2014-2015 Annual Report:  
District 4  
Iosco County

Proven, Relevant, Life Changing
A MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR:

We hope you enjoy reading this latest annual report outlining how Michigan State University Extension in Iosco County and throughout the state continue to make Michigan thrive as an excellent place to live, raise a family and conduct business. MSU Extension faculty and staff members translate the scientific information gleaned from MSU AgBio Research and other Campus Units into real world applications—something we have been doing for 100 years. Throughout the history of the Cooperative Extension Service, founded through the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, MSUE Extension has worked hard to support an environment of collaboration where innovation and creativity can flourish. We continue to extend our reach by connecting with more and more residents each year. This report present the evidence of our successes.

Kelley Hiemstra
District 4 Coordinator
Michigan State University Extension

MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

COUNTY OFFICES:

We would like to thank the Iosco citizens and the county commissioners for your continued support of MSU Extension educational programs.

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When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the work force—especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Extension programs help children develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. They learn leadership and decision-making skills in 4-H that increase their likelihood of becoming civically active. 4-H’ers also demonstrate reduced high-risk behaviors such as drug use, and 4-H involvement also helps participants avoid or reduce involvement with the court system. This helps ensure more young people succeed in school, attend college and contribute to their communities.

4-H Science Safari Camp

Campers ages eight to twelve and teen counselors from Iosco, Arenac, and Ogemaw counties attended this fun-filled science based camp for three days at YMCA Camp Nissokone, in Oscoda. In addition to fun camping activities like swimming, outdoor survival skills, and camp fires, the campers had the chance to participate in hands-on science activities like rockets, ROV’s, solar cars and horses. The goal of the science based hand-on activities is to allow youth to gain knowledge and understanding in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). This exposure gives youth a greater understanding of potential careers in STEM fields.

Careers in Agriculture

Fifty youth from Iosco joined 4-H youth from Ogemaw and Arenac to start their journey to 4-H Exploration Days a day early and explored different careers related to agriculture. Participants visited Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizer where they heard from a scientist on how they develop and test fertilizers and explored the IQ Hub which is the center for Agriculture History and Innovation. Youth learned about plant, soil science and agriculture careers.

4-H Exploration Days

Exploration Days is a three day pre-college event that attracted 2,436 youth, chaperones and resource people from 79 counties. The theme for 2015 was Explore the Possibilities! and the youth did just that by attending a variety of sessions based on their interest. Youth increase many skills throughout the event including responsibility, confidence, and time management. With 50 youth participating, Iosco County’s delegation is one of the states largest. These youth work throughout the year to raise the funds needed to attend through a variety of local fundraisers, learning skills in communication, marketing and critical-thinking along the way.

“Young 4-H Exploration has helped me determine what my career is going to be. I love science; this year was the best.”
-Youth Participant
DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

4-H Capitol Experience

4-H Capitol Experience is an annual four-day conference that helps prepare youth for active citizenship by focusing on civic engagement and public policy. Up to 100 teens from around the state converge in Lansing, Michigan to experience state government in action and learn how they can influence policy issues. Participants interact with legislators, state agency staff, lobbyists and other resource people to learn how policy is made. Iosco County had two 4-H members that had the opportunity to explore different aspects of a policy issue that may affect individuals and communities, explore various careers in public policy and understand the responsibility of being a good citizen. This year 4-H Capitol Experience was presented in part by Michigan Farm Bureau (MIFB). This sponsorship supports the 4-H Capitol Experience team in developing a strong unique youth development program with an underlying focus on team building, group decision making and community leadership.

4-H Great Lakes and Natural Resources Camp

Great Lakes Natural Resources (GLNR) Camp is a statewide environmental education camp held at Camp Chickagami on Lake Esau. Iosco County had three youth attend this year. Campers went charter fishing, snorkeling and sailing. Each year, campers have the opportunity to work with researchers doing real world data collection. Youth learn about the research, career paths, scientific process and data collecting protocols, making this camp unique among camps across Michigan. For 2015, they had the opportunity learn about the invasion of rusty crayfish with Kelley Smith, a researcher focusing on the movement and location of this invasive species.

