



Schoolcraft County

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

msue.msu.edu



MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

It is great to be back in Schoolcraft County, thanks to all for the support you have given, but especially the Manistique Area Schools by providing us a home. We are the same as when we left, our mission at Michigan State University Extension is to help people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities and fits in well with MAS. Over the past nine months, our staff have worked with residents throughout Schoolcraft County to address local needs by connecting people to the resources of the university and beyond.



We hope you enjoy reading the latest Michigan State University Extension Schoolcraft County 2016 annual report. It is a snapshot of the highlights of the important work done by our staff in Schoolcraft County. These highlights give a sense of our work in 2016 and where we are guided in the future. Thank you for your continuing support every year, it remains true that without you, we would not be here doing this important work together.

Jim Lucas
District Coordinator, District 2

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MEASURING IMPACT

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Youth Programming | 24 |
| 4-H Club Participants..... | 21 |
| Volunteers..... | 3 |
| Keeping People Healthy | 26 |
| Agriculture Programs..... | 388 |
| Agriculture for Tomorrow..... | 126 |
| Soil Tests..... | 167 |
| Beginning Farmer Webinars..... | 95 |
| TOTAL IMPACT..... | 438 |

DISTRICT 2 DIGITAL REACH

From July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2015, 14,016 visitors from our six-county district viewed 42,231 pages of rich, science-based content on the MSU Extension website (msue.msu.edu). Search engine rankings make msue.msu.edu one of the most visited Cooperative Extension Systems.

MSU EXTENSION'S EXPANDED DIGITAL REACH

Through combined face-to-face trainings, online webinars, social media, website interaction and electronic newsletters, MSU Extension has made more than 8.8 million connections. More than 149,000 adults* and 203,000 youth† participated in MSU Extension programming in the 2015-16 programming year. More than 3.7 million people viewed more than 7.2 million pages on the MSU Extension website.‡ Of those, more than 760,000 were Michigan residents. MSU Extension remains one of the most visited Cooperative Extension System education websites in the country.

MSU Extension also distributes a series of electronic newsletters that cater to residents' unique interests. Last year, nearly 1.3 million newsletters covering 90 topic areas were distributed to

about 16,900 email addresses.‡ You can sign up for these informative newsletters by visiting msue.msu.edu and clicking on "Newsletter Sign Up" texting MSUE to 22828. MSU Extension uses social media channels to reach people with educational content. Currently, Extension reaches more than 3,500 Facebook followers and more than 2,800 Twitter followers.‡ In addition, Michigan 4-H families and volunteers stay informed about activities through social media channels, including Michigan 4-H on Facebook with more than 4,000 likes and on Twitter with more than 1,300 followers.

*From ES237 Federal Report – Oct. 1, 2014, to Sept. 30, 2015
†From Michigan Extension Planning and Reporting System – Jan. 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2015
‡From July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016

Developing Youth and Communities



When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

I'm Back. Have You Missed Me?

April 11, 2016 was an important day for the youth in Schoolcraft County. It was on that Monday that the Schoolcraft County MSU Extension office reopened and with it came the possibility of 4-H clubs. The office was closed in March of 2011 after three failed millage requests. MSU Extension is the umbrella organization for 4-H in Michigan and without an MSU Extension office in the county, 4-H clubs had to disband.

Opportunities and programs for Schoolcraft County youth are certainly needed. This office will work to expand the horizons of our youth, opening doors to new ideas, seminars, workshops, trips, and community service adventures. 4-H is open to ALL youth aged 9-19 with options for Cloverbuds who are 5-8 years old.

4-H is a program run through the work of amazing volunteers. The process to become a volunteer is simple and you do not need to be an expert on a topic to lead a club. We are currently looking for adults willing to lead animal-focused clubs. It could be one club with “branches” for each species or separate species-specific clubs. If you think this is something that you'd be interested in, please contact the office.

When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Extension programs help children develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. They learn leadership and decision-making skills in 4-H that increase their likelihood of becoming civically active.

Growing True Leaders in Schoolcraft County

Thompson Township Fire Chief Jon Burk is breaking new ground here in Schoolcraft County. His Schoolcraft County Fire Explorer 4-H Club is the first of its kind in Michigan. Teens who are 16- to 19- years old are able to receive hands-on training for skills that will serve them into adulthood. There is a need for younger individuals to take an interest in joining voluntary public service groups, such as fire departments and emergency medical technician crews. 4-H is an excellent conduit for preparing youth for careers, leadership positions and honing decision-making skills—elements that make this a promising partnership. The Fire Explorers were called to assist with their first fire scene in December (youth can assist around the scene but not enter structures or man hoses). Afterwards, one of the members said, “That was a life changing experience. It was amazing to watch one chief direct firefighters from several township towards a common goal.” Directors of the Children & Youth Institute with MSU Extension are watching to see how this program works, with the hope of using it as a model for implementation statewide.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued



Hoophouse 4-H SPIN Club member planted carrot seeds during their first meeting in June.

