

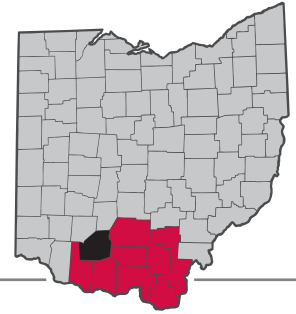


HIGHLAND County

OHIO VALLEY EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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The Highland County Commissioners continued to collaborate with Brown and Adams County Commissioners in 2013, sharing a Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension educator and an Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Extension educator. Highland County also maintained a 4-H Youth Development educator, a part-time program assistant with the SNAP-Ed program and part-time support staff in the county office. Both the FCS and ANR educators make extensive use of area radio and print media to reach and educate clientele across the three counties.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- 4-H prepares youth for success by providing them with life skills. In 2013, 810 youth ages 5–18 participated in traditional **4-H programs**, with the assistance of 258 volunteers. Based on an estimated minimum 35 hours contributed annually by each volunteer, the value of their service to Highland County exceeded \$160,000. More than 50 older teens assisted with educational programs for 4-H members and participated in other leadership activities.
- **4-H Camp** helps build teamwork, communication and leadership, cultivating the job readiness skills that employers look for while giving campers a chance to connect to nature. In Highland County, 44 youth campers ages 5–18 attended camp at Canter's Cave 4-H Camp for overnight camping or the Cloverbud Day Camp held in Highland County. Fourteen 4-H Camp Counselors assisted with these camps.
- **Real Money, Real World** is an OSU Extension signature program that 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 and needs. In Highland County, this hands-on program was provided to 326 youth from Hillsboro City School District and Fairfield Local District.

- An additional 542 youth participated in short-term youth development activities such as **rural safety education** and **4-H awareness programming**.
- Forty-three high school students representing four school districts participated in **Agriculture Reality**. The simulation allowed students to be "land owners" and make business decisions about their farm. Twenty-two farm-related business professionals volunteered to help with the simulation, making the decisions even more realistic.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Four **Pesticide Applicator Recertification** sessions were held at Southern State Community College in Fincastle, with two daytime and two evening sessions. A total of 206 private applicators were recertified in 2013 for the three counties, including 95 from Highland County. Five sessions were offered for both private applicators and custom applicators to obtain a license through testing. A total of 55 private and 52 commercial applicators were tested.
- **Water quality programming** was offered in Highland County in collaboration with OSU Extension, Soil and Water, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Bureau. The program, offered to 48 producers prior to the 2013 planting season, dealt with the 4Rs and phosphorus applications.



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- **Beekeeping** has become very popular in southern Ohio. Programming was offered in four different sessions in 2013. This included a program with beekeepers discussing pesticides and awareness, a Master Gardener class, a public meeting dealing with pollinators and a program for beginners in beekeeping, with a total of over 80 participants.
- **Master Gardener Volunteers** continue to be a vital part of OSU Extension in Brown and Highland counties. Training requires a minimum of 50 hours for new volunteers. A class trained new volunteers in spring 2013.
- A **Cow School** was offered for beef producers on three nights in January, February and March. Through distance technology, the program was offered throughout the state of Ohio, including Highland County. The instructors were OSU Extension beef specialists. Average attendance at the three local sessions was 29 producers.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's grant-funded **SNAP-Ed** program conducted 126 educational sessions for 864 low-income adults, 73% of whom use food assistance benefits. The primary content of direct education was MyPlate, vegetables and fruits, food shopping and food safety. Of participants, 97% said they learned new information, and 85% planned to make recommended changes to improve personal and family nutrition. In retrospective surveys, participants reported significant increases in using food labels to make better food choices, drinking water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, reading labels for sodium content and being physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week. Thirteen programs were delivered at Summer Food Service locations, with 129 children learning basic nutrition and the importance of physical activity.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Food safety education and training can prevent severe illness and high medical costs. Out of 32 total participants in 2013, 13 Highland County residents working in the foodservice industry completed the **ServSafe Food Handler Program for Employees**. Ninety-two percent of the participants reported improving their food safety knowledge and indicated they will make changes in their worksite to support food safety practices.
- Out of 86 total participants, 45 Highland County residents completed **Safe Food Handling for Occasional Quantity Cooks**, with 85% indicating they will implement one or more safe food handling practices when preparing food for others.
- To ensure safe food preservation practices and prevent illness, 15 pressure canner dial gauges were inspected and tested for accuracy. Those attending a **Home Food Preservation Program** reported they will start using current U.S. Department of Agriculture canning and freezing recommendations to ensure food is preserved safely.
- **I Can Cook!** hands-on nutrition and cooking classes were held to increase participants' confidence and skills in making home-prepared meals. Of the 25 total participants, nine were Highland County residents. After the classes, 96% of the participants reported feeling more confident about preparing meals at home. All the participants indicated they plan to prepare foods at home more often and will modify recipes to lower the amount of sodium and fat in foods. Preparing foods at home can improve overall diet quality and prevent health conditions such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

Highland County receives \$40,801 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.