

**Message from the District Director**



Mother Teresa once said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters and create many ripples." Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is a catalyst for creating a lasting impact that ripples across the Upper Peninsula, the state, and beyond. Our programs reach all audiences and age groups. From youth learning essential life skills and farmers exploring ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness, to older adults being able to access healthier foods and local communities discovering ways to increase economic impact. The possibilities of making an impact with MSU Extension are endless.

Through partnerships we can produce exponential ripples to change the lives of our neighbors, family, and friends. For over 100 years, Extension's goal has been to "bring knowledge to life." By connecting with organizations and agencies across the U.P., we bring the knowledge and research from Michigan State University to our communities and empower them to improve their lives. Alone we can cast a small stone to create ripples. Together our stone grows to produce a larger impact than any one organization can create themselves.

Having worked with Extension for nine years—first as a health educator focused on improving the health and nutrition of community members, and now as a district director in the Eastern Upper Peninsula—I continue to serve our communities. I look forward to exploring new ways to collaborate with our partners as we create ripples of impact across Luce County and beyond.

Erin Daines  
District 2 Director

**Luce County Staff**

- Brianna Beaulieu, Community Nutrition Instructor
- Ashley Freed, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Health AmeriCorps
- Temp on Call

**Contact Information**

14126 CR 428, Ste. A, Newberry, MI 49868  
Email: [msue.luce@county.msu.edu](mailto:msue.luce@county.msu.edu)

[www.msue.msu.edu/luce](http://www.msue.msu.edu/luce)



★ 54 ★  
**EXTENSION PROGRAMS INCLUDED LUCE RESIDENTS**

★ 488 ★  
**LUCE RESIDENTS ATTENDED EXTENSION PROGRAMS**

**Luce County Data**

**\$783,414** MSU Total Economic Impact  
**\$72,232** Financial Aid to Luce County  
**9,976** Agriculture parcels in Luce County  
**\$1,718** Spent in local businesses

**23**  
**Extension programs held in the county**

**314**  
**people attended programs held in the county**



**REPORTING**

**25**

Extension educators, specialists and program staff reported data for Luce County

**30**

county direct one-to-one education contact

**189**

youth enrolled in county 4-H

**410**

youth participants



18 USC 707

## Staff Success Stories



**Anna Ellis, Forestry & Natural Resources Educator**

Michigan is home to 20 million acres of forestland, supporting more than 125,000 jobs and contributing more than \$17 billion to Michigan's economy. MSU Extension's forestry programs help landowners become effective stewards of our forests.

Anna Ellis, a forestry and natural resources educator, made a forest health visit to a client in Newberry. She inspected their red pine trees and diagnosed red turpentine beetle as the issue. The advice given to the client was on how to prevent further spread.

Michelle Sweeten has made a notable impact through her work with 4-H in Luce County, contributing significantly to youth development and community engagement. Her involvement with 4-H has empowered young people to develop life skills, leadership abilities, and a strong connection to agriculture. By organizing and facilitating educational programs, workshops, and events, she has helped instill a sense of responsibility and passion for agriculture in local youth. Her leadership in 4-H has fostered a supportive environment where young people can explore their interests, whether through animal husbandry, farming or other agricultural activities.

Beyond 4-H, Michelle has worked in various sectors of agriculture in Luce County, further enhancing her community's agricultural landscape. She has collaborated with local farmers, participated in Extension programs, and contributed to agricultural education, providing resources and support to help improve farming practices and sustainability. Her diverse experience in agriculture allows her to address the unique needs of the Luce County farming community, promoting growth and resilience in the local agricultural economy.



**Michelle Sweeten, Forage and Livestock Educator**

In 2023, Cody McLaren, a community nutrition instructor from Chippewa County, was able to provide educational programming to Luce County residents while MSU searched for a permanent instructor there.

### Senior Project Fresh

Senior Project FRESH (SPF), which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Bill, is a program designed to help older adults incorporate more fresh fruit and vegetables in their diet. Senior Project FRESH was created to assist older adults living on a limited income with a secondary benefit of supporting Michigan farmers.

**Twenty-five** Luce County seniors received coupons, which were used to purchase fresh fruits & veggies at local farmer's markets.

### Teen Cuisine - Tahquamenon Area Schools

Teen Cuisine is a hands-on cooking program that teaches students in Grades 6-12 important life skills for eating smart, which will stay with them as they grow into adults. Cody presented this series over five visits at Tahquamenon Area Schools. Demonstrations included parfaits, tropical fruit tasting, fresh guacamole, mango salsa and chicken salad. **Twenty-eight** Luce County students participated in the program.



