

MSU EXTENSION

GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

2023 - 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Grand Traverse 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 outreach 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 continue to provide our programs in a variety of spaces and delivery methods that are convenient for our participants to engage in and access. Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Grand Traverse County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you will be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

~ Jennifer Berkey, *District 3 Director*

392

Programs accessed
by residents

44,180

Reached by
social media

4,911

Reached through
programming

50,493

Reached
indirectly



VITICULTURE EDUCATION

16 educational programs engaged over 900 participants

DIRT TO GLASS FEEDBACK

Getting together in such a collaborative environment with like-minded viticulturists is something we feel very fortunate to have, and something we look forward to for years to come.

- Peter Laing,
MAWBY Sparkling Wines
and bigLITTLE Wines



VITICULTURE

VITICULTURE OUTREACH

To expand our outreach efforts, a diverse array of indirect activity strategies were implemented. Over the course of the year, we coordinated and co-hosted 16 educational programs, engaging a broad audience of over 900 participants. These programs served as invaluable platforms for knowledge exchange and collaboration, featuring insights from experts spanning seven states.

Covering a wide range of topics, our programs delved into areas such as viticulture, grapevine health, and sustainable practices like composting and biochar workshops. Highlights included flagship events like the “Dirt to Glass” conference, the “Great Lakes EXPO - Grape Sections,” and the “Michigan Grape Spring

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS HOSTED

1. 2023 Dirt to Glass Conference
2. 2023 Great Lakes EXPO - Grape Sections
3. 2023 Michigan Grape Spring Kick Off Meeting
4. Bird Robotic Laser Repellent: Laser Demonstration Showcase
5. Dormant Pruning Demonstration - 4-H Viticulture Program with Greenspire High School at the NW MI Horticulture Research Center
6. Grapevine Dormant Pruning Demonstration
7. Grapevine Dormant Pruning Training Course for New Grape Growers
8. Leelanau Organic Composting Meeting
9. NE2220 Multi-state Coordinated Evaluation of Grape Cultivars & Clones Meeting
10. Northwest Michigan Orchard & Vineyard Show - Grape Section
11. NW Michigan Pre-bloom Meeting: Exploring Early-Season Disease Management & Soil Sampling in Viticulture
12. NW Michigan Wine Region Educational Tour
13. Optimizing Grapevine Health & Productivity: Michigan Grape Pre-Veraison Meeting
14. Sour Rot Summit Meeting
15. Wine America 2023 Fall Retreat
16. Workshop for Composting & Biochar

ROBOTIC LASER BIRD REPELLENT SHOWCASE



Kick Off Meeting.” Additionally, interactive showcases such as the “Bird Robotic Laser Repellent: Laser Demonstration Showcase” and the “Northwest Michigan Orchard and Vineyard Show - Grape Section” provided hands-on learning experiences for attendees.

Each event was meticulously curated to offer valuable insights and foster meaningful networking opportunities.

These initiatives collectively served to enrich the industry landscape and empower stakeholders with actionable insights and tools for success.

Research Projects Overview:

1. Modeling Michigan Grapevine Cold Hardiness — *Third Year*

As the principal investigator, I lead this ongoing project addressing grapevine cold hardiness, a primary

concern within Michigan’s grape and wine industry. Building on previous research funded by Project GREEN and the Michigan Craft and Beverage Council, our focus is on mitigating cold damage and ensuring sustainability amidst a changing climate. Collaborating with Cornell AgriTech, we aim to establish the Michigan Grapevine Cold Hardiness Model (MGCHM) tailored to local conditions, providing crucial support to grape growers.

We collect weekly bud wood samples from 10 selected varieties for differential thermal analysis (DTA) tests throughout the winter of 2023-2024, inspired by Cornell University’s model. Our evaluation process involves comparing model predictions with observed low-temperature exotherms (LTEs) data, optimizing parameters for enhanced

accuracy. This collaborative and iterative approach underscores our commitment to addressing industry concerns and equipping grape growers with resilient production tools.

2. Robotic Laser Bird Repellent — *Second Year*

In the second year of this project, I continue to explore the efficacy of robotic laser bird repellent as a high-tech solution for bird control in vineyards. Building upon first-year results, I will collect data throughout the harvest season to evaluate the system’s performance across different grape varieties. Results will be disseminated through an extension article and poster, facilitating knowledge sharing within the industry.

3. Enhancing Regional Grape and Wine Production and Quality

As the principal investigator, I lead



this nationwide project aimed at improving grape and wine production quality, with a specific focus on Michigan. By adopting a holistic approach and engaging industry stakeholders through a confidential questionnaire, we seek to address challenges and drive innovation in viticulture, enology, and winery business management, ensuring sustained growth and prosperity.

