

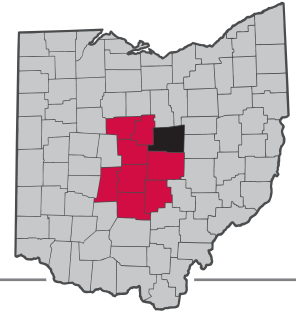


## KNOX County

### HEART OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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#### ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Each year Knox County farmers estimate losing approximately 10% to 25% of their yields to pest-related problems. This equals a loss of \$10 million to \$24 million annually. To help reduce this burden, 53 farmers participated in a series of **on-farm diagnostic tours**. Topics included weed identification and control, weed resistance, disease identification and control, insect identification and control, proper scouting techniques and economic thresholds. Farmers attending these tours reported they expected to reduce their losses by 22% to 48% due to changes in their management practices. This equals savings of about \$3 to \$15 million dollars annually.
- Fifty-three producers attended a series of **farm technology meetings**. Topics for this series included “Getting Started with GPS: The Basics,” “GIS Software,” “Data Collection and Management,” “Using the Data: What Have We Learned,” “Yield Monitor Calibration” and “Variable Rate Applications.” Participants at these workshops estimated a savings of \$12 to \$36 per acre based upon knowledge gained.
- One hundred twenty-three Central Ohio private pesticide applicators attended **Pesticide Applicator Training**. Producers reported improved knowledge, attitudes and application practices as a result. Completion of this training allows these individuals to purchase, apply and use restricted-use pesticides. Of the producers attending, 100% passed their required certification test on the first attempt.
- Knox County Extension collaborated with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil

- and Water Conservation District to host a monthly **Farmers Breakfast**. More than 25 individuals attended each meeting, which included topics such as livestock management, farm tax changes, crop insurance, crop scouting, estate planning, nutrient management and cover crops.
- Efforts to ensure that safe, wholesome food was grown in Knox County and across the state continued by educating more than 200 individuals on **good agricultural practices**. These practices emphasize proper production and management techniques. Of surveyed participants, 100% said they would implement at least one technique presented at the training.
- Over 1,000 individuals participated in the **39th Annual Heart of Ohio Tour**, a self-guided, nine-stop, driving tour in Knox County that educates tourists about agricultural practices.
- The **Mount Vernon Farmer’s Market** supplied plants and produce to hundreds of families during its 16-week season. In 2013, the market hosted events including Family Day and Come Celebrate Apples to attract more families. Each event had live music, cooking demonstrations, games and prizes.
- Owl Creek Produce Growers lost 25% to 90% of their produce yield to a summer derecho (wide line of severe thunderstorms). Afterward, 35 produce growers attended an **on-site tour about erosion management and utilizing cover crops** in their produce fields.

#### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- One hundred eighty Mount Vernon High School and Learning Center seniors, 318 eighth grade students from

Mount Vernon Middle School and 160 Knox County Career Center juniors completed **Real Money, Real World** training. The participants documented learning in a variety of areas related to money matters and planning for their future.

- The **Purple Power Plus** after school program starting its third year with 26 students at East Knox Middle School. The program uses team building, STEM activities and craft lessons to build cohesion among group members.

## PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In Knox County, 1,100 youth participated in 63 traditional **4-H Clubs** and activities, completing 1,901 4-H projects. They demonstrated a gain in life skills at judging and speaking contests and through club leadership and citizenship. Supporting the program were 188 volunteers. Of the 634 4-H members surveyed during interview judging, 547 said they gained leadership skills, 620 increased their knowledge in their project areas, 535 improved record keeping skills, 533 increased their social and presentation skills and 588 increased their confidence in taking on new tasks.
- **School enrichment experiences** were presented to youth in five school districts. Go Plants was presented to two classrooms (43 youth); Team up for Good Nutrition was presented to 14 classrooms (306 youth); Rockets Away! was presented to 5 classrooms (132 youth); and ChickQuest was presented to 16 classrooms (249 youth).
- The **Acres of Adventure** after school program at St. Vincent De Paul School provided 21 pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students with an introduction to the world of agriculture and life sciences through a two-part curriculum. Partners from OSU Extension and St. Vincent De Paul continued this program one day each week during the 2012–2013 school year.
- One hundred eight campers (ages 8 to 14) and 22 counselors (ages 14 to 18) from Knox County attended a five-day **Junior 4-H Camp** at 4-H Camp Ohio with additional Holmes County campers and counselors. Of the survey respondents, 84% could list at least one thing they had learned at camp, and 64% could list at least one skill they had enhanced through their camp experience.
- **Jump Into Foods and Fitness**, a before school program at Pleasant Street Elementary, provided kindergarten through fifth grade students with information on nutrition and the opportunity to exercise before entering the classroom. In 2013, 76 participants attended one or more sessions. In October, the program started its eleventh year, with 52 students.
- The **Power to the Sixth** after school program for sixth grade students at Mount Vernon Middle School provided a total of 53 students with positive activities on Wednesdays. In its eleventh year, the program utilizes 4-H and community teen and adult volunteers, and started the new school year with 26 students in October.