day trip to kayak and tube on the Huron River. Plus optional Thursday overnight campout on the farm!

REGISTER HERE

Registration is OPEN for the Tollgate Stewards Teen Leadership Program!

To be a steward means to take care of something or someone. Tollgate Farm stewards care for campers, the farm, the earth, and each other. The stewards program for ages 13-19 builds teens up as they develop resiliency and gain life and

leadership skills. Farm stewards form relationships, overcome challenges, and have fun while serving as mentors to campers and assistants to camp staff. What better way to spend part of the summer?

"I most look forward to spending time with the kids and making sure they have an enjoyable camp experience because I remember how much I loved Tollgate when I was a camper!" - Tollgate steward

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Maplefest March 5th-6th, 2022: Registration Coming Soon!

How does sap become maple syrup? What temperatures are needed to make the sap flow? How do you tap a tree? Join us on March 5th and 6th for an exploration of Michigan's sweetest winter crop, maple syrup! This family-friendly event begins with a wagon tour out to the Sugar Bush where you will tour the Sugar Shack, learn how to tap a tree, explore the history of maple tapping and so much more! We'll have our concession stand open with sweet maple-themed treats and warm beverages! Maplefest celebrates the science, history, and hard work that goes into each pour of maple syrup, and we cannot wait for you to come to learn with us! Registration opens on Monday, 1/24/2022 and you can find it on the button below. If any attempts at early registration are met with an error message, please check back on Monday.

[REGISTRATION OPENS 1/24](#)

**Teens Taking Action:
Tollgate Stewards Sustainability
Leadership Institute**

SSLI, or the Stewards Sustainability Leadership Institute, is a leadership experience for teens ages 13-19 who love adventure and who want to make a positive difference in their environment. SSLI provides meaningful, life changing learning that includes research, community engagement, action, and fun as teen stewards make important connections between agriculture, the environment, and their daily lives. Interested in learning how you can support their efforts? Email Ellen Koehler at koehle43@msu.edu.



MSU Dairy Store Cheese Still Available!

Looking for something delicious to get you through the cold January days? Buy a box of MSU Dairy Store Cheese from the MSU Tollgate Farm Store. The 2021 MSU Dairy cheese gift box features three classic favorites. Each box contains a ½ lb block of MSU made cheddar, sharp cheddar and grass-fed white cheddar (1 ½ lb total). All proceeds will support the replanting of the MSU Tollgate Farm Rose Garden.

[VISIT THE FARM STORE](#)

MSU Tollgate Farm HomeGrown Vegetable Gardening Series 2022: Second Saturdays, 10 AM: Starting February 12th

Did you know every teaspoon of soil is home to billions of microorganisms and all of them play an essential role in your soil's health? We are so excited to announce that the MSU Tollgate 2022 HomeGrown Gardening series kicks off with a session called **Healthy Soils for the Backyard Vegetable Garden**. Join MSU Tollgate's Sustainable Agriculture Instructor Darby Anderson as we explore the inner workings of what goes into healthy soil. Together we will dig deep into the soil as an ecosystem, soil testing, organic matter, cover crops, mulch, and more! Register for one or more sessions using the button below. Recordings of sessions will be sent to registrants.



[REGISTER HERE](#)



Perspectives: Culturally Responsive Place-based Education Series: Next Session on February 3rd from 6:30 - 8:30 PM EST

Formal and non-formal educators are invited to join us for this virtual panel discussion series to explore ways to better incorporate the perspectives of the many communities we serve. Educators will have a chance to deepen their teaching practice in an online space for open conversation and community.

February 3: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. EST Disability and Place-Based Education in and Beyond the Classroom

What does place-based education and outdoor education look like for disability communities? How can all educators better incorporate these perspectives into our teaching? Join us for a panel discussion moderated by Miriam Furlan Brighente, PhD, Doctoral student in Educational Studies at Eastern Michigan University and Program Associate at [Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition \(SEMIS\)](#), with panelists Mark and Deb Prentiss co-founders of [Rising Stars Academy Post Secondary](#), Jason DeCamillis, a doctoral candidate at Eastern Michigan University and teacher consultant at Washtenaw ISD, Patrick Smith, Director of Camping at [North Star Reach](#), and Diondra Straiton, a doctoral student in clinical psychology at MSU.

