



Osceola County 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 2,500 Osceola County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



Almost 1,700 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



Almost 1,300 adults and youth benefited from health, nutrition, and family development programs



Nearly 290 residents participated in agricultural and gardening services and programs

100+

MSU Extension has served Osceola County over 102 years



MSU disbursed more than \$250,000 in financial aid for Osceola County students



MSU spent almost \$196,000 with local businesses in Osceola County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



Greetings! I am pleased to bring to you another report of Michigan State University (MSU) Extension's work in Osceola 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 Osceola 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 Osceola 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.

Shari Spoelman

MSU Extension District 6 Advisory Council

Ken Brown	Leonard Strouse	Rick Grove	Christine Hammond
Dick Metz	Jerry Jaloszynski	Bob Wachowski	Frank VanderWal
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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.



Anthony & Abbigail present at the poultry check-in at the Osceola County Fair

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Osceola County 4-H program is strong, growing and diversified to meet the needs of the many families across the county. Here are some of the numbers that show the continued success of and participation in the Osceola County 4-H in 2019: 474 youth enrolled in traditional 4-H clubs; 68 adult 4-H leaders actively volunteer their time, 26 4-H Clubs; 1667 additional youth were reached through specific programs such as Project Rural Education Days, health and nutrition education, and 4-H Science Blast.



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Managing stress was a focus of the 2019 social—emotional programming. Extension Educator Shannon Lindquist facilitated single presentations and six-week series to 230 area residents. Preschool teachers, low-income seniors, a weight loss group, health care providers, school personnel, farmers, volunteers, and retirees learned ways to manage stress. In turn, participants increased resiliency and reduced stress related symptoms such as worry, depression and physical tension.

Program Highlights

AGRICULTURE

During the past year in Osceola 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.



MSU Extension provides education and support to farmers and producers.

NUTRITION

Community Nutrition Instructors provide exemplary nutrition and physical activity education for limited resource participants where they eat, learn, live, work, play and shop. Program and outreach efforts aim to increase the likelihood limited resource youth, adults, and seniors make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Staff draw from evidence-based curricula to build knowledge, confidence and skills around healthy foods, beverages and activity for all age groups in Osceola County.



Trinity helping at the Evert Farmer's Market.

FINANCE & HOMEOWNERSHIP

Financial capability education offers families and individuals tools and support to manage their personal finances and achieve financial goals. They learn to utilize a spending plan; paying their bills on-time and building a savings, as well as managing their debt and achieving their own financial goals. Educational programs - Rental Education, Home Buyer Education and Foreclosure prevention are offered as group or as individual basis.



Proud Equestrians!



PROUD EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM (P.E.P)

The 4-H Proud Equestrians Program (PEP) is one of a few 4-H-based programs for riders with disabilities in the U.S. Riders include people with physical, developmental, emotional or multiple disabilities. One can be involved in the program either as a youth or adult rider or as a youth or adult volunteer.

In 2019, the Proud Equestrian Program for Osceola and Mecosta counties was completely filled with 15 youth riders. Under the guidance of Traci Chetter, the P.E.P program had three riding sessions with five youth in each group. Each youth rider requires three volunteers, one to lead the horse and two side walkers. 4-H encourages any youth to volunteer at this program and the rewards of volunteering cannot be put into words.

The Stanwood Lions Club provided a monetary donation to help cover the end of the season ceremony as well as riders' gifts. The Osceola and Mecosta County 4-H Proud Equestrian Program runs both spring and fall of the calendar year.



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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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