

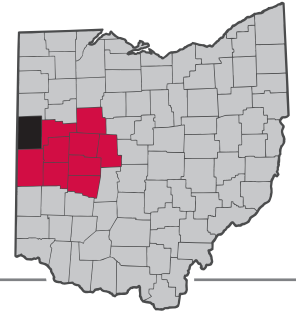


## MERCER County

### TOP OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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#### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The incidence of diabetes has continued to increase in Ohio with nearly 1 in 10 having been diagnosed with the disease, which can increase the risk for other serious health problems. To address this issue, OSU Extension collaborated with the Mercer Health Community Hospital to provide the **Dining with Diabetes** series and a program for the Diabetic Support Group. The participants reported making positive changes to manage their diabetes.
- Approximately 150 youth participated in **nutrition and health education programs** and interactive displays in classrooms, at health fairs and at community events. Youth reported making healthier food choices and increasing physical activity.
- Vision disorders are the leading handicapping condition among preschool-aged children throughout the U.S. Over 230 preschoolers received **vision screenings** to determine potential vision issues that could affect their development and influence their education.
- Adjudicated youth from the Mercer County Juvenile Court learned to make **healthy food choices** and prepare healthy meals and snacks; they also learned the value of physical activity through classes in an after school program. The students developed positive interpersonal relationships, leadership skills, behaviors and life skills to become productive citizens.
- There is an increased concern about the safety of our food supply. To assure safe food, the **ServSafe Food Handler Program** was completed by 55 food service managers,

supervisors and staff representing schools, health care, food pantries and restaurants. Participants reported increased knowledge in handling food to prevent foodborne illnesses. County sanitarians reported improvements in the safe handling of food in local establishments. Numerous consumer questions regarding food safety and home food preservation were answered by the Family and Consumer Sciences Extension educator.

- According to the 2012 Mercer County Community Health Assessment, 67% of Mercer County adults are either overweight or obese. Obesity increases the risks of diabetes and certain cancers, and it leads to many additional health risks. In the assessment, only 55% of Mercer County adults indicated that they were engaged in physical activity for at least 90 minutes each week. To encourage **fairgoer fitness**, Mercer County Extension teamed with Farm Bureau, The Grand Lake Watershed and Mercer Health in developing a walking course around the fairgrounds. Located throughout the course were stations that featured an educational component about an aspect of the Junior Fair.

#### PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- **4-H Camp** continues to be a summer highlight for Mercer County 4-H youth. A record number of campers (224) participated in the two-week resident program. Fifty-five teen 4-H Camp Counselors provided leadership for this program. In addition, 63 Cloverbuds enjoyed a fun-filled Cloverbud Day Camp. Children experience independent decision making, are introduced to new hobbies and make new friends as a result.

- Led by 55 teen Junior Fair Board members, the **Mercer County Junior Fair** activity featured huge numbers of livestock and special interest project displays. Displayed were 1,229 livestock projects and 992 special interest 4-H projects. All livestock exhibitors participated in a Skillathon judging and interview process, and special interest project members' knowledge was evaluated using an interview format.
- Seventeen 4-H teens and four adult chaperons hosted 4-H members and leaders from Nobles County, Minnesota, as part of a **cultural interstate exchange program**. The teens planned all the activities that were enjoyed by the visitors during their one-week stay. The Mercer County cultural interstate exchange group will travel to Minnesota to complete the two-year program in the summer of 2014.

**Mercer County receives \$37,948 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.**