



Tuscola County 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

100+

Over 100 years MSU Extension professionals have provided education to Tuscola County residents



* \$69,080 spending with local businesses in Tuscola County



46 Tuscola County students enrolled at MSU



MSU disbursed \$1,330,982 in financial aid to Tuscola County students



667 MSU alumni living in and contributing to Tuscola County



2,393 youth involved in 4-H in Tuscola County youth development programs



* \$5,733,008 total economic impact in Tuscola County

* 2019 Numbers

Message from the District Director

To say 2020 was an unprecedented year does not do it justice. Our nation, indeed the entire world, was thrust into the uncertainty and fear of battling an invisible enemy called COVID19. And everything changed – our normal activities, so long taken for granted, seemed forever altered. From grocery shopping to youth sports, from local schools to factories, from fairs to health clubs, from mass transportation to worship, nothing was left untouched by the threat posed by this virus. We had no choice but to reinvent methods of collaboration, education and community. We had to find new ways to deliver products, services and compassion to our families, our co-workers and our community.



I am proud to say that Michigan State University Extension was up to this challenge. We were prepared to move into the environment of virtual education and collaboration. Moreover, we ensured that our customers – the residents of Tuscola County – were well served with the high quality, evidence-based curricula to which they have become accustomed. From stress management to disease prevention, from tourism to food insecurity, from nutrition to food safety, from livestock to field crops, MSU Extension hit the ground running – actually increasing our reach in the midst of this pandemic.

Thank you for supporting MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Jerry Johnson, District Director



Keeping People Healthy

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.

Health and Nutrition Staff serving Tuscola County

Karly Creguer

Supervising & Staff Development HNI for District 9 & 10

362 Green Street
Caro, MI 48723
Office: 989.672-3870
oberski9@msu.edu

Nola Auernhamer

Community Nutrition Instructor

362 Green Street
Caro, MI 48723
Office: 989.672-3870
auernha5@msu.edu



In February, Karly Creguer partnered with the Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) Headstart in Caro and Cass City to teach parents how to navigate picky eating with their children as well as strategies to get their kids excited to eat fruits and vegetables. There were 9 parents total attending the presentations.

In March, Karly presented to 13 residents of the Caro Senior Commons on ways to eat a diet that is healthy for our hearts as well as the heart health benefits of staying physically active.

In addition, Karly continued working with the St. Agatha Food Pantry in Gagetown to encourage their pantry users to choose healthier foods. Using the **Voices for Food** initiative, the pantry installed shelf tags designating in which food groups the items on each shelf belonged. Pantry users were then encouraged to choose a particular number of items from each food group to ensure they had the opportunity to serve their families balanced meals. Furthermore, various posters now display MyPlate and other healthy messaging throughout the pantry. These posters, as well as the shelf tags, are in both English and Spanish as the pantry serves a high number of Spanish-speaking families.

This year Erica Krawczyk teamed up with McComb Elementary to coach them through their **Building Health Communities program**. McComb received a grant for their 2019 -2020 school year to create and maintain a healthier school environment for the students and staff. As part of this grant, Erica taught **Show Me Nutrition** to each of their 1st grade classes as well as a Young 5 class, totaling 136 youth. They learned all sorts of things over this 6-week nutrition education series, including MyPlate and the 5 food groups, germs and proper handwashing, and the importance of physical activity. In addition, Erica coached McComb on their **Fuel Up to Play 60 program** to implement changes for a healthier school.

Michigan Senior Project FRESH is a state-wide program for low-income people over age 60. Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) is the administrator for the program in Tuscola County. Participants receive a free \$20 coupon to be used for fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown in Michigan and sold at participating farmers markets and roadside stands.

The program encourages seniors to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables and provides business to local farmers. In addition to the coupons, seniors get educational information on healthy eating.

Coupon distribution started in June and continued through August. Time and again participants voiced their thankfulness for this program, which helps them to stretch their food budget and make healthier choices. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we were not able to be out in the community, which required us to adjust our distribution method. This included talking to each participant over the phone, which was an unexpected health benefit. Participants were longing for interaction and most of them enjoyed talking to a friendly, helpful person. Coupons were then mailed to each of the participants to ensure their health and safety. **MSUE was able to distribute 232 coupons to Tuscola County residents, at a total value of \$4,640.**

DISEASE PREVENTION MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Health and Nutrition Staff serving District 10 (Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, St. Clair & Tuscola Counties)

Kris Swartzendruber
Social Emotional & Disease Prevention Extension Educator

swartze6@msu.edu
Office: 989.672.3870
362 Green Street
Caro, MI 48723



Available programs:

- * **Stress Less with Mindfulness**
- * **RELAX: Alternatives to Anger**
- * **PATH for Diabetes**
- * **PATH for Chronic Pain**
- * **Dining with Diabetes**

Kris Swartzendruber, Extension Educator for the Health and Nutrition Institute, conducted the following programs for District 10

Dining with Diabetes is a fun and interactive series for individuals with prediabetes, type 1 or type 2 diabetes and members of their support system. During each class, participants learn how to make healthier food choices and incorporate balanced menus into their family dining experience. Classes include research-based education and cooking demonstrations from the recipes in the take-home participant books. Participants also get to sample and taste the delicious foods that are made during each of the four sessions. This series can only be conducted in person. Before the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, Kris was able to conduct three in-person series, reaching 52 adult participants. All expenses related to the Dining with Diabetes series were covered by a grant from the Lions of Michigan and Lions International.