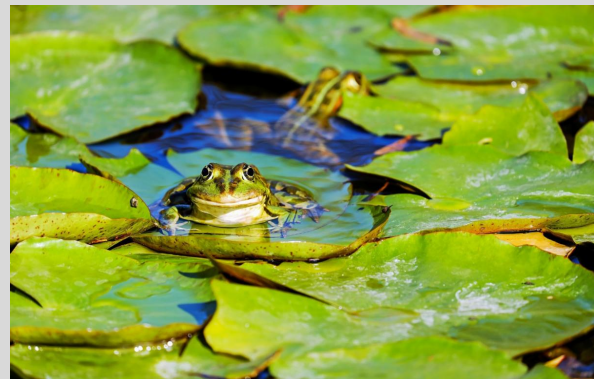
Register for one or more sessions. Recorded sessions are available to registrants. SCECHS are available for teachers. Fees help cover costs and provide stipends for panelists. Group discounts are available for 10 or more.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Save the Dates: Evenings in the Garden Returns Spring 2022

Stayed tuned this February for the registration for Evenings in the Garden, our lecture series on a wide range of gardening and environmental topics hosted by regional experts. Sessions take place on Thursdays, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. on Zoom.

March 31: *Dr. Nate Walton, MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Educator*
Smart Gardening to Keep Pests Manageable
April 14: *Alexander Ball, owner/farm manager of Old City Acres*



LEARN MORE



MSU Tollgate Farm Visits 2022: Educational Programs for School and Community Groups

Designed for diverse audiences and a variety of ages, school and community programs at MSU Tollgate Farm are interactive, educational, and fun. Aligned with education standards, our outdoor farm visits allow visitors to get to know life on the farm up close and personal. Students use the process of science to investigate phenomena taking place as they make connections to classroom learning. Opportunities exist for place-based action projects that encourage learners to make a positive difference in their world. To learn more about MSU Tollgate Farm visits or schedule an in-person farm visit for your class or group, click the button below or email Ellen Koehler at koehle43@msu.edu.

SCHEDULE YOUR FARM VISIT

Interested in one of our virtual Learning Fresh from the Farm series for your class? Select program series are available in weeklong or weekly virtual formats.

SCHEDULE A VIRTUAL PROGRAM

Tollgate strives to provide opportunities for youth and adults of all income levels and welcomes all participants to experience farm-based experiential learning. The goal of the Tollgate financial aid process is to provide as many youth and adults as possible the opportunity to enrich learning and broaden their experiences. To learn more about how to apply for financial aid, [visit the Tollgate financial aid webpage](#).

Save the Date: Summer CSA Registration Coming Soon

On February 1st, registration will be open for the 2022 Summer CSA! The Summer Community Supported

Agriculture program is a weekly produce share from May 25th to October 5th. Every Wednesday members share in the seasonal bounty of fresh produce. More information and registration details can be found in the link below.

[LEARN MORE](#)

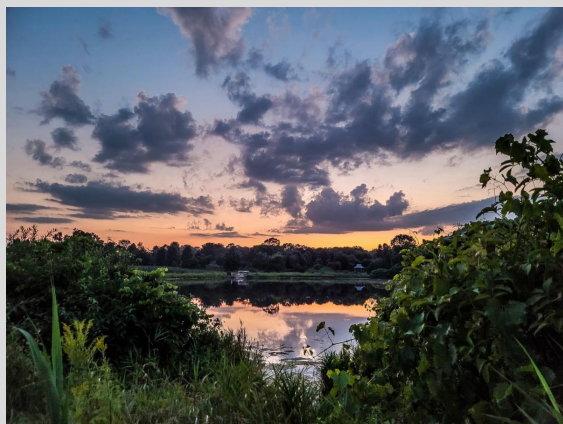


Have you Herd? Goat Shout-Outs are the Perfect Way to Send A Special Message

Looking for a unique way to send a message to a friend or family member? Let the the MSU Tollgate goat herd help you out. 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 "Congrats on your promotion, you are the GOAT!" 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



What is Tollgate Financial Aid and Who Can Apply?