4-H Renewable Energy Camp

Michigan 4-H Renewable Energy Camp is a five-day exploration camp held at Michigan State University for youth ages 13-19. For 2015, the program attracted 39 youth from 15 counties, including one participant from Iosco County. Campers explored ideas, research and opportunities in the field of energy as it relates to natural resources and agriculture. They stayed in dorms and experienced campus life, enjoying a mix of recreational opportunities and learning experiences that included touring the on campus labs, the Kellogg Biological Station and Net Zero home, among others.

Because Michigan 4-H is part of MSU Extension, the activities kids participate in are all backed by and based on child development research. We use experiential (i.e. hands-on) learning and time spent intentionally thinking about what’s been learned to make it a meaningful experience, with skills and ideas learned that last a lifetime.
4-H Cloverbud Day Camp

4-H Cloverbud Camp is designed with the primary focus on non-competitive events that encourage group participation and building self-esteem. It is an opportunity for youth ages 5-8 years old to work together exploring introductory 4-H projects. For 2015, twenty youth from across Iosco County gathered at the Iosco County Fairgrounds for three days of hands-on learning and fun. This year also brought about a partnership between the 4-H program and MSU Extension Health and Nutrition Institute, as MSU HNI staff provided healthy snack options and a series of nutrition and physical activity lessons throughout the camp. 4-H teen counselors also provided science activities to increase science literacy among campers.

Community Involvement

Iosco County 4-H, including its members and volunteers, strive to make an impact using the third H-Hands. 4-H members pledge their hands to larger service and in doing so its participants plan various activities throughout the year to give back to the local community.

Increasing Literacy Through 4-H Community Involvement

The Iosco County 4-H program and Iosco County Farm Bureau partnered together in 2015 to bring a 4-H Reading Day to Whittemore-Prescott Elementary. 4-H teen members spent the afternoon reading Accurate Agriculture books to elementary classrooms in celebration of National Ag Week and March is Reading Month. In addition, 4-H members shared their agricultural experiences with the students and were able to provide the teachers with resources, due to the support of the Iosco County Farm Bureau.

“I’ve been involved with 4-H my entire life, both as a participant and as a parent and volunteer. It is such an amazing worthwhile program.”

– A 4-H parent and volunteer
Club Community Service Projects

The Iosco County 4-H Rabbit and Poultry Club spent an evening this summer helping staff at the Iosco County Animal Shelter. Members helped to walk and groom the dogs, clean up pens and the facility, and also took the opportunity to support the volunteer staff that work at the shelter. In return, 4-H members gained a greater appreciation for the work the shelter volunteers do and also had a chance to learn about responsibility and being good citizens.

Educating Young People about Agriculture

Iosco County 4-H Livestock Club members took the opportunity to work with third and fourth grade students at Clara Bolen Elementary to help teach them about agricultural products. The 4-H teens provided demonstrations on products that come from cows, as well as where corn by-products can be found in the grocery store. This event allowed 4-H members to enhance critical life skills such as public speaking and leadership, and also increased their self-confidence.

Iosco County Family Fun Fair

The Iosco County Family Fun Fair is held annually as a free event for community families to have a fun day focused on family togetherness. The event also provides a venue to share local resources that are available to families. The Family Fun Fair has a long-standing history in the County and was in jeopardy of being cancelled due to the lack of an organization able to coordinate the one day event. Michigan State University Extension staff stepped up to the plate to serve as the coordinators for the event, which attracts over 700 people annually. This event addresses community needs, provides a safe place for youth to explore new things, and provides MSU Extension the opportunity to reach out and share the local programs and opportunities available to families. Michigan State University Extension’s vision is to continue to expand the program through partnerships and community involvement.