Diabetes PATH (Personal Action Towards Health) is a self-management series for adults with prediabetes, type 1 or type 2 diabetes and members of their support system. Over the course of six-session series, participants learn strategies to help with blood glucose monitoring, developing a healthy eating and exercise plan, reading food labels, setting goals and a variety of other tools for managing their diabetes. Since the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic, the developers of the PATH curriculums have given certified leaders permission to conduct the *Diabetes PATH* series remotely and online. As a result, Kris has conducted three remote/online series, reaching 34 adult participants. All expenses related to the Diabetes PATH series were covered by a grant from the Lions of Michigan and Lions International.

Chronic Pain PATH (Personal Action Towards Health) is a self-management series that supports adults, and members of their support system, who face daily challenges of living with chronic pain. During this six-session workshop participants learn ways to effectively communicate with health professionals, manage and prevent the misuse of medications, deal with frustration, understand difficult emotions and manage pain through healthier eating and exercising. Kris has conducted two of these series (one in-person and one online) reaching 19 adult participants. All expenses related to the *Chronic Pain PATH* series were covered by a State Opioid Response grant received by Michigan State University Extension.

Stress Less with Mindfulness is a five-session series that focuses on using mindfulness to reduce stress related symptoms such as worry, depression and physical tension. There is research that shows that mindfulness may also be helpful in managing chronic conditions such as cardiac disease and diabetes. By offering alternative ways of relating to everyday life experiences, including thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and events, *Stress Less with Mindfulness* teaches and encourages the use of mindfulness self-care skills to help one feel better and enjoy life. Kris has conducted three online series reaching 42 participants. All expenses related to the *Stress Less with Mindfulness* series were covered by a State Opioid Response grant from Michigan State University Extension.

Disease Prevention Management and Social Emotional, *continued*

- * The human mind has 70,000 thoughts each day. That's 70,000 opportunities.
- * The typical brain is about 2 percent of your body weight but uses 20 percent of your energy.
- * 80 percent of repetitive thought are negative. But they don't have to be.
- * A brisk 10- minute walk reduces the amount of cortisol (stress hormone) in the brain by 50 to 70 percent.



WISE (Wellness Initiative for Senior Education) is a program for adults, 60 years and older, that are looking to stay healthy and meet new people. During this six-week workshop, participants learn valuable information about health and wellness, medication use, stress management, depression and substance abuse. The WISE program can only be conducted in person. Kris was able to conduct one *WISE* series before the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, reaching 9 participants. All expenses related to this series were covered by a State Opioid Response grant from Michigan State University Extension.



RELAX: Alternatives to Anger is a four-session series that helps teens, adults, parents and caregivers understand and manage anger and stress, and develop the communication and problem-solving skills needed for healthy relationships. Participants learn what anger is, what triggers anger, calming down and de-stressing methods, tools for problem-solving, effective communication skills, and steps that allow them to forgive and let go of the past. Kris conducted one in-person and two online *RELAX* series reaching 20 adult and 25 teen participants.



Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a six-session series designed for people who are helping a parent, spouse, friend or someone who lives at home, in a nursing home or across the country. Participants learn tools to help them reduce stress, communicate effectively with family members/doctors/paid help, take care of themselves, reduce guilt/anger/depression, make tough decisions, set goals and problem solve. Kris conducted one online *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* series reaching 12 participants.



Matter of Balance for Falls Prevention is an eight-session series designed for older adults who are interested in increasing balance, flexibility and strength and for those who have concerns about falling. During this workshop participants learn how to set goals for increasing activity, exercise to increase strength and balance, make changes to reduce falls at home and view falls as controllable. This series is only allowed to be conducted in person. Kris was able to conduct one series before the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, reaching 19 participants. All expenses related to this *Matter of Balance* series were covered by a Falls Prevention grant from Michigan State University Extension.

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food



Health and Nutrition - Food Safety Staff

Laurie Messing
Extension Educator

Office:
1142 S. Van Dyke
Suite 200
Bad Axe, MI 48413

lmessing@msu.edu
989.269.9949 x-611

Food Safety is a global issue from farm to table. Its impact on our health and well-being is significant across the life span. Foodborne illness outbreaks occur on an ongoing basis crossing all socioeconomic lines from production, consumption and preservation of foods. Overall health is impacted by the safety of the food supply and foodborne illness.

To educate consumers about keeping their food safe, MSU Extension provided programming in Tuscola County in the areas of Food Preservation, Cooking for Crowds, Safe Food=Healthy Kids and ServSafe manager training for adults. With the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, our programming shifted online and we offered a large variety of food safety education programs as well as food safety education campaigns to increase knowledge and awareness for consumers.

Results of programming in Tuscola County include:

ServSafe manager certification and education was provided for 69 foodservice employees. This course provides education for the ServSafe Food Protection Manager course and proctoring of the Certification exam. Through ServSafe participants learn how to help prevent foodborne illness throughout the flow of food and set up food safety management systems.

Cooking for Crowds classes were held for 20 volunteers. Cooking for Crowds is designed for non-profit groups that run food fundraisers and events such as meals, bake sales, sub sales and dinners. There are a range of food safety risks that develop when cooking large volumes of food and participants learn to reduce those risks and help prevent the conditions that may lead to a foodborne illness.

