



Barry County

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



2,353 youth participated in 4-H and youth development programs



\$12,253,236 total economic impact in Barry County



\$216,424 spending with local business



MSU Extension website received 16,330 visits from Barry County residents



Barry County students received \$2,587,552 in financial aid from MSU



497 Barry County residents participated in the 2019 Apple Crunch

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, MSU Extension has continued to provide exceptional programming in Barry County. MSU Extension works to meet community needs by partnering with local organizations to bring programming that directly impacts county residents' lives. This year's highlights include innovative programming to address delayed planting issues across the state of Michigan. MSU Extension also received a one-time award of \$500,000 in the state budget to address farm stress throughout Michigan.



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

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Michigan State University Extension



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Program Highlights



MSU Extension Director, Dr. Jeff Dwyer, chats with Chef Justin during the 4-H Culinary Arts Club meeting.

CULINARY ARTS

One of the most popular summer 4-H clubs is the Garden Row to Café Table – Culinary arts program. 12 youth participated in a series of 8 learning sessions harvesting and using vegetables grown in the culinary garden about garden harvesting, food safety, cross contamination, and kitchen etiquette. Each week they were presented with nutrition education centered around the veggies grown and used. This year, MSU Extension's Director, Dr. Jeff Dwyer, visited the club to get a hands-on cooking lesson and to meet the youth involved. As always, the program culminates in serving 80 guests at a plated dinner where they had the opportunity to plan the menu, feature the vegetables they had grown, run table service and learn how to present an attractive plate. A great experience for all involved!



Senior Show Champions pause for a photo at the 2019 Barry County Fair.

BARRY COUNTY FAIR

Our Barry County 4-H youth and volunteers were busy all year long developing critical skills and gaining the experience to be leaders in their local communities as they prepared for the annual Barry County Fair. In 2019, 764 youth members, with the help of an amazing 270 volunteer leaders, participated in the Fair and along with the amazing memories and experiences, the youth raised a combined sales total of \$746,352! All of the proceeds from sales go directly to 4-H members with the exception of approximately 2% which goes to the committees managing the project areas. This shows a tremendous respect for and support of 4-H in Barry County. Members utilize funds to save for future education, first automobiles, business start-up or support, and school clothes and supplies. leaders.



Freshman throughout the county participated in Career Day to gain exposure to the many

CAREER DAY IN BARRY

As a part of the leadership team of the Barry Career Access Network (BCAN), MSU Extension participated in Career Day in December. The team utilized the "Apprenticeship 101" exercise with over 100 high school freshman that participated in the event that day. BCAN has a goal to increase the percentage of Greater Barry County residents with post-high school certificates or degrees to 60% by the year 2025. The goals of the group are well aligned to those of the MSU Extension 4-H program which strives to empower youth with leadership skills for a lifetime. MSU Extension looks forward to continuing this collaboration with BCAN.

2019 4-H AmeriCorps SPIN Clubs



Photo: The 4-H Bakeology SPIN club doesn't mind a few dirty dishes!

Every year, the MSU Extension 4-H team puts their heads together to figure out new, innovative ways to bring in new youth to 4-H. In 2019, Barry County hosted an AmeriCorps volunteer to help set up Special Interest or “SPIN” clubs throughout the county. The topics covered can be anything of interest to the youth: nature, heritage arts, science, engineering, gardening, technology, and more! SPIN clubs are led by MSU Extension staff or volunteers who have a passion and want to share their knowledge with young people. Each club meets a minimum of six times but not more than eight times within an eight week period. Whitney Pennington, the Barry County AmeriCorps Volunteer, had a knack for creative club naming. In the summer of 2019, she hosted “Adulting 101” for personal finance for high schoolers, “How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse” for emergency preparedness, “Keeping it Reel” for Filmmaking, and “Get Ultimate” for ultimate Frisbee.

The SPIN club model recognizes that both youth and adults often have a limited amount of “free time,” as a result of multiple interests. SPIN clubs have the flexibility to provide positive youth development and adult mentorship through varying time frames, giving both youth and leaders more flexibility in when and how long they meet. By implementing SPIN clubs in Barry County, we're also able to raise awareness about 4-H and reach more youth.