4. NE2220 Multi-state Coordinated Evaluation of Grape Cultivars and Clones Program

Chairing this collaborative effort, the NE2220 program evaluates grapevine cultivars and breeding selections across multiple states in the Northeast region. Initiated in 2004, the project aims to enhance sustainability and productivity by assessing grape varieties' performance and suitability through

uniform protocols and data collection methods. The program contributes significantly to driving innovation within the grape industry, benefiting growers and stakeholders alike.

NORTHWEST MI ORCHARD & VINEYARD SHOW 2024

The annual Northwest Michigan Orchard and Vineyard Show was another great success with over 310 tree fruit and wine grape producers in attendance and 48 vendor booths at the Grand Traverse Resort. Dr. Brent Black and members of his team from Utah State University (USU) joined us again to provide an update on the Specialty Crop Research Initiative project in collaboration with MSU on precision orchard management. This year he was joined by Dr. Alfonso Torres-Rua, an expert on irrigation and water management, who discussed

new technologies for mapping and remote sensing of irrigation needs and water stress. Richard Price and Dr. Todd Einhorn presented some of the MSU side of the research project on remote sensing for yield estimations and experimenting with variable rate irrigation in tart cherries.

The 2024 tree fruit educational sessions featured other new topics and speakers including a talk on forest carbon offsets by Daphna Gadoth-Goodman from the MSU Forest Carbon and Climate Program and a segment by Parker Jones from the MSU Product Center on agritourism and cost studies for value-added products to help growers see ways to diversify their income streams. This year's program also featured a section on agritourism, including a panel of local and statewide growers who have integrated agritourism in diverse ways on their farms.



HOP RESEARCH

2023-2024 HOP RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH

Research & Grant Funding

MSU Extension Educators, professors, specialists, and graduate students have continued to secure federal and state funding to conduct groundbreaking hop research in Grand Traverse County.

MSU Hop Research Projects with Grand Traverse County hop growers and stakeholders

- SAP Analysis to Improve Nutrient Management and Hop Quality with MI Local Hops
- Integrated Practices to Managing Cone Diseases with MI Local Hops
- Testing and Managing for Hop Virus and Viroids with MI Local Hops

- Management Strategies for Plant-parasitic Nematodes in Hopyards with MI Local Hops

Local partners and stakeholders:

- Alex Adams, Cambium Analytica
- Mike Moran, President, MI LOCAL HOPS
- Scott Stuhr, Silver Spruce Brewery
- Statewide MSU Hop Research Projects

With assistance from MSU Extension, the Hop Growers of Michigan were awarded a USDA Specialty Crop Block grant for \$110,810 entitled: “Enhancing the competitiveness of the Michigan hop industry”. The project will run from October 2023-September 2025. The project objective is to increase sales of Michigan-grown hops in Michigan and throughout the Great Lakes Region through a targeted promotion campaign and a brewer/consumer engagement strategy.

The Michigan Craft Beverage Council recently announced the recipients of their 2024 Research Grants. Nearly \$350,000 was awarded to twelve projects. Three of the twelve projects will directly benefit the Michigan hop industry and related craft brewing industry and a fourth proposal will likely have a positive impact on Michigan’s hop industry as well.

Dr. Aaron Staples who recently completed his Ph.D. at MSU, Dr. Trey Malone (formerly at MSU), and Dr. Rob Serrine were awarded MI Craft Beverage Council funding for their proposal: “Benchmarking best practices to expand craft beverage markets for the Michigan value chain”. This project will identify the regulatory, marketing, and other constraints related to local craft beverage supply chain development. It will also determine consumer policy and purchasing preferences across



MI LOCAL HOPS

SURVEY INNOVATION

Based upon requests from the Michigan Brewers Guild and the Hop Quality Group, MSU designed a survey instrument to collect cultivar, acreage, yield, and hop quality data from all Michigan hop growers. Those who responded accounted for 85% of the total hop acreage in Michigan. Brewers, growers, and MSU researchers will be able to use the information to improve plant selection, improve hop quality, incorporate Michigan hop varieties into new beer recipes, and more. Presentation of the survey results spurred conversation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. We are in conversation to codify collection of this important data on an annual basis.

craft beverage value chains and explore which marketing strategies might be most effective for promoting the development of the Michigan craft beverage industry.

Education & Outreach

MSU extension educators, professors, and graduate students continue to

deliver educational content in a variety of forms including conference presentations, the annual MSU Hop Management Guide for growers, peer-reviewed journal articles, and more.