True leaders are also being grown in Jenny VanDyck's Lifeskills 4-H Club. Teens gather in her kitchen twice a month to learn basic cooking skills—skills previously taught in home economics classes. Many of these teens have realized that being able to prepare healthy food safely is something that they will need to know how to do as adult. When the club was given a 40# bag of carrots, they got right to work peeling, dicing and grating. The lesson went from practice to personal success when a member took home her container of grated carrots, found a recipe and produced a delicious carrot cake for her family, without adult assistance.



One last club to mention here connects the two aspects of services provided by the MSU Extension office in Schoolcraft County—4-H and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education—with a strategic partner, the Manistique Area Schools. The school district owned a hoop house that had never been put to use, which was moved to the area near the MSU Extension office on the middle/high school campus.

After a guest presentation from Abbey Palmer at MSU's North Farm, coordinated by Jill Connin, 4-H Program Coordinator/Nutrition Program Instructor, students from the 6th grade science class planted the first seeds in the hoop house. When school ended for the summer, a 4-H SPIN (special-interest) club was formed to care for the plants in the hoop house. Club members learned about gardening and plant science. Nutrition and tasting lessons were woven in when various items were ready for harvest, such as leaf lettuce, kale, tomatoes, purple beans and herbs. In September, all produce that was ready for harvest was given to the school lunch program, where fresh red and yellow tomatoes went on the salad bar, herbs were mixed into recipes and kale went out in salad mixes to every student who participated in hot lunch.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

Demmer Shooting Sports Center at Michigan State University



There are many great clubs in the works and the future of 4-H in Schoolcraft County is bright. As more members in the community learn about the great work that MSU Extension does in the county and the variety of programming that is available, whether through 4-H, SNAP-Ed or our network of educators, the reach will continue to grow. Some 4-H programming that is in the works for 2017 is a volleyball club, a knitting & crocheting club, a Cloverbud club (kids 5 to 8-years-old), a shooting sports club, some health and fitness SPIN clubs, and plans to increase entries and participation at the Schoolcraft County Fair. Extension Educators are currently providing or making plans to provide “Be SAFE” anti-bullying programming to student at MAS, A Matter of Balance to seniors, food safety, food preservation and adult nutrition classes.

The Proverbial Cart is Before the Horse

4-H is regaining a foothold here in Schoolcraft County. In the past two months, three new clubs have formed and held their first few meetings. We have a dozen members enrolled and more forms in route to the office. This is excellent progress, however, I have many more youth wanting and waiting to join a 4-H club—but no club that fits what they are looking for! Specifically, there is a handful of youth looking for a club focused on small farm animals, such as chickens and rabbits. You absolutely don’t have to be an expert to lead a club—we have curriculum to help you learn right alongside your club members. Some of the best learning experiences are ones that youth and adults share.

I have renewed excitement for a shooting sports club after visiting the Demmer Shooting Sports Center at MSU last week. It is a beautiful facility that allows for the indoor and outdoor practice of archery and rim-fire .22 and smaller firearms. If you are interested in becoming a certified 4-H shooting sports volunteer for this future club, please contact me. Once I have 12 adults in the central U.P. interested, I can arrange to have the training done locally, rather than downstate. I suspect we will start with archery certification and expand to other disciplines as necessary. When thinking of the history and future of our region, a shooting sports 4-H club seems like a natural fit. -Jill Connin, 4-H Program Coordinator

[Schoolcraft County MSU Extension Webpage](#)

[MSU Extension Schoolcraft County Facebook page](#)



Keeping People Healthy



Encouraging healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs by helping prevent chronic health conditions and providing safe environments throughout a person's life span.

Stress Less with Mindfulness

This series introduces participants to the experience and practice of mindfulness to reduce stress. Mindfulness can be defined as paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally. Research has shown that the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction courses are effective in reducing stress related symptoms such as anxiety, worry, depression, and physical tension, and be helpful in managing cardiac disease and diabetes. Tracie Abram, Extension Educator, offers this series on a quarterly basis.

Relax

RELAX is a four-part educational series designed to help adults, parents, teens and caregivers increase their knowledge about anger issues and put anger management and healthy relationship skills into practice. Through discussion and skill-building activities, participants explore what anger is and what triggers it. This interactive program teaches participants techniques for calming down and de-stressing, the principles of problem solving, effective communication skills, and ways to forgive and let go of the past. It is offered as a series, and also as a one-time workshop, including a Train the Trainer version and *RELAX: For Parents and Caregivers*. RELAX is available as an online course.

