



# Ionia County

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

### BY THE NUMBERS



\$14,879,534 total economic impact in Ionia County



1,065 youth participated in 4-H, early childhood, in school or after school programs



MSU Extension website received 4,377 page views by Ionia County residents, the most page views were of 4-H pages



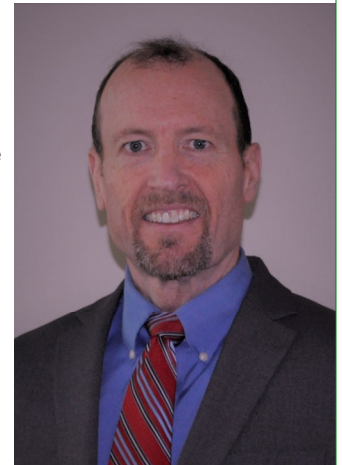
1,631 Ionia County residents participated in 320 different MSUE programs In 2022

# 100

MSU Extension has served Ionia County over 100 years

### MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Ionia County residents took advantage of MSU Extension programming from all four MSU Extension Institutes in 2022 . The following pages contain just a sample of the program highlights from the County's participation in MSU Extension 's Agriculture and Agribusiness (AABI); Health and Nutrition (HNI); Community, Food and Environment (CFEI); and the Children and Youth Institute (CYI). During this period, Over 1,600 Ionia County residents participated in 320 different in-person or online programs. In addition, 4-H youth participated in club activity and projects leading up to the 2022 Ionia County Free Fair. Your local MSU Extension staff and the statewide network of Educators worked through local partners to bring the University's research and resources directly to our County residents.



Bill Hendrian

### CONTACT



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# Program Highlights



Educator, Roger Betz, gives a report to the Michigan senate agricultural committee.

## FARM MANAGEMENT

Roger Betz, Farm Business Management Educator, assists farmers, businesses, industries, families and individuals to improve lives and achieve their goals through an educational process that applies management, production and economic knowledge to critical issues. Roger often teams with locally housed educators like Ionia based educator, Kevin Gould, to connect with farm families. As with all extension programming, local partnerships and collaboration help identify and address local needs. MSU Extension is there to provide research-based education and resources. When it comes to farm financial decisions, it is important to have both the technical information and the trust of the parties involved because most farms are family run businesses.



Educator, Kevin Gould assists with bull management by formulating and adjusting rations to meet target gains. He processes and evaluates each bull upon arrival for soundness, and ultrasounds all the bulls.

## BEEF EVALUATION PROGRAM

The MCA/MSU Bull Evaluation Program (BEP) is the region's premier central bull appraisal program. In its 35th year, the program is a cooperative effort among the Michigan Cattlemen's Association, Michigan State University, and Plank Farm. The objectives of the program are to 1) promote performance-evaluated beef cattle and serve as an educational tool to acquaint producers with its overall value, 2) provide a common environment for evaluating young bulls for rate of gain, soundness, and body composition, and 3) aid beef producers in obtaining superior bulls that have been evaluated for growth, breeding and structural soundness, and carcass merit.

A total of 65 bulls sold at the 2022 Bull Evaluation netting over \$250,000. The total impact of the sale is over 1 million annually to the Michigan beef industry as reported from the 2021 survey data.

## FARM EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Dairy farms in Michigan rely heavily on hired help. Dairy farm employees can have a wide range of backgrounds regarding experience, education, race, and culture. The MSU Extension dairy team has been supporting Michigan dairy farms for years by offering on farm training in multiple topics, including milking, maternity (cow and newborn calf care), sick cow's care, calf care, low stress animal handling, cow nutrition and feeding management. These trainings are offered on farms across the state of Michigan and are delivered in English, Spanish, or both languages. In 2022, the dairy team conducted 33 trainings on 18 farms, representing over 22,100 dairy animals, and offered education to a total of 184 dairy employees.



MSU Extension Dairy Educator, Paola Bacigalupo Sanguesa offers education to dairy farm workers.

# Program Highlights

## LOCAL CWD OUTREACH

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a neurodegenerative disease that has affected deer in our county. Outreach and education programs were held throughout the area reaching nearly 200 local hunters and students during the 2022 deer hunting season. One student who attended a program held at his school and who harvested three deer during the season determined that CWD testing was important. After participating, he was able to extract the deer lymph nodes from his harvested deer, store them properly, and send them into the MSU Lab for testing using pre-packaged testing kits provided by the Michigan DNR and made available to hunters at the Ionia County MSU Extension office. He reported using best practices for disease mitigation such as wearing disposable gloves while handling his harvested deer, properly disposing of his deer carcasses, and disinfecting tools and equipment that came into contact with his harvest.



Extension educator, Katie Ockert, shows a student how to extract lymph nodes as part of Chronic Wasting Disease education program.

