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Ottawa County 2021 Annual Report

Message From District Director

Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) brings the science, programs and resources of Michigan's land grant university to organizations, communities and individuals throughout the state. Our out-reach and engagement is built on a local basis, thanks to our county partnerships and more than 600 faculty and staff in offices across all 83 counties. Historically, most of our relationships have been maintained through in-person meetings and programs. Over the last few years, we have built up the breadth and quality of our website at extension.msu.edu, which now averages 1.25 million visitors per month. In 2021, we expanded our capacity to provide high-quality virtual education.



Working from home with the tools and support needed to help them succeed in a remote environment, MSUE program staff have continued to assist farmers through the growing season, elected officials and decision makers, parents, families and youth by meeting with them on virtual platforms through online meetings and webinars. With the work they have accomplished over the last months, staff have reported that they have learned that:

- Programs that are produced for a live audience and recorded allow more people to view the meetings in a time convenient for them;
- We are reaching audiences that would not be able to attend our programs in the past because of time, travel and disability;
- We are reaching local, regional, state, national and global audiences;
- We are able to share our expertise, ideas and best practices more efficiently across the state;
- A digital divide still exists, not all programs work in an on-line format, and nothing will replace our local, face to face, relationship-based work.

In the end, I believe the experience in on-line program development and investment in capacity will not only augment but strengthen our face-to-face work. Our programs will have greater reach than ever before and MSUE will be a leader in virtual education. Please contact me for more information and thank you for your continued support!

Erin Moore, District 7 Director



Ottawa County 2021

Health and Nutrition

In 2021, 78 Ottawa County residents took classes and accessed resources from MSU Extension's Food Safety team. These classes covered a variety of topics that helped residents gain the knowledge and training to prevent food borne illnesses. Some examples of the classes attended are below:

- Pantry Food Safety
- Winter Food Preservation
- Food Safety Q & A
- Michigan Cottage Food Law
- Investigating Food With Science
- Food Safety for Food Service Workers
- Knives 101
- Spring Food Preservation
- Pressure Canning
- Shopping & Storing MI Fresh Produce
- Safe Food = Healthy Kids
- Food Security - GVSU



Stress Less with Mindfulness & Stress Less Coffee Hour

As we all continued to adjust and manage our mental health over the last year, Ottawa County residents found resources that incorporated weekly Stress Less with Mindfulness and Stress Less Coffee Hour. These virtual experiences provided strategies for maintaining health during challenging times. In 2021, Ottawa County Residents attended 12 different program (43 participants).

RELAX Series

Our weekly RELAX Series focused on Alternatives to Anger. With participation from community members, there is certain to be a ripple effect throughout our community that ensures a positive impact. MSU Extension is very proud to have offered mindfulness and anger management training to Ottawa County residents during 2021 as COVID-19 continues to put a strain on people's lives and mental health wellbeing. In 2021, Ottawa County residents attended 24 different programs (71 participants).

Changing Negative Self Talk

In a continued effort to manage our mental health, residents (21 Ottawa County) dove deep into the ins and outs of how to change negative self-talk. We all have automatic thoughts, both positive and negative. Having more positive thoughts can influence how we manage stress. During this workshop, participants learned about the brains negativity bias and how it affects our response to stress, benefits of positive self-talk, and explored other tools for dealing with negative self-talk.

SNAP-ED

Ottawa County SNAP-Ed Instructors, Christian Kleinjans and Amy Prins, successfully modified their in-person interactive series to an online format due to the impact of COVID-19. The Teen Cuisine series and the Show Me Nutrition series help educate children about the importance of increasing their vegetable and fruit consumption as well as increase their physical activity. In 2021, Christian and Amy taught 406 Ottawa County children in 23 Classrooms about food and nutrition. The children learned about healthy eating, food resource management, physical activity and reduced sedentary behavior, healthy eating behaviors, and food resource management behaviors.

