

2013-2014 Annual Report:

St. Joseph County



Proven, Relevant, Life Changing



Mission

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

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2014 celebrates the 100-year signing anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act, which officially created the national Cooperative Extension System. President Woodrow Wilson signed legislation that extended the land-grant university concept beyond university campuses to reach into communities across the United States. For 100 years, the Smith-Lever Act has stimulated innovative research and vital educational programs for youth and adults through progressive information delivery systems that extend knowledge and improve lives using a state-by-state network of Extension Educators.

Extension is a unique partnership between federal, state, and county governments. County-based community partnerships in Michigan have been thriving for nearly 100 years as MSU Extension, Michigan's land grant university, delivers education throughout the state and uniquely in the southwest region.

Sincerely,

Julie Pioch

Interim District 13 Coordinator

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The 4-H program in St. Joseph County has had a very busy year. One of the highlights for the program was offering the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) “Grow Your Pig & Sell your Pig” Commodity Carnival. This ‘carnival’ gave youth and adults alike the opportunity to expand their knowledge of what it really takes to raise a hog for market.

The CME put together a learning lab consisting of plastic eggs to represent the pig, feed options, medical expenses, housing options, transportation, and employee expenses to ‘feed’ their pig. Once the individual felt their pig was ready for market they weighed their pig and then used a Plinko Board to send their pig to market. The objective was to see if the pig lost money, made money, or just broke even.

Many individuals were surprised at what it takes to raise a pig and even more surprised to realize that they had lost money in the process! Individuals were then given the opportunity to go back and reevaluate how they raised their pig and begin the process again to see where they could cut costs.

It was a great learning experience, for youth in particular, helping them process the reality of where money goes, how to manage where they sent their money, and what was most important in being sure the hog was ready for market.

The “Grow Your Pig & Sell Your Pig” Commodity Carnival is one of three options through a grant. “Risk Ranch” was the second option that was used at the 2014 fair. “Risk Ranch” was similar; however the focus was raising a beef animal for market. Both carnivals have been a great opportunity for the public to see what it really takes to raise an animal from birth to table in a fun way.



4-H By the Numbers:

117 Cloverbud members (ages 5 to 8)

724 4-H members (ages 9 to 19)

279 Adult Volunteers

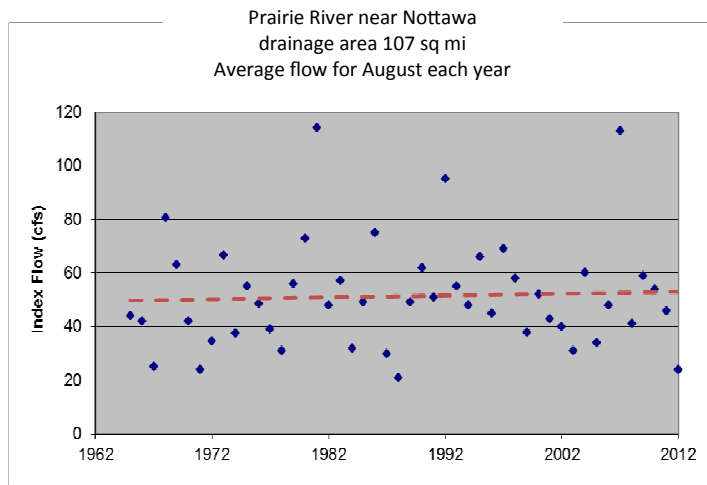
69 Teen Leaders

MSU/PURDUE EXTENSION JOINT IRRIGATION EDUCATOR

St. Joseph County Extension office hosts the MSU/Purdue Extension Irrigation Educator Position. This cooperative effort began in 2006 as an effort to improve irrigation-related education in the Michigan and Indiana area. The placement is ideal with both states having the majority of their irrigated land near the Indiana-Michigan border.

From January through September 2014, 84 educational meetings were conducted for Indiana and Michigan producer/irrigators with a total of 1,966 participants. Meetings ranged from farm visits with 6-8 producers to summer field day stops with over 400 participants. Educational presentation topics included irrigation design and management, water policy, and energy savings.

Your local Extension office worked with the Farm Bureau group from St. Joseph and Branch Counties to plan and host a State Water Council tour highlighting the irrigation dependent seed, vegetables and food processors in the area. The tour ended at the Lawayne Yoder Farm on the Prairie River at M-66 where a United States Geological Survey river gauge has documented summer river flows from 1964 till present. The lack of documented irrigation impact on stream flows over five decades raises questions for the water council that oversees the Michigan Water Withdrawal Assessment tool that estimates the potential impact of large volume water use on streams and rivers.



