



## MEIGS County

### BUCKEYE HILLS EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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#### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Over 190 people participated in the **Blue Star Healthy Colon Initiative**, a collaboration of Meigs County Cancer Initiative, The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Ohio State University Extension under an OSU Cares Grant. Colorectal cancer rates in Meigs County are 17.6% higher than that for Ohio, and death rates in Meigs County from colorectal cancer is 35% higher than that for Ohio. An inflatable, 30-foot walk-through colon (Super Colon) was exhibited at the Meigs County Fair and was used as an interactive educational tool to help explain colon cancer to targeted clientele and families.
- The Meigs County **SNAP-Ed** program had a total of 877 direct contacts in 2013. These direct contacts received programming in the areas of MyPlate, vegetables and fruits, food shopping and food safety. Thirty-five classes were single lessons, and 67 were part of a series of 2–4 lessons. Six hundred thirty-two participants (74%) stated they would make some changes recommended in the programs, and 150 (18%) stated they would make a lot of changes recommended in the program.
- SNAP-Ed indirect contacts, in various Meigs County locations such as libraries, community centers, Head Start programs and elderly service sites, included 14 nutritional displays and 150 monthly newsletters, fact sheets, pamphlets, calendars and other promotional materials.

#### PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2013, **Meigs County 4-H** reached nearly 600 individual youth through traditional 4-H Clubs, 4-H Camp and school

enrichment programs. The goal of 4-H is to help youth develop into caring, competent and contributing members of society by exploring the world around them.

- Nearly 400 youth take part in Meigs County **4-H Clubs**. The clubs are managed by screened, trained adult volunteers who help youth decide on and complete subject matter projects, learn basic parliamentary procedure and generally have fun. In 2013, Meigs County 4-H began requiring 4-H volunteers to complete bi-yearly training on program basics and on various other topics to help volunteers better relate to 4-H members. Ninety percent of volunteers who completed evaluation surveys stated that the program was relevant to the work they did, and 95% stated that the information presented would help them.
- **4-H Camp** offers youth a safe place to make new friends, try new things and have fun. In 2013, 17 campers and six counselors from Meigs County participated in Canter's Cave 4-H Camp. Events included nature hikes, canoeing, swimming, crafts, games, line dancing, campfire ceremonies and a candle lighting ceremony at the conclusion of camp. Counselors receive training in first aid and safety, child development, camp games, crafts, setting boundaries and more to help them prepare to help campers get the most out of their time at camp.
- For the second year, Canter's Cave 4-H Camp was a **Camp Corral** site. Camp Corral is sponsored by Golden Corral and is "The Week of a Lifetime" for children of injured, disabled or deceased veterans. This past summer, 149 campers including one Meigs County youth came from nine states to learn, play and grow. In addition, three

Meigs County 4-H members served as counselors, and Michelle Stumbo, Meigs County 4-H Youth Development educator, served as co-program director.

- **School enrichment programs** are a great place for students to learn more about 4-H. More importantly though is that students learn more about the world around them. In 2013, ChickQuest was offered to more than 230 students in kindergarten and fourth grade at two county schools. Surveys completed by the fourth graders showed more than a 10% knowledge gain on pre- and post-tests. Surveys from the fourth graders also showed that, as a result of the programming, 60% were interested in exploring science and nearly 90% would show responsibility for living things.
- Gallia and Meigs counties Extension educators obtained a **4-H Foundation Grant** to offer trainings for area teachers on presenting STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) in their classrooms using 4-H curriculum. Funds were used to develop kits for schools to check out with all materials and supplies to conduct ChickQuest and Rockets Away! in classrooms. According to pre- and post-tests, only 5% of attending teachers had participated in a 4-H STEM project in the past, and 95% reported that their comfort level in teaching hands-on science in their classrooms was increased as a result of the program. Both kits are on hold for five different schools in the 2013–2014 school year.

## ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Three **Pesticide Applicator Recertification** trainings were held for 26 agribusinesses involved in nearly \$4 million in local agricultural income. After training, 100% of participants stated that they had improved personal safety practices and were better informed about compliance with pesticide and environmental laws. Ninety-six percent reported that they had improved handling practices, had improved practices to protect the environment and had increased efficiency of pesticide application.
- Nineteen farmers received assistance in reviewing soil tests that covered 600 acres of grain crops, hay fields, pasture and vegetables. **Soil test results** showed a lack of phosphorus and lime were limiting factors to increased production yields. Only two field tests showed excess phosphorus availability, one of the major reasons for algal blooms in Ohio's streams, rivers and lakes. Soil testing assisted some farmers in obtaining federal EQIP dollars to improve the environment.
- Over 100 homeowners, landscapers, public employees and conservationists from three states attended **"Using Native Plants in the Landscape,"** which emphasized the need to

use lower input native plants instead of plants with higher water and nutrient requirements. Speaker topics included using native plants as ground covers, designing using native plants for increased biological diversity, using native sedges, controlling invasive plants and matching up the right native plant to the site.

## ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- All 4-H and FFA livestock and horse exhibitors (268 individuals) completed **Quality Assurance Training**. During Quality Assurance Training youth learn safe animal handling practices, proper identification of animals and animal health management.
- During the **2013 Meigs County Fair** 4-H and FFA members received over \$215,000 by selling their 4-H project animals during the livestock sale. These young people work with their animals for several months in order to learn compassion, record keeping skills and knowledge of animal husbandry.

**Meigs County receives \$10,660 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.**