MSU Annual Spring Hop Kickoff Meeting

MSU Extension hosts the annual

online ZOOM meeting with hop growers, researchers, specialists, and additional stakeholders. The meeting includes important updates to the MSU Hop Management Guide, pest control options and recommendations, irrigation and fertility best practices, and updates from the Hop Growers of Michigan. The 2024 kickoff is scheduled for April 8, 2024.

MSU Hop Chat Webinar Series 2023-2024. Bi-monthly May-August

MSU Extension hosts a bi-monthly online meeting that brings together hop producers, educators, scientists, state and national industry experts, and more to discuss current growing conditions, best management practices, and pertinent issues such as potential changes to maximum residue limits that may impact Michigan hop exporters.

MICHIGAN'S GREAT BEER STATE CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW



MSU Extension Regional Hop Growing Reports

New in 2023, Dr. Rob Serrine produced bi-monthly hop reports for 8 regions across Michigan during the growing season. The reports included up to date precipitation levels, daily temperature, and accumulated growing degree days as well as temperature, soil moisture, growth, disease, and insect pressure forecasts.

Michigan's Great Beer State Conference & Trade Show

Organized and hosted by the Michigan Brewers Guild, MSU Extension, and the Master Brewers Association of the Americas-District Michigan.

Michigan Craft Beverage Summit

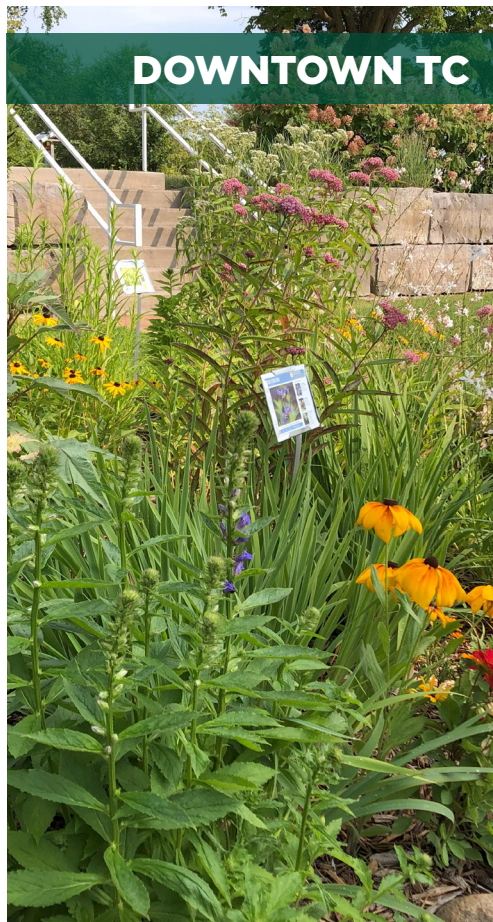
The Summit was organized by the Michigan Craft Beverage Council and Pure Michigan Business

MICHIGAN'S GREAT BEER STATE CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

- **Six** invited conference speakers were from MSU
- **+550** speakers, trade show representatives, and attendees from across the U.S.
- **+\$200,000** generated in direct economic contribution to the local economy. This includes hotel rooms, conference facility costs, transportation, but does not include indirect or induced economic benefits.

Connect. The summit aimed to educate and connect growers, producers and other industry suppliers and to create collaborative partnerships and advance an ever-growing state craft beverage industry. The Summit objectives included: Convene a statewide network of MI craft beverage companies, including wineries, cideries, breweries, and distilleries; connect MI-based suppliers to a

unified craft beverage industry; disseminate craft beverage specific research, education, and economic development opportunities; and provide an arena for supply chain connections through a MI-based supplier trade show and one-on-one meetings. Dr. Serrine was invited to participate on a speaker panel discussing Michigan terroir with an emphasis on Michigan hops. He also organized a session on hop quality



MASTER GARDENER IMPACTS

2,279 Extension Master Gardener Hours volunteered, valued at **\$72,472**

422 pollinators counted in Downtown Traverse City by **132** citizen scientist observations

82 horticulture or pest management questions answered through the Grand Traverse county office

that included Michigan hop growers and brewers. The summit was attended by over 300 people.

Collaboration

MSU Extension helps coordinate the Great Lakes Hop Working Group, a multi-state collaborative, comprised of university scientists, specialists, and government agriculture workers, that develops hop research and education priorities to meet the needs of hop growers across the Central and Eastern United States and Canada.

