

INGHAM COUNTY MSU EXTENSION ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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Message from the Director

In 2025, Ingham County MSU Extension made impacts in agriculture and agribusiness education, health and nutrition programming, community vitality, food systems, and environmental planning, and children and youth programming and resources (including 4-H). What follows are the numbers that made up the programs and some short highlights and pictures that capture just a taste of the rich involvement our educators and instructors have in the local community that create the public value that is MSU Extension.

Impact



7,218 people from Ingham County attended MSU Extension programs.



People from Ingham County attended **946** MSU Extension programs (across the state).



2,638 people from Ingham County participated in agriculture and agribusiness programs.



1,642 youth and adults from Ingham County participated in children and youth programs.



1,394 people from Ingham County participated in community, food and environment programs.



1,975 people from the Ingham County participated in health and nutrition programs.

Overall Impact



MSU Extension employees are members of **19** community coalitions within Ingham County.



There were **347** answers provided to “Ask Extension” questions asked by people from Ingham County.



8,140 people attended programs that were hosted in the county.



432 people from Ingham County volunteered with MSU Extension



There were **6** Nutrition and Physical Activity *Policy System and Environmental* (PSE) sites receiving PSE change education within Ingham County.



There were **19** policy, systems, and environmental changes with those PSE sites. **1,644** people were impacted.



There were **409,508** contacts through e-newsletters and handouts.



There were **732** direct client consultations in Ingham County

Economic Development, Environmental Conservation, and Agricultural Productivity



There were **72,517** participants in community, food, and environment programs from across Michigan.



There were **476** virtual programs related to Financial Education, Food Systems, Water and Environmental Quality, Government and Businesses.



Ingham County processed **16** commercial and farm soil test samples processed.



There is a **\$244.2 billion** annual impact of food and agriculture on Michigan's economy.



Ingham County processed **227** homeowner soil test samples processed.



There were **2,032** participants in county agriculture programs.

Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Productivity

The MSU Product Center – Ingham County

- **34** clients served
- **32 employees** serve the businesses represented
- **136.9 counseling hours** were logged with the clients
- The client's businesses generated **\$944,684**

The Michigan State University Product Center helps Michigan entrepreneurs and businesses to develop and launch new product and service ideas into the food, beverage, and agriculture markets. Whether you are a budding entrepreneur or operate a well-established company, the Product Center is your key to the front door of Michigan State University's vast and varied technical expertise, research and outreach services.

Business Development



Marcus Leslie, founder of Mr. Leslie's Cheesecakes, first engaged with the MSU Product Center in 2020 while producing and selling family-sized pies at the Allen Neighborhood Center in Lansing. At that time, his business operated exclusively through direct-to-consumer channels, including catering and individual orders, with a long-term goal of expanding into the wholesale market.

The MSU Product Center supported Mr. Leslie by providing technical assistance in product and market development and connecting him with two established Michigan frozen dessert manufacturers who served as advisors. Through this guidance, he improved production efficiency, identified an effective shipping strategy, and strengthened his overall business management approach.

In 2023, Mr. Leslie attended the Making It In Michigan Trade Show, where Fresh Thyme of Grand Rapids honored him with the "First Time at Fresh Thyme Award," creating new retail opportunities with Fresh Thyme and Meijer.

By 2025, he had expanded into his own 3,200-square-foot production facility, where he also rents commercial kitchen space to emerging food entrepreneurs. Alongside his growing cheesecake operation, he is launching a formal consulting business. Mr. Leslie's personal-size pies are now available at Meijer's Capital City Market in Lansing, Woodward Corner Market in Royal Oak, Tom's Food Center in Okemos, and several additional Meijer locations across Michigan.

Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Productivity

Pesticide Safety Education

In 2025, a total of **33 Ingham County residents** participated in *Pesticide Safety Education Program* training opportunities.

Participation included:

10 individuals completing the **Core Pesticide Applicator self-paced course**,

6 attendees participating in the **2025 webinar sessions**

17 individuals attending **in-person core review sessions**.



