

Ensuring Strong Communities, continued



Marlette – Development and implementation of their first farmer’s market being drive by a re-engaged Downtown Development Authority comprised of nine new members.

Sebewaing – Successful completion of MSU Urban and Regional Planning program resulting in a new recreation plan and updates to master plans as a result of FIT, as well as the launching of a new farmer’s market. Sebewaing has also developed their first Historical River District too as a result of participating in FIT.

FIT2017 communities continue to work diligently towards meeting goals identified during the FIT program. A majority of communities have used the \$2,000 implementation money to receive additional grant dollars for funding more projects. This successful model has influenced Prosperity Region 1 in adopting a similar funding model across the Western U.P. As a result of these four FIT programs in 2017, the program has received statewide attention from Michigan Economic Development Corporation and individual Michigan communities interested in funding their own FIT community assessment

This successful community partnership endeavor has to lead to another round of FIT programs across Prosperity Region 6. Marine City in St. Clair County and Cass City in Tuscola County were both selected for FIT2018 in District 10. Both communities have begun the FIT process as of mid-August and will work directly with Andy Northrop, Tourism and Community Vitality Educator, throughout 2018 and 2019.



Serving the State of Michigan

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- Fiscal Sustainability for Michigan Municipalities – Statewide
- New County Commissioner Training – Statewide
- Non-Profit Community Grocery Store Model – St. Clair County
- Plant Science Laboratory- Yale Public Schools

Food Policy Council in Michigan’s Thumb Area

The five District 10 counties including St. Clair, Lapeer, Tuscola, Sanilac, and Huron counties will be represented by a food policy council beginning the fall of 2018. The purpose of the council initially will be to develop a thorough understanding of what the food system looks like in the greater Thumb area both from a consumer and producer perspective. The food system is a large dynamic web of networks represented by both private and public sector circles. It further represents a large portion of economic activity within the district geographic area and internationally.

Additionally, the council will evaluate what best strategies will assist in the promotion of a food system that provides for the food needs of those who are secure and insecure. To this end, the council will develop and sponsor projects, programs and other initiatives that provide education to the greater public and promote changes in practices with stakeholders and policies with elected officials that undergird the larger food system.

The council received a \$3,000.00 grant from the Michigan Local Food Policy Council Network in June of 2018. Each county will have designated representatives to serve on the council beginning in September 2018. If you or someone you know would like to be involved in this council please contact Extension Educator Joe Bixler at bixlerj@anr.msu.edu or call 810-989-6309.

Keeping People Healthy



Carol Bublitz, Nutrition Program Instructor at the Community Resource Fair

*One student said that the nutrition class was her favorite thing she did in the afterschool program, and that because of that hands-on cooking experience, she plans to have a career in the culinary arts.

**A kindergarten student said, "I never tried that before, and I like it." The student even pointed out the Nutrition Facts Label to a parent at home.

MyPlate in St. Clair County

"SNAP-Ed is an evidence-based program that helps people lead healthier lives. SNAP-Ed teaches people using or eligible for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) about good nutrition and how to make their food dollars stretch further. SNAP-Ed participants also learn to be physically active."¹ USDA's Choose MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are the basis for the nutrition education curricula that SNAP-Ed uses. Among adult participants in SNAP-Ed programs, 80% showed improvement in one or more nutrition practice (makes healthy food choices, reads nutrition labels, etc.) and 72% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices (planning meals, does not run out of food, compares prices, etc.). Among youth, over 95% showed improvement in one or more core nutrition areas.

"SNAP-Ed works by building partnerships with all types of community organizations. Communities have social marketing campaigns, hold nutrition education classes, and improve their policies, systems, and the environment of the community. SNAP-Ed even addresses local issues like lead poisoning."¹ Throughout St. Clair County, MSU Extension Nutrition Program Instructors Carol Bublitz and Jennifer McNamara partnered with many organizations to deliver nutrition and physical activity programs.