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Ottawa County 2021

Consumer Horticulture

In 2021, 259 Ottawa residents took classes and accessed resources from the MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture team. These classes help equip residents with knowledge and training they need to implement environmentally responsible gardening practices. Through continued education, knowledge sharing and creation of more livable communities, the MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture program continues to make the Great Lakes State one of the most diversely beautiful states in the country. Below are examples of classes accessed by Ottawa residents:

- Basic Home Hydroponics
- Master Gardener Training
- Interactive Pruning Workshops
- Tree Fruit Pruning
- Backyard Fruit 101
- Let's Learn about Invasive Plants
- Insidious Woody Plant Invaders
- Adding Flair to your Garden with Ground Cover
- Unravelling Pesticide Use in the Home Garden
- Controlling Invasive Plants in Landscaping
- Integrated Wildlife Damage Management
- Smart Gardening with Bulbs



MSU Extension Cabin Fever Conversations

Does gardening programming come to halt all winter long? Absolutely not! It may have been snowing outside, but with Cabin Fever Conversations, participants started dreaming and scheming for time spent with their plant friends. Starting in February 2021 and lasting for ten weeks, Ottawa participants joined to learn about gardening and to connect with other gardening enthusiasts from around the state. This series was so popular that it will be repeated for a third year in a row!



Ottawa County 2021

Ornamental Horticulture

Summer 2021 Michigan Christmas Tree Association Meeting

The Ornamental Horticulture Team scheduled an in-person tour of three tree farms in Michigan. The team covered emerging and key disease issues, along with best management practices. Participants, which included 34 Ottawa County residents, learned about creating an effective website that will attract potential customers to their farm, and how to create easy arrangements using Christmas greens.

Smart Gardening Outreach at Windmill Island Fall Festival

MSU Extension was invited to share Smart Gardening information with guests during Windmill Island's annual Fall Festival on October 9, 2021. Education provided included soil testing, IPM and smart lakefront management for this lake-shore community. Information was shared with 142 participants (75 from Ottawa County).



GLEXP

MSU Extension has a long history of organizing and facilitating different tracks for the Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable and Farm Market & Michigan Green House Growers Expo. This year, Ottawa County residents made up 220 of the 2,655 attendees who attended the Expo at the Devos Place Convention Center December 6 – 9, 2021. Over 20 MSU Extension Educators facilitated tracks and brought expertise in subjects such as Managing Fruit Production in a Changing Climate, Agritourism 101, Agriculture Technology and Fruit Production, Technical Assistance for Greenhouses, Beginning Famers, Technical Assistance for Labor among many others. The diversity of MSU Extension's expertise as it relates the ever changing world of Agriculture comes with a long history and continues to support the economic growth of Ottawa County.

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Ottawa County 2021

BY THE NUMBERS:

1,678 Ottawa County residents participated in MSUE programming.

MSUE Ottawa County hosted **71** programs.

Statewide, **1,323** Michiganders participated in Ottawa County based programming.

MSUE Experts answered **178** questions submitted to our Ask An Expert from Ottawa County residents.

Nearly **600** Ottawa County youth are members of at least one of the **34** Ottawa MSUE 4-H youth clubs.

Ottawa County's Carlos Garcia provided trainings to **294** Michigan small fruit growers.

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SEA GRANT

Steelhead Fishery Workshop

Steelhead are one of Michigan's premier gamefish, providing fishing opportunities for river, pier, surf, and boat anglers in a wide variety of waters around the state. Sea Grant hosted a fishery workshop to provide a variety of perspectives on steelhead biology in Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and river environments. Attendees discussed and learned about steelhead creel studies in rivers and the Great Lakes, what steelhead are eating and if anyone is eating them, comparisons of skamania and winter steelhead performance, steelhead harvest limits and Lake Michigan basin management updates. Ottawa County's MSU Extension's Dan O'Keefe hosted this workshop and had 161 attendees from across the state.



MI Paddle Stewards Workshops

Michigan's lakes and rivers often bustle with a variety of paddlers. Kayak, canoe, and stand-up paddleboard users traverse the state's many waterways in search of tranquility or adventure. Michigan Sea Grant has created this workshop to enlist paddler's help in protecting the waters they love. This program consists of 5 units including MI Watch List species overview, Michigan clean boats, clean waters, proper cleaning methods for your craft, how to report an invasive species using the MISIN app, and additional resources. 178 Michigan paddlers attended this workshop (10 in Ottawa County) and are helping to protect the wonderful lakes and rivers we love.