MSU Extension Master Gardener Program – Mid-Michigan

In 2025, the MSU Extension Master Gardener Program in Mid-Michigan engaged **131 Master Gardener volunteers** across **54 projects** in **Clinton, Ingham, Eaton, and Montcalm counties**, contributing a total of **6,695 volunteer hours**.

Volunteer efforts supported six primary focus areas:

- **Improving Community:** 3,240 hours
- **Increasing Food Security:** 1,119 hours
- **Outreach Events:** 987 hours
- **Environmental Stewardship:** 506.5 hours
- **Developing Youth Through Gardening:** 449 hours
- **Supporting MSU Extension:** 345 hours



Outreach efforts expanded the distribution of **MSU Extension Smart Gardening tip sheets** to three new locations through events held on the **Michigan State University campus**, the **South Lansing Farmers Market**, and the **St. Johns Farmers Market**. Outreach at the St. Johns Farmers Market reached approximately **400 individuals**, increasing awareness of Smart Gardening practices.

Environmental Stewardship saw increased volunteer engagement, with Master Gardeners receiving training and participating in the identification and reporting of **lesser celandine** in parks and public riverfront areas in **Ingham and Eaton counties**. Training on the identification and removal of **garlic mustard** was also emphasized. Expanded training has positioned more volunteers to educate the public and lead invasive species reporting and removal efforts in **2026**.

Increasing Food Security remained a priority area, supported by a strong partnership with the **Greater Lansing Food Bank's Garden Project**. **2025** also saw **23 Master Gardeners contribute more than 600 volunteer hours** assisting with free plant and seed distributions, supporting community gardens, and educating the public on Smart Gardening practices to help individuals and families grow their own food.

Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Productivity

Rain Garden Workshop

In June 2025, MSU Extension hosted a beginner-friendly Rain Garden Workshop for community members interested in practical, eco-friendly landscaping. Led by a Michigan State University Extension Master Gardener, the two-hour, hands-on session introduced participants to the fundamentals of designing, building, and maintaining residential rain gardens. Attendees learned how these gardens help manage stormwater, reduce runoff, and support local ecosystems.

The workshop also included a guided tour of a local rain garden, giving participants the opportunity to see design features, plant selections, and maintenance strategies in action. This program was offered in partnership with the *Greater Lansing Regional Committee for Stormwater Management* and the *Tri-County Regional Planning Commission*, supporting shared regional goals around water quality, gardening, and green infrastructure education. The event was so successful another workshop is being planned for June 2026.



Breakfast on the Farm 2025

MSU Extension hosted the 2025 Breakfast on the Farm event at the MSU Horse Teaching and Research Center, attracting nearly 1,200 Attendees. Since its launch in 2009, the program has introduced more than 93,000 visitors to Michigan agriculture. This year's event highlighted the Michigan equine industry for the first time, reflecting the state's rank as having the 12th largest horse population nationally. Held on August 2, the event featured a pancake breakfast for 1,154 visitors followed by a self-guided tour covering horse care, facility management, and the history of the MSU horse farm, home to one of the Nation's longest-running Arabian breeding programs. Additional stations addressed topics such as horse health, nutrition, manure management, fencing, toxic plants, and MSU Extension's Emergency Response to Accidents Involving Livestock (ERAIL) program.

Family-friendly activities included a kid's quiz, a mock stick-horse show, and hands-on demonstrations with horse-farm equipment. The event Was supported by more than sixty volunteers and numerous Agricultural commodity groups and businesses including *Michigan*

Horse Council, Michigan Pork Producers Association, Michigan Wheat Program, Michigan Soybean Association, Michigan Ag Council, Michigan Farm Bureau, Hutson Equipment, and Tribute Feeds, whose contributions helped provide a successful educational experience for all ages.



Participant comment: "Excellent set up and examples. Breakfast was a great draw. Viewing historical photos was educational. Talking with the volunteers was educational + enlightening. Seeing the horses was the best!"