During 2015, evaluations were returned at the end of RELAX series and workshops. In a program series, participants provided pre- and post- rankings of knowledge and self-reported behavior changes. Consistently, more than half of program participants leave with improved knowledge or new skills designed to promote social and emotional well-being with others in their lives and immediate social environments. Audience demographic characteristics varied as did program delivery format. Program outcomes, and the indicators for outcomes and corresponding survey items, are in a chart showing number of participants changed out of number assessed with the percentage of participants showing improvement on the ten key program outcomes.

SPARTAN Athletics Nutrition

Tracie Abram, Extension Educator/SNAP-Ed, conducted a series to the junior varsity and varsity volleyball teams and their parents and coaches. There were 22 participants. It was a six lesson series that covered topics such as basic nutrition, pre and post workout meals, performance day meals, timing of and healthy snacks, hydration and supplements.

Nurturing Families

Nurturing Families is a six week series that covers topics such as defining nurturing, managing stress, alternatives to spanking, praising, self-esteem, self-worth, child development, brain development, parenting development and developing family value and morals to write a family mission statement. These series were offered in 2016 and will continue through 2017 on an on-going basis due to receiving a contract from DHHS. A total of three participants are needed to provide the series. There is no program fee for these series. If anyone is interested in participating in these series they are to contact Tracie Abram. 906-643-7307 or abram@anr.msu.edu.

Ensuring Strong Communities



Short Term Rentals



A short-term rental is generally defined as a commercial use of a residential property for a period of less than 30 days. Short-term rentals are an important land use activity to address in communities that have a significant tourism economy. In Michigan, short-term rentals are typically thought of as vacation properties rented either during the endless beach days of summer or the snow-filled ski and snowmobiling winter days characteristic of northern latitudes. It is true that poorly regulated or lax enforcement of short-term rentals can result in neighborhood opposition resulting from unruly tenants, late night parties, and parking problems. However, given the growth in the sharing economy in recent years, tourism oriented communities must address short-term rentals in a way that allows for this type of lodging option while maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods.

MSU Extension's government, leadership, and community engagement programs engage participants in learning skills of good governance, how to communicate with purpose, and how to collaborate on solving complex issues in order to improve their communities. The application of knowledge and skills gained from good governance programs builds stronger civic infrastructure.

In Schoolcraft County when the issue of short-term rentals emerged, the EDC offered to provide oversight and guidance to the Schoolcraft County planning commission and board of commissioners. The Schoolcraft County EDC turned to MSU Extension for assistance. District Coordinator, Jim Lucas, summoned Extension educator, Brad Neumann, to assist. Neumann, based in Marquette County, works across the Upper Peninsula as an educational resource on land use planning and zoning topics and engaged with local leaders to share insights from statutory and case law, as well as best practices related to the topic. In the end, Extension filled an emerging educational need with objective, legally-sound information to help local officials make a more informed decision on an issue affecting the economic future of the community. As Brad Neumann likes to say, part of what MSUE does is translate statutes, case law, the latest research, and other unintelligible gobbledygook into information that can be applied to improve Michigan's communities. Brad Neumann AICP, Government & Public Policy Educator, 906-475-5731, neuman36@anr.msu.edu

Supporting Food and Agriculture



When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices.

The Ninth Annual Agriculture for Tomorrow conference sponsored by MSU Extension was held March 10, 2015, on the campus of Bay College, Escanaba, Michigan. This is the Upper Peninsula's largest MSU Extension Agriculture educational event. One hundred twenty-six attendees were provided with educational programs. It also gave an opportunity for growers, agricultural product companies, federal and state agencies to gather and interact. A majority of them learned about the Agriculture for Tomorrow 2015 Conference from the *UP Ag Connection Newsletter* distributed monthly from the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center. <http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprc/newsletters>

After the completion of the 20 different educational programs offered that day, 73% of the attendees positively identified ways to decrease production cost and increase income. Eighty four percent of attendees feel they will now implement new best management practices on their farm.

Forage Programming

Beef and dairy producers across the Upper Peninsula face unique challenges to grow and harvest high quality forages in an economical manner. Soil conditions, weather during harvest, and short growing season are some of those challenges unique to the Upper Peninsula. MSUE Educators conducted winter meetings and on-farm forage field days to educate producers on innovative management practices to grow and harvest forages with high yield and quality.

In February 2015, a series of forage/cover crop educational meetings were held in four locations and attracted 57 participants. The cover crops/annual forages meetings included an overview of cover crops with potential for grazing in Michigan's U.P. Dean Baas presented these sessions, including a segment on the online cover crop selector tool.

Michigan State University Extension educators also conducted on-farm forage field days at seven farms across the Upper Peninsula that attracted 70 participants. Each forage field day was based on topics identified by local forage focus groups and involved local farmers providing support for demonstrations, tours or both..

