



# Clare County

## 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

### BY THE NUMBERS



Almost 2,300 Clare County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



More than 1,200 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



Almost 550 residents participated in health, wellness, nutrition and family development programs and services



Over 140 Clare County residents participated in gardening services and programs



Over 110 residents helped with financial, homeownership, and foreclosure prevention education



MSU spent nearly \$172,000 with local businesses in Clare County



Over 200 residents participated in agricultural services and programs

### MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



Shari Spoelman

I am pleased to bring to you another report of Michigan State University (MSU) Extension's work in Clare County. We are pleased to continue to serve the residents here and help strengthen our communities. MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, bring the university's research and resources to provide outreach and education in Clare County.

Under the leadership of MSU Extension Director Jeff Dwyer, we continue to grow as an organization and are challenged to continue to address the many issues facing Michigan residents. We do this by staying true to our many traditions and mission while stretching our reach through untraditional channels and new technologies.

We're passionate about serving Clare County and are looking forward to a new year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

#### MSU Extension District 6 Advisory Council

Ken Brown	Leonard Strouse	Rick Grove	Christine Hammond
Dick Metz	Jerry Jaloszynski	Bob Wachowski	Frank VanderWal
Chris Gentry	Jack Nehmer	Russ Nehmer	Marilynn Bradstrom
David Eggle	Mike Solomon	Judy Nichols	

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Clare County MSU Extension

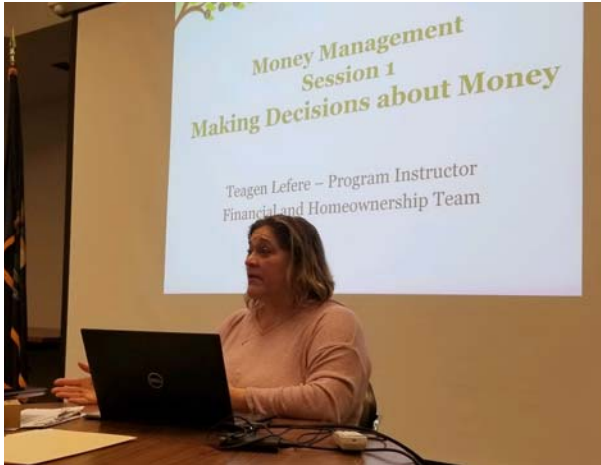


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# Program Highlights



MSU Extension provides the key to success with housing, rental and home buyers' education courses.



MSU Extension provides education and support to farmers and producers.



Note the attention to food safety (hair cap) as a young man at Farwell schools begins preparing carrots for a dish during "Teen Cuisine."

## FINANCE & HOMEOWNERSHIP

MSU Extension offers financial and home-ownership education to community members. Financial capability education provides families and individuals tools and support to manage their personal finances and achieve financial goals. They learn to utilize a spending plan, pay their bills on-time, build a savings, as well as manage their debt and achieve their own financial goals. MSU Extension also provides programs regarding housing: rental education, home-buyer education, and foreclosure prevention. These opportunities are offered in a group setting, or individuals may meet with a housing counselor staff member on a one-to-one basis.

## AGRICULTURE

During the past year in Clare County, MSU Extension provided farm support and education through individual consultations, workshops, field tours, and research opportunities. Topics included beef production, quality assurance, animal health and well-being, forages, cover crops, soil health, farm financial management, breeding readiness, and farm stress.

With the implementation of the new field crop commodity section of the Farm Bill, MSU Extension partnered with FSA to provide educational sessions to help farmers navigate the best plan for their farm.

## NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

During 2019, Clare County multi-session nutrition series were conducted with students from Clare Pioneer High School, Farwell Junior and Senior High SPARKS programs, Clare Primary SPARKS, and in several preschool rooms. Additional nutrition presentations took place throughout the county. The "Grow It, Try It, Like It" curriculum helped preschoolers explore fruits and vegetables through touch, smell, and taste. The "Jump Into Foods and Fitness" program kept primary-age students active while learning about healthy food choices, and students at Farwell High and Middle Schools prepared foods and learned about healthy food and activity choices with "Teen Cuisine" classes.

# Program Highlights

## FARM STRESS

Taking care of crops and animals can be hard. Selfcare and wellness in this high-stress profession are often overlooked but are critical for effective farm operations. MSU Extension helps farmers adapt to the changing agricultural environment and address related stress. Outreach efforts including television, radio, newsletters, journals, social media, podcasts, and expanded farm stress staff have been implemented to help the at-risk population. Two programs, “Communicating with Farmers Under Stress” and “Weathering the Storm” provide further support to farming communities. We’re working together to promote awareness, reduce the stigma of mental illness, and save lives.



Farmers have many challenges facing them that can add to farm stress.

## TEEN LEADERSHIP

Two groups that MSU Extension helps facilitate and provide youth with leadership experiences are the Clare County Youth Action Council (YAC) and the newly formed Clare County 4-H Youth Leadership Council. The YAC group focuses on youth learning about philanthropy and grant making. The 4-H Youth Leadership Council helps 4-H Youth have a voice in the 4-H Program while making decisions that affect their interests and actively getting others involved. These programs help youth develop relationships with caring adults, communication skills, responsibility, mentoring and many other life skills.



Congratulations to the newly elected board and advisors of the Clare County 4-H Youth Leadership Council.

## SUMMER CAMPS

Clare County 4-H held three summer camp experiences that included Camp Clover, Cloverbud Day Camp, Exploration Days, and Forestry Day Camp. A total of 73 youth participated in these camps. Teens had the opportunity to learn leadership and responsibility while leading younger youth through their camp experience. Forestry Day Camp was held in conjunction with the Clare Conservation District and the DNR Huron Pines AmeriCorps program. Campers were able to take a field trip to a forestry products facility and Hartwick Pines State Park.



4-H members fishing from the dock is just one of the many experiences youth took part in while attending Camp Clover.

# MSU Extension and Mid-Michigan Industries working together



In early 2019 MSU Extension partnered with Mid-Michigan Industries (MMI) of Clare County. MMI works with adults with disabilities, building skills for community employment. They utilize the MSU Extension kitchen for training in the food service industry. MSU Extension's financial and homeownership counselor provided two 12-week programs for financial capabilities education.

Weekly, two groups from Mid Michigan Industries use the MSU Extension kitchen to learn safe food handling skills, preparing food, setting tables and serving food. With the skills learned through MMI, one individual has successfully found employment at a local eatery in Clare.

Another group of individuals come every Monday for one hour to work on their financial capability skills for twelve weeks. Each person is asked to think of their own personal financial goal. Some folks dreamed of going on a vacation while another planned to purchase a new television. MSU Extension provides them with skills to learn to obtain their goals.



One gentleman stated that with the skills he learned in the "financial capabilities" course, he learned how to

plan and save for his own wedding. Another woman who attended the series stated this was the first time she did not go into debt over the Christmas holiday.



Everyone who attends the program has their own individual needs. Each week participants talk about planning for the future and reaching personal goals as well as the importance of protecting their personal finances. This partnership has been very successful and rewarding to MSU Extension and Mid-Michigan industries.



## 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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