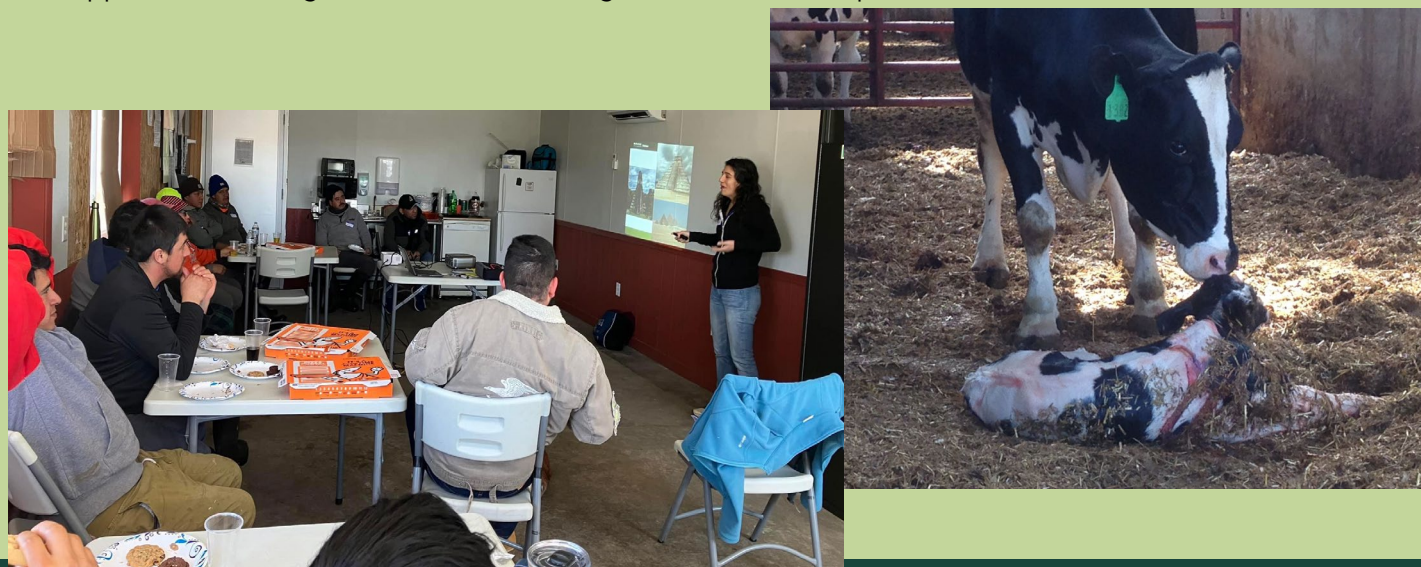
Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Agricultural Productivity

Spanish-Language Dairy Employee Trainings and Consultations

MSU Extension Dairy Educator, Paola Bacigalupo Sanguesa, delivered Spanish-language dairy workforce trainings throughout 2025 in addition to making many farm visits to offer direct consultations. Paola offered trainings at Evergreen Dairy, Autumn Vista Dairy, Car Min Vu, Oak View Dairy, Reed Dairy, Preston Farms, and Sparks Cedarlee Farm. Paola developed and updated training materials to make the resources available to English and Spanish speaking employees. Michigan's milk producers are a vital part of the State's agricultural output.

Training topics included milking routines, dry cow care, mastitis prevention and management, down cow care, animal handling, maternity care for newborn and fresh cows, and colostrum management and feeding.

In addition to employee training, Paola also collects data during farm visits using video recordings, assessment tools, and on-site observations. The data gathered is analyzed and findings are presented to support farm management decision-making and continuous improvement efforts.



Navigating Finances with Extension

In 2025, more than 2800 **individuals** participated in financial education sessions across the state. Examples of program offerings include making a spending plan, credit basics, navigating financial challenges, informed renter and thriving on a fixed income.

Additionally, **76 human service professionals** attended eight train-the-trainer sessions, enhancing their ability to support limited-resource clients. Staff have built relationships with **19 tri-county community partners**, including those serving vulnerable populations such as individuals seeking mental health services, refugees and seniors. Outreach to rural communities remains a challenge and key focus. These collective efforts reflect an ongoing commitment to community-based financial education reaching diverse populations.