Nearly 67 percent of Michigan 4-H’ers who graduated high school in 2013 and 2014 are attending college, compared with just 44.6 percent of their peers, and 4-H alumni are more likely to go to college than their same-age peers in 90 percent of Michigan counties.
When you support MSU Extension, you help participating farmers learn profitable and efficient business and production practices. Participants also learn how to optimize and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and how to conserve and protect water resources. This education leads to better use of time, money and human capital, and helps retain and create agricultural jobs. These measures strengthen Michigan’s economy while connecting farmers to local food opportunities and global markets. In this way you help MSU Extension encourage growth in a sustainable and prosperous Michigan food and agriculture system.

Example of Workshops that Iosco Residents were able to Participate included:

- **Effective Management of Farm Employees Conference.** Extension Educators Phil Durst and Stan Moore led this two day conference to help farm owners and managers better understand how their management impacts employee engagement and to help develop their skills as managers of people in order to achieve greater success on the farm.

- **2014 Dairy Farm Bill Programs** focused on the Dairy Margin Protection Program and featured Dr. Chris Wolf from Ag Econ, Phil Durst local Dairy Educator and Financial advisors. Participants learned about the tool available to manage the risk of low milk prices relative to high feed costs so that they were able to make informed choices about signing up for the margin protection program.

- **Quality Milk and Reduced Antibiotic Use.** Dr. Ron Erskine is leading a three state project to reduce mastitis and less effective use of antibiotics for dairy cows. Among the 60 enrolled herds statewide, some are in Ogemaw County where producers took the opportunity to participate. An analysis was conducted on these farms and recommendations provided to producers. Over the course of 12 months, data is being collected to help determine the impact of producer changes. Because mastitis is the primary reason for the use of antibiotics in cows, reducing mastitis and targeting antibiotic use only where response is likely should reduce overall antibiotic use.

- **Beef Cow-Calf Producer Clinic.** Beef cow herd owners brought bulls to a local farm to have them checked for breeding readiness prior to the start of breeding season. This ensures confidence that cows will get bred and give birth to a calf in the spring rather than be surprised by poor calf crop.

*MSU Extension works to increase farmers’ success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets and advancing agriculture through applied research.*
Michigan Dairy Growth

In 2014, Michigan was home to 390,000 dairy cows (8th in the nation) on 1,950 herds. Michigan dairy farmers added 10,000 new cows in 2014, the second biggest growth in the country. In the past five years, the number of herds in Michigan has declined, while cow numbers have increased almost 10%. Dairy farmers in Michigan produced 9.6 billion pounds of milk last year (7th in the nation), up 20.6% over 5 years ago. The farmers based in Michigan produce the 3rd most milk per cow in the country, and are on track to continue to move up in the national rankings.

Dairy is very important to Michigan’s economy and to the local economy. In 2014, milk sales topped Michigan’s charts in gross value for agricultural products at $2.31 billion. The dairy industry as a whole is estimated (United Dairy Industry of Michigan) to contribute $14.7 billion to the state’s economy annually, employing people directly and through consultants that work with farms and process milk.

MSU Extension agriculture and agribusiness programs focus on:

- **Increasing productivity and financial solvency** on Michigan farms to increase local, statewide, national and international ripple effects:
  - Farm revenue translates into more dollars spent in local communities, thereby increasing the tax base.
  - Maintaining the vitality of rural communities creates jobs in areas of the state where agriculture is the primary employer.

- **Production of high quality, safe and affordable food for Michigan residents** and for global exports. Non-food crops supply high-quality and high-value products both in and out of state.

- **Protecting natural resources** through programming that targets more efficient use of energy, water, fertilizers, pesticides and nutrients. Increased use of managed energy sources help to ensure clean, abundant water, soil, air and energy resources for future generations.
2014 Farm Bill Overview and Updates

The 2014 Farm Bill was signed into law by President Obama on February 7 on the campus of Michigan State University. Educational programs were held throughout the state to give an overview of new provisions in the Farm Bill and updates important to agricultural producers. In September, programs focused on dairy producers.

