



ROSS County

OHIO VALLEY EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Three hundred twenty-six youth ages 5–18 participated in **4-H Camp** in 2013. Leadership came from teen 4-H Camp Counselors and adult volunteers during two residential camps and a one-day camp. Residential campers experienced 10.3 hours of Health Rocks curriculum, a healthy living program focused on reducing tobacco, alcohol and drug use by youth. Campers were also involved in a variety of activities that helped develop their life skills in teamwork, decision making, time management and cooperation. Ninety percent of youth gave camp the highest evaluation ratings available.
- Seven hundred eighty youth participated in 52 **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** Summer Food Service Programs held at summer feeding sites. These programs encouraged youth to exercise; use MyPlate to increase their dairy, vegetables, fruits and whole grains; eat breakfast every day; choose healthy snacks; and wash their hands before eating or preparing meals. Youth obesity nutrition and physical activity programs have been shown to save society billions in reductions in medical costs, prescriptions, diabetes-related costs and future missed school and work.
- **4-H Camp Counselor Training** provided 54 teens with 24 hours of training in youth development, leadership, program planning, teaching and conflict management skills. In addition, these youth received specialized training in CPR, Health Rocks curriculum, food allergies and child abuse and neglect. Teens involved as counselors, **Junior Fair Board** members, **Junior Leaders Club**, and **4-H CARTEENS**

instructors logged over 8,540 hours of service learning valued at \$67,039 to Ross County.

- Four hundred forty-four **adults volunteered** 23,783 hours working with the 4-H Youth Development program in Ross County as club advisors, Junior Fair Livestock Superintendents, quality assurance trainers, clinicians, and program teachers. In addition to providing leadership, 112 Club Advisors participated in **“Making Clubs Better 20 Minutes at a Time” training** to improve their skills and to enhance positive youth development working through their community clubs. The estimated value of the volunteer time was \$447,739.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- With the current size and scale of Ross County farms (\$95 million in sales annually), **farm transition and estate planning** was identified by the Ross County Farmers Club as a critical issue to address in 2013. The federal estate laws changed with the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, and combined with the elimination of the Ohio Estate Tax, farmers needed to understand the rules and how to effectively manage them. Thirty-one people attended an Extension program and showed notable increases in knowledge on estate laws, transition strategies and approaches to improve multigenerational communications with the family.
- Six countywide **Quality Assurance Training** sessions were conducted to teach humane animal care and handling; animal identification tracking; and efficient, effective health



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management practices. The sessions focused on food safety with meat animals and the importance of ethical treatment of animals. The 1,172 youth from 85 community clubs with livestock projects gained decision making and management skills to help ensure a safe and wholesome food supply.

- Working closely with cattle producers in Ross County, four **on-farm research plots** examined the effectiveness of a yield-enhancing product in pasture production. Using a replicated random plot design, the research showed that the product increased pasture yields by approximately 200 pounds per acre. Ross County has 22,000 acres of pasture, which could increase production by more than 2,500 tons of hay equivalents or \$150,000 annually.

- OSU Extension helps limited-income Ross County adults with children make healthier, safer and more budget-friendly food choices through the **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)**. After completing this eight-week series of classes, 89% of participants had improved in one or more nutrition practices, and 80% had improved their food resource management practices including planning meals ahead or shopping with a grocery list.

Ross County receives \$76,495 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 made several substantial changes to the IRS tax code that affected farmers. Educational information on the changes that are important to agriculture was presented to Ross County Farmers Club members. The information was also featured in the Ohio Ag Manager Newsletter and other prominent Ohio farm publications. Farmers indicated they were better informed to make **tax management decisions**, which would ultimately increase their working capital by lowering their tax liability.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Utilizing social media, three six-week **Live Healthy, Live Well eChallenges** were offered to over 490 Ross County adults this past year. Bi-weekly email messages encouraged respondents to increase their physical activity, improve their diet and use coping techniques to reduce stress. Evaluations confirmed 82% of participants reported adopting one or more of the recommended practices to reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases, and 95% reported maintaining or losing weight. Encouragement to try new healthy foods was reported as the greatest benefit of participation by 70% of participants in a six-month follow up survey. A new study shows a health insurance savings of \$2.38 per month per participant in wellness programs.
- OSU Extension worked with 1,052 limited-income individuals in Ross County through **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Educational (SNAP-Ed)** classes in 2013. Newsletters, displays and educational materials were distributed to another 1,885 families this year. Pre- and post-evaluations used with a vegetable and fruit series of classes showed significant change in participant behavior, with increased consumption of both vegetables and fruits.