Virtual Food Safety Education Programs- March-July 2020

Our efforts shifted in March to move most of our in-person group education classes to online options for Michigan residents. We also created some new educational online opportunities.

- Online Food Safety Education Programs offered included:
 - Home Food Preservation—16 sessions
 - Cottage Food Law—7 sessions
 - Safe Food=Healthy Kids —11 sessions
 - Food Safety Q and A—14 sessions
 - Emergency Preparedness—4 sessions
 - Food Pantry Safety-It's Your Job—5 sessions

During the months of March-July 2020:

- ◆ Approximately 20,000 people have registered for the above online classes
- ◆ Over 6,000 have attended the food safety program sessions

PRESERVING YOUR HARVEST

Join us online at 1 p.m. or 6 p.m. EDT for free classes to learn to safely preserve your harvest.

- Aug. 13 - Safe Home Food Preservation- Traditions and Trends
- Aug. 20 - Preserving What's Left in Your Garden
- Aug. 27 - Peaches-Can or Freeze?
- Sept. 3 - Too Many Tomatoes
- Sept. 10 - Salsa 101
- Sept. 17 - Know Your Canners
- Sept. 24 - Basics of Sauerkraut
- Oct. 8 - Preparing Soups for Winter
- Oct. 15 - Making Applesauce
- Oct. 22 - Preserving Food for Gifts
- Oct. 29 - Preserving Venison

To register visit:
<https://events.anr.msu.edu/PreserveHarvest/>
To listen by phone: call to register, 877-643-9882

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

Ensuring Safe and Secure Food, *continued*

Health and Nutrition - Food Safety Staff

Laurie Messing
Extension Educator

lmessing@msu.edu
Office:
989.269.9949
1142 S. Van Dyke
Suite 200
Bad Axe, MI 48413

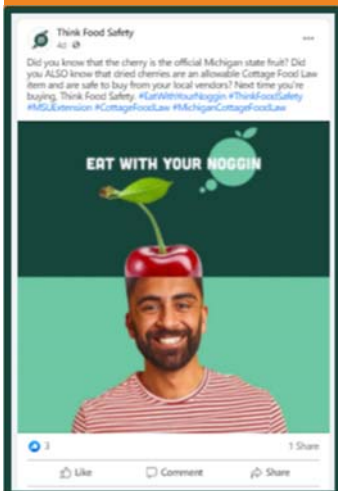


- ◇ **Food Safety Hotline:** If you have food safety questions on preserving foods at home, food expiration dates, safety of foods after a power outage, or how long leftovers will last, please call the MSU Extension Food Safety Hotline at 877-643-9882. Hotline calls are answered Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- ◇ **Educational Texting Campaign:** Receive a weekly food safety educational text messages which provides great information to keep you and your family food safe. Text "SafeFood" to 797979 to sign to and receive these food safety text messages.



- ◇ **Think Food Safety Social Media Campaign:** An MDARD grant funded campaign is bringing awareness to consumers on illegal food sales as well as food that can be made and sold legally under the Cottage Food Law. This slogan & tag line are being used to encourage people to be informed and be aware of the food they are buying to ensure their safety. Michigan adopted the Cottage Food Law (CFL) in 2010, which describes the guidelines for individuals to prepare non-potentially hazardous foods in a home kitchen. Only non-potentially hazardous foods can be made and, with proper labeling, sold directly to the consumer without a license under this law. Examples of approved food items under CFL include bread, chocolate covered pretzels, cookies and jars of jelly. Unfortunately, there is some confusion among entrepreneurs about what they can and cannot sell under CFL, which adds to the incidence of illegal food sales.



To learn more, follow us on
[Facebook](#)
and
[Instagram](#).

Supporting Food and Agriculture

Bob Battel

Extension Educator
Field Crops

362 Green Street
Caro, MI 48723

Phone: (989) 672-3870
Cell: (989) 315-4221
Email: battelro@msu.edu

Phil Kaatz

Extension Educator -
Forages & Field Crops

1800 Imlay City Rd., Suite 1
Lapeer, MI 48446

Phone: (810) 667-0341
Cell: (810) 338-5242
Email: kaatz@msu.edu

Some comments from
the Virtual Breakfast series
were:

**“Enjoyed the Virtual
Breakfast meetings and
picked up much useful
information.”, said Jim.**

**Ira said, “The Breakfast
Meetings were very
informative all season and
I hope they continue next
year.”**

Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series

Every Thursday during the growing season, farmers were able to access the most current information available for timely, relevant in-season crop and weather information from MSUE Field Crops Specialists and Extension Educators. Each 30-minute zoom session is divided into 15-minute segments for crop information and weather. Following the presentations, participants had the opportunity to participate with MSU Specialists and Educators in a half-hour question and answer period. This innovative approach using technology has provided growers from every region of the state the opportunity to participate in a live webinar via their computer, laptop, or cell phone. Each participant was able to ask questions of the specialists and educators during the live sessions.



The Virtual Breakfast Series is a result of a focus group that included young farmers asking for opportunities to have fast-paced, video or Internet based, and unbiased research information during critical times of the spring and summer. Each week field crop producers were invited by email to participate and an MSU Extension News article was written to encourage participation.