Farm Bill programs were a joint effort between MSU Extension, USDA Farm Service Agency, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Participants learned about major components of the Farm Bill and decisions they would need to make during the summer of 2014. USDA-NRCS staff spoke about conservation components.

MSUE Farm Information Resource Management Educators provided programing that addressed the management needs of corn, wheat, soybean, fruit, and dairy producers in Northeast Michigan.

The Farm Bill also ushered in a new 5-year program for dairy producers. Dairy farmers that understand implications of the new Dairy Margin Protection Program (DMPP) in the 2014 Farm Bill are likely to make better decisions on risk management, including their participation in the DMPP program. Price risk management has been shown by market history to be a critically important part of dairy farm business management.

Michigan State University Extension offered 12 meetings across the state in September and November:

- learned what the Dairy Margin Protection Program is and how it will work
- saw a demonstration of the online Dairy Decision Tool Software
- learned about the potential impacts on farm profitability

Dr. Christopher Wolf, MSU Dairy Economist, MSU Extension Dairy Educators and Farm Management Educators taught these 2-hour workshops. USDA Farm Service Agency personnel were also present at the meetings to help answer questions.
Bovine Leukosis Virus Control

In any population, managing diseases that challenge health and productivity are critically important. Among dairy and beef herds in the US, Bovine Leukosis Virus (BLV) causes a disease that we really did not think was economically important until recent research at Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine demonstrated impacts that reduce the life of animals in the herd as well as milk production. Unfortunately, with this disease there is no cure, nor treatment.

Educational programs were conducted (including in West Branch) and articles written by Extension Dairy Educator Phil Durst were published on the Michigan State University Extension website (http://msue.anr.msu.edu). Those articles were picked up by other media including national dairy and veterinary magazines and Michigan ag papers.

A project initiated by Durst is helping producers understand the impact that it may have in their herd and ways to reduce the risk of transmission. Enrolled herds were tested and then contacted by Durst or another member of the team including Dr. Dan Grooms, Dr. Paul Bartlett or Dr. Rebecca LaDronka to discuss management aspects. One year after the initial test, another herd test will be conducted to determine the amount of change, if any in infection rates. This will provide producers with feedback on the management choices they have made and enable them to adjust if necessary.

Beef producers will have an opportunity to participate in a project initiated by Grooms in 2016 to determine the impact of BLV on beef cow pregnancy and cull rates. Contact Phil Durst to learn more.

Ukrainian Dairy Assistance

Ukraine is undergoing tremendous change and as a country is at a crossroads. At this critical time, developing their great agricultural potential is a stabilizing force for the country. Ukraine needs to be able to feed its own people and to develop export markets to replace the loss of the Russian market. Durst and two Extension colleagues, Stan Moore and Phil Kaatz, were invited to present at the VIII Ukrainian Dairy Congress in March 2015. This was an opportunity to build upon the relationships and the work started by Durst the previous year during two visits to Ukraine to work with the Ukrainian Dairy Producers Association.

The Dairy Congress drew more than 900 producers, processors, policy-makers and ag-professionals to this conference. Durst developed and gave two presentations: ‘Dry cow management’ and ‘Integrity in Business’, as well as being a part of a panel discussion on vaccine use in dairy cattle. Durst, Moore and Kaatz also toured three dairy farms and met with advisors to consult about dairy management.

The invitation to speak about integrity at this Congress is recognition by the Ukrainians that business cannot continue as it has been. They are seeing that credibility in business, product quality, and relationships with employees is as, or more, critical than increasing production per cow. While speaking once on this topic will not likely change the culture, it is a step in the right direction that Ukrainian business owners need to take.

Stability in the world and relief of hunger and poor nutrition on the globe has both direct and indirect affects on this country and the markets. Knowledge should not be kept when it can benefit others and when it is wanted. Every producer should have the opportunity to put into use what has been learned through research. That, after all, is why Extension exists!
The Greening Michigan Institute is a team of MSU Extension Educators who specialize in educational programming related to community food systems, economic development, government & public policy, natural resource management, home ownership education, tourism and leadership skill building.