**Cody McLaren Community Nutrition Instructor**

## 4-H Success Stories

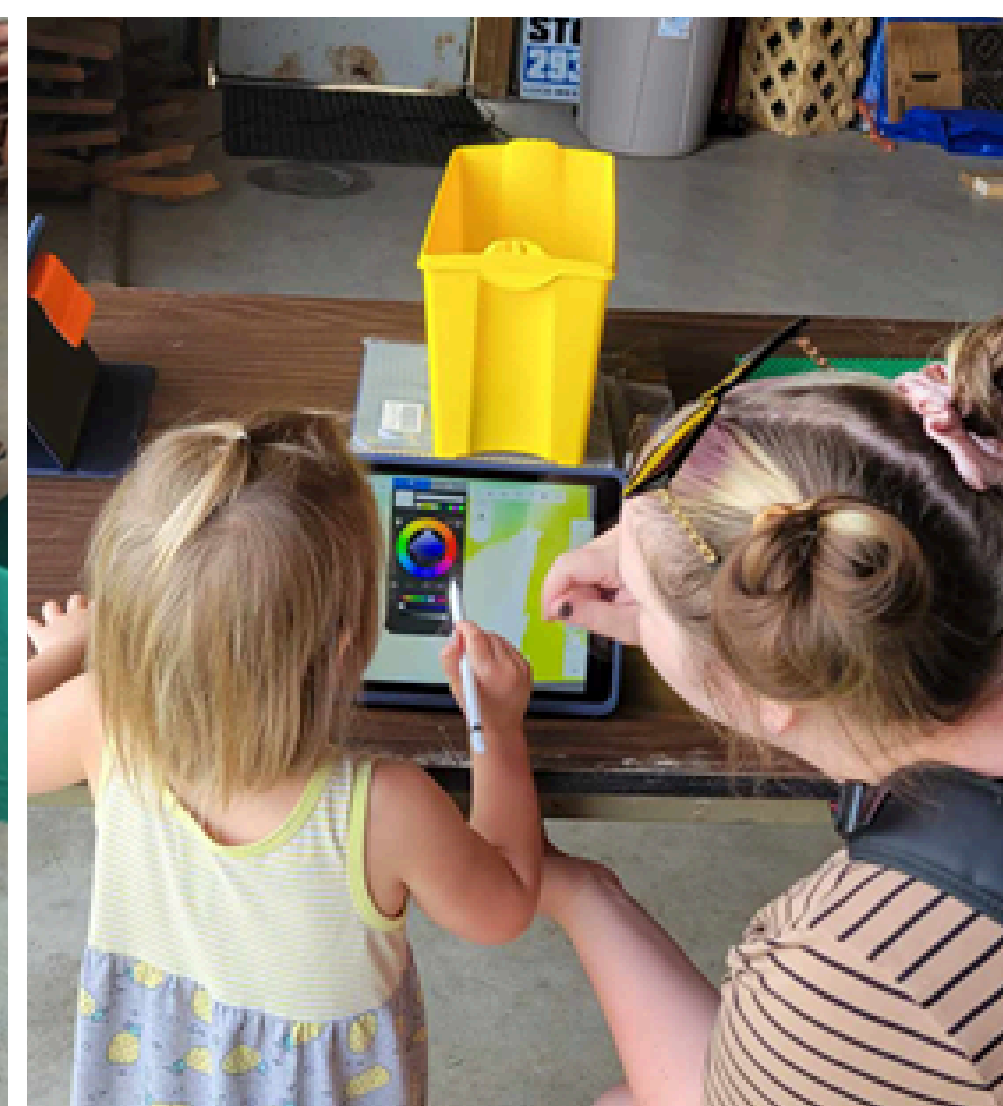
### Increase of youth at the Luce/West Mackinac County Fair

*“Despite its size and turnout, Luce County 4-H always turns up for the Luce West Mackinac County Fair (LWMC) on Family Day. In previous years, I hesitate to say I saw more than five kids a day. Now, this isn't to say that those five youth didn't enjoy the activities I had available - because they did!*

*“This year was no different. Michelle Sweeten, an ag educator, and I packed up our tables and activities and headed to Family Day! I brought along three different activities this year: iPad - digital art, sand art kits, and a Lego station. I am happy to say that I saw ten kids this year! Many of the families were new or had never participated in a 4-H activity before! The Luce/West Mackinac County Fair board was happy to see this increase - even if it was small. They were happy with both Michelle and I's activities. The fair board has even asked me to start sitting in on their board meetings, and work with them to bring 4-H still exhibits to the fair. This might not seem like a huge success, but a 50% increase in a county where the fair is not a priority is huge!”*