USGS data for the Prairie River gage at M-66 can be found at : http://waterdata.usgs.gov/mi/nwis/uv/?site_no=04097540&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060

Bruce MacKellar, MSU Extension Crop Educator for the region, presented a white paper to the State Water Council, "Value of Irrigation to Southwest Michigan Economy." His work estimates the 150,000 acres of seed corn produced in 2014 to be worth \$1.023 Billion. Even with today's lower corn price the Farm Gate value of the seed industry locally is expected to be over 100 million dollars. You can find the report on the irrigation page of the St. Joseph County MSU Extension webpage: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county/info/st._joseph.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS

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FIELD CROPS

In 2014, bi-weekly Integrated Pest Management (IPM) breakfasts were held in St. Joseph County and 10 breakfasts were held from May 13 through July 8 at the Royal Café in Centreville. The St. Joseph County MSU Extension office coordinated these meetings with MSU Extension participation from Lyndon Kelley, Dr. Dean Baas and Bruce MacKellar. The breakfast meetings were attended by farmers, crop scouts and ag industry representatives. Due to the unusual spring, attendance was down from last year and ranged from 5 to 15 people. The meetings were an opportunity to report on the status of crop production in St. Joseph County including early indicators of weed, insect and disease issues. Crops reported on and discussed included seed corn, commercial corn, sweet corn, soybeans, wheat, potatoes, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Speakers were invited to present timely information on topics relevant to current production issues and concerns. Speakers and topics included:



- Dr. Jeff Andresen – MSU Associate Professor and Michigan State Climatologist: 2013-14 winter and carryover into the 2014 crop season, along with a long range weather forecast for 2014.
- Beth Bishop – MSU Enviro-weather Coordinator: Local Enviro-weather network stations and how to use them.
- Bruce MacKellar – MSUE Extension Educator: Soil Fertility
- Dr. Christy Sprague - MSU Extension Specialist: Weed control, post-emergence herbicides and controlling Palmer Amaranth.
- Dr. Martin Chilvers - MSU Plant Pathologist: Disease potential this growing season.
- Dr. Chris Difonzo - MSU Professor of Entomology: Insect pests including aphids, Western Bean Beetle, Brown Marmorated Stink Bug and corn rootworm.

2013 - 2014
Participation
Numbers
Ag &
Agribusiness
Cover Crops:
1,387 people



Field Crops—Continued

A Southwest Michigan Field Crops Advisory Meeting was held August 27, 2014 at the St. Joseph County MSUE office with key growers to develop plans for educational programs and on-farm research. Selected leading growers shared their opinions of the programming needs at the local level. The meeting was led by Lyndon Kelley, Dr. Dean Baas, Bruce MacKellar and Mike Staton, MSUE Soybean Specialist. The program included updates/discussions on:

- MSU Extension updates
- Identifying the top issues that your farm faces today and will face in the next three years
- Specific research needs that would help address these issues
- How growers currently receive information that helps them to make management decisions for their farm
- What research or educational programs/materials are needed to help growers improve irrigated soybean yields.

Input and feedback from the meeting was shared with MSUE Agriculture and Agribusiness leadership and will be used to shape future programming and events for St. Joseph County.



MSUE educators Paul Gross and Marilyn Thelen demonstrate the benefits of cover crops to soil health in a soil pit for Pioneer seed corn representatives.

COVER CROPS

Dr. Dean Baas continued cover crop research and education programs in St. Joseph County, statewide and regionally in 2013 - 2014. Research and demonstration projects have continued in cooperation with St. Joseph County farmers in 2013 - 2014. One study site on Henry Miller's farm evaluating the impact of interseeding oilseed radish as a cover crop with wheat-on-wheat yield continued to show promise and the study is being repeated for a third year. This study is funded by the Michigan Wheat Program. Another on-farm study in cooperation with Henry Miller is researching cover crops and manure to improve soil health and is led by Tim Harrigan from MSU Biosystems Engineering.

In support of the local seed corn industry, the Pioneer Healthy Soils training was held during two field days at Henry Miller's farm. This pilot program was developed by University of Wisconsin Extension educator Kevin Erb and MSUE educators Christina Curell, Paul Gross and Marilyn Thelen to provide resources on soil health and cover crops for approximately 30 Pioneer seed corn representatives. Kevin, Christina, Paul, Marilyn, Dean Baas and Bruce MacKellar participated in this event.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

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In 1914, St. Joseph County had the honor of hosting the first “Cooperative Extension Home Demonstration Agent” appointed in the State of Michigan. Since then through today’s staff of Linda Kline and Diana Fair, the Family and Consumer Science educators have offered a variety of educational programs for 100 years with the goal of improving the health and nutrition of St. Joseph County residents.