Tollgate strives to provide opportunities for youth and adults of all income levels and welcomes a broad cross-section of participants to experience farm-based experiential learning. The goal of the financial aid committee is to provide as many youth and adults as possible with the opportunity to enrich learning and broaden their experiences. Funding is limited and applications are reviewed based on the needs of the participants, potential impact on their learning, cost of the program, and potential for meaningful collaboration. To apply for financial aid or learn more about the process, visit the financial aid page with the button below.

Tollgate Farm 4-H Club is Looking Forward to 2022 Activities!

Tollgate Farm 4-H Club is off to a busy start in 2022 with the birth of (so far) 7 lambs. We are anticipating that a few of these new arrivals will be shown at the Oakland County and Michigan State fairs this summer. In the meantime, all hands on deck to help socialize the lambs. In between chore times, the club has been soap making and working on seed art.

Next we plan to prepare for our annual distribution of seed packets to school and community gardens. We have collected over 2,500 packets of seeds to give away and are looking forward to hearing about the flowers, vegetables and herbs grown in the community from these seeds. Birthing season has also just begun. We anticipate goat kids in March as well as chicks and ducklings in the spring. There is much to look forward to at Tollgate Farm!

Interested in joining the Tollgate 4-H Club?
Find more information on their website below.



LEARN MORE

Oakland County
Youth & Families

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

January 2022

NEW YEAR

GOAL
PLAN
ACTION

SMART goals make great resolutions all year by Laura Rhoten

Many people use New Year's resolutions to better themselves and their lives. Goals can also be set at any time in the year to work towards a life improvement.

How many times have you set a New Year's resolution or a life goal only to feel like you were not able to achieve it? To help you be more successful this year, start with a [solid goal-setting plan](https://oakcountymichigan.org/goal-setting.pdf).

A study at Dominican University of California found that more than 70 percent of the participants who spent weekly updates to a friend reported successful goal achievement (completely accomplished their goal or were more than half way there) compared to 30 percent of those who kept their goals to themselves without writing them down. Writing down your goals and sharing them with someone else matters.

In addition, your written New Year's resolution or life goal should be SMART to be successful. Michigan State University Extension can help you make those goals SMART, an acronym that stands for:

- **Specific:** What exactly needs to be accomplished? Who else might be involved? Where will this take place? Why do I want to accomplish this?
- **Measurable:** How will I know if I have succeeded? How many steps will it take to achieve this?
- **Attainable:** Do I have the resources I need to make this happen? Is this goal realistic (not too easy, not too hard for me to accomplish)? Will the steps I have planned help me reach my goal?
- **Relevant:** Can I commit to this goal? Will I not be able to reach another goal or do something else I want to do because I am working towards this goal?
- **Time-bound:** When is the deadline? When do I need to take action?

Take time to answer each of these questions as you create your goal. Using the SMART goal process can help you decide if the goal is a good fit for you as it is, or if you need to modify it to be successful. It is often best to start with the time-bound, specific and measurable and then revise them for being attainable and relevant.

As an example of a goal that isn't quite SMART would be:

- **Measurable:** "I want to take a trip to Europe next October for my birthday." The goal, after being put through the SMART process by an individual, might look like this:
- **Specific:** "I want to take a two-week trip to Ireland with my sister for my birthday in October of next year."
- **Measurable:** "I need to save \$4,000 to cover flight

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

Japanese Outreach Initiative: Host Families Needed for MSU Tollgate Farm Japanese Coordinator

MSU Tollgate Farm is excited to announce we are being considered to host a Japanese Coordinator from the Japan Outreach Initiative. The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) and Laurasian Institution designed the Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) as a grassroots opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of Japan by sending Japanese Coordinators to conduct community outreach activities about Japan in the Midwest and Southern regions of the U.S.



Now MSU Tollgate needs your help to find a host family for an adult Japanese Coordinator. Host families would provide housing and assist the individual in transitioning to life in U.S. A \$500 stipend is available to defray utilities and housing costs. The JOI program covers the cost of a car, insurance, and living expenses for the coordinator. Japanese language proficiency is not required. Commitment length is flexible, but preferably 6-months or 1 year. Multiple host families will be needed for the coordinator during their 2 years at Tollgate. Become a host family and create a bond that spans continents!