Program Highlights



MSU Extension is here to assist farmers, families and individuals with issues such as succession & estate planning, budgets, and cost production.

FARM MANAGEMENT

MSU Extension's Farm Management team has a mission to help farmers, agriculturally-related businesses, industries, families and individuals to improve their lives and achieve their goals through an educational process that applies management, production and economic knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities. Jon Laporte, MSU Extension Farm Management Educator, met with 23 Barry County farms in 2019 to review tax liability and to review and to support their farm management strategies. Prior to meeting with Jon the 23 farms had a combined total of \$838,438 in estimated tax liability. After that, the total was estimated at \$601,965! That is an average tax liability reduction of just over \$10,000 per farm!



Dr. Jeff Dwyer, Director of MSU Extension, visits with the Extension Master Gardeners at the Barry County Fair.

CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

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 and ideas for improving food security, and are committed to improving the quality of life in Michigan through horticulture-based volunteerism. In Barry County, there are certified 36 Extension Master Gardeners. Additionally, 17 Barry residents took advantage of the EMG promoted soil testing.



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

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). Extension Educators collaborating on this project provided 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 Barry County, there were 497 apple crunchers!

Program Highlights

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

MSU Extension's two Social and Emotional Health Educators, Holly Tired and Georgina Perry, were successful in bringing programming into Barry County in 2019. Barry County residents took advantage of classes such as "Relax: Alternatives to Anger" and "Mindful Laughter" and "Stress Less: Laughter is Good Medicine." Additionally, in partnership with the Barry County Commission on Aging, MSU Extension hosted a Caregiver Wellness Day—a free event for caregivers of adults living with dementia. The program activities included stress reduction, chair massages, Tai Chi, drumming circle, hand paraffin dip.



MSU Extension offers many programs about disease self-management, which provide valuable information for caregivers of those with chronic health conditions.

CITIZEN SCIENCE IN CONSERVATION

Water Educator, Erik Elgin, presented at the 2nd annual meeting for Our Common Ground held at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. The gathering brings together nature centers, land conservancies, parks, state departments and anyone interested in creating and supporting a lasting conservation legacy. MSU Extension educated on the many different citizen science program they host such as Master Naturalist and the Conservation Stewards Program, as well as the benefit they bring to the community. Throughout the year, Barry County residents participate in many of MSU Extension natural resource programs.



MSU Extension hosts a variety of programs around natural resources, and water quality.

HEALTH & NUTRITION

In late 2019, Sydney Miller joined the Barry County MSU Extension team as the Community Nutrition Instructor. Sydney will serve the residents of Barry County by working with local partners to deliver programs like Cooking Matters, a six sessions series that involves instruction as well as the opportunity to prepare a meal together. Some other benefits include opportunities to learn about healthy fruits and vegetables that are not as common to many consumers, helping empower the participant to expand their healthy choices in the kitchen. Participants also learn money saving strategies to help them budget for and prepare healthy meals that do not break the bank. Sydney is looking forward to bringing these resources to the community.



MSU Extension helps to equip people with the knowledge and resources to make healthy choices for themselves and their families.

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 Barry County

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Collaboration Across MSU Extension

For more than 100 years, MSU Extension staff have been helping people in our communities. MSU Extension values the opportunities made possible by our federal, state and local partners. In addition, our staff often seek grants that focus on particular needs that enable us to focus our efforts where necessary. In fact, grants made up the largest percentage of our statewide funding in 2019. Another important resource comes from donors. MSU Extension receives generous support from individuals and organizations who are passionate about specific work we do and want to make possible even more education. Donors fund local programs or offer opportunities to youth to participate in activities beyond the local program. Gifts sometimes fund research positions or just help boost local operations. To learn more about giving to MSU Extension, visit extension.msu.edu/giving.

Through successful partnership and collaboration with Barry 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 Barry County!



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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