

2014 County Highlights



DARKE County

TOP OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- A total of 1,171 youth participated in 47 community **4-H Clubs**. Youth improved life skills related to organization, time management, responsibility, financial management, communication and leadership. Comments from members included “4-H helped me find my niche” and “4-H helped me to determine my future career.”
- Two hundred thirty **adult volunteers** served as advisors for the 1,171 youth enrolled in 47 community 4-H Clubs. Volunteers provided leadership in project-related work and community service activities and served as mentors and positive role models for youth.
- One hundred twenty-one campers, ages 9–14, participated in a four-day residential **4-H Camp**. Campers learned life and leadership skills, and the value of collaboration. Campers said, for example, “I love 4-H camp” and “Camp gives me the chance to be outdoors and try new things.”
- Twenty-seven teens served as **4-H Camp Counselors**. Counselors completed a minimum of 24 hours of training and developed personal skills related to supervision and management, leadership, communication and teamwork.
- Forty-four **Junior Fair Board** members planned and conducted Junior Fair activities for over 3,000 exhibitors. Junior Fair Board members reported an increase in life skills related to conflict management, organization and communication.
- Forty-eight youth, ages 5–8, attended **Cloverbud Day Camp**. Campers participated in sessions designed to increase their environmental awareness.
- Darke County 4-H partnered with the Darke County ESC to offer **Real Money, Real World** to 39 special-needs students. Participants learned the importance of setting and obtaining career and educational goals, as well as financial management skills. Sixteen local businesses donated their time to enrich this educational program. Comments from students included “Kids are expensive” and “I am going to change my plans for the future and go to college.”
- The livestock **Quality Assurance Training** program instructed 527 youth about animal welfare, good production practices, ethical farming and basic livestock management. Youth participants learned the importance of properly caring for their animals and presenting a positive image to the public in regard to animal care.
- Students in grades K–5 (1,245 in all) participated in 4-H **school enrichment projects** designed to teach science-related concepts. Students were able to explain key science concepts such as pollination, germination, the life cycle, the importance of earthworms in our soil and the basic needs of plants.
- Ninety-five teens and their parents participated in classes for first-time traffic offenders, called **4-H CARTEENS**. Teen participants reported an increase in the awareness and importance of sobriety, as well as an increase in the awareness and importance of using safety belts. Parents reported an increase in the awareness of risks related to teenage drivers as a result of attending CARTEENS.



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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- One hundred forty divorcing parents learned how to communicate with their children about divorce and learned the importance of minimizing conflict with their child's other parent in the monthly **Successful Co-Parenting** program.
- Nine hundred adults participated in several **health fairs** where they received information pertaining to healthy foods and keeping foods at the correct temperature.
- Thirty-five people attended **food preservations workshops** on pressure canning, water bath canning, and freezing fruits and vegetables. Attendees were informed of the correct way to use their canner and preserve their food.
- **Preschool Vision Screening** was provided to one area preschool. A total of 80 three-, four- and five-year-olds were screened to see if they would benefit from a visit to an eye doctor.
- Over 2,000 Darke County residents participated in one of 213 classes taught by OSU Extension's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** program. Hands-on activities—along with preparing simple recipes—helped participants understand the ease and cost effectiveness of eating healthy. Classes were taught for partner agencies including local food pantries, WIC, Council on Rural Services, and Job and Family Services. Participants learned basic nutrition from MyPlate, how to stretch their food dollars, and food safety. The consumption of healthy foods, along with the importance of daily exercise, was encouraged for a healthy lifestyle.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- One hundred twenty-eight Darke County farmers who hold a private pesticide applicator license attended **Pesticide Applicator Recertification**. Ninety percent of the attendees reported that they were better informed about compliance with pesticide and environmental regulations, 88 percent reported that they have increased the efficiency of their applications, and 95.6 percent reported that they had improved personal safety practices as a result of their last training. Purdue University places a \$625 value per-hour on pesticide certification training based on Extension pest management knowledge, cooperation with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, prevention of individual and commercial mishandling of toxic chemicals, and potential increases in productivity. In Darke County this translates to \$240,000 of economic benefit.
- We collaborated with Darke County Soil and Water Conservation District to offer a **Soil Fertility and Nutrient**

Management Workshop Series. Twenty-one producers participated in the series, which included four sessions. Participants were able to identify basic agronomy principles and nutrient sources, and collect soil samples from their farms. Their soil samples were analyzed, and they learned how interpret their soil tests. They also learned about the requirements of their crops. Each farmer, using the information they learned, built field and application plans with nutrient-retention objectives. One hundred percent reported knowledge gained in the series.

- Four hundred sixty-six persons attended a **2014 Farm Bill meeting** to learn about the decisions they will have to make regarding dairy and grain crops. Survey responses following the meeting indicated that over 500,000 acres of cropland were represented at the meeting. Producers may receive as much as \$74 per corn acre, resulting in safety net receipts in Darke County of nearly \$10 million.
- **Agricultural research projects** sought to increase knowledge for producers, consultants and agriculture professionals in the areas of nutrient management, soil and water quality improvement, integrated pest management, and production efficiency. Specific projects focused on three corn swine manure side-dress replicated plots, corn and soybean population studies, a corn nitrogen response study, and two soybean fields for the Yield-Limiting Factors in Ohio Soybean Production study. The three swine dress manure plots that covered 120 acres resulted in a savings of \$218.38 per acre over a two-year period, resulting in a total savings of \$26,325.

Darke County receives \$54,898 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.