



Ottawa County 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



4,138 youth participated in 4-H, early childhood or after school programs



1,427 adults and youth benefited from health and nutrition programs



\$55,765,848 total economic impact of MSU to Ottawa County



\$1,957,297 spending with local businesses



\$10,283,616 MSU financial aid for Ottawa County students



720 residents educated about the Grand River Dredging Project Proposal

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, MSU Extension has continued to provide exceptional programming in Ottawa County. MSU Extension works to meet community needs by partnering with local organizations to bring programming that directly impacts county residents' lives.

We're excited to present the 2019 Annual Report that gives an overview of MSU Extension's accomplishments and ongoing work.

We are passionate about serving Ottawa County and we look forward to a new year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Erin Moore
District 7 Director



CONTACT



Ottawa MSU Extension
12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, MI 49460



canr.msu.edu/outreach
msue.ottawacounty@msu.edu



Michigan State University Extension



616-994-4580



@MSUExtension

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Program Highlights



With Beverley's help, a team from Ottawa County took top honors at the Junior Dairy Quiz Bowl. Team members were Delbert Smith, Brandon Dreyer, Kyle Killebrew, and Josiah Tripp.



A 4-H SPIN club is a special interest club where five or more young people get together to learn about a topic of interest. This model provides flexibility in when and how long groups meet.



Kids learn to make rockets out of straws at the Herrick District Library.

4-H VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Beverley Brower has volunteered with Ottawa County 4-H for over 32 years. Each year, Beverley takes two weeks of vacation time from her job to take a delegation of youth to the MSU 4-H Dairy Days in East Lansing and the 4-H classes at the Ottawa County Fair in Holland. Beverley is instrumental in preparing the youth for the events. At Dairy Days the youth participate in dairy judging & quiz bowl competitions. In addition to running Bell 4-H club, Beverley volunteers her time to the Ottawa County 4-H Dairy committee & the 4-H Spring Achievements committee. While Beverley's own children have long since aged out of 4-H, her dedication to the 4-H program is invaluable. In 2019, Ottawa County had over 200 adult volunteers dedicate their time serving the youth of the Ottawa County 4-H program.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Susan Fenton, 4-H Program Coordinator, coordinated a group enrollment activity at Boys and Girls Club Southside in Holland to teach youth leadership, communication, and team building. In total, 15 youth participated in an activity where they had to assemble mixed up puzzles by calling "meetings" to collaborate with other groups. Susan also did a Messy Science club with the Boys and Girls Club that reached 42 youth. These clubs are examples of a special interest club or "SPIN" club. These clubs help 4-H reach kids who aren't able or interested in participating in the traditional clubs of 4-H.

SPACE EXPLORATION

In June of 2019, the 4-H program hosted a recruitment event at the Herrick District Library for elementary aged students. There were 27 youth in attendance. The kids made straw rockets to compliment the library's theme of outer space exploration. These events are a good way to promote 4-H in an areas that many are not traditionally participating. Due to the wide variety of projects offered in 4-H, our youth development team can easily adapt and augment another organization's missions and goals while staying true to one of the 4-H goals of growing kids who are confident and strong, curious and capable.

Program Highlights

SOLAR IN AGRICULTURE

In an effort to help farmers understand the renewable energy landscape, nuances of solar leases, zoning considerations, and accompanying tax implications, MSU Extension and Michigan Farm Bureau sponsored a program called “Shining a Light on Solar in Agriculture” for farmers at four locations around the state. The meetings also attracted utility personnel, solar energy consultants, solar developers, land owners, and appointed and elected government officials with zoning responsibilities. MSU Extension staff with lease agreement, tax, and zoning expertise provided the educational content.



Through research and outreach efforts, the MSU Extension bioenergy team works to help the citizens of Michigan reach sustainable bioenergy and bioproduct goals.

DAIRY EDUCATION

Dairy Educator, Martin Mangual, reached 72 people with dairy education. This ranged from individual on-site farm consultations, to milk quality, succession planning, parlor protocol, downed cow management, and hands-on animal handling training. On September 24, 2019 MSU Extension coordinated and hosted a meeting with the Young progressive dairy group of West Michigan. The topic for the event was issues with 2019 corn harvest. At this meeting, there were many MSU Extension professionals present that tackled different issues pertinent to the demographic.