Iosco County was the location of several Greening Michigan Institute programs:

Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC) - The CEC program was created in Michigan approximately 8 years ago to educate communities on the tools and resources available to grow entrepreneurship in their communities. Communities form teams to attend this event and learn first-hand how other communities have expanded their economic capacity.

In October, 2014 we brought the CEC conference to the Iosco county communities of East Tawas and Oscoda. This conference showcases the host community by embedding break out sessions directly into merchant locations, while keeping the event walkable to encourage attendees to shop in and take in the community. We hosted 127 attendees from around Michigan as well as from Nebraska and Mississippi. In the spirit of collaboration, we also transported attendees from East Tawas to Oscoda for an evening networking dinner cruise aboard the Au Sable River Queen. Attendees are still talking about their positive experiences of the area to this day!

This year the conference will be held in two locations -Houghton/Hancock on Oct. 7-8 and Sturgis on Oct. 21-22, Michigan.

Understanding Tourism in Michigan Communities – Tourism is an important component of Iosco County’s economy, continued growth and diversification of tourism means new opportunities for local businesses. In March 2014, we piloted this newly developed program to a small group of Advisory Council members in Oscoda. Feedback from that session was incorporated and with those enhancements our team successfully presented in Ogemaw, Roscommon, and Crawford counties during the 2014 / 2015 programming year. A modified version of this program was also delivered in October 2014 at the CEC conference held in Iosco county.

Understanding Food Systems and Food Hubs – Sustainable community food systems help local agriculture industries, boost local businesses, increase community vitality and economic health, as well as promoting healthy food choices for individuals and families. In 2015 this workshop was offered in Ogemaw, Roscommon and Crawford Counties.

“This workshop provided me with the tools needed to diffuse a conflict situation.”
“The Conflict Smoothie steps are critical for dealing with people in my job.”
“As a result of this workshop I will “stop, be quite and listen.”
Small Business Counseling through the MSU Product Center – Individual business counseling helps Michigan entrepreneurs develop and commercialize high-value, in-demand products and businesses in food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio-economy. Iosco County residents have been able to access this confidential entrepreneurial counseling service at [http://productcenter.msu.edu/how_the_center_can_help_you](http://productcenter.msu.edu/how_the_center_can_help_you)

Michigan Citizen Planner – Understanding the long-term outlook of a community is essential for leaders working to attract businesses, add jobs and strengthen Michigan’s cities and towns. The Michigan Citizen Planner program offers land-use education and training to local planning officials.

Reinventing MI Retirement – Developed in response to Governor Synder’s special message on aging and made possible with grant funds from the Michigan Securities Investor Education and Training Fund, MSU Extension was invited to provide training based on ‘Grandma’s Yellow Pie Plate’, a retirement planning tool.

The Greening Michigan Institute team offered additional workshops and programs that were available to Iosco County residents this past year. These include, but are not limited to the following: Local Benchmarking Consortium - New County Commissioner Training - Conflict, Collaboration and Consensus in Natural Resources - Facilitative Leadership – Advanced Facilitative Leadership - Habitat Restoration and Wildlife Management - Regional Fisheries Workshops - Lakes and Streams Leaders Institute - Foreclosure Education and Counseling - Home Ownership Education.

Conflict Smoothies – The 2008 CPP Global Capital Report stated that U.S. employees spend 2.8 hours per work week dealing with conflict, at a cost of about $350 billion in paid work hours. Conflict Smoothies, a conflict management workshop, was developed by the MSUE Leadership and Community Engagement Team to provide an easy to use framework for addressing conflict situations.

