



# Mecosta County 2021 Annual Report

## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



It is my pleasure to provide you with a snapshot of the work that Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is doing in the Mecosta community. The circumstances of the past two years have presented new and unique challenges for us and many throughout the world. Despite the adversities encountered, MSU Extension continued to work with local audiences and community partners to deliver our services in the safest way possible and expanded our reach to new audiences through the use of technology. Because of your continued support, MSU Extension has been able to continue its long tradition of providing programming and educational resources that help enhance

the lives of Mecosta County residents, contribute to community prosperity, and address critical issues as they arise in communities.

Your support of:

- MSU Extension's Agriculture and Agribusiness programs continue to provide the agricultural community with education and resources to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets, and advancing agriculture through applied research.
- MSU Extension's 4-H Youth Development supported youth in learning lifelong skills, develop leadership skills, explore new interests, and discover the value of community service.
- MSU Extension food programs support residents to learn about the safety, security and affordability of local fresh foods, how to use them, where to find them, or how to start a cottage food business of their own.
- MSU Extension nutrition and physical activity programs support county residents to improve the quality of their diets and become more active.

We hope you are as proud of this important partnership as we are. We thank you for another great year and the continued opportunity to serve this great community.

Eric Karbowski, District 6 Director

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

**Extension**

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## CHILDREN & YOUTH YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Michigan 4-H is the largest youth development organization in Michigan and provides more than 200,000 young people with experiential learning opportunities to explore new interests and discover their passions. In 2021, 56 Mecosta County volunteers supported 272 youth in participating in 4-H programs delivered both virtually and in-person (as COVID-19 mandates shifted).



4- H develops youth as current and future leaders by providing programs that instill young people with knowledge and skills to become positive agents of change through leadership development, civic engagement and education, global citizenship, and cultural competency programming;

- assists youth in preparing for and finding gainful employment opportunities through entrepreneurship, financial literacy, career exploration, and workforce preparation programs; and
- excites youth about future science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) careers and build critical STEM skills. These programs seek to increase aspirations and attitudes toward science, interest and engagement in science, and skills in critical thinking, problem solving and decision making.



I strive to positively impact the youth in Mecosta County by supporting them in career readiness activities, contributing to the opportunities available to the 4-H community, and developing hands-on learning experiences to promote continued growth and development. - Jennifer Myers



## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

MSU Extension provides Financial & Homeownership training and resources, foreclosure prevention assistance, homeownership education, and money management for the residents of Mecosta County.

"I just wanted to follow up and say thank you again for the information you and your colleague presented in the Homebuyer Education class. The information I learned is unmeasurable and the HBE should be a mandatory class for all first time homebuyers. I have told many people about my great experience and the wealth of information I obtained. Michigan State University Extension is offering a great service in the State of Michigan with this class and at a very reasonable cost! I am so thankful I was able to attend."

- Program Participant



Mid-Michigan Industries (MMI) honored MSU Extension with their Community Partner of the Year Award.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## HEALTH & NUTRITION



Students participated in SNAP-Ed programming through in-person and virtual series such as Show Me Nutrition, where students learned about MyPlate and gained the skills necessary to make healthy lifestyle choices.

MSU Extension partners with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to provide SNAP-Ed, a nutrition education program designed to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits for SNAP-Ed eligible populations. MSU Extension SNAP-Ed community nutrition instructors teach youth, individuals, and families how to make health a priority. The goal of SNAP-Ed is to improve the likelihood that SNAP-Ed eligible persons will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA food guidance. In 2021, 66 Mecosta County residents participated in SNAP-Ed programs, such as Eat Smart, Live Strong, Understanding Food Labels, and Cooking for One.



## MSU EXTENSION FOOD PROGRAMS

MSU Extension food safety programs support residents to learn about the safety, security and affordability of local fresh foods, how to use them, where to find them, or how to start a cottage food business of their own through Food Safety courses in 2021, such as Food Preservation, Cottage Food Law, and Safe Food = Healthy Kids.

## AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS

MSU Extension serves the agriculture industry by engaging in research, education and outreach that enhances the quality of life of Michigan residents. In 2021, Mecosta County residents had the opportunity to participate in programming related to animal agriculture, agribusiness management, beekeeping, consumer and ornamental horticulture, and field crops, fruit crops, and vegetables.

2021  
Beginning  
Grazing School



“Thank you, I didn’t believe in the counseling program when you shared it with me but, this program gave me my life back and might have saved it in the process.”



# IMPACT AT A GLANCE



14

PROGRAMS HOSTED IN  
MECOSTA COUNTY



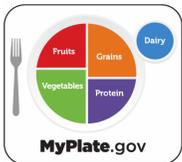
272

YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN 4-H



1,673

MECOSTA COUNTY  
MSU EXTENSION  
FACEBOOK VIEWS



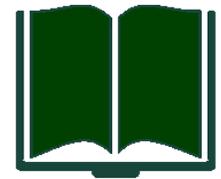
66

RESIDENTS SERVED IN  
SNAP-ED PROGRAMMING



732

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS FROM  
MECOSTA COUNTY THAT ATTENDED  
MSU EXTENSION PROGRAMS



131

PARTICIPANTS THAT  
ATTENDED PROGRAMS  
HOSTED IN MECOSTA  
COUNTY

20



4-H CLUBS IN  
MECOSTA COUNTY

## CONTACT US

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