Through Nutrition & Physical Activity programs, Diana and Linda offered free SNAP-Ed nutrition education workshop series and one-time presentations for county residents who received food stamp benefits. SNAP Education was also presented to youth in school classrooms having 50% or higher free and reduced lunch eligibility. Over 435 adults and 780 youth participated in Extension nutrition education programs at program locations throughout the county including:

- Community Health Agency WIC Project Fresh
- Child Care Resources
- Commission on Aging
- Community Mental Health H.O.P.E. Group
- Great Start Collaborative Parent Coalition
- Head Start
- Keystone Shelter
- St. Joseph County Public Schools
- Sturgis Senior Center
- Sturgis and Three Rivers Young Adult Programs
- Three Rivers Area Mentoring
- Sturgis Parenting Fair
- Project Connect



The nutrition education workshops produced great outcomes. Participants reported eating more fruits and vegetables after attending sessions as well as increasing their physical activity. A 93-year old participant from Sturgis, when asked why she had attended sessions, stated that “you’re never too old to learn”.

Part of the collaboration between the St. Joseph County Grange Fair and MSU Extension is an Ag-Citing Experience offered to St. Joseph County third grade classrooms. This popular educational tour links students with the agricultural food crops raised in the county with the food they eat. This year over 10 schools with 428 students attended along with 33 adult volunteers.

Disease Prevention and Management programs were also offered to County residents. These programs included Dining with Diabetes, a five-session program providing diabetes nutrition education as well as cooking demos, the National Diabetes Prevention Program, a 16-week program developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assist people having pre-diabetes develop skills to lower their risk of contracting diabetes, and PATH (Personal Action Toward Health), a six-week program with the goal of providing participants with the skills needed to manage their own chronic diseases. With almost 10% of St. Joseph County residents having diabetes and approximately another 20% at risk for developing diabetes, educational programs offering information about ways to manage this chronic disease and steps that can lower the risk of ever developing diabetes have been a top priority. Disease prevention programs reached about 100 county residents in 2014.



My students talk about MyPlate daily! They have shared this information with their families. We have more physical activity time and use the MyPlate for portion control.

Community Action Sturgis
Head Start a.m. & p.m. classes.

Susan Teft



It was a pleasure having Linda Kline come and work with our young adult students with cognitive impairments at the ISD’s Three Rivers Young Adult Program. She made information on how to eat healthy easy to understand and a cool thing to do...something that is very important to this age group if you want to implement change! When she put music on and got the students moving they learned that daily exercise can be good for you and fun!

Jackie Yeomans, Teacher
Three Rivers
Young Adults Program

GREENING MICHIGAN



Making it in *Michigan*

MICHIGAN'S PREMIER SPECIALTY FOOD SHOW



MSU Product Center

The MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assists county residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio economy. Select MSUE educators trained as Innovation Counselors, conduct business counseling and link entrepreneurs to resources.

The assistance provided is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include things like developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain, or seeking funding options. The educator also assists clients in accessing specialized services they may need that are offered through Michigan State University like feasibility studies, nutritional labeling and packaging assistance.

The Michigan State University Product Center (www.productcenter.msu.edu) helps Michigan entrepreneurs and businesses to develop and launch new product and service ideas into food, agriculture, natural resources, and bioenergy markets.

MSU Product Center conducts the premier new food product trade show “Making It In Michigan” in Lansing every fall. It offers new food producers an opportunity to make contact with retail and wholesale outlets to better establish marketing channels.

PRODUCT CENTER FOOD•AG•BIO

Accelerating Innovation for Business, Industry and Entrepreneurs



Entrepreneurship Training and Cottage Food Law Classes

The Michigan Cottage Food Law enabling the production of certain foods in a home kitchen for direct sales is still relatively new. Members of MSU Extension and Product Center Counselors collaborated with MSU Extension Food Safety Team to provide food safety, cottage food, and business development content in a single session that could be easily presented around the state. On average, of participants who completed the course, 93% understood what is necessary to run a successful food business, and 78% felt that the sessions met or more than met their needs in starting a cottage food business.

Water Resources

MSU Extension educated lakefront property owners, local government officials and waterfront contractors on the ecology, protection and management of Michigan's 11,000 inland lakes and their 23,500 miles of shoreline.

Through the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership (MNSP) – a public/private partnership of state agencies, plant industry representatives, marine construction industry representatives, academics and non-profit organizations dedicated to the restoration and preservation of natural shorelines for the benefit of Michigan's inland lakes,— the *Certified Natural Shoreline Professional (CNSP)* program equips professional marine and landscape contractors with the tools needed to expand their business services to better serve lakefront property owners looking for more lake-friendly alternatives to sea walls, rock and turf to the water's edge.