Ottawa County 2021

2021 Milker Training – Success Story

MSU Extension hosted multiple trainings and meetings to develop the work force of a dairy farm in Ottawa County whose goal was to increase herd size and improve the quality of the shipped milk. Martin Mangual, MSU Extension's Dairy Educator, met with the dairy farm's work force and reviewed protocols to increase capacity and throughput in the parlor in order to allow for the growth of the herd. Extension was also part of multiple meetings to help managers reduce the language barrier and improve the communication between management and their employees. As part of our work, we performed protocol evaluations in the parlor as part of the parlor performance analysis to gather information to improve the farm protocols. We also helped management review some of the policies they had in place and provided recommendations for implementing changes.

As a result, the manager communicated with us how he observed changes in his workforce following our meetings and training. According to milkers, after our trainings they learned how they could affect milk quality and how mastitis worked in dairy cows. They improved somatic cell counts (an indicator of milk quality) from 213,000 in January to 180,000 in February, 158,000 in March, and 157,000 in May. This provided quality bonuses for the farm. The increased effort to improve the work force through our trainings improved the communication of the milkers and management regarding areas in the parlor where the equipment was not working properly. In turn, the farm was able to service the equipment timely, which increased the efficiency of the milking process. The improvement in the efficiency in the parlor equipment and procedures allowed the farm to increase their herd size without adding additional time on the parlor or labor cost. They were able to increase the herd by 50 additional milking cows who were milked three times per day, which translates to 150 additional milkings performed in the parlor without increasing time used on the parlor.

The farm's records showed average milk production of this farm to be 79.3 pounds per cow per day. This means that the herd increase resulted in an additional production of 3,965 pounds of milk per day for a year resulting in a total increase of 1.4 million pounds per year. The average milk value (using butterfat and protein prices) in 2019 was \$14.5 cwt. This means that the additional milk produced by the farm provided an additional \$209,847 in gross revenue. Additionally, with the improved milk quality bonus system of the cooperative that markets this farm's milk, they also increased their quality level of the bonus, which provided the farm with additional economic value for their sold milk. The somatic cell counts provided the farm with a bonus valued at approximately \$12,300 in addition to the standard milk price. The farmer communicated with us that the education and technical assistance provided by MSU Extension played an important role in increasing their productivity, which then allowed them to earn this additional revenue.



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Child and Family Development

In 2021, 59 Ottawa County residents took part in a variety of child and family development workshops that reached over 2,800 people. The topics of these workshops included: How Children Develop, Positive Discipline, ABCs of Early Literacy, Purpose of Play, Understanding a Toddler's World, Healthy Living, The Parent Talk System, Developing Early Literacy Skills, Guiding Principles for Highly Successful Parenting, Together we Can, The Resilience Toolbox, Raising Young Readers, Mindfulness for Children, and more.

Financial Literacy

In 2021, 24 Ottawa County residents attended financial literacy webinars. MSU Extension provides resources and education on money management, foreclosure prevention, buying your own home, retirement planning and more to help residents and their families be more financially healthy. Some of the webinars Ottawa County residents attended are:

- Homebuyer Education
- Tips to Build and Protect Your Credit
- Informed Renter
- How Much Home Can You Afford?
- Top 10 Credit Tips
- Make a Spending Plan Work for You
- Adulting 101
- Foreclosure Basics
- Every Penny Counts



Ottawa County 4-H

4-H Tech Wizards

In 2021, 12 Ottawa County Youth participated in 4-H Tech Wizards. This program strives to bridge the gap between STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) industry needs and education by reaching youth who have not previously considered STEAM careers and who do not have an adult role model in these fields. Mentees are between the ages of 8 and 17. They met weekly throughout the year for two hours at a time and work together on STEAM activities with their mentors. These activities are the catalyst for building effective mentoring relationships that teach young people life skills and spark their interest in the possibilities of STEAM.



Ottawa County 4-H

Youth members of an organized 4-H community club in Ottawa County totaled 597 in 2020-2021. The highest participation was with Animals and Livestock clubs. The swine clubs had 232 members and beef clubs had 163 members, totaling 395 of the 597 members. Other club membership participation included Birds and Poultry (59), Dairy Cattle (60), Goats (76), Horse & Pony (76) and Rabbits/Cavies (63).

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