From the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and other preschools to elementary and high schools in Algonac to GSRPs in Marine City, Marysville, Kimball, and Port Huron to elementary schools and high schools in the Port Huron Area School District* and East Shore Leadership Academy**, to summer school in Capac, to special events such as Earth Fair and the 4-H & Youth Fair at Goodells County Park, youth nutrition programs spanned the county. Partners throughout the county also supported adult nutrition programs at Clay Township Hall, Algonac High School, senior centers in Marine City and Port Huron, Marysville Library, St. Clair County Community Mental Health, and the St. Clair Community College. At special events such as the St. Clair County Community Baby Shower, Community Resource Fair, Show Me the Money Day, the Breastfeeding Stroll, National Night Out, the Council on Aging Foster Grandparent's Camp S.H.I.N.E. Zone, and Healthy Kids Day at the YMCA of the Blue Water Area, SNAP-Ed brought fun, interactive education on nutrition and physical activity.



Red, White, and Blue spuds at the 4-H & Youth Fair with a picture of potato harvest.

Keeping People Healthy, continued

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.



“MyPlate” is one of the fun ways MSUE SNAP-ED introduces fruits and vegetables to school age children. Most children can't resist tasting while learning about food groups.



SNAP-Ed partnered with 4-H to offer unique programs. Together Carol Bublitz and Lori Warchuck planned to “Bring the Farm to Town” at the Port Huron Housing Commission Gratiot, Huron, and Dulhut Villages. Youth were able to learn where pizza ingredients come from and to plant a pizza garden; to learn about bees, pollination, and honey and taste smoothies and cookies made with honey; and to learn how milk ends up at the store and to make ice cream with dry ice (Smokin’ Ice Cream).

At the 4-H & Youth Fair, youth learned to “Eat Your Ag”. These from-dirt-to-dinner programs featured not only learning about food sources and production, but also had hands-on experience making mini-pizzas, spiral cut “potato tornadoes”, and corn tortilla chips to eat with salsa. While the food was cooking youth were able to participate in a physical activity trail and other fun 4-H learning. The week culminated with the Spartan Spectacular, in which staff from various MSU Extension programs engaged youth in activities. Nutrition and Physical Activity Staff provided Breakfast from the Farm Superheroes and Rock the Bike (a blender powered by riding a bike). The 4-H staff provided the ever-popular Smokin’ Ice Cream, plus a craft to make a bank to teach youth how to invest in their future, face-painting, bubble science, Fair Trade trading cards, and the physical activity trail. Youth also learned meat science, such as how to cook ground meat safely and how to use a food thermometer.

1 <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-education-snap-ed>

District 10 Nutrition Staff at The Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum event

The Thumb Octagon Barn Agricultural Museum, located in Tuscola County, is an agricultural museum and educational center open to individuals, families and student groups to educate and stimulate awareness of our agricultural heritage.* May 9-11 the Barn offered school field trips with students coming from Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, Bay, Saginaw, St. Clair, Lapeer, and Genesee Counties. The barn reports that 1,426 students attended and visited the 26 Education Stations offered to students.

MSU Extension reached 1,403 people (students and chaperones) over the course of the 3

days. The theme was “The Thumb: Naturally Sweet”, so our display was “Fruit: Nature’s Candy” and our education discussed recommended servings, forms of fruit, and included a fruit-themed physical activity game.



MSU Extension provides trusted, evidenced-based education and expertise in:

- Markets and Financials
- Risk Management Plans and Farm Analysis Information
- Managing Stress, Anger or Depression

District 10 Educator

Kristina L.
Swartzendruber
Extension Educator

Improving Health &
Nutrition Institute

Huron, Lapeer,
St. Clair, Sanilac and
Tuscola Counties

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Farm stress program

In collaboration with the Ag and Ari-Business Extension Educators in Districts 9 and 10, Kris Swartzendruber, Extension Educator for Social and Emotional Health, conducted the following *Farm Stress: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset* programs for area farmers:

Thumb Ag Review Meetings: 72 adult participants

Farmers know how to care of their animals and crops, taking careful steps to ensure that they are healthy and safe. Unfortunately, farmers don't always take the same care in monitoring and managing their own mental and physical stress and fatigue. At present, commodity prices are low, making stress especially palpable for the farmers in the thumb area.

MSU Extension puts a high emphasis on making sure farmers care for their own health and wellness in this high-stress profession. Whether these stresses come from a financial issue or the stresses of everyday

life, the *Farm Stress* program is designed to provide information and resources to not only help the farmers identify and manage stress for themselves, but also for their family members, friends and/or neighbors.