A wide range of topics was planned according to the seasonal issues that frequently occur at specific times. However, the series was flexible, adaptable, and had the ability to change quickly and effectively when unexpected issues arose. One of the unexpected issues for 2020 was the flooding that occurred in the Mid-Michigan area. Due to the flooding, a special session focusing on nutrient losses for field crops was inserted into the lineup. This was an example of how the MSUE Field Crops Team was able to provide information at the right time with an unscheduled topic.

2020 MSU Field Crops Team Virtual Breakfast Series

Virtual Breakfast Series	Live participants	You Tube Views	Facebook Views	Social Media	Article Page Views	Total Participants and Views
Total Audience	2,134	2,045	10,619	1,290	2,170	18,258
#/week	97	89	483	59	99	794

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices.



Each Winter Bob Battel conducts several pesticide review session prior to the time the MDA comes in to the county to offer producers the opportunity to test for or renew their license for the use of restricted use pesticides. Many find these session helpful.

Thumb Ag Day

MSU Extension hosted the annual Thumb Ag Day on Wednesday, December 11 at the Ubyly Heights Country Club. One-hundred visitors from met with seventy-six vendors at the event.

Participants also had the chance to see educational sessions, including:

2018 Farm Bill Commodity Title—helping you make decisions, presented by Dr. Jim Hilker, Professor, Department of Ag, Food and Resource Economics, MSU, and Dr. Corey Clark, MSU Extension Farm Management Educator

Commodity market update, presented by Dr. Jim Hilker, Professor, Department of Ag, Food and Resource Economics, MSU

In the afternoon, MSU Extension Field Crops Educators Phil Kaatz, and Bob Battel presented a local agricultural review.

In addition to the Farm Bill meeting at Thumb Ag Day, MSU Extension also hosted a series of informational meetings for farmers on the 2018 Farm Bill. Educational materials were presented by Drs. Jim Hilker, and Corey Clark. The meetings were held in partnership with local USDA Farm Service Agency personnel. Farm Bill meetings were offered on the following dates at the following locations:

- * Wednesday, December 4, Sanilac Careers Center, Peck
- * Monday, December 16, Brentwood Restaurant, Caro
- * Thursday, January 23, Farm Bureau Building, Bad Axe
- * Thursday, January 23, Tuscola Skill Center, Caro
- * Monday, January 27, West Park Inn, Sandusky

2019 SMaRT Soybean Meetings & Research

Meetings:

We conducted a SMaRT program research update in Caro in January. More than 80 producers participated. We will do a follow-up evaluation in December to measure and document actual financial and educational impacts. The impacts from a similar program conducted in Caro in 2019 are listed below:

- 72% of participants utilized or implement information they received at these meetings
- From the knowledge gain at the meetings, local producers shared that they **earned or saved** \$15.19 per acre on the 5,442 acres they planted for a total financial impact of \$82,669. in 2019 alone.

On-farm Research Trials:

We conducted one replicated on-farm research trial in Tuscola County in 2020. The trial is comparing the yield and income produced by two row spacings (15" rows vs 30" rows).



Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

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

Animal Welfare Dairy Management

Marianne Buza,
Dairy Extension Educator

mbuza@msu.edu

Office:

989.269.9949 ext. 612

1142 S, Van Dyke Rd.

Sutie 200

Bad Axe, MI 48413

Gaining Efficiency is a Work in Process

Michigan State University Extension's winter dairy program for 2020 focused on gaining efficiency in a profitable way. Inefficiencies and waste can plague a farm's bottom line creating a drag on a farm's performance. Efficiency does not always mean cheaper, but rather getting more value from the dollars invested in each area of a farm.

This program helped identify low-cost solutions to improve productivity. It was designed for dairy farm owners and managers, and others who work in the dairy industry. The program discussed strategies based on research to improve efficiency. Topics included: when is treating cows profitable, how to tell if you are maximizing your forage usage and consistency, using manure profitably, measuring and managing labor efficiencies, and milk efficiency to make more milk.

This event was held in February and March in McBain, West Olive, St. Johns, and Bad Axe. The presenters at these meeting were MSU Extension Dairy Educators and Specialists: Paola Bacigalupo, Marianne Buza, Phil Durst, Dr. Ron Erskine, Martin Mangual, Stan Moore, Erica Rogers and Sarah Fronznack.



Virtual Coffee Break with MSU Extension Dairy Team

The Michigan State University Extension Dairy Team created a podcast and video series for dairy farmers and ag professionals for virtual "coffee breaks".

These coffee breaks with the MSU Dairy Team is a new series of virtual meetings that occurred each Wednesday morning in March and April at 10 a.m. They were designed as conversations lasting less than a half hour that can be listened to live, or listened to as posted recordings any time after. The recorded podcasts are perfect for busy farmers who can catch the coffee break meeting at their convenience,

Episodes will later be available on YouTube in the MSU Extension Dairy Team YouTube channel. The series is also available as a podcast on all major podcast channels like Apple Podcast, Google Podcast and Spotify.

Season one covered a variety of guests that included farmers, researchers, and industry experts. Topics discussed included how to promote the dairy industry, methods to improve milk quality, introduction to LEAN management, antibiotic usage, corn silage recommendations, and other interesting information to improve dairy farms.

