



## Volunteer Learning Modules: Welcome to MSU Extension Part 1

### Overview

In this module volunteers gain an understanding of Michigan State University Extension. The module explores the Land Grant System, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and the origins of cooperative extension,

### Section 1: Land-Grants & MSU Extension

As the outreach arm of MSU, our goal is to help people throughout the state improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, families, businesses, and communities. MSU Extension focuses on four key areas of importance: leveraging natural and human assets, enhancing agriculture and agribusiness, improving health and nutrition, and preparing children and youth for the future.

- **Agriculture & Agribusiness:** MSU Extension focuses on seven key areas: animal health and wellbeing, fruit production, vegetable production, field crop research and education, ornamental plant sustainability and profitability, consumer gardening, and farm management.
- **Health & Nutrition:** MSU Extension teaches individuals about healthy lifestyle choices in relation to food and physical activity, safe food handling and preparation, and overall care for their health and wellbeing.
- **Children & Youth:** MSU Extension's goal is to prepare every child in the state with the knowledge, tools and skills to lead a healthy and productive life. To accomplish this, MSU Extension's children and youth programming focuses on two core audiences: parents and caregivers of children birth to age eight and young people ages five to 19.
- **Community, Food, & Environment:** MSU Extension's community, food and environment programming seeks to leverage Michigan's natural and human assets to strengthen community vitality

The first land-grant colleges were authorized on July 2, 1862, when President Abraham Lincoln signed the first Morrill Act into law. These *land-grants* took their name from the source of their federal support: the proceeds from grants of 30,000 acres of federal land to the Union states for each of their U.S. senators and representatives. Michigan was granted about 240,000 acres. Today, the nation has more than 110 land-grant colleges and universities (USDA, 2019). Michigan has four.

#### Resources:

- › Bay Mills Community College: (<https://www.bmcc.edu/>)
- › Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College: (<http://kbocc.org/>)
- › Saginaw-Chippewa Tribal College: (<https://www.sagchip.edu/>)
- › Michigan State University: (<https://www.msu.edu>)

**To contact an expert in your area, visit [extension.msu.edu/experts](https://extension.msu.edu/experts) or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)**

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## Section 2: Agriculture Experiment Stations

Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station were created in 1988 as part of the nationwide network of agricultural experiment stations that was authorized by the Hatch Act of 1887 to conduct research and development projects on behalf of farmers. In 1925, the Purnell Act added agricultural economics, rural sociology, and home economics to the experiment stations' mission.

Resources:

- › MSU AgBioResearch website: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/research/index>

## Section 3: Origins of the Cooperative Extension System

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever act which was named for Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of South Carolina. The act created the Cooperative Extension System and made land-grant schools responsible for overseeing Extension work in their states. From Extension offices in nearly every county across the nation, skilled and knowledgeable Extension workers began helping farmers and farm families apply the knowledge gained from research at land-grant schools to improve their lives.

MSU Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs, and opportunities. MSU Extension's connection to the university and the land-grant system is vital to our existence. With an MSU Extension presence in all 83 counties in Michigan we are committed to responding to the needs of Michigan residents.

Resources:

- › The History of MSU Extension: ([https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the\\_history\\_of\\_msu\\_extension](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the_history_of_msu_extension)) Dig deeper to understand how MSU Extension started and how the program has grown since the beginning.
- › MSU Extension website: (<https://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/>)