As a result of these programs, the majority of the participants reported a significant increase in their knowledge about:

- Understanding rural stress issues and the warning signs of stress
- The impact stress has on our bodies
- Assessing stress issues and taking steps in managing stress
Recognizing available resources



Other programs offered:

Kris Swartzendruber, Extension Educator for District #10, offers programs that focus on:

Social Emotional Health: programs that help participants learn anger management, problem-solving and communication skills, as well as mindfulness techniques that help reduce stress.

Disease Prevention and Management: prevention and management programs that provide participants with strategies to improve the quality of their diets, manage chronic health conditions and reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes.

Making the Most of Our Natural Assets

Partners involved in program development and delivery:

- DNR Fisheries Division
- USGS Great Lakes Science Center
- DNR Lake Huron Citizen Fisheries Advisory Comm.
- Michigan Charter Boat Assn.
- Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fisherman's Assn.
- Blue Water Sportfishing Assn.
- Thumb Chapter MSSFA
- Lake Huron Sportfishing Club
- Thunder Bay Walleye Club
- Saginaw Bay Walleye Club
- Purdue University
- MDEQ Office of Great Lakes
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- USDA Wildlife Services
- NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Les Cheneaux Sportsman's Club

When you support MSU Extension's natural resources education programs, participants learn about income-generating opportunities, ecological principles, natural resource issues and the role of natural resource professionals. They also explore public policy issues related to environmental stewardship. Our programs can lead to increased income for families that retain their natural resource assets, help landowners become better stewards of their land, and protect land management opportunities for future generations. Better land stewardship benefits communities by protecting and enhancing Michigan's natural resource assets.

2017 Lake Huron Fisheries Workshops

Workshops were held in Port Huron, Bay City, Oscoda and Cedarville. Scientists and fisheries managers shared research and management updates, with time for participants to ask questions, trade insights and share input on a variety of fisheries management topics and issues. Workshops included information and status updates on topics such as fish populations and angler catch data, forage or prey fish surveys, offshore fisheries from native lake trout recovery, and successes with Atlantic salmon program. The status of Saginaw Bay yellow perch and walleye, updates on fisheries management activities, citizen science opportunities for anglers, and other Lake Huron related topics of local interest were discussed.

These workshops offered a great opportunity to learn directly from and visit with a variety of fisheries experts who study and manage this important fishery. MSUE Sea Grant educators involved in developing the workshop series included Brandon Schroeder, Katy Hintzen, Ron Kinnunen and Elliot Nelson.



Supporting Food and Agriculture



According to US Dept. of Commerce the value of crops, livestock and other income for 2016 raised in St. Clair County was \$80,471,000

MSU Extension Agriculture educators serving St. Clair:

Marianne Buza—dairy

Phil Kaatz—forages and field crops

Michael Metzger—small ruminant

Martin Nagelkirk—wheat

Jeannine Schwehofer—Animal quality assurance & food safety

Kable Thurlow—beef

Bob Tritten—fruit

Thumb Ag Review provides results of research on local field crops

The Thumb Ag Reviews are a series of post-harvest meetings intended to provide farmers, agronomists and agribusiness an opportunity to learn about the results from the research and demonstration field trials conducted by the MSUE Field Crops educators located in the Thumb of Michigan.

Phil Kaatz, Bob Battel, and Martin Nagelkirk were the MSU Extension educators who presented the findings at five locations in the Thumb. These locations included Saginaw Valley Research & Education Center in Richville, Thumb Ag Day in Ubly, Lapeer Education & Technology Center in Attica, Westpark Inn in Sandusky, and at Gracies Restaurant in New Lothrop.

