

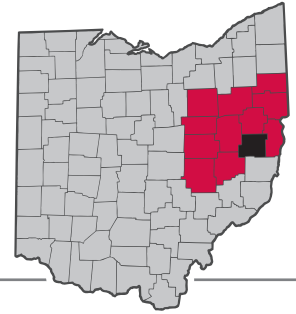


HARRISON County

CROSSROADS EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Eighty-four eligible citizens attended 28 direct-contact educational events of OSU Extension's **Family Nutrition Program (FNP)**. Of participants, 95% reported learning new information, and 85% planned to make personal or family changes. The program's goal is to increase the likelihood that participants will make healthy food and active lifestyle choices. FNP is a grant-funded program made possible with partnership from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Job and Family Services, and OSU Extension.
- Parenting is challenging, especially for dads and moms in the midst of a divorce or those involved with Child Protective Services. One way to assist these parents is to offer them research-based parenting education information from which they can acquire improved tools for their parenting toolbox. In Harrison County, parenting programs include **Successful Co-Parenting** for divorcing parents, **Men in Families** for dads of preschoolers in Head Start and **Mandated Parenting** for parents involved with Child Protective Services. The goal of these programs is to equip participants with the knowledge and strategies for improving their parenting and relationship skills. In 2013, 22 divorcing parents and seven non-divorcing parents mandated by local Child Protective Services participated.
- A number of Harrison County residents are challenged by health issues such as inactivity, weight management and proper nutrition. Extension presented research-based educational events such as **Early Childhood Nutrition, Healthy Snacks and Lunches, Avoiding Holiday Weight Gain** and **Using an ExerBand** at Puskarich Library, WIC

Clinic, Cadiz Senior Center, Jewett Head Start Center and Harrison Central Junior Senior High School. The goal is that participants improve their knowledge, strategies and attitude for making healthier lifestyle choices, for example, by increasing their exercise and physical activity, eating healthier varieties and amounts of food and managing their weight.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- School funding shortfalls have diminished student access to experiential education in public schools. By providing cost-effective services, Extension staff filled part of this void with school enrichment opportunities. **ChickQuest, Fishy Science, Go Plants!** and **Rockets Away!** were four supplemental curriculum programs taught to over 230 county third and fourth graders. These programs helped public school teachers meet academic content standards through engaging, hands-on lessons.
- The **Junior Camp** experience provides a valuable opportunity for teen leadership development and for building positive social relationships in a safe learning environment. In 2013, 25 older youth participated as 4-H Camp Counselors and 80 youth as campers—a growth of 55% in the past five years. Ninety-six percent of the counselors improved their workforce development skills such as problem solving and positive interpersonal communications.
- Studies have shown the importance of reaching young children with positive activities and role models. In **Harrison County 4-H**, community club advisors and older youth

guide the program experience. To ensure strong leadership, over 50 advisors from 19 community clubs participated in advisor training workshops that promoted the 4-H mission of education, safety, health and fun.

- In seeking to promote food production safety to the next generation of farmers, livestock **Quality Assurance Training** instructed 150 youth about animal welfare, good production practices, ethical farming and basic livestock management. With the recent onset of the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board, livestock quality assurance is an increasingly critical step toward ensuring food quality and safety among young producers in the Buckeye State.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- As part of a two-county shared agriculture program with Jefferson County, the following was achieved:
 - Seventy-two private pesticide applicators became recertified to purchase and use restricted-use pesticides by participating in a three-hour **Pesticide Applicator Recertification**. Participants learned how to effectively identify and manage pests, how to protect the environment when using pesticides and how to minimize pesticide use.
 - More than 75 beef producers increased the profitability of their herds as a result of participating in a three-session **Beef Management School**. A full 100% of participants reported they would improve their livestock operations as a result of what they learned. Participants learned about heifer replacement, alternative feed sources and spring pasture management.
 - A **new Master Gardener program** resulted in 18 participants completing over 900 hours of volunteer service for local residents. Master Gardeners serve the community as trained backyard experts in topics such as raised-bed gardening, pest identification and fertility methods.
 - Nearly 90 local food enthusiasts increased their gardening, food preservation and insect identification knowledge and skills at seven **local foods workshops** taught by staff and volunteers. Additionally, over 20 early childhood youth benefited from a **Farm to School local foods program** in which they learned about the value of fresh produce, planting and harvesting techniques and making healthy snack choices.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Extension was proud to partner with the **Harrison County Agricultural Society** to improve their development efforts. The resulting 10-year strategic plan has already generated significant investment from stakeholders and government officials as well as the financial support of over \$50,000 in pledges toward new facilities.
- Persistent unemployment is an issue in Harrison County, particularly among females. In 2013, **Increasing Employability**, a twice-weekly educational event held at Harrison County Job and Family Services, was offered to unemployed participants in the Ohio Works Program. Participants were presented with a holistic assortment of topics including setting and accomplishing personal goals, financial management, planning the job search, balancing work and family, soft skills, writing a resume, writing cover letters, supervisory skills, career exploration, preparing for an interview, healthy eating and physical activity. The goal was for participants to use these skills to improve their ability to become gainfully employed and self-sufficient.
- According to a recent Battelle study, 4-H youth are 1.6 times more likely than their peers to attend college or technical school. This is due in large part to the life skills developed as they work through their **4-H projects**. In 2013, over 260 county youth completed 4-H projects in topics as diverse as robotics, scrapbooking, teen leadership and livestock sciences.
- Almost 600 county families increased their knowledge about 4-H, agriculture and natural resources, and family and consumer sciences through a new **bi-monthly Extension newsletter**. As a result of expanded programming, Extension's reach increased by nearly 50 families in 2013.