



BUTLER County

MIAMI VALLEY EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Recipients of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** learn how to stretch their food dollars through interactive classes offered by OSU Extension Butler County. The SNAP-Ed program taught 1,268 food stamp-eligible and food stamp recipients classes on diet quality, physical activity, food safety and food resource management. As a result, program participants were significantly less likely to run out of food at the end of the month, were more likely to make economical and healthier choices when grocery shopping and were more likely to provide healthier meals for their families.
- The **Development of Living Skills (DLS) program** offers in-home instruction to individuals and families referred by Children Services. Instruction is given in the areas of nutrition, parenting, child development, money management and home economics. Through September 2013, DLS provided 2,164 hours of teaching time to 217 clients. As a result of instruction, 23 children were reunited with their parents from foster care, and 34 at-risk children were able to remain in their parents' home, eluding foster care.
- The resurgence of families experimenting with backyard gardens and home canning is one sign of difficult economic times. OSU Extension's **Food Preservation and Food Preparation classes** teach research-based techniques and skills to make food dollars go farther while keeping food safety in mind. In 2013, 368 participants attended home canning, local foods, nutrition and food preparation classes.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2013 there were 61 **4-H Clubs** in the county, which represented over 1,300 members. The 4-H program was delivered with the help of over 250 adult volunteers who gave countless hours back to our community and youth. In 2013, 22 new advisors went through training to become volunteers and two new 4-H Clubs were started.
- During 2013, 758 teens were mandated to attend one of 40 Butler County **4-H CARTEENS** programs accompanied by a parent or guardian. To date, 532 teens have attended with a parent. This program is a partnership among OSU Extension, The Butler County Juvenile Court and the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The program is based on peers teaching peers about driver safety. This program is staffed by 95 teen volunteers, who gave over 2,084 hours to the program.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Master Gardeners** are OSU Extension-trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information. In 2013, Master Gardeners reached countless people through media, community projects and programs. Master Gardeners donated more than 5,500 hours last year, providing horticulture education to the public. Their volunteer efforts resulted in \$121,880 worth of community service contributions throughout Butler County.
- Invasive species—including emerald ash borer and, most recently, the walnut twig beetle with thousand cankers disease—are of concern in Butler County and throughout

the state. In an effort to better prepare citizens with the best **invasive species management** decisions, the Butler County OSU Extension office leads educational efforts by providing information such as pest identification, tree identification, management and regulatory laws. More than 1,535 citizens were reached at local farmer's market displays, community meetings, house visits and one-on-one phone consultations.

- Proper pesticide usage following the **Integrated Pest Management** method was a main focus for homeowner education. Through the horticulture hotline, newsletters and one-on-one consultation, Butler County Extension helped 2,700 homeowners make appropriate decisions on pest and disease management, as well as pesticide usage in their home landscapes.
- With the difficult economic times, homeowners are looking for ways to save money by growing their own food and providing their own landscaping services. In an effort to increase this "do-it-yourself" thinking, Butler County held the **2013 Home Horticulture Series**, which provided education to 115 individuals on making educated choices for Butler County gardens and landscapes.
- Increasing yields of agronomic crops/forages as well as correct use of pesticides was a main focus during **Pesticide Applicator Training**. During 2013, 52 participants representing over 39,320 acres in Butler County were provided up-to-date, research-based information on the safe and effective use of chemicals. The evaluations from the trainings indicated that these farmers expected to see an increase in profit of \$17.88 per acre based upon the recommendations they received during training.

ADVANCING INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- The Centers for Disease Control estimates that there are more than 76 million cases of foodborne illnesses every year. Considering that over one-third of all meals are eaten outside of the home, food safety training for food service professionals is essential to public health. One hundred twenty-two food service professionals participated in the **ServSafe Food Handler Program** offered in 2013. The objectives of ServSafe are to provide food safety education to food service managers and to facilitate food safety certification with the National Restaurant Association and the Ohio Department of Health. Each participant completed 16 hours of training followed by a certification exam.
- More than ever, the youth of today need a clear understanding of how to manage their finances. **Real Money, Real World**, an OSU Extension signature program, gives middle and high school students an understanding of

how current income and life choices affect future income. Participants learn how much to expect to pay for housing, transportation and childcare, and how to balance wants versus needs. In Butler County, this program was offered to 2,366 young people. Fifty-seven volunteers staffed the simulation experience. As a result of the program, students felt it was more important to do well in school, get an education or training after high school, plan a family wisely, have a plan for spending that includes both needs and wants, learn how to make wise financial decisions and start saving money regularly.

- **Workplace Wellness** is a newly developed program delivering educational messages designed to encourage individuals to make informed choices about healthy eating, active living, stress reduction and overall improved wellness. The program has been involved with the Butler County Employee Wellness Committee, reaching 56 employees at four events.

Butler County receives \$600,523 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.