MSU Extension provides easy-to-access information, specialized dairy programs, ranging from online resources to educational seminars, to dairy educators located throughout the state.

HOLLAND BEEKEEPERS

Dr. Adam Ingraio, an MSU Extension Educator serving as the organization’s liaison to Veteran programming, launched a signature program called Heroes to Hives which has become widely popular around the state. Heroes to Hives is a unique program through MSU Extension that seeks to address financial and personal wellness of veterans through professional training and community development centered around beekeeping. In 2019, Adam, who is also an experienced beekeeper, travelled to Ottawa County to present at the Holland Beekeepers Association. Adam covered hive inspections, leading causes of death for bees, safety gear, tools and safe handling. There were 63 beekeepers in attendance at the workshop.



Since 2016, Heroes to Hives has trained 456 military veterans and their dependents that currently manage over 2,000 bee hives across the US.

Program Highlights



MSU Extension helps veterans access the benefits they have fought for.

VETERAN OUTREACH

In 2019, MSU Extension was awarded a USDA/MDHHS grant for Veteran Outreach. Steve Whittington joined the MSU Extension team in May as a Program Instructor for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Outreach to Veterans. He has met with Veteran Service Organizations such as American Legion, Grand Haven Momentum Center, the Veterans Homefront by Benchmark and VA Home Loan Professionals at Realtor for 616 Homes and Realtor Envoy Mortgage. Steve is dedicated to working with veterans and veteran families to help them determine their benefit eligibility, evaluate their options and learn about additional support services.



MSU Extension helps improve greenhouse crop production and business management by providing trusted information on new production techniques and management strategies.

Photo credit: Heidi Lindberg, MSU Extension.

NURSERY TOUR

Charles Gould and Heidi Lindberg organized the “Energy, Labor-Saving, and Sustainability Greenhouse Field Day” on January 22, 2019. They worked with two local greenhouses/nurseries (Countryside Greenhouse of Allendale and Spring Meadow Nurseries) to showcase practices that save labor, save and produce energy, and improve efficiency. A total of 68 people— representing 13 Michigan counties- attended the two greenhouse tours, lunch, and afternoon sessions. The tour evaluation shows that all respondents would be making changes to their growing and labor management practices as a result of the meeting.



March Garden Day featured lectures on topics such as pollinators, pests, and community gardens.

CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

MSU Extension co-hosted a March Garden Day with the West Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association. The event was held at the Grand Haven Community Center. Consumer Horticulture Educator, Rebecca Finneran, delivered the keynote presentation entitled, “Romantic, Inspiring, Educational—Public Gardens of Today”. This lecture brought together a historic look at public gardening throughout the centuries to emphasize the importance of research-based learning at university gardens and other noted gardens. There were 161 people in attendance, of which 80 were from Ottawa County.

Program Highlights

EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS

The MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program is a long-standing program that trains Michigan residents to share science-based, environmentally-sound gardening knowledge. Additionally, Extension Master Gardeners share environmentally responsible gardening practices, ideas for improving food security, and are committed to improving the quality of life in Michigan through horticulture-based volunteerism. In Ottawa County, there are 74 active Extension Master Gardeners. In addition, 97 residents took advantage of MSU Extension soil tests as well as 24 commercial enterprises.



Master Gardener Coordinator, Deb Gulick, and Ottawa County Master Gardener, Barry Andersen, show off tomatoes in the Holland Community Garden. Barry has over 10,000 volunteer hours with MSU Extension!

2019 APPLE CRUNCH

On October 10th, 2019, students and adults alike participated in the annual Farm-to-School month event that helps raise awareness for Michigan Apples. Statewide, over 850 institutions participated (schools, hospitals, early childhood centers, non-profits, businesses, colleges/universities). MSU Extension Educators collaborated on this project to provide support for development of the registration page, crunch resource guides, local apple sourcing support, promotion of the event through Facebook, and participation in Crunch events in our region. In Ottawa County, there were 2196 apple crunchers!



With more than 900 million pounds of apples produced per year, apples are Michigan's largest fruit crop.

