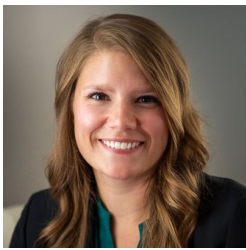


SANILAC COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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- Mary Gilbert, Community Nutrition Instructor
- Mary Heiden, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Jerad Jaborek, Beef Educator
- Betty Jo Krosnicki, 4-H Supervising Educator
- Shelly Krueger, 4-H Online Data Systems Support Staff
- Renee Travis, Cooking Matters Liaison



Karly Creguer
District 10 Director
oberski9@msu.edu

Message from the District Director

Even prior to the creation of the cooperative extension system in the U.S. in 1914, Michigan State University (then Michigan State College) was at the forefront of community education and outreach. The first livestock agent was hired in 1907. Now, in 2025, there are over 600 MSU Extension staff bringing evidence- and research-based information to Michigan residents. They are embedded in the communities they serve, lending them first-hand knowledge of the local needs and opportunities. From non-biased seed trials and youth development to health education and economic development, MSU Extension is at the ready to respond to emerging needs. We are able to do this through our many partnerships with volunteers, coalitions, local groups and businesses and county governments. Thank you for your continued support as we evolve to the demands of today’s world while staying true to the Extension mission established over 100 years ago.

Impact



1,216 participants attended **36** programs hosted in Sanilac County



418 client consultations from Sanilac County



2,081 participants from Sanilac County attended **252** programs



213 total volunteers serving Sanilac County



252 programs (across the state) attended by participants from Sanilac County



350 youth enrolled in 4-H



38 policy, systems, and environmental changes at **7** sites in Sanilac County



9,625 contacts through social media, web activity, e-newsletters, and handouts

Community Nutrition: Mary Gilbert, Community Nutrition Instructor

Mary teaches cooking and nutrition lessons to preschool-aged youth all the way through older adults. This can be through 6-week series or one-time presentations. In 2024, she facilitated **10 programs** in Sanilac County attended by **132 participants**.

Senior Project Fresh is a program that makes fresh produce available to older adults. Low-income residents over age 60 receive education and coupons to purchase Michigan-grown fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices, and honey from farmers markets and roadside stands. **Two new sites** were registered as vendors to accept Senior Project Fresh in Sanilac County. In 2024, **150 residents** received coupons with a total value of **\$3,750**.

In partnership with the Thumb Food Policy Council, the Last Food Mile program delivers fresh produce directly to senior housing as well as to Sanilac Transportation Corp. Every week, April-November, **300 bags** of produce are delivered to those most in need within Sanilac County.



Photo credit: Mary Gilbert



Photo credit: Mary Gilbert

In 2024, Mary coached sites through implementing changes to their policies, systems, and/or environments to make the healthy choice the easy choice. This included helping Mama's Eatery Farmer's Market establish a private tent for breastfeeding mothers shopping for fresh produce. She also assisted Deckerville Schools' Ag Program in revitalizing a community garden.

Food Safety: Laurie Messing, Extension Educator

New partnerships led to multiple Preserving MI Harvest classes being offered in-person at local Sanilac County libraries. Library patrons attended a variety of classes learning about how to safely can food at home, freezing, and dehydrating using research-based methods, resources, and recipes. Also, a Preserving MI Harvest display was used at the Port Sanilac Farmers Market and the Sanilac County Health Department to educate consumers on safe home food preservation methods and recipes. **59** participants attended food safety programs in 2024 ranging from preserving harvests from gardens to determining whether a locally caught fish is safe to eat.



Photo credit: Laurie Messing

Health & Well-Being: Kris Swartzendruber & Jacqui Rabine, Extension Educators



The Arthritis Foundation *Walk with Ease* program helps individuals manage arthritis pain and improve overall health. With a focus on enhancing balance, increasing confidence in walking and reducing arthritis-related limitations, this self-paced program supports participants in gradually building up to 30-minute walks at least three times a week.

The *Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention* program offers online and local, in-person classes. Participants increase their knowledge of ways to prevent falls, increase their strength, and help manage chronic pain.

Social and Emotional Health programs include *Stressless with Mindfulness*, *RELAX Alternatives to Anger*, *ACES and Positive Childhood Experiences* and *Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)*.

Diabetes self-management programs include *Diabetes PATH* (Personal Action Towards Health) and *Dining with Diabetes*. The aim is to educate those who have this disease on ways to manage their chronic condition through increased physical activity, knowledge of healthy eating and improved communication with healthcare providers.

For more information about our Health program, please scan our QR code.