MSU Extension works hand in hand with the Hop Growers of Michigan, a 501(c)(5) non-profit organization, whose mission is to: advance the interests of Michigan hop growers and the Michigan hop industry through support of research and educational initiatives and promotion of Michigan-grown hops.

MASTER GARDENER MSU EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers participated in over 27 volunteer projects in 2023. These projects benefited residents by improving quality of life, empowering youth, protecting waterways, and improving food security. Providing flowering plants to support butterflies, bees, and other pollinators was the focus of several projects in 2023. Pollinator gardens at Hull Park and Clinch Park in Traverse City provided flowering plants to support bees and butterflies, along with educational signs so that visitors could learn about the importance of pollinators to our region. Similarly, 17 flower planters along Front Street in Downtown TC were maintained by MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers, contained flowers

for pollinators, and provided educational signage inviting visitors to participate in a citizen science project if they wanted to learn more. A highlight of this year for this project, was our planting day in May, when members of the larger community, schools, and partner organizations joined EMG volunteers to help place the plants in the planters at Clinch Park. Participants learned about pollinator protection and container gardening while planting the plants in the 40+ planters owned by the DDA that would later be placed in locations throughout Traverse City's Downtown.

FARM STRESS

MANAGING FARM STRESS RESOURCES

Farming can be an incredibly unpredictable, dangerous, and stressful occupation. MSU Extension is committed



to supporting agricultural professionals as they navigate tough times and make decisions that impact their families, livelihoods, operations, and farms.

Combining farm business management guidance with mental and behavioral health expertise, MSU Extension’s team of more than 20 dedicated professionals provides innovative resources and support to the agriculture community — from teletherapy and financial services to free online education and community presentations.

In 2023, the MSU Extension Farm Stress team conducted a record number of programs to a record number of participants in 2023; 68 unique direct program activities, which spanned 169 distinct sessions with 5,657 participants. 103 individuals enrolled in the Rural Resilience online D2L (Desire2Learn) training course and 35 farmers and farm family members were referred to

counseling services; this is a 52.17% increase compared to 2022.

In 2023, MSU Extension’s farm stress specialist Remington Rice also appeared in several key media outlets to promote resources for farmers, including Michigan Ag Today, UpNorthLive, WPBN-TV, the AgriSafe Network’s Talking Total

Farmer Health podcast, among others. As a result of this publicity, several new farmers have reached out to access MSU Extension resources.

Rice cherishes the individual farmers he and other educators have helped over the years, including this recent meeting with a Michigan fruit farmer:

“I journeyed to his farm, expecting a brief conversation, but what unfolded was a three-hour revelation. This farmer, disenchanted with his vocation and contemplating selling his farm, was recently divorced, and felt hopelessly adrift. We explored the roots of his passion for farming – pride in his work, cherishing public interactions at his farm stand and stewardship of the land. As he recounted his story, he rekindled his love for farming and found new meaning and purpose. Today, his farm flourishes, and he passionately advocates for the MSU Farm Stress Program, sharing his story at Research Station events and among fellow farmers. His transformation is a beacon of hope for all.”

-Remington Rice

4-H COMMUNITY IMPACTS

604 youth enrolled in clubs and **159** adult volunteers
364 local youth participated in 2023 Livestock Auction
\$982,885 sold in 2023 Livestock Auction
9 Junior Beef projects purchased and donated to 4-H youth to raise as large beef for 2024.



4-H

4-H CONTINUES TO GROW WITH THE 2023-2024 PROGRAM YEAR

Four new year-round community clubs were started in 4-H during the fall and winter for the 2023-2024 season. These include: Roundabout Wranglers 4-H Club, Too Goat to be True 4-H Club, Clover Bunch 4-H Club, and Farm & Freedom 4-H Club, bringing the total number of community 4-H clubs to 45 in Grand Traverse County!

4-H Viticulture Program

This was the first of three half-day field trips as part of the new 4-H Viticulture Program in partnership with Greenspire High School. There were 19 students who signed up for the viticulture program. The students were able to ride a school bus at the

start of their day to the Northwest Michigan Horticulture Research Center in Traverse City to take part in an introductory lesson on viticulture.

“I want to grow grapes at my house. This is really cool!”

- Student participant

The students were introduced to the research center by Erin Lauwers, an Integrated Pest Management Educator stationed at the Center. The students then partnered with Hannah Gaither, a 4-H Viticulture volunteer, and learned some viticulture basics before meeting with MSU Extension Viticulture

Specialist, Esmaeil Nasrollahiazar. Esmaeil presented on winegrape pruning techniques along with a demonstration out in the Research Center’s research vineyard, where the students used pruners, gloves, and safety goggles to prune the vines in two rows. Emily Kotz and Rosali Collier represented Grand Traverse County 4-H and Leelanau 4-H, respectively. A Greenspire teacher, Greg Czerwonka, was also present, and is a current 4-H volunteer as well. The pruning activity lasted about an hour, with different lessons and presentations during that time. The students responded very positively to the activities, and stayed focused on pruning for about an hour. One student took a break and made a snow angel, and others talked about really liking pruning and wanting to do it themselves by growing their own grapes at home.