HEMP 101

In the 2018 Farm Bill, USDA made provision for commercialization of industrial hemp in the United States for the first time; however, the regulatory framework was not released until the Fall of 2019. Calls and emails continued to come in to MSU Extension offices throughout the state from people looking for general information about industrial hemp as well as recommendations on numerous topics from seed sources to soil fertility to plant spacing to irrigation. MSU Extension has created a resource hub for hemp production that includes an FAQ for industrial hemp production. Additionally, MSU Extension hosted a “Hemp Production 101” Webinar series that had 254 registrants. Interesting tidbit – of those who participated, 40% were not currently farmers but interested in learning more about growing hemp.



For more information and resources on hemp production in Michigan, go to <https://www.canr.msu.edu/hemp/>

Grand River Information Dissemination



A group led by MSU Extension Educator, Dr. Dan O’Keefe, performed summer sampling that documented shallow gravel habitat and a diverse mussel community in the Ottawa County waters of the Grand River that had not previously been documented as part of the Grand River Dredging project.

Photo credit: Dr. Dan O’Keefe

The issue: In 2018, the State Legislature authorized \$3M to dredge a large section of the Grand River—essentially creating a navigable path for large boats to travel from Grandville to Lake Michigan. The issue that arose was a lack of education around the environmental and economic impacts of the proposed project. The Grand River Waterway proposal is not a typical harbor dredging project, but rather a river channelization project that would remove roughly 50 acres of shallow habitat through dredging portions of the Grand River in Kent and Ottawa counties. The project sought to create a 7-foot deep channel through a 22.5-mile stretch of the Grand River between Grand Rapids and Bass River State Recreation Area near Eastmanville.

How MSU Extension is helping: MSU Extension Sea Grant Educator, Dr. Dan O’Keefe, drafted a white paper, compiling literature from across the United States on similar projects entitled “Summary of Research Related to the Potential Physical and Biological Impacts of Dredging to Channelize the Grand River.” This white paper served as a basis for Michigan residents to understand the science around the proposed project.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2019, Dan was invited to present to local governments, community groups, park visitors, and others and conducted 17 presentations on the potential physical and biological impacts of channelizing roughly 23 miles of the Grand River between Grand Rapids and Bass River State Recreation Area. He reached 720 residents with evidenced-based education on the river habitat and potential impact of the project.

Summary of research: This channelization dredging project would have removed 50 acres of shallow habitat, including riffles used by state-threatened mussels and spawning state-threatened river redhorse. The project also had the potential to indirectly impact roughly 590 acres of off-channel river habitat. Economic impacts touted by the developer who supported the channelization project did not account for the full cost of maintenance dredging, snag removal, ecological impacts, and negative impacts to existing businesses, property owners, and recreational users of the river.

During 2019, 48 groups developed formal resolutions or expressed support for formal resolutions regarding this dredging project. Many of those groups were present at MSU Extension presentations or received the white paper, which provided an unbiased review of the science regarding the impacts of this type of dredging. All 48 groups were opposed to the dredging, with many citing the same concerns presented in the white paper and skepticism regarding economic benefit claims.

Program Highlights



Holland Middle School successfully acquired a new workstation portable kitchen, where MSU Extension will host it's classes!

NUTRITION EDUCATION

This year MSU Extension continued our work with Holland Middle School, building on the success of last year's Hoop House design/build. As a partner agency we provided support for STEM teacher Bill Boerman as he successfully fundraised for a 10 workstation portable kitchen for use in the HPS Middle School building. We are now working with the 8th grade STEM students as well as faculty and staff to develop site specific curriculum for use with this outstanding resource. The unit itself is constructed of commercial steel with an oven, hot and cold water and an induction cooktop as well as cooking equipment and fits through a standard doorway.



Participants in MSU Extension's nutrition programming learn how to build nutritious diets on a budget.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Community Nutrition Instructor, Amy Prins, partners with Love INC and their life skills class. Love In the Name of Christ partners with churches to help people with food resources and life skills in the Hudsonville and Jenison area. During the series of a 6-week class, participants gain evidence-based knowledge about healthy eating, resource management and increasing physical activity. In addition to educating on nutrition, Amy works with organizations throughout the county on creating environments that encourage healthy eating with SNAP-Ed best practices on policy, systems and environmental changes.