After a very successful first season, the virtual coffee break podcast returned with season two. Season two began on July 8, 2020, featuring 10 new episodes representing multiple areas of dairy management. Fields included animal health, feed management, and calf management among other interesting areas. New for this season, we created three episodes focusing on the financial side of dairy farming. We had special guests from Michigan State University, GreenStone Farm Credit Services, Penn State University, and Clemson University all hosted by MSU Extension Educators. The last episode of season two aired on September 16, 2020. So far, the virtual coffee break podcasts have reaches 1,148 people.

MSU Extension Dairy Team YouTube page

The MSU Extension Dairy Team created a YouTube channel in February for live webinars, educational videos, and podcast recordings. The channel has just over 200 subscribers, 21 videos and over 3,000 video views. The topics of the videos are designed for those who work on farms, own farms or work with farms.



MSU Extension Dairy Team
202 subscribers

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

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

Meat Quality & Safety

Jeannine Schwehofer,
Senior Meat Quality
Extension Educator

Office:
200 Grand River Ave.
Suite 102
Port Huron , MI 48060

Phone: 810-989-6935
Email: grobblej@msu.edu

Cattle feeders and producers from throughout the Thumb attended a summer picnic hosted at a Tuscola County beef feedlot. The event was held to allow cattle producers to network, tour the host farm, learn about managing Holstein cattle, and share MSU Extension research and updates. It occurred on August 14, 2019 at Ruggles Beef Farm, Kingston, Michigan, in Tuscola County. An industry speaker spoke on end point management in Holstein feedlots. Dr. Schwehofer organized the event, gave an update with various Extension programs, promoted upcoming educational opportunities.

Michigan State University Extension provided educational opportunities for Tuscola County beef producers.

From July 2019 to March 2020, four programs related to beef feedlots were held in Huron County and 96 participants attended those programs. Topics included industry trends and hot topic roundtable sharing, Enogen corn and the impact of feeding it, and manure management with an update on permit changes and other opportunities to manage manure.

Beef Quality Assurance – Transportation Certification

Beginning January 1, 2020, some beef packers began requiring that cattle coming to their plants would be delivered by truckers that are certified in the Beef Quality Assurance – Transportation (BQA-T) program. The BQA-T program emphasizes practices that truckers should take to ensure the cattle are loaded, moved, and unloaded with efforts to minimize stress, injury, and carcass defects while keeping animal comfort and end-product quality as a top priority.

Michigan State University Extension Educators conducted one BQA-T certification program in 2019 for 43 truckers in Bad Axe, MI. Many feedlot owners transport their own cattle to harvest facilities either themselves or their employees. The certification session consisted of a two-hour presentation using PowerPoint and followed with a 20-question test. Truckers needed to obtain 80% correct to achieve certification. Truckers passing the test received a certification card and dashboard reference guide. The certification card will be required to be shown at harvest facilities as cattle are delivered.

Feedlot owners can continue to transport their own cattle to harvest with this certification. Participants obtained certification to verify their understanding of cattle care during transport.

Food Safety Course Participant

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 and co-taught by Dr. Jeannine Schwehofer and team of Campus specialists including Dr. Les Bourquin, Mr. Gary Smith, Dr. Kirk Dolan and Mr. Jason Hofman. One HACCP course participant in 2019 was from Tuscola County.



Developing Youth and Communities



4-H is America's largest youth development organization, providing educational opportunities to over 6 million youth. The 4-H program offers a vast selection of project area topics—science, healthy living, arts, and civic engagement to name a few, all with hands-on experiential learning for youth. 4-H programs are available for all youth ages 5-19, and are made possible by the service of our dedicated volunteers. We always welcome new members and new volunteers; if you are interested in joining 4-H, please contact the Tuscola County MSU Extension office at 989-672-3870. We would be happy to help you enroll today!

Our Volunteers

4-H programs are made possible by the service of our dedicated volunteers. An Effective 4-H Council is essential to planning, conducting and evaluating 4-H work. To be successful, 4-H programs must meet the needs and interests of local participants. Determining these needs and interest and then developing and implementing programs that fulfill those needs require the organized involvement of local volunteers and community stakeholders. Tuscola County's 4-H program has several committee boards that are made up of 24 dedicated volunteers. They are vital to the local 4-H program as these volunteer groups fulfill their mission thru the following functions:

- Assist in developing a total 4-H program based on the needs of youth and the county and then actively carrying out the plan.
- Introducing new 4-H projects, programs and activities that are designed to attract new youth to the 4-H program
- Planning for and assisting with the recruitment, education and recognition of 4-H members and 4-H volunteers.
- Raising and managing funds to underwrite the planned 4-H curriculum, program and activities.
- Recommending policy and procedures for the county when not determined by state or national regulations.
- Providing for the representation of the 4-H program at other meetings and events.
- Evaluating the overall 4-H program on a continuing basis.
- Promoting the work of the 4-H council, its committees and the entire 4-H program throughout the county.

Not only do young people gain by being involved in community service, the clubs and groups that they are in also experience benefits from planning and carrying out service projects.

