

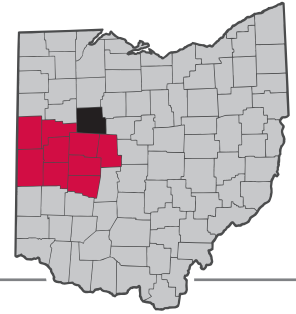


HARDIN County

TOP OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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Thanks to the local support of Hardin County residents who voted for the OSU Extension Levy, Hardin County Extension staff have been able to leverage these local dollars to apply for and receive over \$83,000 in grants and contracts. These grants have provided programming in money management, parenting education, childhood obesity, leadership, youth career choices and STEM education.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- As Ohio's treatment site for the four-year **Communities Preventing Childhood Obesity Project**, Hardin County and its Healthy Lifestyles Coalition worked directly with 250 young children at 10 events. These included a preschool Motor Lab, Kenton's Kids Day and the Saturday Children's Event at the fair. Three of these events featured the coalition's research project of "grab and go" activity bags. The coalition is becoming recognized for bringing organizations together around the common objectives of improving the overall health of the county's residents—"to inspire, educate and facilitate healthy lifestyle choices."
- In celebration of the 20-year anniversary of the **weekly parent support and child play group, Goo Crew**, a reunion celebration was held in October with 170 in attendance. Parents reported that Goo Crew was a helpful "sanity break" as they reared their young children, and they said the friends made there remain as anchors for them today.
- In partnership with Hardin Memorial Hospital and the YMCA, a single series of **Dining with Diabetes** was held involving 20 people. The three most often cited changes made by the participants were counting carbohydrates, controlling

portion sizes and understanding the plate method. The FCS educator also addressed this topic at a wellness camp for mid-career women that reached 40 women.

- Recipients of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** learned how to stretch their food dollars through programs on diet quality, physical activity, food safety and food resource management. Hardin County SNAP-Ed reached 906 people with topics that included MyPlate, vegetables and fruits, low fat dairy, lean protein foods, and food shopping. Of those participants, 893 reported that they learned new information, and 847 reported that they made food- and diet-related changes. Nutrition information was distributed throughout the county, including being dispersed through Kenton Backpack Meals, community health fairs, and several food pantries.
- Eight families were involved in **First Time Homebuyers and Post-Purchase Workshops**. They reported that the knowledge they gained allows them to feel more secure about their financial futures as homeowners.
- Eighty divorcing parents completed the court-ordered **Successful Co-Parenting Program**. These parents indicated that they learned why they must decrease the conflict between the adults and focus on what is in the best interests of their minor children as they begin this new phase of co-parenting.
- Twenty-two adults completed **Hardin Leadership** in 2013, and thirty-seven sophomores completed the **Youth Leadership** program. These participants are more likely to volunteer and show a passion to make things better for

the benefit of their community. This is the 20th year for the Youth Leadership program in Hardin County.

- Twelve new **home food preservers** participated in hands-on workshops provided to make them knowledgeable and comfortable with pressure canning of vegetables and meats. Twenty pressure gauges were tested for accuracy.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Hardin County **4-H Clubs** had 836 youth members in 34 clubs, led by 118 volunteers. These youth took 1,266 projects.
- Thirty-four teens participated in **4-H Camp Counselor Training** during 2013. The teens learned to be effective leaders, to make decisions and to be personally responsible for their duties as 4-H Camp Counselors. Youth also learned valuable skills for future jobs.
- In November, a **Hardin County Career Expo** highlighted 27 area businesses and focused on getting students prepared for local careers. This was a partnership with the Hardin County Chamber Alliance and County FFA chapters.
- The **Real Money, Real World** signature program was provided for 215 students in Ada and Kenton. College access was added to this program by discussion of college loans, grants and scholarships during the classroom lessons. After participating in Real Money, Real World, over 75% of participants said they were focused on furthering their education after high school. One participant commented, “I didn’t realize how much my grades will affect everything in the future.”
- Forty-one students participated in the Ada and Espy Elementary **Tech Wizards Programs**, focusing on robotics and film-making projects. STEM activities were also the focus of an after school program at Espy that included dairy science, chemistry and rocketry. Seventy-two children participated in that weekly program. A partnership was formed with the Hardin County Community School and Hardin County Juvenile Court to create an in-school club. Twelve members completed a film-making project about stereotyping, and a total of 125 kids were involved in non-traditional programs.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **A new Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension educator was hired** in June to carry out the related programming needs in the county. Mark Badertscher joined the Hardin County staff and started providing educational social media posts, weekly clientele electronic

newsletters, radio interviews and continued monthly Ag Council meetings. Partnerships were continued with various commodity groups, and the educator also gave Extension updates at the County Agricultural Society, Farm Bureau and Soil and Water Conservation District meetings. Also, twenty-five active and retired sheep producers participated in a two-day Hardin County Sheep Management Tour.

- **A soybean yield-limiting factor study, western bean cutworm data collection and a county weed survey** were carried out as part of a statewide OSU Extension research effort. Participation in weekly **Crop Observation and Recommendation Network (C.O.R.N.)** conference calls helped contribute local information to over 3,000 individuals who receive the C.O.R.N. Newsletter across Hardin County, Ohio and the nation.
- A series of four **Conservation Tillage Breakfast Programs** were held in 2013 on conservation and farm management topics, with an average attendance of 75 farmers. The **21st Annual Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference** was hosted in Hardin County at Ohio Northern University, with over 900 participants. Also, Students learned environmental and conservation practices as part of an **Environmental Science Day** done in cooperation with a local school.
- A fruit and vegetable production **Crop Walk Program** was provided to address the needs of the Amish community and horticulture industry. **Pesticide Applicator Training** was conducted for hundreds of private applicators in the Top of Ohio EERA. Thirty-two **Master Gardener Volunteers** added greatly to the horticultural education efforts of the county.

Hardin County receives \$35,952 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.