For more information about programs and workshops offered by the Greening Michigan Institute teams, please contact Bonnie Wichtner-Zoia at the Ogemaw MSU Extension office (989.345.0692) or check online at [www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu).
Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiatives: Engaging Youth in Coastal Community Development through Place-based Education

Collectively, our Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI) network, NOAA B-WET water education partnership, and Center for Great Lakes Literacy trainings have invested in promoting Great Lakes Literacy and supporting a growing place-based education network and culture among our Northeast Michigan schools and communities. This reflects a regional network and partnership investment that has been co-facilitated and supported by Michigan Sea Grant/GMI and 4-H/CYI - close collaboration with our many regional network leadership partners since 2006.

Approximately 154 teachers in 33 school buildings receive direct support and/or professional development opportunities for implementing place-based education with their students. Their communities are both the partners and the beneficiary of their student’s environment stewardship investments. These students are engaged, across the region, in addressing important, relevant Great Lakes issues and community development goals.

During the 2013-2014 school year alone, our NE MI GLSI regional network and partnership across eight counties engaged 3,274 youth (approximately 20% of youth in targeted counties)—through their learning—in on-the-ground environment stewardship projects that make a difference in their communities. Across Michigan, the state GLSI network recently released attached report “GLSI 5 years, 50,000 stewards” - during these same five years, our NE MI GLSI network (one of nine GLSI hubs across Michigan) contributed significantly to this outcome and impact, engaging 12,123 youth in stewardship activities across northern Lake Huron communities. To date, in total, our network programming has now engaged 13,266 youth in place-based stewardship education opportunities.

As the 2014-2015 school year kicked off, another 1,852 students have already hit woods and water of northeast Michigan in service of their communities and local government. Reflecting on this past September, we highlight a few super GREAT weeks of place-based stewardship education programming at its best in Northeast Michigan—and the many schools, teachers, and students who were part of implementing some amazing, ambitious, impactful environment stewardship projects in (and with) their local communities.
Ensuring Safe and Secure Food

When you support MSU Extension’s efforts to enhance resident’s access to an adequate supply of safe, affordable food, program participants will focus safety measures in the field and at harvest, learn proper food preparation and food preservation techniques, and bring community partners together to strengthen access to healthy food supplies. This leads to a healthy population, which in turn helps keep health care cost in check and our communities viable.

Reducing foodborne illness - Food preservation is both a popular hobby and a small business opportunity, but people who preserve food without following scientifically proven food preservation techniques increase the risk of foodborne illness. In 2014, MSU Extension worked with 59 Iosco County residents about safe food practices through the Food preservation classes and Cooking for Crowds workshop. At Food Preservation, demonstration style workshops, participants learn about food preservation methods such as freezing, dehydrating, and canning with a boiling water bath canner or pressure canner. Cooking for Crowds workshops are geared toward non-profit groups that prepare high volumes of food for their organization or for the public.

As a result of MSU Extension food safety programs, individuals now use safer food handling, preparation, storage and preservation techniques. This reduces medical expenses, reduces food recalls and contributes to the financial stability of food businesses.

Participates in MSU Extension’s food preservation workshop reported:

- 97 percent said they will properly use processing techniques to safely can foods.
- 93 percent said they will select high-quality foods for preservation.
- 89 percent said they gained knowledge on how to properly preserve food.

“\textit{I now use the proper techniques for preserving all my food. I am much more aware of the importance of correct times and temperatures. I follow directions in tested recipes exactly and I use the resources given to us}” \textemdash Food Preservation participant

Participant comment:

One of my childhood memories is canning with my grandmother. I am grateful to have been able to take this class to learn updated safe ways to preserve a tradition.

Very informative!
Cottage Food Law - From the farm to the kitchen table, food safety is an important issue. Foodborne illness outbreaks occur crossing all socioeconomic lines from production and consumption to preservation of foods. Foodborne illness costs the U.S. economy dollars each year in lost productivity, hospitalization, long-term disability and even death. The Cottage Food Law took effect in July 2010, allowing home-processed foods to be sold to the public, emphasizing the need for food safety education.