MSU EXTENSION 4-H STAFF

KATIE COOPER
4-H Program
Coordinator

Committee Leaders:
Scott Holmes
4-H Council President

Genevieve Hecht
4-H Large Livestock
President

Jennifer Beardslee
4-H Small Livestock
President

Grant Gettel
4-H Horse Leaders
President



Developing Youth and Communities, continued

Tuscola County 4-H provided local members and volunteers opportunities to connect to learning experiences beyond the county as well. These included:

4-H School Enrichment

School Enrichment programs are a great way to get 4-H into the classroom. 4-H Staff and volunteers are able to partner with local schools and use the 4-H Embryology curriculum to help provide teachers with a fun science activity. The embryology program is where students can learn about the developmental stages of embryos. Embryology is a 21 day program where students can observe and learn about the life cycle of chickens. 4-H staff set up an incubator and provide eggs for the students to be able to get a hand on learning experience right in their classroom. This year 4-H staff was able to provide with Cass City 7th and 8th agriculture class with this school enrichment opportunity. Mayville Community Schools 3rd grade classes were also able to participate via a virtual experience using google classroom!

4-H Community Service

4-H'ers pledge there "hands to larger service"! Many youth who participate in Tuscola County 4-H help in different community service project! In the 2019-2020 program years clubs have helped clean up there communities, provide free, high quality educational opportunities to youth, participated in Adopt-a-Highway, and had an animal food drive for the Tuscola County Animal Shelter. By giving back to their communities, young people can:

- Learn the value of helping others, develop leadership, communication, organizational skills and a sense of empowerment.
- Learn how important the connection is between subject matter and life in the community.
- Learn how to cooperate with one another and work as a team with diverse groups of people including adults, peers and others with different backgrounds and experiences.
- Succeed in an area different from academics, athletics or popularity.
- Build self-esteem from the positive results of their service.
- Develop problem-solving and decision-making skills by applying their knowledge to real-world situations.
- Develop a sense of being responsible for their community and a sense that citizenship requires them to actively participate in their community.
- Receive recognition for their efforts and possibly college scholarships.
- Experience the world of work.

Project RED (Rural Education Day)

Project Red day is a day when Tuscola County 3rd grade students venture through local educational and hands-on stations outlining the role agriculture plays in their lives. Tuscola County 4-H and the Tuscola County Farm Bureau have built meaningful relationships and programs at our county level to foster strong agricultural communities among our youth.

MISTEM Career Day

Tuscola County 4-H worked in partnership with the Upper Thumb MISTEM Network to provide 7th and 8th graders in Tuscola County with a hands on Career Day at the Tuscola County Fair grounds. Many local business participated in the Career Fair where they provided hands on learning opportunities for the youth to participate in.



Camp Activities included:

- Outdoor skills
- Olympic training
- Cabin Games
- Skits
- Shooting sports
- Nature walk
- Mud hike
- Kayaking
- Swimming in Lake Huron
- STEM
- Team building events
- Minute-to-win-it games
- Outdoor cooking

2020 Tuscola County 4-H Winter Camp

On February 28th and 29th Tuscola County 4-H hosted Tuscola County 4-H Winter Camp at the Wesleyan Woods Campground. Winter Camp had 20 youth participate from ages 9 to 19! At 4-H winter camp youth had the opportunity to participate in fun activities along with a number of educational opportunities. The United States Coast guard attended 4-H Winter Camp and taught youth about the importance of ice safety. Youth also participated in activities such as fire building, building winter shelter, and cooking!

Virtual 4-H Engagement

As a result of Covid-19, 4-H was no longer allowed to meet in person but this did not stop us from trying to stay connected and keeping youth involved. A number of online zooms and webinars were created to help keep youth active! Tuscola County 4-H offered a few different GooseChases. A GooseChase is an online educational scavenger hunt/trivia game. Topics that the scavenger hunt/trivia covered were things such as, Michigan history and geography, 4-H history, health living and many more topics! Livestock Educational Webinars, Finance Webinars, Career Webinars and many other educational webinars were made available for youth to stay engaged in Tuscola County 4-H!

Agriculture Career and College Night

Tuscola County 4-H, Tuscola County Farm Bureau and Tuscola County FFA partner together to provide an opportunity for students to meet and talk with local Agriculture businesses and colleges who provide Agriculture courses. Agriculture Career and College Night is to help youth prepare for there future. This year this event was hosted virtual. Agriculture business submitted videos discussing different aspects of Agriculture Careers. Youth attended the event via zoom!

The Tuscola County Virtual Fair

The 2020 Tuscola County Fair was unlike any other fair Tuscola County 4-H youth had ever participated in. Due to Covid-19 causing the 2020 Tuscola County Fair to be canceled, MSU Extension and 4-H volunteers worked hard to still offer youth a platform to showcase and sell their projects. The virtual showcase had 77 Tuscola County 4-H and FFA members participate. The Youth who participated submitted pictures and videos on a website called FairEntry. After all the youth had submitted their pictures and videos a judge was able to login and place the classes as well as provide feedback to all the youth who participated. The Large and Small livestock also had the opportunity to participate in an online auction. The Small Livestock had 12 youth participate in selling their animals on Albrecht's Auction. The Large Livestock had 56 youth sell their animals on Breeders World sale site. The 2020 Tuscola County Virtual Fair was a great opportunity for youth to explore marketing and showcasing their animal in a new way!



Ensuring Strong Communities

MSU Extension understands that building civic engagement and healthy economic structures leads to greater opportunities and stronger communities.