Growth in State 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show

Since the pandemic, participation in the state 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show had declined; however, renewed outreach and coordinated volunteer efforts have led to a significant rebound. Volunteers managed a Facebook silence auction, provided timely show updates, and assisted with participant inquiries. Additional communication efforts included reminders to Ingham County staff, distribution of promotional materials, and posting flyers at the MSRBA fall show. Showmanship classes and educational sessions were added to enhance engagement.

As a result of these efforts:

Youth participation increased by 23% compared to 2024 and 81% compared to 2023.

Exhibited animals increased across all categories:

Rabbit entries: up 9% from 2024 and 43% from 2023

Cavy entries: up 30% from 2024 and 7% from 2023

Fur entries: up 31% from 2024 and 28% from 2023

This growth restored the Rabbit and Cavy show to a positive financial position for the first time since the pandemic, reducing reliance on the scholarship auction to break even.

4-H Youth Educational Experience

The Michigan 4-H Animal Science Team, consisting of 4-H educators and species points of contact, developed a new statewide program called the *Michigan 4-H Animal Science Ambassadors*. This initiative provides youth interested in animal science with opportunities to build leadership skills and connect with peers who share similar interests. After Michigan introduced the program and shared its structure and application requirements, Iowa 4-H adopted the concept and created a similar animal science ambassador program modeled after Michigan's work





In 2025, there were **635** 4-H youth enrolled in **51** 4-H clubs.



There were **289** 4-H volunteers



The 4-H volunteer hour value was **\$9,129.51**.



There were a total of **2,300** county youth participants in MSU Extension programs.



There were **12,861** MI Stronger Family online participants.



2,734 people participated in nutrition and physical activity programs that were hosted in-county.



2,506 people in the county participated in health and nutrition programs.



Statewide, **9,808** people participated in food safety programs, and **45** restaurant and food establishment staff received ServSafe® certification in the county.

Chispa 4-H delivers technology education to Ingham County

Ingham County Extension Educator Patricia Monterrosa continued to support culturally diverse youth through programming focused on leadership, team building, workforce readiness, family engagement, and community events. In 2025, the Chispa 4-H program delivered six sessions, reaching 145 youth and engaging 129 families through local activities.



The *Cafecito con Pan* bilingual webinar series completed its first year with participation from 61 families, strengthening connections with multilingual households. Complementing this work, the *Smart Zone* and *LEAP* program—led by program worker December Day—helped students build confidence using technology to solve everyday problems. The program emphasized practical skill development, moving youth from simply interacting with digital tools to actively building and coding their own projects. It also fostered leadership and teamwork through hands-on learning experiences designed to prepare students for future opportunities

Current and upcoming offerings include:

- Sphero Chariots Maker Monday*
- Whitehills Elementary Coding SPIN Club*
- East Lansing High Code Coaches*
- Teen AI literacy session,*
- Six-week Vibe Coding program for the community*
- Robotics STEAM theme day showcasing MSU robotics groups*

These programs collectively expand youth access to technology, promote STEM exploration, and strengthen community engagement.

Healthy Choices in Ingham County

During March and April 2025, Community Nutrition Instructor, Tammy Fletcher, taught six lessons of "Healthy Choices for Everybody" to seven IDD participants at Community Mental Health of Ingham County.

Each week, the group prepared a new recipe and showed enthusiasm for trying unfamiliar foods. Recipes included tropical muffins, salsa, sloppy joes, banana milkshakes, apple nachos, BBQ chicken salad, and pineapple fried rice, all of which were well received—even by a participant who was a self-proclaimed “fuzzy eater.”

Additionally, Food Safety Educator, Shannon Stover, provided demonstrations on proper handwashing and the principles of bacterial growth on food, further enhancing the participants’ understanding of safe food practices.