MSU Extension has a menu of programs that offer education in mental health awareness, anger management and reducing stress.

MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

MSU Extension has a growing portfolio of social and emotional health classes. Holly Tiret and Georgina Perry, both MSU Educators who are specialized in these topics, implemented diverse programming around the county. In 2019, they partnered with Hillcrest Church, Arbor Circle, Four Points Center for Successful Aging, Loutit Library, West Early Childhood Center, Chester Ray, Harbor House among many others and offered programs such as Stress Less with Mindfulness. Stress Less with Mindfulness is a six-class series for teens, adults and seniors that introduces mindfulness concepts and practices to reduce stress and related symptoms. Together, Holly and Georgina reached 188 people in Ottawa County.

Program Highlights

REGIONAL FISHERIES WORKSHOP

Sea Grant Educator, Daniel O'Keefe, works with Steelheaders and Great Lakes Anglers from along the Southwest Michigan coast line. O'Keefe regularly updates the groups on Sea Grant citizen science and updates on the status of Lake Michigan fisheries and stocking rates. In April, O'Keefe presented at the South Haven Moose Lodge to attendants from Van Buren, Allegan and Kalamazoo Counties. Michigan Sea Grant is a partnership between Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. O'Keefe reached 48 Ottawa residents with Fishery Education.



Michigan Sea Grant is part of the National Sea Grant College Program and receives funding from state, tribal, business and other sources.

BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION

Small fruit Educators, Carlos Garcia-Salazar and Mark Longstroth, hosted various workshops in the fruit belt (Van Buren, Allegan, Ottawa) to equip farmers with the knowledge needed for successful harvests. Topics included advances in pest and disease control in blueberries that resulted in trials conducted at MSU Extension. Additionally, there were two special trainings for Hispanic blueberry growers that covered spotted winged drosophila and integrated pest management. The small-fruit team continues to look for innovative ways to protect one of Michigan's most treasured crops.



Michigan blueberry growers produce about 100 million pounds of blueberries every year, making Michigan a leader in blueberry production.

SOYBEAN PRODUCTION

MSU Extension Soybean Educator, Mike Staton, was approached by Zeeland Farm Services to give a presentation on reducing soybean production costs. Mike had written up a two page report that included twelve specific recommendations for soybean growers that caught the attention of many growers in the area. His recommendations included crop rotation, early planting, reducing tillage operations, and selecting pest resistant varieties among many others. In a time where soybean prices are low, these recommendations become very valuable in the industry. There were 48 Ottawa County residents in attendance at the presentation held at Zeeland Farm Services.



MSU Extension provides research-based field crop production recommendations and resources.

Featured County Story—Delayed Planting



Photo: Deep ruts created by harvesting soybeans in wet soil conditions.

Photo by Mike Staton, MSU Extension

The issue: Throughout Michigan and the Midwest, prolonged wet weather and flooding in spring 2019 put farmers in a difficult financial position. Many farmers delayed planting and greatly adjusted management practices. Some fields were not planted at all. Due to these conditions, farmers faced a unique set of challenges in fall of 2019 making harvest related decisions.

How MSU Extension is helping: MSU Extension's statewide network of agricultural educators have responded to this situation by tracking growing conditions, working individually with farmers, hosting crop update sessions and writing educational articles detailing how farmers could adjust to inhospitable conditions, make difficult choices and apply for crop damage assistance. Because this issue has the potential to greatly affect farm income, many farmers found themselves under financial stress.

MSU Extension provides programming dedicated to [serving farmers under stress](#) - whether it be physical, financial, emotional or some combination of pressures. Farmers who are struggling can find a [MSU Extension expert](#) who can help them or utilize the [ask a question online](#) resource so MSU Extension can connect them to the proper resources.

Managing farm stress: Taking care of crops and animals is hard on farmers and agribusiness professionals. Caring for your own health and wellness in this high-stress profession is often overlooked but is just as critical as caring for your farm business.

From weather, to equipment breakdowns, a lot of things can cause stress. Researchers at MSU Extension are conducting a research study to learn more about struggles Michigan farmers experience and what types of information may help.