Serving the State of Michigan

Andy Northrop

Extension Educator

northro5@msu.edu

Office:

810.989.6935

200 Grand River #102

Port Huron, MI 48060

- Sustainable Tourism Development
- First Impressions: Tourism Assessments
- Planning for Tourism
- Community Vitality
- Leadership and Facilitation



Rural tourism opportunities increase in Tuscola County from first-time visitor assessment program

The Village of Cass City, Mich. applied to be a First Impressions Tourism (FIT) (https://www.canr.msu.edu/tourism_first_impressions/) recipient community in 2018. As a recipient, the Village of Cass City received a team of five first-time visitors during the latter half of that year. The results of their assessment were shared in a community forum during February 2019, which drew in nearly 60 participants from the Village of Cass City and Tuscola County area. After receiving their results, the Village of Cass City Community Leadership Team (CLT) was provided with a summary report, a collection of presentation slides showcasing data extracted from nearly 80 pages of unedited visitor feedback, and a supplemental tourism report summarizing short-term rental and social media recommendations.

As part of the FIT program, Michigan State University Extension tourism educators follow up with all communities to gauge impacts and actions typically within a year of completing the program. I followed up with the Village of Cass City CLT in March 2020, with qualitative questions designed to assess everything from growth in leadership and external funding to a range of infrastructure and community improvements.

As with nearly all communities that complete FIT, the Village of Cass City made improvements based on visitor feedback consistently since receiving their results.



Ensuring Strong Communities, continued

Serving the State of Michigan

Goals of our tourism program are to:

- * Increase awareness of assets and opportunities
- * Increase knowledge of best practices, trends and changes
- * Develop new leadership roles, opportunities and action items
- * Foster new collaborations and plans among stakeholders to advance community-driven tourism



So far, Cass City has -

- Youth from the community have put together an environmental committee focused on identifying flora and fauna in the area
- Will be expanding their 9-hole disc golf course to include an additional nine holes that will help attract national competitions and increase user base
- Walking trails have been marked with distance markers to and from the Cass River to attract more visitors
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA) installed a kiosk to be placed downtown showcasing events and community information to residents and visitors
- DDA is creating a façade improvement program for local businesses
- Began direct collaboration with the Hills and Dales Hospital as part of long-term community economic development strategy
- Developed and funded, in partnership with Hills and Dales Hospital, a gateway and wayfinding signage to identify and strengthen visitor and resident knowledge of existing assets (see photo)

An additional \$3,000 was raised from a service club and another \$15,000 from the local foundation was contributed to install updated free-standing playground equipment

First Impressions Tourism (FIT) assessment program is a comprehensive community assessment conducted by unannounced visitors in a host community positioned to lead development based on their unique results. FIT involves developing community leadership, assessing the host community, sharing the results in a community forum and providing suggestions to drive community action. Overall, FIT helps communities learn about their strengths and weaknesses through the eyes of first-time visitors evaluating their community in an asset-based manner on multiple tourism-related community metrics. The overriding goal of the program is to support community economic development by facilitating the growth of local and regional tourism economies. Service clubs have begun requesting input from the Village of Cass City for future service projects to support new developments.

In addition, Cass City has been highlighted statewide and nationally for their successes in the FIT program. They've been touted as a model community via statewide meetings, programs, and national conferences. MSUE Educator and FIT Program Leader, Andy Northrop, received a certificate of recognition in early 2020 from the Village of Cass City for his work with the community via the FIT program. Furthermore, Cass City is also highlighted in a promotional video that helps other communities interested in the FIT program understand what benefits it can bring to a small town.

Ensuring Strong Communities, continued



Serving the State of Michigan

Joe Bixler

Extension Educator
bixlerj@msu.edu

Office:
810.989.6935
200 Grand River #102
Port Huron, MI 48060

- Fiscal Sustainability for Michigan Municipalities—Statewide
- New County Commissioner Training—Statewide

Thumb Food Policy Council

The Thumb Food Policy Council, created in 2018, covers the geographic area of all five Thumb counties (Lapeer, Tuscola, Huron, Sanilac and St. Clair). Representatives from all five counties provide community input and strategic planning on behalf of those communities and the Council.

The 2019-20 year was marked with marketing efforts to local community organization with presentations, development of a formal plan of work, consultations regarding food insecurity best practices, development of communication and marketing strategies, and delivery of food to communities experiencing hardships due to the COVID 19 virus pandemic.

A summary of the Council's priorities through 2022 include:

Food to people: The transportation and distribution of food in both directions. That's is general distribution of food to people and/or people to food.

Ongoing assessments of food pantry capacity in all five counties

Greater access to affordable, safe, and diverse food

Agriculture and food literacy

Two programs, central to these priorities, were kicked off during the 2019-20 year. A Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) BASICS presentation was developed and presented to 163 individuals in group settings from January 2020 to June 2020. The second program offered was due to a significant pivot of our work ad result of COVID 19 and food insecurity efforts. In partnership with the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, the Council began to assist in the recruitment and coordination of volunteers and procurement of sponsors for community mobile food pantry giveaways. The total number of pounds distributed as of this writing is in excess of 1.5 million pounds. These efforts are considered paramount to our first priority of FOOD TO PEOPLE.

Although the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic altered our work significantly, it is conclusive that we were properly positioned with our fundamental priorities to impact all five Thumb counties with food in a time when it was, and still is, most need. It is likely that the Council's FOOD TO PEOPLE priority will continue for the remainder of 2020 as well as agriculture and food literacy.