Animal Agriculture: Dr. Jerad Jaborek, Extension Educator



Photo credit: Morgan Cook, MP Branded

Emergency Response for Accidents Involving Livestock (ERAIL)

In 2024, the MSU ERAIL team conducted two, in-person comprehensive ERAIL trainings for emergency first responders. The training materials included animal handling and behavior, emergency action plan preparedness, euthanasia and hands-on animal handling of different livestock. The first event in May held in Imlay City included **52** participants and the second event in October at MSU's campus included **32** participants. The MSU ERAIL team placed **five new** fully equipped emergency response trailers across Michigan, totaling **eight** in the state, one of them placed in neighboring Lapeer County.



Photo credit: Jerad Jaborek

MSU Feedlot Educational Series

2024 was the fourth year of the MSU Feedlot Educational Series, held at Beagio's Restaurant in Kingston. There were four presentations. In January, the topic of focus was on carbon credits and environmental sustainability improvements due to reduced ammonia emissions when feeding Exporior, a beta-3-agonist product from Elanco Animal Health. February, United Producers Inc. (UPI) presented on financing, marketing and risk management tools. Finally, in March, Quality Liquid Feeds (QLF) shared results cattle feeders can expect when feeding a liquid supplement versus a dry supplement.

Agriculture & Agribusiness: Jenna Falor & Phil Kaatz, Extension Educators

Field Crops Programs - Upper Thumb Area (Huron, Sanilac, Tuscola)

In 2024, we had **70** participants at the Crop and Pest Update in Peck, **81** participants at the annual Thumb Ag Day held in Ubly, **27** participants Field Crops Scouting School at the Saginaw Valley Research & Extension Center; **one** Regional Field Day, **nine** on farm soybean plots and **eight** Field Crops Webinar Series.

Jenna (pictured right) also organized hands-on activities on kid's days at local fairs. She displayed pans of different "soil" types, utilizing granulated sugar, flour and powdered sugar. Kids then built their own soil mixture. While they were playing with the "soil" learning about textures, she utilized different sized objects to explain the difference in particle size in a visual manner (beach ball, golf ball and bead).



Photo credit: Karly Creguer

Field Crops – Virtual Breakfast Series

presented on financing, marketing and risk management tools. Finally, in March, Quality Liquid Feeds (QLF) shared results cattle feeders can expect when feeding a liquid supplement versus a dry supplement. Conducted during the growing season, the series focused on field crop and pest management, soil health, soil management, cover crops, and financial management. In production agriculture, things change fast during the growing season and the Virtual Breakfast Series is a convenient and valuable way to provide and assist producers and agribusiness professionals with solutions that address possible management options associated with emerging issues and concerns. address possible management options associated with emerging issues and concerns.



- **5,465** live participants
- **5,414** YouTube video views
- **7,365** MSU Extension page views of Virtual Breakfast
- **1,493** podcast participants
- **2,620** Facebook live participants
- **392** live participants from **Sanilac County**

4-H & Youth Development: Mary Heiden, 4-H Program Coordinator

Michigan 4-H Youth Development Programs offer youth an opportunity to learn about a subject in a safe and secure environment. Sanilac County 4-H Youth Development offers a wide range of activities and subjects throughout the program year and 2023-2024 program year was no different. Some of the activities were conducted at the Marlette Library, Brown City Library, and Homeschool Co-op out of Cass City which included, robotics, embryology, science, art, music and more.



Photo credit: Mary Heiden



Photo credit: Mary Heiden



Photo credit: Mary Heiden

Programs like the Child & Babysitting Course, Sanilac County Proud Equestrian Program, Horse & Pony Program, Small Animal Clinics, Large Animal Clinics, Dairy Clinics, Shooting Sports, Thumb Area 4-H Camp and 4-H Youth Exploration Days require a lot of dedicated volunteers to help organize and execute the programs. In the 2023-2024 4-H program year Sanilac County had **185 Gold Volunteers** and **nine Silver Volunteers**, which allowed Sanilac County 4-H to reach **1,403 youth**, generating interest in 4-H so they ultimately join the program.



Photo credit: Mary Heiden

Tourism & Community Development: Andy Northrop, Extension Educator



Andy generates impacts via his statewide roll addressing needs related to small town tourism development, government and community vitality. Specifically, he leads MSU Extension's First Impressions Tourism (FIT) program for communities interested in capturing visitor perspectives to drive innovation and growth. In 2024, **five** Michigan communities participated in FIT.

Andy has been working with local partners to organize the 2025 Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC) Conference in Lapeer. In 2024, **\$240,000** were generated through his community program outreach and technical assistance.

MSU Extension's Statewide Impact



133,306 total youth participants statewide



\$246.5 billion annual impact of food and agriculture on Michigan's economy statewide



12,861 total volunteers statewide



29,264,562 contacts through social media, web activity, e-newsletters, and handouts statewide.



9,808 people participating in Food Safety programs including ServSafe® statewide



Check out MSU Extension's Strategic Directions Report!

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