



EXTENSION AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS IN MICHIGAN

59,018 participants

in MSU Extension agriculture and agribusiness related programs.

992 programs

provided by in MSU Extension agriculture and agribusiness educators.

170,000 subscribers

to agriculture and agribusiness related MSU Extension News Digests.

711 news articles

published on the MSU Extension website, in addition to 109 bulletins and fact sheets.

REACHING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Michigan is agriculturally diverse both in what we produce and who produces it. MSU Extension goes beyond traditional methods of working with farmers with a strategy to reach farms at every level and size of production. We understand that some farmers may not be able to meet in person due to distance or timing of an educational offering, so we incorporate a vast array of online learning and digital informational opportunities to meet people both where they are and when they have the time to consume information integral to their farming success. In the past year, we have reached audiences in a variety of ways.

70% In-Person Events

19% Webinars

6% Hybrid

5% Online Courses

KEY PROGRAMMING IMPACTS

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension educators work with farms of all sizes to positively impact individual farming operations. When individual operations do well, their success helps to fuel state and local economies.

Pesticide Safety Training

MSU Extension agriculture educators collaborated with the Pesticide Safety and Education Program (PSEP) and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) to revamp pesticide safety education for Michigan's restricted use pesticide (RUP) applicators. Together, they hosted 24 in-person review and testing sessions across the state, reaching 950 participants: 52% were private applicators and 48% were commercial, including 40% agricultural consultants. These sessions helped bridge access gaps for rural residents with limited internet access and included multiple Spanish-language offerings for non-English speakers.

88%

passing rate of those who attended review sessions



MSU Extension's Swift Response to Avian Influenza Outbreak

MSU Extension responded quickly to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreaks, helping protect Michigan's livestock industry and agricultural community. Extension staff equipped farmers with critical biosecurity resources, minimized disease spread and supported safe agricultural and community events statewide. This coordinated response also ensured youth involved in 4-H programs could continue their learning experiences, even during a challenging outbreak. The effort not only addressed the immediate threat but also strengthened Michigan's long-term agricultural preparedness.

\$104.7

billion annual impact of food and agriculture on Michigan's economy





100

years MSU Extension has provided soil testing services



MSU Extension Soil Testing Program

Following the 2022 closure of the MSU Soil and Plant Nutrient Laboratory MSU Extension launched a new soil testing program in partnership with A&L Great Lakes, Inc. The lab analyzes samples and provides data that Extension staff use to generate MSU-specific fertilizer and soil amendment recommendations. From January to December 2024, MSU Extension issued recommendations for 4,377 home lawn and garden samples—a 23% increase over 2023—and 1,819 commercial and farm samples, up 11%. Demand remains high across Michigan, reflected in both county office feedback and strong sales of the Home Lawn and Garden Soil Test Mailer, the top-selling product on shop.msu.edu. Through this new program, MSU Extension continues to deliver trusted soil testing services that Michigan residents and farmers have relied on for over a century.

Managing Farm Stress

The MSU Extension Farm Stress program, a partnership between MSU Extension health and agriculture education programs, offers mental health education and support to Michigan's agricultural community. The program reaches farmers, farm families, agribusiness professionals and rural communities with resources that reduce stigma and promote well-being. In 2024, MSU Extension delivered 45 educational sessions, reaching 1,769 participants. The program also partners with Pine Rest to provide teletherapy services, with 13 sessions held in 2024, and 38 sessions total from 2023–2024. To sustain this support, an endowment was created for the teletherapy program, and Cherry Republic contributed a portion of February sales to the effort.

1,769

participants reached through 45 educational sessions



Ask Extension and the Lawn and Garden Hotline

Michigan residents can receive expert, research-based answers to their questions through MSU Extension's online Ask Extension system. In 2024, Extension staff and trained Master Gardener volunteers responded to 6,179 questions from residents in 82 counties on topics ranging from gardening and landscaping to family, business and community.

The Michigan Lawn and Garden Hotline provides additional statewide support via a toll-free number. In 2024, the hotline received 1,540 calls—a 6% increase from the previous year—with questions from residents in 80 of Michigan's 83 counties. Both services ensure residents have accessible, science-based guidance to support healthier gardens, homes and communities.



6,179

Ask Extension questions answered from residents in 82 counties

1,540

Michigan Lawn and Garden Hotline calls received from residents in 80 counties



Improving Irrigation Efficiency with MSU's Mobile Scheduling App

A U. S. Department of Agriculture survey found 445 Michigan irrigators are using evapotranspiration-based irrigation scheduling tools, including MSU's Excel-based Irrigation Scheduler. In 2024, MSU Extension launched a more user-friendly, mobile app version to improve water use efficiency, crop resiliency and farm profitability. The app calculates crop water needs and helps farmers schedule irrigation more accurately. Developed with support from Project GREEN, the app is now available in English and Spanish on the Apple Store and Google Play. By the end of 2024, 108 users had registered and entered data for 106 fields covering 19,672 acres of corn, soybeans, vegetables and fruit. MSU Extension trained 117 growers and ag professionals on the new app during the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo and the Michiana Irrigation Association Winter Workshop.

19,672

Michigan acres entered and registered in irrigation app



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