Community Reach



MSU Extension Food Safety Educator, Shannon Stover hosted an interactive food preservation demonstration at the ***Stockbridge Senior Center*** to engage participants during the winter months. The session included a brief presentation on types of pectin, followed by demonstrations of three jam recipes, each utilizing a unique pectin. Participants explored the visual qualities of each product and then took part in a sensory tasting experience using samples served on homemade bread. The activity generated conversation and enthusiasm among attendees. Although many participants had prior experience making jams and jellies, the introduction of a new pineapple upside-down cake jam recipe—sourced from the *Ball Blue Book*—was especially well received.

2025 Partnerships:

Allen Neighborhood Center
Angel House
Bath Senior Center
Beal Botanical Garden
Boys and Girls Club of Lansing
Cafecito con Pan y Department of Police and Safety MSU
C.A.C.S. Head Start
Capital Area Community Services
Capital Area Master Gardener Association
Capital City
Caterpillar Corner
Cavanaugh STEAM Elementary
Community Mental Health-Eaton, Clinton, Ingham
Cristo Rey Church
Discovery Elementary
Dr. Bart
Dr. Eunice Foster Africa Engagement Project – WFPMIYI
East Lansing Farmers Market
East Lansing Public Library
East Lansing Public Schools
Eastern Ingham Farmers Market
Eaton Rapids Public Schools
Edgewood Village Apartments
Melissa Elischer
empowHER
The Fledge Foundation
Food Rescue US – Lansing Communities
Gardner International Magnet School
Giitigan
Greater Lansing Food Bank Garden Project
Greater Lansing United Nations Association
Harris Nature Center
Holly Park Academy
Holt Junior High School

Holt Public Schools
Homeless Angels
House of Promise
Indigenous Youth Empowerment Program
Ingham County Fair Board
Ingham County Farm Bureau
Ingham County Youth Detention Center
Justice in Mental Health Org.
Kevin Brooks – Center for Community and Economic Development
Ladybug Agrihood Farm Planning Board
Lansing Area Aids Network
Lansing Board of Water and Light
Lansing Charter Academy
Lansing Parks & Recreation
Lansing Public Schools
Lansing Regional Smart Zone
Lansing School District
Latino Club – Everett High School
Latino Club – Lansing School District
Little City Farm
Mason First United Methodist Church
Mason Sycamore Creek Garden Club
MEHA
Meridian Garden Club
Meridian Township Wetlands Citizen Advisory Group
Meridian Senior Center
MESSA
Michigan Association of Children’s Mental Health
Michigan Carrot Committee
Michigan Community Service Commission
Michigan Corn
Michigan Farm Bureau
Michigan Fitness Foundation
Michigan FFA
Michigan Nature Association
Michigan Onion Committee

Michigan Organic Food and Farming Alliance
Michigan State Rabbit Breeders Association
Michigan State University: *Counseling Services*
Employee Assistance Program
Broad Art Museum
CANR
Global Youth Advancement Network
Pollinator Performance Center
Pre-College Committee
Mimi’s House Family Childcare
National Garden Club Landscape Design School
Newcomer Center
North Elementary
Peckham
Potter Park Zoo
Primetime Seniors Program
Refugee Development Center
Rosie the Riveter Day Planning Committee
Shared Pregnancy Women’s Center
South Lansing Farmers Market
St. Michael’s Episcopal Church Community Garden
Tri-County Regional Planning
UMH Sparrow Hospice House of Mid-Michigan
Waverly High School
Wellness X
Wexford Montessori Elementary School
Wild Ones Red Cedar Chapter
Williamston Red Cedar Garden Club
Women’s Center of Greater Lansing
YiC



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In 2025 alone, almost 300,000 Michiganders participated in MSU Extension programs, and they had plenty of programs to choose from - we delivered more than 8,000 last year! Some people took classes to plan their retirement. Some took classes to learn how to can tomatoes. Others learned how to improve their farm's recordkeeping, start a mindfulness practice or support their children's development. And that's just the start of impact across the state.

To learn more, go to: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/michigan-state-university-extension-at-work-2025-impact-report>

Or download the report from the QR code



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