Farmers know how to take care of their animals and crops, taking careful steps to ensure they are healthy and safe, yet farmers may need support and encouragement to tend to their own mental and physical stress and fatigue. Stress becomes especially intense when an on-farm injury occurs, commodity prices are low or natural disasters decrease yield.

Whether these stresses come from a financial issue or the stresses of everyday life, MSU Extension can help. If you're concerned about yourself, a family member, a friend or a neighbor MSU Extension has resources and educators that can help you identify and manage stress.

****MSU Extension was granted a one time \$500,000 award to implement farm stress programs. Please visit our dedicated farm stress site to learn more about programs offered and the research being conducted. https://www.canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress/index ****

MSU Extension staff located in Ottawa County

Katelyn Brolick	Sea Grant Support	616-994-4542	brolickk@msu.edu
Carlos Garcia-Salazar	Small Fruit Educator	616-994-4545	garcias4@msu.edu
Charles Gould	Renewable Energy Educator	616-994-4547	gouldm@msu.edu
Jane Gould	Program Support Staff	616-994-4548	jagould@msu.edu
Melissa Haug	4-H Program Coordinator	616-994-4582	haugmeli@msu.edu
Kelli Headley	Senior Extension Clerk	616-994-4544	kelli.headley@affiliate.msu.edu
Christian Kleinjans	Community Nutrition Instructor	616-994-4549	kleinj22@msu.edu
Heidi Lindberg	Greenhouse & Nursery Educator	616-994-4701	wollaege@msu.edu
Martin Mangual	Dairy Educator	616-994-4581	carrasq1@msu.edu
Erin Moore	District 7 Director	616-994-4573	mooree16@msu.edu
Daniel O'Keefe	Sea Grant Educator	616-994-4572	okeefed@msu.edu
Amy Prins	Community Nutrition Instructor	616-994-4541	prinsamy@msu.edu
Brenda Raterink	Ag. In the Classroom Program	616-994-4540	raterin3@msu.edu
Angela Van Order	Master Gardener Program	616-994-4580	vanorde7@msu.edu

Additional MSU Extension staff serving Ottawa County

Jan Brinn	4-H Youth Educator	269-673-0370	brinn@msu.edu
Tina Conklin	MSU Product Center	269-673-0370	conkli74@msu.edu
Christi Demitz	Disease Prevention Educator	616-632-7881	demitzch@msu.edu
Beth Ferry	Swine Educator	269-445-4438	franzeli@msu.edu
Rebecca Finneran	Consumer Horticulture Educator	616-632-7886	finneran@msu.edu
Ron Goldy, PhD	Vegetable Educator	269-944-4545	goldy@msu.edu
Jane Hart	Food Safety Educator	231-724-6694	hartjan@msu.edu
Amy Irish-Brown	Fruit Educator	616-632-7891	irisha@msu.edu
Glenda Kilpatrick	Supervising 4-H Educator	616-632-7879	kilpatri@msu.edu
Stephanie Marino	Supervising Nutrition Educator	616-632-7889	marinos1@msu.edu
Jill O'Donnell	Christmas Tree Educator	231-779-9480	odonne10@msu.edu
Jinnifer Ortquist	Financial Management Educator	616-632-7874	ortquisi@msu.edu
Georgina Perry	Social Emotional Educator	616-632-7884	perrygeo@msu.edu
Mike Staton	Soybean Educator	269-673-0370	staton@msu.edu
Holly Tiret	Social Emotional Educator	616-632-7893	tiret@msu.edu
Steve Whittington	Veteran Program Instructor	616-632-7890	whitti34@msu.edu
Kendra Wills	Product Center Counselor	616-608-7424	wills@msu.edu
Garrett Ziegler	Community Foods Educator	616-608-7436	zieglerg@msu.edu

Collaboration Across MSU Extension

MSU Extension is an organization comprised of individuals with broad knowledge of subject matters related 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 & Environment Institute. However, even if you do not have a local expert for the Extension 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 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 Ottawa 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 Ottawa County!

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.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jeffrey W. Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. The 4-H Name and Emblem have special protections from Congress, protected by code 18 USC 707.