Natural Resources Clean Boats Clean Waters

program was revitalized to address Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). MSU Extension partnered with Michigan Lakes and Streams Association to train volunteers to help identify and remove AIS from their watercraft and sport equipment to help prevent the spread of AIS in Michigan's inland lakes.



ServSafe is a national food safety certificate program through the National Restaurant Association. The program provides training in food service to help participants gain knowledge about food safety procedures. Topics covered include: Providing Safe Food, Forms of Contamination, The Safe Food Handler, The Flow of Food, Safe Facilities, Pest Management, and Cleaning & Sanitizing.

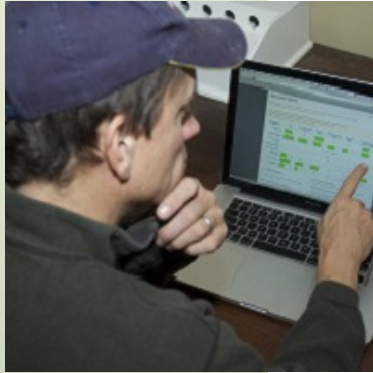


MSU Extension helps strengthen communities through programs that teach community leaders how to implement best practices that keep communities solvent, productive, and engaged.

Leadership Development and Running for Elected Office—In several workshops, township, city, village and county officials learned the basics of good communication among board members and public engagement techniques. They also received training on the implementation of the Opens Meetings Act and how to comply with that law while meeting the demands of policy making.

Citizen Planner Program—The seven-week classroom program was held in 2013-14. 37 members of local planning and zoning boards (including persons from St. Joseph County) and the general public successfully completed the course; several finished their capstone projects and obtained Master Citizen Planner status.

Telfarm Income Tax Management and Business Analysis



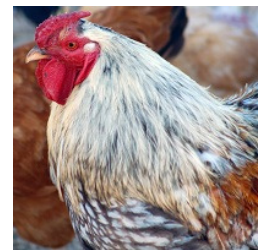
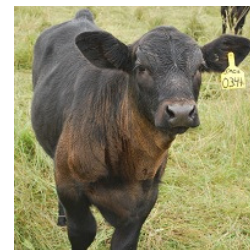
The TelFarm system of farm financial record keeping is a program available from MSU Extension's Farm Information Resources Management (FIRM) Team. It is an educational and service program designed to assist farmers with their farm financial records and decision making.

Over several years, effective tax planning can save producers thousands of dollars.

MSU Extension held it's annual Income Tax Management consultations for current Kalamazoo Telfarm clients in

Business Management Educators for MSU Extension provided the individual consultations by appointment.

Together they have over 30 years of experience at MSU Extension in farm financial management, including estate planning, business succession, expansion, financial projections, profitability analysis, income statements, cash flow, business plans, risk management and ag commodity marketing and more recently, estimating the Affordable Care Act employer penalty costs.



Agricultural Resources, Programs and Events listed online

Supporting agriculture is key to a brighter future. Michigan State University Extension works to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets and advancing agriculture through applied research. Research-based resources, programs and events are listed and organized by specific categories online and can be accessed by visiting:

<http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/agriculture>

Topics include:

Beef	Fruits & Nuts	Pork
Dairy	Horses	Poultry
Farm Management	Nursery &	Sheep & Goats
Field Crops	Christmas Trees	Vegetables
Floriculture	Organic Agriculture	

MSU Extension Program Institutes

Enhancing Michigan's First Green Industry: Agriculture & Agribusiness

Focus: Keep research and education on the cutting edge to keep agriculture and agribusiness strong and secure. Grow Michigan's \$71.3 billion agriculture and agribusiness industry which employs 25% of Michigan's working population.

Preparing Michigan's Children & Youth for the Future

Focus: Create and foster an environment that provides educational opportunity for young people and the adults who support them. Help develop skills youth need for a quality life to prepare them for the future so they can be productive and contribute to society.

Greening Michigan: Leveraging Natural and Human Assets for Prosperity

Focus: Enhance knowledge and decision making skills for communities and individuals throughout the state on how to respond to the changes from manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy. A large part of this new economy is the green industry.

Improving the Health & Nutrition of Michigan's residents

Focus: Create a healthy and holistic viewpoint for Michigan' residents for issues involving physical, social and mental health.

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension

With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

Whether it's helping grow Michigan's agriculture economy, capturing opportunities that use our natural resources in a sustainable way, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness or preparing tomorrow's leaders, MSU Extension creates opportunities and builds communities that make Michigan strong, prosperous and a great place to live.



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