The topics discussed included:

- corn hybrid trials
- soybean variety trials
- glyphosate resistant varieties
- conventional non-herbicide resistant varieties
- RR 2 Xtend varieties
- Liberty Link varieties
- biological additive trials
- corn population trials
- yard compost in a corn/soybean rotation
- corn nitrogen rate trial
- soybean cyst nematode resistance variety trial
- alfalfa sulfur source trial
- wheat fungicide efficacy trial on stripe rust susceptible varieties

Intensive management of wheat inputs

In all, there were 160 participants, 77% of the participants completed a post-evaluation survey. Those completing the evaluation represented 107,420 acres of crops. 83% said they would make changes in management practices based on the information they received, and estimated a potential in increased revenue or in cost savings of \$242,885 from implementing the changes.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

MSU Extension provides trusted, scientific-based education and expertise in:

- Food Safety
- HACCP Plans
- Product Quality
- Beef Quality Assurance
- Meat Cutter Training Course
- Chronic Wasting Disease resources for meat processors
- USDA Grant of Inspection

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Serving the State of Michigan

Food Safety Courses Hosted in St. Clair County

Many food processors are required to have food safety plans, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) or Preventive Controls for Human Foods. These important industry trainings that provide participants with a certificate at the end of the course were hosted by MSU Extension in St. Clair County and co-taught by Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer and team of Campus specialists including Dr. Les Bourquin, Dr. John Partridge and Mr. Jason Hofman. The HACCP course was held February 27-28, 2017 and had 12 participants. The Preventive Controls for Human Foods course was held June 7-9, 2017 and had 18 participants. Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer coordinates the MSU HACCP team.

Beef Feedlot Education

Thumb Cattlemen Series—The Thumb Cattlemen series starts in December and ends in April. The group meets once a month to learn from experts and discuss with each other topics that include animals well-being, animal health, fundamentals and opportunities in Michigan feedlots, Packers and Stockyards Act, environmental management, managing farm stress and meat quality. Farmers from St. Clair County attend these workshops. The series is coordinated by Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer.

Great Lakes Professional Cattle Feeding and Marketing Shortcourse – Feedlot producers from St. Clair and surroundings counties attend this annual shortcourse. Topics include educational information and research results regarding management and marketing.



Cooked Color of Ground Beef



Consumer Education Related to Meat Safety at St. Clair County 4-H and Youth Fair

Consumer education related to meat cookery methods and safety was demonstrated at the St. Clair County 4-H and youth fair. Participants were able to see the importance of using a food thermometer when cooking ground beef patties and that internal color is not a valid indicator of doneness. Patties that looked pink inside were actually safe to consume and patties that looked well done were not cooked to a safe internal temperature.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Meat Processor Assistance

One business in St. Clair County was able to expand their product offerings to include bacon under U.S. Department of Agriculture inspection. This included developing a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan with the establishment. The additional HACCP plan allows this business to sell bacon wholesale as well as offer this product to farmers who choose to sell individual packages of meat at places such as farmers markets or on-farm. In the two months following implementation of the bacon plan, the business already has a customer purchasing 100 pounds per week for a local restaurant. In addition to HACCP assistance provided to the establishment above, additional food safety issues were addressed related to product and process quality and safety. Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer assisted the establishment.

Explore Your Future – February 10, 2018

A total of 80 youth and adults attended (despite a severe winter storm event occurring) and were exposed to careers related to Agriculture and Natural Resources including animal science, community food systems, crop science, entomology, food safety, forestry, health and nutrition, ichthyology, meat processing, and veterinary science. There were 4-H adult and youth volunteers that assisted with several of the ANR career stations. There was also programming on career readiness and preparation. St. Clair County Community College partnered with MSU Extension on this event. St. Clair County Community College hosted the event and provided education on careers related to computer information systems, criminal justice, marketing and sales, medical technology (obstetrics, med surgery, medical assistant, and radiologic technology), nursing, paramedic, robotics, and welding.

Each career area represented had a hands-on interactive demonstration that engaged youth and adults in exploring careers available. Salary information and career opportunities in each area were also presented.



Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued



Information in this article was taken from “Using Enviro-weather to assist pest management decisions”, a presentation at the 2014 Integrated Pest Management Academy by Emily Pochubay, Fruit Integrated Pest Management educator for MSU Extension,

Enviroweather

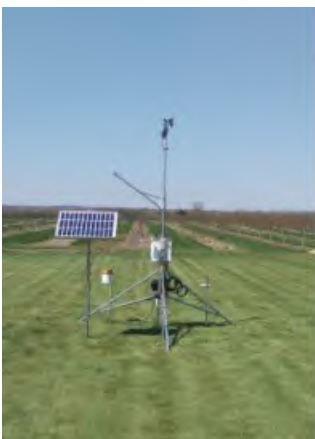
Enviroweather Weather Data and Pest Modeling aims to help users make pest, plant production and natural resource management decisions in Michigan by providing a sustainable weather-based information system. This online resource provides ‘local’ weather information and weather-based tools. There are currently 78 weather stations throughout Michigan (each yellow dot on the map)

One Enviroweather station is located in Emmett, with more located throughout or near the Thumb. Each station provides readings every 30 minutes on air temperature, soil temperature, soil moisture, relative humidity, solar radiation, wind speed and direction, precipitation, leaf wetness. There are different components of Enviroweather that deal specifically with field crops, fruit, vegetables, trees, turfgrass, and landscape/nursery.