LONG LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Several students talked about how relaxing it was to prune the vines and wanted to continue learning more about viticulture and vineyard management practices.

Long Lake Elementary School Gardening Program

After receiving a Michigan 4-H Foundation mini grant to assist with purchasing gardening supplies for Long Lake Elementary School, two MSU Extension Master Gardeners helped teach 4-H Junior Master Gardener lessons to two 4th-grade classrooms at Long Lake Elementary School for six weeks. Following these plant science lessons, students from the two classes also helped plant seeds in the neighboring hoop house and tracked the growth and development for each plant for the remainder of the school year. It was an amazing experience for the

youth to have a hands-on learning experience where they were able to see the benefits of helping to prepare the raised garden beds, planting, watering, and then harvesting, after

“I’ve learned through this club that there are so many different kinds of plants!”

- Student participant

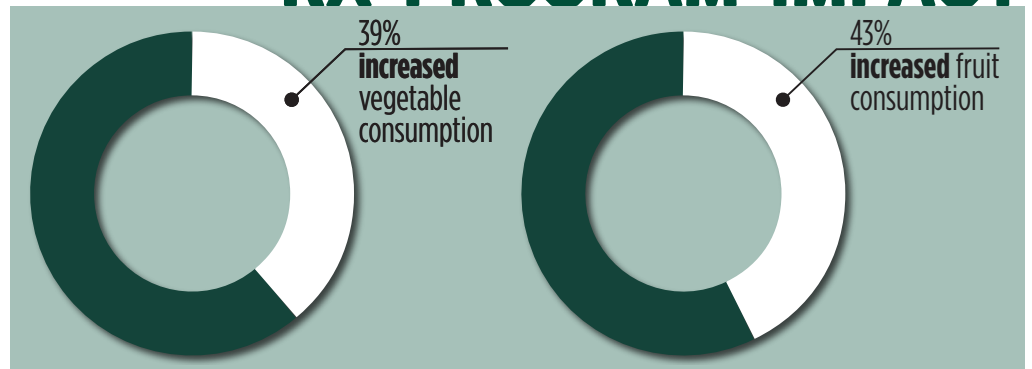
having learned about gardening and plant science in their classrooms. From developing the partnership with the elementary school, to receiving the necessary grant funds, 4-H was able to have a positive new program in Grand Traverse County and help local youth gain new skills and in-depth experiences.

Junior Master Gardener 4-H SPIN Club

We had a successful second summer Junior Master Gardener SPIN 4-H Club at the Botanic Gardens at the Historic Barns Park in Traverse City. Youth participated in four weeks of meetings two times a week and learned about plant biology while being able to work in the community garden space at the Historic Barns Park. The group learned about soil types, insects, and plant parts through hands-on activities at each meeting and then worked on weeding, planting, and watering in the garden. Junior Master Gardeners selected the plants to grow in their own pizza garden with the help of Master Gardener and 4-H MSU volunteers!



RX PROGRAM IMPACT



SNAP-ED

SNAP EDUCATION IN GTC

MSU Extension supports individual and community level, or public health approaches, to prevent obesity. Through the United States Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), we provide a combination of educational strategies, accompanied by supporting policy, systems, and environmental change interventions aimed to increase the likelihood that limited resource youth, adults, and seniors can make healthy choices.

Fruit & Vegetable Prescription Program

This program is designed to help patients with chronic disease create new healthy habits that align with the Dietary Guidelines. A healthy

eating pattern includes fresh fruits and vegetables and is an evidence-based way to improve health and reduce the risk of chronic disease.

“I learned about adding foods to my diet that I wasn’t familiar with before. I am otherwise unable to afford fresh food at the farmers market. This program gives me a special opportunity.”

- Program participant

Participants in the program are referred by physicians’ offices and receive up to \$100 in token that can

be used to purchase fruits, vegetables, herbs and seedlings at the Sara Hardy Downtown Farmers Market and The Village at Grand Traverse Commons Farmers Market. This program is provided by Munson Healthcare Community Health with nutrition education classes taught by Community Nutrition Instructors of MSU Extension. In collaboration with Munson Healthcare and Michigan State University Extension, Community Nutrition Instructors provided nutrition education to a total of 82 participants using the Discover Michigan Fresh curriculum through September 2023.