## NUTRITION EDUCATION

Our Community Nutrition Instructors work with schools, community groups, even the courts providing basic nutrition education. On one occasion this past year, Joanna Urban was greeted by a participant: "I'm telling you right now that you are not going to teach me anything about nutrition. I retired from an early education program and I was the food director. I'm only here because the program coordinator told me I had to come and it's better than sitting at home being bored." I let her know how happy I was to have her in class and that I hoped she would enjoy herself, even if she didn't learn anything new about nutrition. Throughout the class, I found the group to be good participants and open to new ideas. My reluctant participant started out rather unwilling but she slowly warmed up to the learning



MSU Extension Community Nutrition Instructor, Tammy Fletcher, moved to a new territory last year, but still helps out Ionia residents along with fellow instructor Joanna Urban.

## EAT HEALTHY BE ACTIVE

The adults in my most recent Eat Healthy, Be Active program arrived on the first day of class with sodas and energy drinks in hand. Ironically, one of our activities for the day was using real sugar and a measuring spoon as a visual of how many teaspoons of sugar can be found in all kinds of drinks, including soda and energy drinks. I had each participant take turns counting out teaspoons of sugar and dumping it on a plate and guess when they were finished. When they saw the final results for soda and energy drinks, they were shocked. I reminded them that if they drank multiple sugary beverages in a day they would need to multiply the amount of sugar by the total number of drinks. Also, sugary foods would add to the amount of sugar intake. Everyone agreed they would cut back on the number of sugary beverages they consumed. One participant said that she went from drinking 2-3 sodas each day to 2 sodas per week after she saw how much sugar is in one can of soda.



Eat Healthy, Be Active is one of the many programs that our community nutrition instructors use to help participants make better food choices and increase physical activity.

# Program Highlights

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## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Ionia 4-H youth participated in many programs during 2022. For those who chose to do an animal project, the culminating event was and always is the Ionia County Free Fair. In 2022 many 4-H youth brought their animals to the fair to be shown, judged, and sold to the highest bidder. There were more than 1000 animal entries including, beef, cavies, dairy, dairy feeders, dairy goats, market goats, poultry, rabbits, sheep, and swine. Other youth participated in the Fair by creating beautiful still exhibits and preparing jams and baked goods. Through club networks each youth works on projects according to their particular interests. MSU Extension offers programming throughout the year for the youth to develop specific skills related to their projects like showmanship, or skills for life after 4-H such as public speaking and entrepreneurship.



Youth show their lambs to a livestock judge at the 2022 Ionia County Free Fair.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H participants learn by doing. There are many programs and learning opportunities throughout the year where 4-H youth can follow their interests or attend special events. In 2022 Ionia County youth participated programs like the Adulting 101 series; 4-H Bee educational programs; career exploration; entrepreneurship; cooking; embryology; 4-H Exploration Days; 4-H Capitol Experience, invasive species identification, and many more. Ionia County residents participated in more than 20 different Children and Youth development programs in 2022. Some in 4-H like to say that 4-H isn't just about sows and plows. It certainly does have a strong agricultural and animal husbandry foundation, but it also allows youth to develop many skills that are transferrable to many different areas of study and careers.



MSU Extension 4-H Program Coordinators, Rachel Sheff and John Duvall help youth examine potential invasive species pulled from a lake in Ionia county.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Our Ionia County 4-H Program Coordinator develops partnerships, recruits and maintains volunteers, recruits youth for programs and clubs, manages budgets and oversees the operation of all club and 4-H council activities. Through hands-on clubs, short-term clubs, educational programs and special events, our aim is to prepare youth to be productive, creative, and enthusiastic contributors to the Ionia community. Many in positions of leadership today, participated in 4-H growing up. One of the special events that the 4-H Program Coordinator, John Duval, organized was a fishing day at a local lake. The DNR partnered with 4-H for this event where science was practiced in a hands-on outdoor classroom. Everyone had a great time!



The Michigan DNR collaborated with 4-H youth from Montcalm and Ionia counties on a fun, family oriented, and educational day on the lake.

# Featured County Story

Senior extension educator, Brenda Long, provides Financial and Homeownership education to the residents of Ionia County and across the state. Through a mix of in-person and online programming, Brenda is one of MSU Extension's most sought after educators. Brenda helps prospective homeowners navigate the process of becoming first-time homeowners. Brenda's programs have helped hundreds qualify for first-time and special financing. In addition to homeownership, Brenda offers personal finance programs and an array of one-time presentations on various money-management topics. In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, Brenda has helped many struggling financially to stay in their homes, keep the lights and heat on, and make needed repairs. Ionia County homeowners Brenda helped in 2022 received \$117, 143.86 in assistance toward mortgages and utilities. Many of these homeowners had no where else to turn. They lacked personal financial skills, fell behind due to various hardships, and were unable to access available resources. Brenda was able to provide education and access.



## Help for homeowners with COVID-19 related financial hardships

The Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) is a \$9.961 billion federal program to help our country's most vulnerable homeowner households who are behind on their mortgages and other housing-related expenses due to the impacts of COVID-19. The purpose is to prevent mortgage delinquencies and defaults, foreclosures, loss of utilities or home energy services, and displacement of homeowners experiencing financial hardship after January 21, 2020. The HAF program was included in the American Rescue Plan Act and is overseen by the U.S. Treasury Department. It is administered by the states, territories, and tribes and nearly every state and territory has launched their HAF programs. The U.S. Department of the Treasury notified MSHDA on April 14, 2021 that it would allocate \$242,812,277 to the State of Michigan. This number was based on unemployed individuals and the number of mortgagors with delinquent mortgage payments. Applications opened to the general public on February 14, 2022.



