

# Michigan State University Extension in Iosco County: Solving Problems & Increasing Opportunities for Today & Tomorrow

On August 6, 2024, Iosco County residents will be asked to continue investment in MSU Extension programs that help families, businesses and professionals gain the knowledge they need to be healthy and safe, do their jobs better, build strong communities, protect local environments, and help young people gain the confidence and skills required to be successful. MSU Extension programs in Iosco County help reduce the cost of public investment in health care and other governmental remediation services and increase the educational resources that help families and local communities thrive.

## Empowering and Equipping Youth Success

Data from the 2019 Michigan 4-H College Access Project shows that Michigan 4-H alumni enroll in college at a higher rate than their peers in 84% of Michigan counties, including Iosco. An investment in Iosco County MSU Extension and 4-H is an investment in the positive development of the county's young people.

In 2023, 556 youths were enrolled in Iosco County MSU Extension 4-H programs. 4-H club participation has proven to help prepare young people for work, especially for jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math. Iosco County MSU Extension has engaged young people in short-term, special interest, and 4-H club learning opportunities.

## Educating to Fight Foreclosure

Michigan has the 11th highest foreclosure rate of any U.S. state with 857 foreclosure filings in 2021.

MSU Extension educators help prevent homelessness by providing financial and homeownership education to Iosco County families. Extension provides education that helps prevent mortgage and tax foreclosures, improve household budgets, and help families become viable homeowners and/or stable housing renters.

## Educating for Greater Farm Profitability and Sustainability

Iosco County is home to 244 farms and 33,828 acres of land managing cattle, goats, sheep, and layers; and farming forage crops, corn, soybeans, and wheat according to 2017 data.

Access to research-based information is critical when business decisions depend on it. MSU Extension is a leader in discovering information and helping farmers apply tested solutions that benefit their farms, their families, and their communities. Iosco County MSU Extension educators provide access to articles, webinars, and timely social media posts designed to help producers manage the challenges of disruptions to agriculture, prepare for tax season, and manage the ongoing financial and business planning needed for farming.

MSU Extension's Farm Stress programs provide behavioral health and financial management, and planning support and services to farmers and their families to help manage the emotional and financial ups and downs of farm production. Online access to teletherapy, resiliency tools, and assistance resources were expanded to ensure Iosco County families had what they needed especially during the challenges of the pandemic.

## Helping Families Make Healthy Decisions

By December 2021, Iosco County had 4,195 residents receiving federal food and nutrition assistance. Two years later, in 2023, Iosco County had 209 residents participate in 16 SNAP-Ed programs.

MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to help adults, young people, and families eat well, consume food safely and stay healthy. Extension educators provide nutrition and health education programming to individuals and families proven to improve family diet and physical well-being.