Weather influences crop and pest development and management decisions. For example, wind speed and direction for drift management, temperature to prevent phytotoxicity that may result from applications on hot days, insect and pathogen development are all influenced by weather.

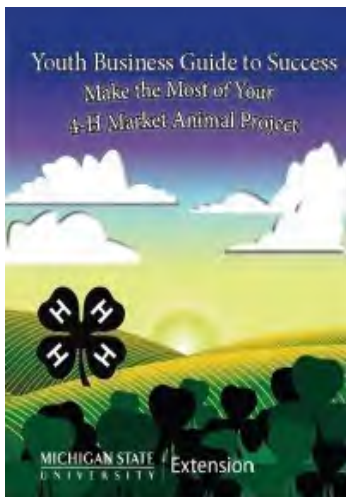
Model predictions allow growers to prepare to take management action if necessary. Enviroweather tools are intended to assist, not dictate, management decisions. The decision to take management action should be influenced by several factors including: a history of problematic pests, the current season pest pressure, susceptible crops, and past and predicted weather events.

Enviroweather is a collaborative project of: Michigan Climatological Resources Program & the MSU Integrated Pest Management Program. It is supported by: Project GREEN, MSU AgBio Research, MSU Extension, private donors, and the MSU departments of Crop and Soil Sciences, Entomology, Forestry, Geography, Horticulture, and Plant Pathology.

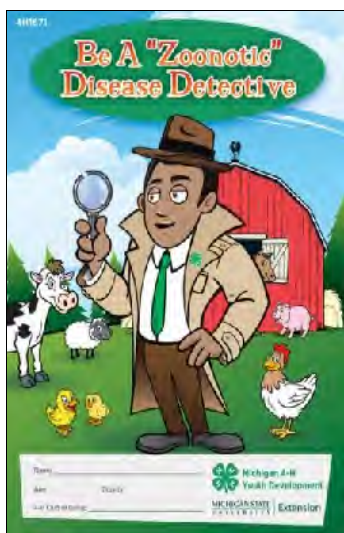


A screenshot of the Enviroweather website interface. The header includes the Michigan State University logo and the text "Enviroweather Weather-based pest, natural resources, and production management tools". Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "Tools for: Field crops | Fruit | Trees | Turfgrass | Vegetables | Landscape & Nursery | More weather". The main content area features a map of Michigan with numerous yellow dots representing weather stations. A "Show magnifier" button is visible. On the right side, there is a "Welcome to Enviroweather!" message with instructions on how to use the tools and a call to action to contribute. At the bottom right, there are logos for Michigan State University Extension, AgBioResearch, and Project GREEN.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued



Betty Jo Krosnicki, Extension Educator from Sanilac County, is one of the authors of the “Youth Business Guide to Success” curriculum.