Kingsley Middle School Sustainable Science

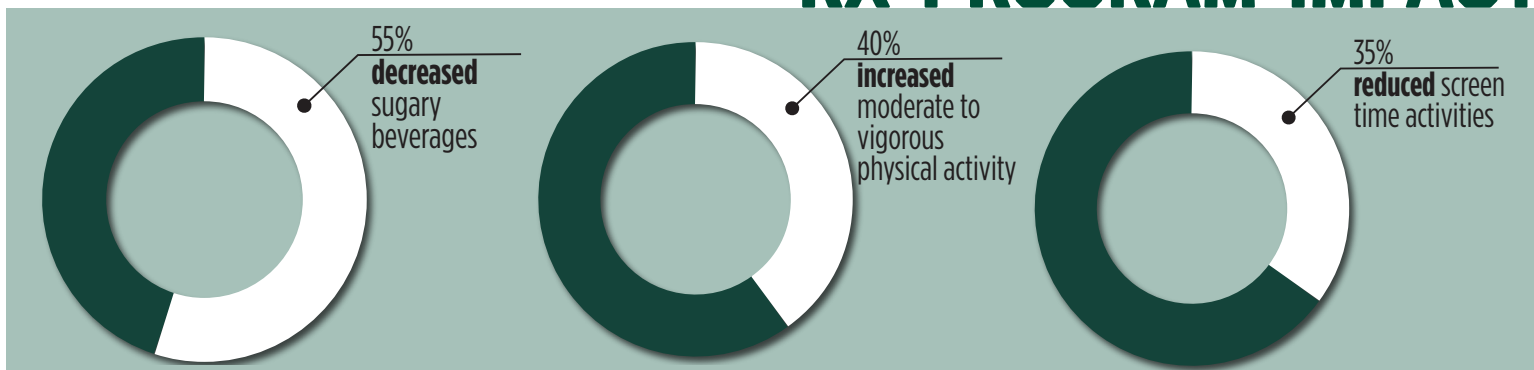
Sustainable Science: MSU Extension provided support and resources to continue to help guide a local middle school teacher with their



NW EDUCATION TRANSITION CENTER



RX PROGRAM IMPACT



Sustainable Science Class. This class is available to 5th – 8th graders and includes nutrition education, cooking skills, composting, hydroponic and aquaponic growing, along with other life skills. As part of the partnership, MSU Extension provided assistance in growing community outreach to help support and sustain the building of a future greenhouse along with guiding acquisition of needed materials to sustain the cooking portion of the

curriculum. The greenhouse build is set to begin this Spring 2024.

In the Fall of 2022, 43 students from two middle school classes participated in the Teen Cuisine nutrition education curriculum at Kingsley Middle School.

Northwest Education Transition Center

Life Skills Center: Northwest Education Services Transition Campus is a long-standing partner

with MSU Extension. NETC supports students, aged 16-26, with moderate to severe cognitive impairments, multiple impairments and emotional impairments. What once started as nutrition education, cooking skills, resource management and food safety for one classroom has expanded to eight additional classrooms within the Life Skills Center and the Adult Community Experience (ACE) campus downtown.



Botanic Garden at Historic Barn's Park

The Botanic Garden continues to be a strong community partner providing a beautiful class and meeting space for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Education programming. MSU Extension has been able to offer nutrition education classes highlighting cooking with local produce to the community.

Father Fred

MSU Extension continues to partner with the Father Fred Foundation Food Pantry on the Pantry to Preschool Program. The program serves 182 families at 10 early childcare sites. The program connects families in need of nutritious foods. The boxes are delivered to the families twice a month. Boxes include

the recipe ingredients to create a family-friendly meal along with the recipe and other pantry staples.

In December 2023 a survey was sent out to families participating in the Pantry to Preschool Program.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

SHEPHERD'S PIE

Servings: 8 | Size: 1 cup

Photo: Jane Rabin
Recipe: Inspired by Maple Street EAT

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs of baking potatoes, peeled and diced (3 large)
- 1/2 cup milk of choice
- 2 Tbsp butter
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 lb ground beef, pork or turkey
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced, or 1/2 tsp of garlic powder
- 1 Tbsp flour
- 1 1/2 cups frozen mixed vegetables (12-ounce bag)
- 1 cup low-sodium beef broth or water
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste or ketchup
- 1/2 tsp each salt and pepper

Optional Ingredients

- 1 tsp Italian seasoning or
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried rosemary

“My family has been very grateful for the food we receive every two weeks. It has gotten us through some tight pinches. We love making the recipe together.”