MSU Extension Cottage Food Law workshop participants learned about preserving food and preparing safe food for public consumption. Food consumers can have increased confidence when buying food products sold by someone with an MSU Extension food safety certificate related to producing cottage foods.

ServSafe – The ServSafe class is a nationally recognized certification program that provides training to citizens that are working, managing or plan to work in the food service industry. In Iosco County 16 participants took part in the classes offered with 100% passing rate. This program is offered in two formats. For those that are recertifying and wish to maintain their certification, there is a one day (8 hour) training. For those that are new to the industry or feel they need in-depth information on food safety there is a two day class. (16 hour). Both of theses classes provide information needed to keep food safe in the food industry. MSUE is partnering with the local Health Department to provide the Iosco County food service industry with this program on a regular basis.

What is the BackPack Program?

The Backpack Program is an undertaking of the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan which attempts to reduce child hunger. Each weekend, children receive backpacks of nutritious foods to supplement weekend meals at home through the Food Bank’s Backpack Program. It was designed to provide extra support during weekends for children who typically receive free or reduced priced lunches at school. The program began in 2004 with 50 backpacks in 2 elementary schools. Currently the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan serves 4,300 children in 99 schools from 14 different counties.

MSU Extension’s Role:

MSU Extension is currently piloting a nutritional tip sheet for the Food Bank of East Michigan’s BackPack program. Each week we publish a health newsletter geared towards providing low-income families with information about food, nutrition, and overall wellness. These flyers are currently being distributed in District 4 (Northeast Michigan), with the goal of expanding state-wide. Over 1900 families received weekly nutrition education along with food items to encourage healthy behaviors that last a lifetime.
Like most of America, Michigan faces the dual and interrelated challenges of hunger and obesity.

- Michigan has the 10th highest rate of obesity in the United States. Over 30 percent of adults are obese, and an additional 35 percent are considered overweight.
- Nearly 80 percent of both adults and youth do not consume adequate amounts of fruits and vegetables.
- 50 percent of adults and youth report inadequate physical activity.
- Nearly 20 percent of Michigan residents are considered to have low or very low food security.

To help people be healthy at every stage of life, Michigan State University Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities.

**Highlights of Health and Nutrition Programming in Iosco County:**

In 2014, MSU Extension Nutrition programs were presented to 74 adults and 317 youth in Iosco County with 722 sessions! Interactive lessons over time have proven to result in increasing dietary quality and increasing physical activity.

Programming for Iosco County happens with the cooperation of local partners that promote healthy lifestyles, physical activity and good nutrition. Some of those who help make these programs happen are:

**Youth Programs**
- Clara Bolen Elementary School
- Dept. of Health and Human Services
- Iosco County 4-H
- Whittemore-Prescott Elementary School

**Adult Programs**
- Dept. of Health and Human Services
- District Health Dept. #2
- Iosco County Commission on Aging
- MiWorks!
- Tawas City Walmart

In 2014, these programs reached more than 84,000 adults and youth across the state. Participants reported the following changes:

**Youth** (preschool through second grade)
- 93 percent of teachers reported that their students demonstrated an increased awareness of the importance of good nutrition.
- 84 percent of teachers reported that their students were willing to try new foods.

**Adults**
- 75 percent of participants demonstrated improvement in one or more nutrition practices.
- 50 percent of completing participants reported that they increased their daily vegetable consumption.

**Older adults**
- 51 percent increased their vegetable consumption in a typical day.
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The Staff Support existence in this office is a benefit to the public by providing the following services:

◊ Soil testing for lawn, gardens and field crops. The MSU Diagnostic Lab tests the soil and provides recommendations to keep lawns, gardens and crops growing properly.

◊ Insect and Plant Identification – Specimens are brought in, pictures are taken and electronically submitted to the “Ask An Expert” department on campus and a result is sent back to the customer within 48 hours: https://ask.extension.org

◊ Materials for clients available at www.migarden.msu.edu and the MSU Gardening Hotline staffed by Advanced Master Gardener Volunteers at 888-678-3464.