Upper Peninsula farmers were receptive to both winter programming and summer field days around the topic area of forage improvement. The participants points of interest were soil health, fertility and low-input practices to improve forage performance. The management practices recommended by MSU had a positive feedback of 75-100% of respondents planning to implement these practices. The participants highly accepted cover crops, rotational grazing and broadcast seeding to establish pastures and improve forage stands based on their plans to implement these practices on their own farms.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Providing basic, practical information to people interested in, or already engaging in, new farm enterprises helps these small businesses develop sound production and marketing plans. New farm businesses provide jobs, income and increased economic and social stability, and increased food security to rural and other communities.

Beginning Farmer Webinar Series

Michigan citizens interested in engaging in new agriculture enterprises sometimes lack knowledge, experience and technical support to get started. Extension educators and specialists receive numerous contacts from such people seeking basic, start-up information. The Michigan State University Extension Beginning Farmer Webinar Series was developed in response to this need.

The 2015 series included twenty webinars offered from January 26 through April 20, 2015. Twenty three MSUE educators, faculty and staff presented webinar topics, with 198 people from fifty-four Michigan counties, twelve other states, and three other countries registering for a total of 1,845 webinar views.

A majority of participants indicated that they plan to utilize additional MSU Extension resources based on the series. They also indicated that the series contributed to creation or updates of business and marketing plans, new crop production, and expansion of farms and marketing strategies on many farms. A small number of participants indicated that they were beginning new livestock and poultry enterprises, purchasing farm equipment, establishing new business relationships and improving job prospects. Six participants said that the series helped them decide not to begin cultivating a crop in Michigan due to increased understanding of costs and risks.

Participants were appreciative for the program especially the convenience of on-line participation. MSU Extension received many compliments on the webinar series.



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Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center

In the center of Michigan's Upper Peninsula sits the 118 year old Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center (UPREC). The purpose of UPREC is to serve as a hub for integrated crop and livestock research. Applied research on pasture-based cattle management practices and cropping rotations is conducted in the unique environment of the U.P. Grass-based beef finishing, utilization of cover crops, hoop-house farming, season extension and soil health studies are keystone research elements on the farm. The North Farm is an incubator farm specializing in diversified local food production, research, education, and outreach for northern latitude climates. Our focus is healthy soils, food, people, and communities. Please go to the UPREC North Farm Facebook site for details and updates: <https://www.facebook.com/northfarmatuprec>



Complementary agronomic studies at the 1,262-acre site focus on forages and small grains. The center also coordinates field trials on potato varieties and corn varieties throughout the Upper Peninsula region.

Research Goals

1. Improvement of soil quality to enhance the productivity of U.P. agricultural lands in a manner that emphasizes health linkages associated with soil, crop, livestock and people.
2. Development of research that demonstrates the costs and benefits of integrated crop livestock systems, including grass-based livestock production. Closer collaboration between UPREC and Lake City Research Center (LCRC) in Lake City to foster complementary research endeavors and to increase the quality and quantity of research results.
3. Development of research tied to the educational needs of regional food systems in the Upper Peninsula that contributes to community sustainability while linking to objectives 1 and 2.



MSU UPREC has been working over the last three years conducting research to support the growth of malting barley acres in Michigan, especially in the Upper Peninsula. In addition to variety trials, management practices such as fertility recommendations and fungicide use have been studied. In order for the malting barley industry to thrive in Michigan, suitable processing is also necessary. UPREC staff has been working with start-up malt-houses throughout the state and are confident that there will be a major increase in available processing by the end of 2015 – from 2 malt-houses to 6, including one in the Upper Peninsula.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued



The following deliverables have been produced in 2014 to support this emerging industry:

- MSU UPREC Malting Barley website to house research, resources, and contact information http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprc/malting_barley

- Malting Barley Production in Michigan guide http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uploads/396/36753/Research_Files/Malting_Barley_Production_in_Michigan_-_GMI035.pdf

- Malthouse feasibility study produced by the MSU Product Center http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uploads/396/36753/Research_Files/Malt_House_Feasibility_Study_JFW_-_FINAL.pdf



- Four location malting barley variety trial held in Alger, Schoolcraft, Leelanau, and Presque Isle Counties http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uploads/396/61579/2014_MSU_Malting_Barley_Trial_Results_UPREC-Posen.pdf

- 2015 Great Lakes Hop and Barley Conference, Grand Rapids, Michigan – April 10th – 11th <http://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?folder=hopandbarley15>



Download the entire 2015 Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center, annual report: http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uploads/396/36753/UPREC_Center_Report_2015_Final.pdf

For more information about UPREC and updates on current projects, please visit their website at: <http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/centers/uprc> or call Coordinator, Ashley McFarland at 906-439-5114 or email: ashleymc@anr.msu.edu



Extension Educators Serving Schoolcraft County

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Extension Educators Serving Schoolcraft County, Continued

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| | | | |
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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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