**Ashley Freed,  
4-H Program  
Coordinator**



## 4-H Continued...

### Luce County 4-H Members Go to 4-H Exploration Days held on Michigan State University's (MSU) campus.

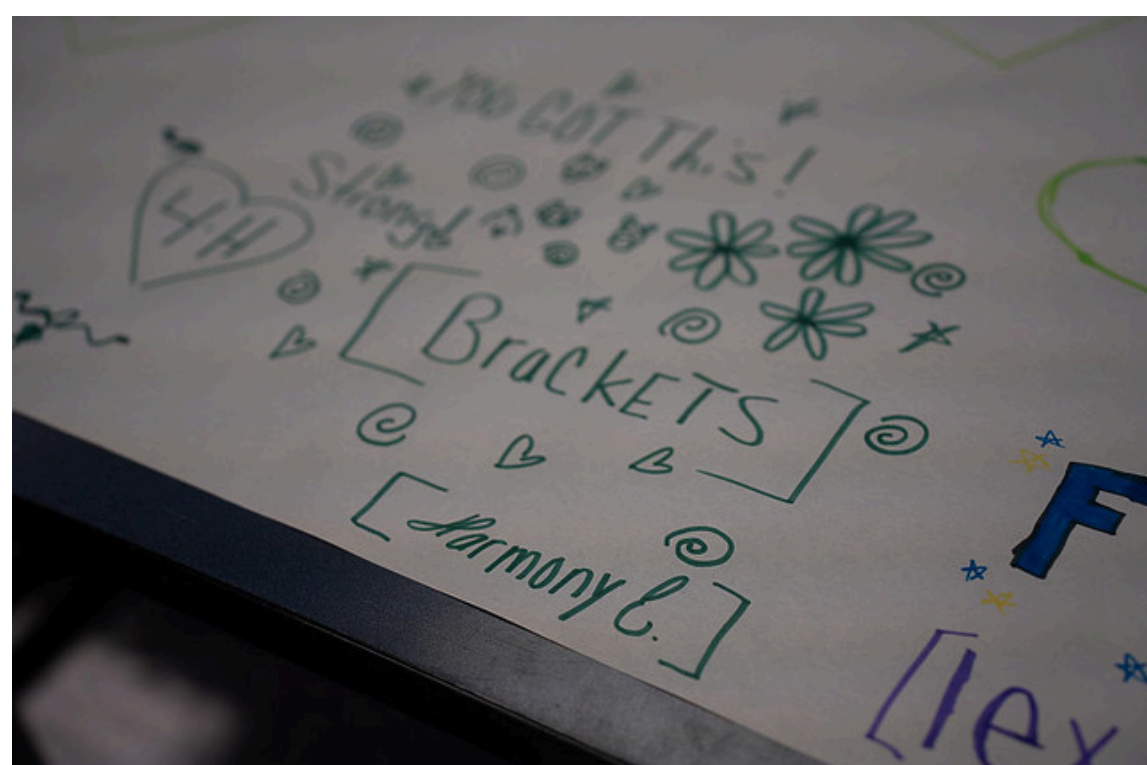
*"During the 22-23 program year I worked hard to build a relationship with high school teachers at Tahquamenon Area Schools with the plan to give a short 4-H Exploration Days presentation to their students. I was able to form a relationship with three teachers. I scheduled times to engage with all the sixth, seventh, ninth, 10th and 11th-graders. During these presentations I passed out flyers with the event information, and an additional flyer with details on the upcoming informational meeting I had scheduled. I covered topics such as: the event overview, its purpose, sessions provided, use of free time, having some freedoms as a responsible young person, event costs, pre-trip activities, and shared pervious years session books.*



*"These conversations were followed up with an informational meeting (where dinner was provided) to go over most of the same event details above, but with parents. I had the room set up for around 20 families. Over 40 families attended!!*

*"From these efforts, Luce County took a delegation of 25 youth and two (new) chaperones to MSU's campus during the 2023 4-H Exploration Days event. We had the largest delegation in the U.P. as a single county; more importantly, this was the largest group to ever go from Luce County! I am excited to see how next year's program grows!"*

*-Ashley Freed*



## 2023 4-H Continued...

### Teen Mental Health First Aid comes to Luce County

*“Mental Health struggles have been very prevalent in Luce County for several years. During one of my weekly sessions at Consolidate Community Schools - Newberry's Alt Ed - a youth brought this topic up. He asked what help or information was available for those suffering some type of mental health challenge. I began listing off local resources to him; then I paused and thought about what I, as part of MSU Extension, could bring to him. I told him I had some other ideas and would get back with him.”*



*“I reached out to a colleague, Brian Wibby, an educator in the U.P. who teaches Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) to youth. He was excited to hear this student wanted resources and was happy to send me more information. I took this information to the school and shared it. The students were happy to hear there was a program they could get certified in to help their peers. I worked with Brian to schedule this program at the school, and Brian and his team were able to facilitate this program to the youth over the fall months.*

*“From this program taking place, Tahquamenon Area Schools heard about it and asked to have a meeting. After meeting with them several times, they have agreed to become a STOP grant site with the goal of training all high school teachers in Youth Mental Health First Aid. Furthermore, they plan to have the tMHFA program facilitated to all youth, Grades 10-12th, by the end of this school year. Moving forward they plan to have every incoming 10th grade class complete this certification! This is not only huge for the program, but for Luce County as a whole! I am proud of the school for recognizing the need, and allowing MSU Extension to come in and help.”*

*-Ashley Freed*

**According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, 4-H'ers are 4X more likely to make contributions to their communities, 2X more likely to be civically active, and 2X more likely to make healthier choices.**