



Osceola County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 2,600 Osceola County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



Almost 2,000 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



More than 1,500 residents participated in health, wellness and development programs



Almost 250 residents participated in agricultural services and gardening programs

100+

MSU Extension has served Osceola County over 100 years



MSU disbursed more than \$214,500 in financial aid for Osceola County students



MSU spent more than \$320,000 with local businesses in Osceola County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

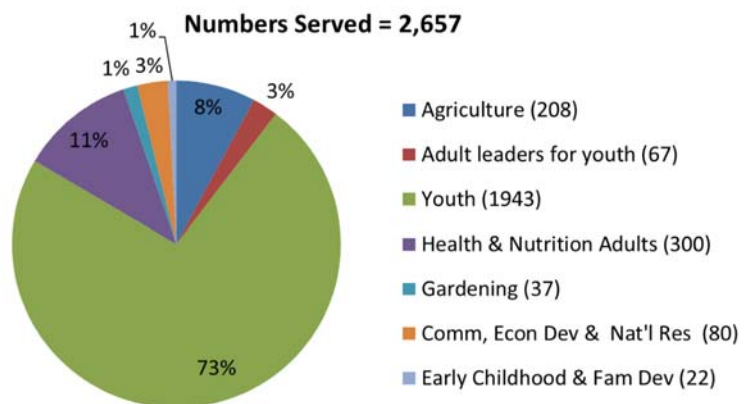
I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Osceola County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses and communities.



MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

We're passionate about serving Osceola County and are looking forward to a new year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension.

Shari Spoelman, District Director



Program Highlights



Budgeting assistance helps residents understand their limited resources and provide skills to help with homeownership.

FINANCE & HOMEOWNERSHIP

MSU Extension's team of knowledgeable financial pros demystify common money and homeownership best practices with university-backed, research-based programs and resources to help Michigan residents navigate through whatever fiscal challenges life throws their way. In 2018, the team provided homeownership education, foreclosure triage, and foreclosure counseling assistance to residents of Osceola County.



The most popular 4-H project, raising animals to show and sell at the fair teaches youth responsibility and entrepreneurial skills.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H is the largest youth development organization in Michigan. Connected at the national level, MSU's program promotes the traditional 4-H clubs, as well as many other leadership and life-skills development opportunities for youth like financial literacy, career exploration, and science. 4-H provides experiential learning opportunities that allow youth to explore new interests and discover their passion. In 2018 Osceola County had 39 4-H clubs with 67 adult volunteers. The total number of youth served in Osceola county was 1,943.



One of the many plant disease samples brought into the Extension office for identification.

GARDENING & CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

Homeowners often have insect infestations or plant diseases that they are unfamiliar with and need help addressing. MSU Extension provides soil testing, plant and insect identification, disease identification and treatment, Smart Gardening resources, and a toll-free Lawn and Garden hotline. The Osceola County MSU Extension office assists many customers with basic home gardening concerns.

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 grass-fed beef production, quality assurance, forages, multi-species cover crops, soil health, restricted use pesticide review, farm financial management, and farm stress. MSU Extension provided support for a number of beginning farmers, helping them to establish and grow their farming dream.



Field crops and forages are large agricultural crops in Osceola County.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

MSU Extension's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides basic nutrition education and hands-on activities for all ages. Core curricula are designed to help low-income families stretch their food dollars while maintaining good nutrition. Some instruction includes physical activity and cooking techniques that help instill life-long skills. It is estimated that every \$1 spent on nutrition education saves as much as \$10 in long-term health costs.



Kids learn to make healthy snacks during "Cooking Matters for Teens."

DISEASE PREVENTION

Chronic diseases—such as diabetes—can be difficult to manage. We offer disease management workshops that introduce participants to skills they can use to manage their health and lives. Disease management participants report improvements in breathing, depression, pain, stress, and sleeplessness. We also offer prevention workshops related to physical falls and diabetes.



Dining with Diabetes is enjoyed by these participants.

Powerful Tools

Preparing adults and youth to better face what life sends their way is a goal of the MSU Extension.



MSU Extension is helping to make a difference in Osceola County by teaching skills for better self care and care for others.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Research studies find high rates of depression and anxiety among caregivers and increased vulnerability to health problems. Caregivers frequently cite restriction of personal activities and social life as problems. They often feel they have no control over events, and that feeling of powerlessness has a significant negative impact on caregivers' physical and emotional health.

Classes help caregivers take better care of themselves while caring for a friend or relative. This series of classes helps reduce stress, improve self-confidence, manage time, set goals, solve problems, better communicate feelings, locate helpful resources and make tough decisions. A local participant read an article advertising "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" and told MSU Extension facilitators, "I was reading about myself in that article and that's why I'm here."

Communicating With Farmers Under Stress

The "Communicating With Farmers Under Stress" workshop is geared for agricultural professionals who work with farmers and their families. Building awareness of stress triggers, signs of stress, and helpful techniques for responding to stress are a focus of this workshop. Techniques for identifying, approaching and working with farmers who may not cope with stress effectively and learning what community resources are available to farm families rounds out this training.

Weathering the Storm: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset

The "Weathering the Storm: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset" workshop is specifically for farming families to help build skills in identifying stress signs and symptoms, strategies for managing stress, finding out where to access community resources and making an action plan for managing stress.

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