- Pantry to Preschool Participant

PROGRAM RESULTS

- **73%** reported eating more vegetables
- **68%** reported eating more fruit
- **64%** reported cooking together more often
- **55%** reported being able to better stretch food dollars



PRODUCT CENTER IMPACTS

- 18** client businesses
- 1** business start
- 4** jobs created
- \$1 million** in loans obtained (combined)
- \$10,000** in sales growth (combined)
- 2** licenses obtained



PRODUCT CENTER

MSU PRODUCT CENTER BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NoBo Mrkt is a collaborative café and beverage bar that drives the local food economy through curated food items from 12 regional businesses. The MSU Product Center met with the market’s leadership team to discuss the final financing of the space. This collaboration resulted in an additional \$1M in loans. The Product Center is also an advisor on NoBo Mrkt’s restaurant incubator program, titled “The Hatch,” for aspiring chefs from the region to test concepts in the market’s dedicated food stalls, pop up events and catering opportunities.

The MSU Product Center hosted a marketing workshop at the Great Lakes Incubator Farm (GLIF). After a presentation, beginning farmers applied their new knowledge to

decipher marketing signals from real food brands in a facilitated discussion.

Parker Jones, Innovation Counselor, was elected by a body of over 10,000 member owners to serve on the Oryana Board of Directors. In this role, he helped onboard a new CEO for the first time in 12 years and to update the organization’s bylaws to foster a high-functioning board.

MSU Extension Citizen Planner program

MSU Extension’s award-winning Citizen Planner program was hosted by East Bay Charter Township and included 25 participants from the Grand Traverse Region in October/November 2023. Citizen Planner is an intensive, yet accessible, six-session training series designed to build skills and a comprehensive understanding of Planning and Zoning. Participants

commonly include professional planners and zoning administrators, elected officials, Planning Commissioners, Zoning Board of Appeals members, and other interested parties.

In July 2023, MSU Extension staff delivered a training to Blair Township staff, elected officials, and Planning Commission members on the Minimum Elements of a Master Plan. This rapidly changing Township is gearing up for a Master Plan update in 2024 and benefited from some additional planning time to procure the right services for their update.

In March and July 2023, MSU Extension staff facilitated two sessions for the Regional Housing Partnership under the Michigan State Housing and Development Association (MSHDA). Identifying a lead agency and developing a regional housing plan was required to obtain MSHDA funds under the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan.



The Dollar Store in Long Lake Township generated new interest in planning and zoning among a broad coalition of residents. MSU Extension staff provided a convenient, lunchtime one-hour zoom on November 14, to about eight residents to better provide a more detailed understanding of the link between planning and zoning. The program was recorded and shared among the group.

The Community Development Coalition of Northwest Michigan reached out to MSU Extension to provide a 45-minute lightening talk on the role of agritourism in supporting farmers and farming in the region. Local cherry and apple farmers face pressure from disease, international competition, and development and are looking for ways to stay competitive in a difficult market. On December 14, 2023, four staff from MSU Extension, each with

different expertise, provided insights and research to support a dialogue around the role and possibilities offered through agritourism.

Grand Traverse League of Women Voters

“Local Government in Michigan” presentation by John Amrhein for the Grand Traverse League of Women Voters. Audience was both live and on YouTube and remains available on YouTube. Total audience as of January 2024 was 72.



Northern Lakes Community Mental Health Board held a day-long retreat in October 2023, including a presentation by John Amrhein, MSU Extension Government and Public Policy educator, on Components

of Extraordinary Governance which applies to all forms of board governance. The day also included presentations by its Policy Governance, consultant and a board consultant who specializes in mental health boards. Sixteen NLCMH board members and staff participated.

Grand Traverse County continues to participate occasionally in the Northern Michigan Counties Association (NMCA). Approximately 30 counties in the northern lower peninsula are members and participate regularly. The group exists as a local forum for commissioners and/or administrators to learn, discuss topics of particular interest or concern to county government and to gain insight from peers across county lines in the northern lower. Association support service is provided by MSU Extension.



BEBOT



SIFTING FOR DEBRIS

SEA GRANT

SEA GRANT

Co-sponsored and co-planned 16th annual Freshwater Summit, which is an annual conference that discusses the latest research, projects and initiatives that impact the Great Lakes and Grand Traverse Bay regions. Speakers covered invasive carp, non-chemical control of Eurasian watermilfoil, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), among other topics. The 125 attendees further understood the importance of freshwater resources after the experience.