Preparing youth for future careers in agriculture

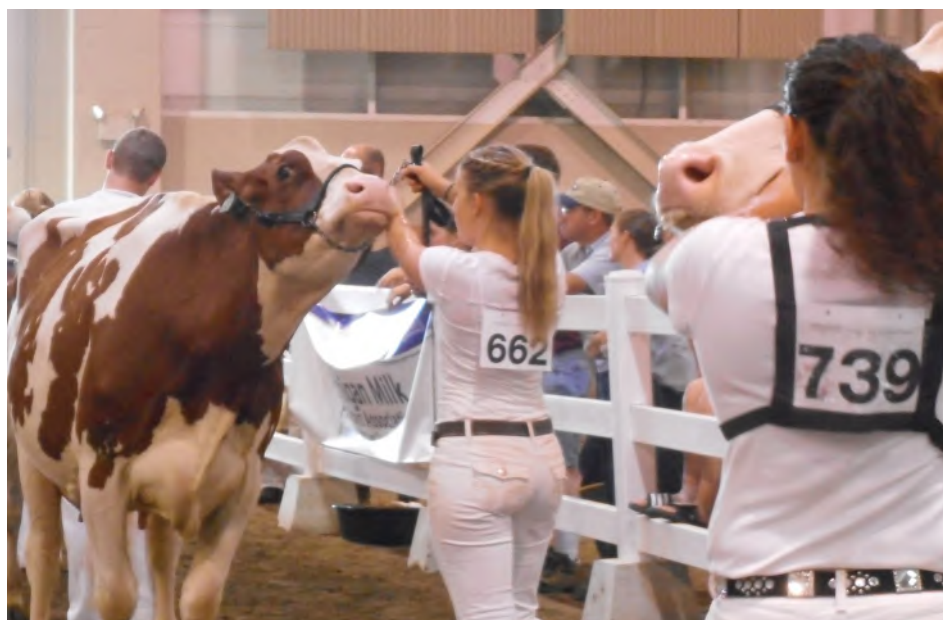
As a pillar of Michigan’s economy, agriculture must continue to grow and thrive. One way to ensure this success is to prepare an informed and skilled workforce ready for careers in this essential sector.

To meet this need, MSU Extension offers youth a continuum of learning opportunities in the agriculture industry. These opportunities range from interactive experiences such as 4-H Renewable Energy Camp and World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute, to educational resources such as the Youth Business Guide to Success animal marketing curriculum and zoonotic disease prevention tools.

Through these experiences and resources, as well as county 4-H projects, youth are educated about agriculture and prepared for careers in this important industry.

In the last program year in Michigan:

- More than 24,000 4-H youth participated in animal, biological and plant science projects in 78 counties.
- More than 850 youth took part in Michigan 4-H pre-college programs with an agricultural focus. These programs, which include 4-H Exploration Days and 4-H Animal and Veterinary Science Camp, among others, are designed to help youth explore potential careers or academic areas.
- The Michigan 4-H Agriculture Career Fair was held on May 13, 2017 in Frankenmuth. Planned jointly with the Lapeer County Farm Bureau, this all-day event was attended by 28 teens and 11 parents, many from Sanilac and the Thumb area. Focus of the career fair was exploring agricultural careers, writing an effective résumé, interview skills, and networking.



Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

On Farm Research Influence Winter Education Programs.

Since the summer of 2016, the MSU Extension dairy team has been doing a summer research project on farms across the state. These research projects are to help answer questions dairy producers have. The research projects provide valuable information to the farms and create picture of the issue state wide. The first project the team conducted involved the immunity of dairy bull calves verse dairy heifer calves. The 2017 winter education program was about how to improve your calf raising program biased on results from the project. The program was held at 6 locations, including Bad Axe. Summer of 2017 The dairy team's research involved evaluating parlor performance by measure milk let down and milk flow. The topic for the 2018 winter education program was ways to increase profits by making changes to your parlor. Meetings were held in 5 locations. For the 2018 summer project the level of heat stress on dairy farms is being assessed. The 2019 winter education program will be influenced by the results of the project. Of the 3 research projects 21 Thumb area farms have participated.



Parlor inspection tour

Thumb Dairy Odyssey

Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days just completed its 7th event. The first event took place in the summer of 2016. This continues to be a unique event that is pulling youth from all over the state to learn about dairy. This program was invented by 4-H member, Addy Battel. It was created because, even though the Thumb area of Michigan is the number one milk producing area in Michigan, it lacks any youth events for dairy. This event takes place on Saturdays in the summer. In 2017 and 2018 each summer had 2 separate Saturday events where youth were able to go to different local dairy farms and learn about animal science, agriculture and most importantly some of the career possibilities they present. Many farms across the state of Michigan struggle to find those who want to work on farms or work in agribusiness.

These youth were also encouraged to try showing animals at fair or attending events like dairy days at MSU. In 2017 and 2018, Thumb Dairy Odyssey Days had 87 youth participated and there were 54 parents and volunteers that attended.



Hendrick Eggink gives a farm tour



Marianne Buza teaching low stress animal handling



Milan Forrester clips a cow for show with volunteer Jared Sanderson

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