Brenda assisted homeowners with the online Michigan Homeowner Assistance Fund (MIHAF) application upon request. Many of these homeowners did not have technology skills to self-apply and upload electronically required documents. She also provided follow-up to check their MIHAF status and communicate as needed until a decision was made.

As a HUD certified housing counselor, Brenda could also provide in-depth mortgage counseling to homeowners including communicating with their mortgage servicers and submitting a mortgage assistance application. She also worked closely with several county Treasurers who referred homeowners facing foreclosure for delinquent property taxes. When these struggling homeowners are helped it's a win for them and the local economy. Brenda's office is located in downtown Ionia, but she has helped homeowners throughout the region. In five of the six MSU Extension district counties (Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, and Montcalm) Brenda has helped 82 applicants successfully apply for \$405,507.35 (dollars). Brenda's work is another example of MSU Extension improving the lives of Michigan families. We are grateful for the impact Brenda makes!



## **MSU Extension staff located in Ionia County**

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Bill Hendrian	District 8 Director	616-527-5358	hendria2@msu.edu
Brenda Long	FHE Senior Extension Educator	616-527-5357	longbr@msu.edu
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Roxanne Turner	CYI / 4-H Supervising Educator	517-546-3950	turnerr@msu.edu

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## **Additional MSU Extension staff serving Ionia County**

Paola Bacigalupo Sanguesa	Dairy Educator	970-888-1356	paolabs@msu.edu
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# Collaboration Across MSU Extension

MSU Extension is an organization comprised of individuals with broad knowledge of subject matters related to a particular discipline, such as field crops, nutrition, or youth development. Having four MSU Extension Institutes gives the ability to bring together cross-disciplinary expertise to address issues that are multifaceted and complex. For example, MSU Extension Educators and Program Instructors have worked together on physical and financial health issues, agricultural and stress issues, economic and community development and conservation issues, and issues that span generations.

Your local office is housed with experts in particular fields. Individuals may serve in the Agricultural and Agribusiness Institute, the Children and Youth Institute, the Health and Nutrition Institute or our Community, Food and Environment Institute. However, even if you do not have a local expert for the issue that you need addressed, MSU Extension has the unique functionality of drawing from a statewide pool of experts to make sure that you have the information that you need. In addition, the MSU Extension website [www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu) is maintained and updated on a regular basis. We are always looking for ways to collaborate with each other to apply knowledge to the critical issues you face.

**Through successful partnership and collaboration with Ionia County, MSU Extension is able to continue its local presence and to provide vital educational resources and programming in such areas as community and economic development, agriculture, land use, health and nutrition, and youth development.**

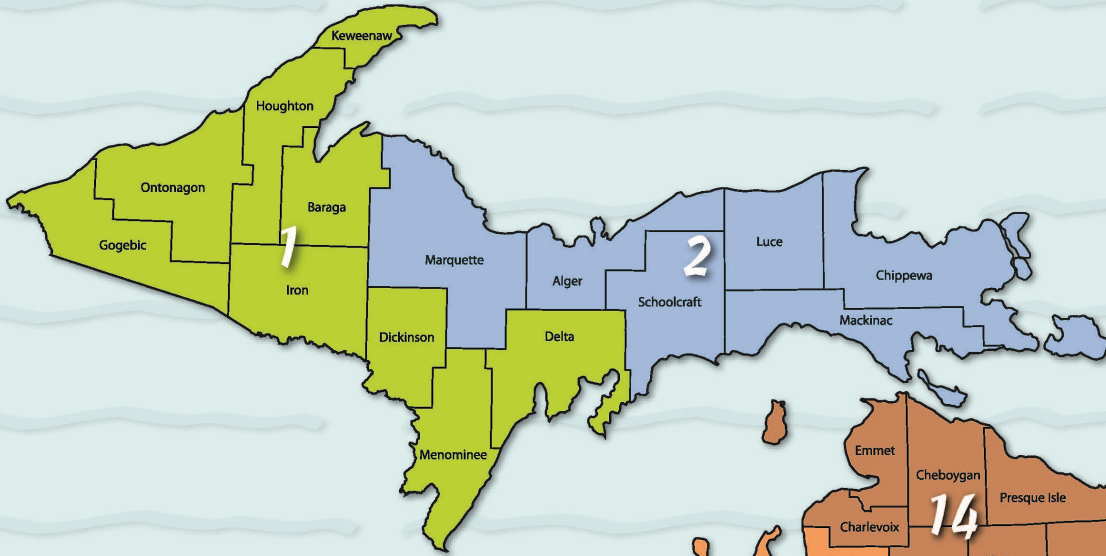
**Thank you Ionia County!**

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**MISSION:**

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

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