Sea Grant staff answered questions from community members related to Lake Michigan sport fishing, commercial fishing, and tribal fisheries from local residents.

Hosted Ecosystem-Approach update at Grand Traverse County training room for conservation group leaders.

Presented on Sea Grant activities in the Great Lakes Basin and hosted an information table at the No-Spills Conference - an environmental and emergency response event focused on preventing hazardous material spills in the Great Lakes and its tributaries.

Staff presented Great Lakes Levels talk to 40 Acme Garden Club members at the Acme Township Hall.

Lake & Beach Clean Up

Sea Grant utilized PixieDrone, that collects floating waste debris from water systems, at Northwestern Michigan College harbor.

BeBot, a cleaning robot, that collects solid waste from beaches, such as plastic and cigarettes butts, was run at the Senior Center and East Bay Park beaches.



STAFF HOUSED IN GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

NAME	ROLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Jennifer Berkey	District Director	231-922-4821	berkeyj@msu.edu
Terra Bogart	Nutrition & Physical Activity	231-922-4630	bogartte@msu.edu
Mark Breederland	Sea Grant Coastal Communities Devt.	231-922-4628	breederl@msu.edu
Kate Edwards	Office Manager	231-922-4625	kedwards@gtcountymi.gov
Sarah Eichberger	Nutrition & Physical Activity	231-922-4836	eichber2@msu.edu
Robin Gildner	4-H Program Coordinator	231-922-4825	gildnerr@msu.edu
Parker Jones	Product Center Innovation Counseling	231-922-4621	jonesp28@msu.edu
Jessica Protetch	Office Support	231-922-4623	jprotetch@gtcountymi.gov
Jane Rapin	Community Nutrition Instructor	231-922-4858	rapinjan@msu.edu
Michelle Smith	Community Nutrition Instructor	231-922-4823	smithmmk@msu.edu

MSU EXTENSION STAFF SERVING GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

NAME	ROLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Chris Bardenhagen	Farm Business Management	231-256-9888	bardenh1@msu.edu
Julie Crick	Forestry & Natural Resources	989-275-7179	crickjul@msu.edu
Christina Curell	Cover Crop & Soil Health	231-745-2732	curellc@msu.edu
Mary Dunckel	Agriculture Literacy	989-354-9875	dunckelm@msu.edu
Phillip Durst	Beef	989-345-0692	durstp@msu.edu
David Emmel	Community Prosperity	231-582-6482	david@northernlakes.net
Charles Gould	Bioenergy & Conservation	616-994-4547	gouldm@msu.edu
Kevin Gould	Food & Animal Systems	616-527-5357	gouldk@msu.edu
Tom Guthrie	Pork/Equine	517-788-4292	guthri19@msu.edu
Philip Kaatz	Forage/Commercial Agriculture	810-667-0341	kaatz@msu.edu
Heidi Lindberg	Greenhouse & Nursery	616-994-4701	wollaege@msu.edu
Erin Lizotte	Integrated Pest Management	231-944-6504	taylo548@msu.edu
Kara Lynch	Food Safety	989-317-4079	lynchka4@msu.edu
Michael Metzger	Small Ruminants & Foragers	517-788-4292	metzgerm@msu.edu
Esmaeil Nasrollahiazar	Wine Grapes	231-256-9888	nasroll2@msu.edu
Kristy Oosterhouse	4-H Supervision	231-533-8818	oosterh6@msu.edu
Dennis Pennington	Wheat Systems	269-832-0497	pennin34@msu.edu
Emily Proctor	Tribal Governance	231-439-8927	proctor8@msu.edu
Bethany Prykucki	Leadership & Community Engagement	231-258-3320	prykucki@msu.edu
Mary Reilly	Government & Public Policy, Land Use	231-889-4277	reillym8@msu.edu
Remington Rice	Health & Farm Stress Educator	231-882-0025	riceremi@msu.edu
Nikki Rothwell	Commercial Fruit	231-946-1510	rothwel3@msu.edu
J Robert Serrine	Community Food Systems/ Hops	231-256-9888	serrine@msu.edu
Michael Staton	Soybeans	269-673-0370	staton@msu.edu
Nate Walton	Home Horticulture/Master Gardener	231-256-9888	waltonn2@msu.edu
Benjamin Werling	Vegetable Crop Production	231-873-2129	werlingb@msu.edu
Wendy Wieland	Product Center Innovation Counseling	231-348-1770	wieland5@msu.edu
Sam Wolfe	Agriculture & Occupational Health	231-882-0025	wolfesa4@msu.edu
Casey Zangaro	Swine	989-875-5292	zangaroc@msu.edu