Extension Professionals Serving Tuscola County

Staff Located in Tuscola County Office:

Name	Role	Email
Bob Battel	Educator, Field Crops	battelro@msu.edu
Kris Swartzendruber	Educator, Disease Prevention/ Social Emotional Health	swartze6@msu.edu
Katie Cooper	4-H County Program Coordinator	coope305@msu.edu
Karly Creguer	Educator, District 9-10 Supervising & Staff Development	oberski9@msu.edu
Nola Auernhamer	Community Nutrition Instructor	auernha5@msu.edu
Cathy Patterson	Office Support Staff	patte199@msu.edu

Additional MSU Extension Staff Serving Tuscola County:

Name	Role	Email
Marianne Buza	Educator, Dairy	mbuza@anr.msu.edu
Joe Bixler	Educator, Community Food Systems /State & Local Gov't	bixlerj@msu.edu
Corey Clarke	Educator, Farm Business Educator	clarkcr@msu.edu
Jacob DeDecker	Academic Specialist, 4-H Youth Development	dedecke4@msu.edu
Mary Dunkel	Educator, Ag Literacy	dunckelm@msu.edu
Jerad Jaborek	Educator, Beef Feedlot Systems	jaborek.1@buckeyemail.osu.edu
Jerry Johnson	District 10 Director	johnjer@msu.edu
Philip Kaatz	Educator, Forages / Field Crops	kaatz@msu.edu
Eric Karbowski	Educator, Community Behavioral Health—Farm Stress	karbows8@msu.edu
Betty Jo (Nash) Krosnicki	Educator, District 9&10 4-H Supervising & Staff Development	nashbett@msu.edu
Laurie Messing	Educator, Food Safety & Nutrition	lmessing@msu.edu
Martin Nagelkirk	Senior Educator, Wheat / Field Crops	nagelkir@msu.edu
Andy Northrop	Educator, Community & Economic Development	northro5@msu.edu
Benjamin Phillips	Educator, Vegetable Consumer Horticulture	phill406@msu.edu
Jeannine Schwehofer	Senior Educator, Meat Quality	grobbej@msu.edu
Mike Staton	Senior Educator, Soybeans / Field Crops	staton@msu.edu
Robert Tritten	Educator, Commercial Fruit	tritten@msu.edu

MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jeffrey W. Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lan-sing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. The 4-H Name and Emblem have special protections from Congress, protected by code 18 USC 707.

DISTRICT 10 ADVISORY BOARD

Serving the following counties: HURON, LAPEER, SANILAC, ST. CLAIR AND TUSCOLA

Name	COUNTY	CITY	EMAIL
Clark Brock	Huron	Kinde	cbrocketching@gmail.com
Melanie McCoy	Huron	Port Austin	melmccoy22@gmail.com
Carl Osentoski	Huron	Port Austin	carl@huroncounty.com
Karen Aboukarroum	Lapeer	Flushing	kaboukarroum@gmail.com
Lourdes Emke	Lapeer	Metamora	hscofimlaycity@gmail.com
Nancy Boxey	Lapeer	Allenton	nboxey@lapeercountycf.org
Melissa Anderson	Sanilac	Sandusky	director@sanilacfoundation.org
Holly Tatman	Sanilac	St. Clair	htatmanvillagemgr@gmail.com
Bill Sarkella	Sanilac	Port Sanilac	billsarkella@gmail.com
Don Fletcher	St. Clair	Lakeport	fletch9003@aol.com
Phil Pavlov	St. Clair	St. Clair	phil@grindstonestrategies.com
Kevin Watkins	St. Clair	Wales Twp	kevinwatkins59@me.com
Gene Harrington	Tuscola	Akron	gene.harrington@greenstonefcs.com
David Rupprecht	Tuscola	Vassar	imsuperdave@yahoo.com
Jade Edwards	Tuscola	Vassar	Jadelackerman@gmail.com

What is the purpose of the Advisory Board?

The Michigan State University Extension District 10 Advisory Board purpose is as follows:

Advocacy: Intentionally informing residents and elected officials about the achievements of MSU Extension as well as the educational capabilities and partnership opportunities available.

Vision: Providing MSU Extension with the key insights pertaining to your geographic and socio/economic areas of residence, employment and volunteerism.

Pathways: Using your influence to open doors for potential partners/customers/collaborators of MSU Extension for the purpose of growing influence and better communities.

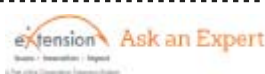
Needs Identifications: Providing insight into areas of deficiency or opportunity in which MSU Extension educational programming can address and benefit residents.

Mentoring: Providing honest, constructive feedback to the MSU Extension District Director on methods of enhancing personal and organizational engagement, involvement and effectiveness.

Food Safety Hotline

Do you have questions about food expiration Dates? Want to know how long leftovers will last? The MSU Extension food safety hotline can help answer these types of questions.

Hotline: 1-877-643-9882



Questions are answered by Cooperative Extension, University staff and volunteers from across the United States

<http://Ask.extension.org/ask>

Garden or Yard Questions?

Visit the Gardening in Michigan website: www.migarden.msu.edu. View tip sheets on smart soils and other smart gardening topics OR call

**MSU Extension's toll free
Hotline: 1-888-678-3464**