Interested? Learn more about the JOI program below or contact MSU Tollgate Farm Director, [Mike Mathis](#).

LEARN MORE



Join the Fun: Become a MSU Tollgate Garden Volunteer

Are you a Master Gardener or a home gardener who wants to expand your experiences and knowledge? MSU Tollgate Gardens are the perfect place for you. Here is the opportunity to continue your education by working with seasoned gardeners. These smart and welcoming people are always happy to share their knowledge. Tollgate Farm and Education Center is a 160 acre "oasis" located in the heart of Novi at the corner of Meadowbrook and 12 Mile Roads. Just look for the long white fence.

Being a Tollgate Garden Volunteer has many advantages: participating in monthly programs with speakers, sharing your gardening experiences and making new friends. You can join as a supporting member or active garden member.

This is also a great opportunity for Master Gardeners and candidates to fulfill required volunteer hours next season even if you do not wish to join the Tollgate Garden Volunteer

organization. Weekly Saturday group workdays generally run from March to October with individual assignments by arrangement for other days and times that may be more convenient. Questions? Click the button below for more information or contact Roy Prentice at: prentic1@msu.edu or 248-347-3860 ext. 251.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Now Hiring! Event Coordinator, Transaction & Event Assistant, and Educational Leader at MSU Tollgate Farm

Join the MSU Tollgate Farm Team! We are now hiring for the following positions:

Event Coordinator (751705)

This position will coordinate private rental events, farm stand sales, public outreach events, and other business ventures needed to support the farm financially. Additionally, the position will process financial transactions such as invoicing, purchase orders, reimbursements, disbursement vouchers, and complete accompanying tracking and reporting.

Transaction and Event Assistant (751926)

This position will support the administrative and hospitality aspects of the educational programming and rental operations. Primary responsibilities include working rental events, including set-up and clean-up of buffets. The position will also be responsible for essential financial transactions for the farm and provide administrative support to the Farm Director.

Educational Leader (754888)

MSU Tollgate Farm and Education Center promotes food system awareness through exploring the sustainable, nutritional, and cultural aspects of agriculture. During the school year, MSU Tollgate Farm offers enrichment programs that include experiential, educational programs for youth and adults from community groups and public and private schools. During the summer, we provide 16 different weeklong camps for children age 6 to 19. We are seeking staff with a background in one or more of the following activities: K-12 formal education, agricultural science, outdoor education, summer camping, and/or environmental science.

To learn more or apply for one of these positions, click the button below and search



the job posting number listed above.

[LEARN MORE](#)



JOIN OUR TEAM AND HAVE AN UNFORGETTABLE SUMMER! ☀️

Join our Team for an Unforgettable Summer!

Come join our amazing summer camp team and positively impact the lives of the youth that we serve, as you spend your summer teaching, playing, and learning in the great outdoors. Summer Camp is currently looking for experienced candidates for our Summer Camp Educational Leader, Garden Kitchen Leader, Communications Leader, Horse Camp Educational Leader, and Horse Camp Coordinator Positions. To learn more or apply for one of these positions, click the button below.

[LEARN MORE](#)

MSU Tollgate Kid's Corner: Matching Animal Scat Activity

Looking for a fun and educational activity to do with your kids? We've got you covered with our seasonal activity in MSU Tollgate's Kid's Corner. Have fun matching the different scat with the correct Tollgate farm or wild animal. Then take it outside on a walk and see if you can find any scat that matches in local parks or nature centers.

[GET THE ACTIVITY](#)

WHOSE SCAT IS THAT?



Rent MSU Tollgate Farm for your Next Event or Meeting

The MSU Tollgate Conference Center and historic barn are available for your next business meeting, bridal or baby shower, or private luncheon. Our event catering staff are available to meet all of your needs. If you are looking for a unique venue, Tollgate is the perfect choice for your special event or business meeting! Interested? Give us a call at 248-347-3860 ext 235.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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