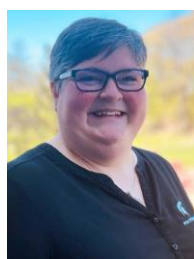


# OSCODA COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024



## Message from the District Director

At MSU Extension, we believe that learning and working together make our communities stronger. In 2024, we helped farmers grow food more efficiently and overcome emerging challenges, supported individuals and families in making healthy choices and gave young people opportunities to develop leadership skills and explore interests and careers. Our programs bring people together to solve problems and create new opportunities across District 4.

This year, we focused on supporting local communities, improving stewardship of our natural resources, and helping people prepare for the future. Whether through 4-H youth programs, farming workshops, community development support, or health and wellness education, MSU Extension continues to provide valuable resources that make a difference in everyday life.

We are proud of the work we've done and excited for what's ahead. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Together, we can build a brighter future for Oscoda County.

## Impact



**6** commercial, farm, and homeowner soil samples processed



**18** participants in county agriculture programs



**251** participants in community, food, and environment programs from Oscoda County



**332** participants from the county attending programs



**63** programs (across the state) attended by participants from this county



**29,264,562** contacts through social media, web activity, e-newsletters, and handouts

## Bovine leukemia virus (BLV) Dairy Herd Consultation

A farm visit was completed with an Amish dairy producer in Oscoda County to review the results of his herd BLV test and to talk about risk factors for disease transmission and control. Senior Extension Educator for Dairy and Beef Phil Durst met in person with the farmer and had other project team members the phone to add any additional information and answer any questions. By connecting farmers with researchers and MSU Extension staff, we are helping farmers overcome challenging issues on their farms that affect profitability, animal health, and which sustain small farmers.



## NEMIGLSI: Students engaged in Place-Based Education (PBE) Learning and Stewardship

### REGIONAL INITIATIVE (COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT)

**Regionally – 1,803 total students** were engaged, through their learning, in Great Lakes and natural resources stewardship projects in nine northeast Michigan counties during 2023-2024 school year. These reflect students we engaged (or continued to engage) in PBE learning and stewardship during the Spring 2024.

### IN OSCODA COUNTY

**120 students (2 educators) from Oscoda County** were directly supported in fielding PBE stewardship projects in their communities during Spring 2024 (Jan-June) portion of 2023-2024 school year.

These school project teams included:

- Fairview Schools (6-8, 8-12 Grades) – 2 teachers, 120 students

### NEMIGLSI NETWORK & SUPPORTS FACILITATED

MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant (MSG), as Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (NEMIGLSI) network leadership partners, supported these schools and students in fielding place-based education (PBE) projects on stewardship in Oscoda County. Sustained Professional Learning Opportunities (PLOS) provided in support of these PBE efforts via NEMIGLSI, MSUE, the Center for Great Lakes Literacy teacher education trainings for educators and community partners throughout year. Examples include: a networking meeting, Eco Careers fair for middle schools, Lake Huron PBE Summer Teacher Institute, Saginaw Bay Wetland Education on marine debris, Vernal Pool Patrol training with Michigan Natural Features Inventory, Teaching Great Lakes Literacy program, providing educational resources (e.g., posters or publications), and more.



## 4-H Growth Potential in Oscoda County

In the past, Oscoda County benefitted from the positive impacts of 4-H youth development through the involvement of dedicated volunteers and engaged youth. While there are currently no active 4-H clubs or volunteers in the county, Michigan State University Extension recognizes the strong foundation that past participation has built and remains committed to revitalizing 4-H opportunities in the area.

Looking ahead, there is significant potential to re-engage the community by supporting youth and adult volunteers in forming new clubs, offering short-term SPIN (Special Interest) programs, and connecting youth with statewide 4-H events and learning experiences. Partnerships with schools, libraries, and community organizations can help identify areas of interest—from agriculture and natural resources to STEM, creative arts, and leadership development.

MSU Extension stands ready to collaborate with Oscoda County residents to create meaningful, hands-on learning experiences for local youth that reflect the unique strengths and values of this community.



**237** Oscoda County residents participated in children and youth programs in 2024



## Gaining Mobility and Confidence Through Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention

Falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults, significantly impacting their mobility, independence and quality of life. Addressing these challenges is critical to promoting health, preventing injuries and improving quality of life for vulnerable populations. Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention is a class that is offered both online and in-person.

After taking an online Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention class, one participant shared her appreciation and that she had taken the class in both online and in-person formats, getting different benefits from each format. She appreciated being able to stand next to the instructor when in-person. She also appreciated being able to focus on the instructor and see the steps in greater detail when virtual, plus practicing from home. She shared that her balance and coordination have been greatly improved by participating in tai chi classes.



**"I'm really enjoying this class, you've helped me to recognize so many details I hadn't quite gotten right." – Participant quote**

## The value of partnerships:

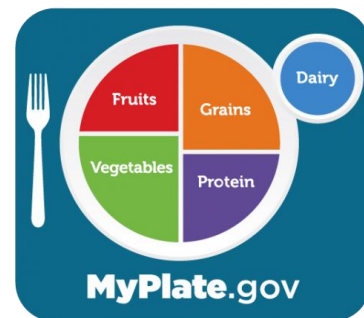
Michigan State University Extension engages community partnerships to leverage resources, expand outreach, and address local needs effectively. By collaborating with organizations, businesses, and government agencies, MSU Extension strengthens programs in agriculture, health, youth development and community vitality, fostering sustainable solutions and improving the well-being of individuals and communities across Michigan.

### Building a Healthier Oscoda County Through Partnership



At Michigan State University Extension, partnerships are a vital part of how we serve communities across Michigan. By working together with local schools, we are able to bring research-based programs directly to young people, helping them build the skills they need for a healthier future. Our partnership with Mio AuSable Schools is a great example of how MSU Extension supports the health and well-being of Oscoda County families through nutrition education.

In Mio AuSable Schools, MSU Extension delivered the Show Me Nutrition program to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students. This fun and interactive curriculum taught students about the importance of good nutrition and healthy habits. Students learned how to choose foods from all five MyPlate food groups and how to balance portions for a healthy eating pattern. They also explored the benefits of drinking water, eating fiber-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and choosing low-fat or fat-free dairy products or fortified soy beverages.



The lessons covered limiting added sugars, sodium and saturated fats, and encouraged students to stay active by playing sports like tennis or swimming. Students also talked about ways to reduce screen time, such as watching less TV or playing fewer video games.

Another important part of the program was food safety and basic cooking skills. Students learned how to safely prepare meals and snacks, helping them gain confidence in the kitchen.

By participating in Show Me Nutrition, Mio AuSable students took important steps toward promoting and maintaining a healthy weight and building lifelong healthy habits. MSU Extension is proud to partner with Mio AuSable Schools to help strengthen the health of Oscoda County's next generation.

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