

2014 County Highlights

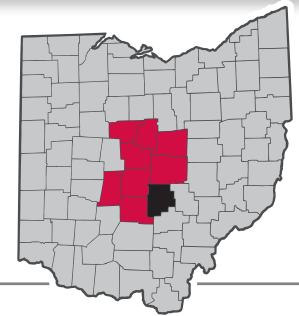


FAIRFIELD County

HEART OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- More than 935 4-H members developed valuable life skills by completing more than 2,425 4-H projects for exhibit at the **Fairfield County Junior Fair**. More than 41 4-H youth learned about meat science, livestock growth and performance, and carcass characteristics by participating in beef, lamb and hog carcass contests at the Fairfield County Junior Fair.
- Forty-nine teens served as **4-H Camp Counselors**, completing a comprehensive 4-H Camp Counselor Training program and utilizing the life skills that they developed both during camp and afterward.
- More than 356 Fairfield County youth developed life skills through participation in one of four **4-H Camps** conducted this summer by Fairfield County 4-H. More than 97 percent of the campers indicated they wanted to return to camp the following year.
- Twenty-five Fairfield County 4-H members learned communication and leadership skills by participating in the **Ohio 4-H Teen Conference** and the **Fairfield County Teen Conference Overnighter**. Participating youth reported learning how to incorporate new ideas into future 4-H events and how to provide leadership as 4-H Camp Counselors.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Nearly 3,122 Fairfield County residents participated in one of 234 classes taught by Extension's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)**. Almost 60 percent of participants reported increasing the frequency of

using MyPlate to make food choices with a limited budget while 65 percent improved behavior in regards to using food labels to choose whole grains. SNAP-Ed also served the Summer Food Service Program by providing 23 nutrition and physical activity programs to children participating in the meal program.

- OSU Extension partnered with Fairfield Medical Center to conduct **Dining with Diabetes** educational classes. Evaluations indicate that the program had a profound effect for the 14 Fairfield County residents who completed the course. In fact, 93 percent of participants reported that they learned how to better manage their diabetes, and 75 percent reported eating smaller portion sizes and knowing how to count carbohydrates as a result of attending the classes. In addition, 90 percent adopted new food safety skills while attending Dining with Diabetes.
- Using social media, the Family and Consumer Sciences educator conducted three **online health and wellness challenges** to "live healthy, live well." More than 200 Fairfield County adults participated, with over 82 percent reporting adopting one or more practices that may help cut the risk of developing chronic disease. In followup surveys, 95 percent said they maintained or lost weight.
- Nearly 500 seventh-grade students in Lancaster City Schools learned hands-on budget management and decision-making in Extension's **Real Money, Real World** financial education program. Nearly 80 percent of the students reported an increased understanding of the importance of having a spending plan, and 65 percent



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reported an increased understanding of the importance of saving money regularly.

- The 2014 Annual National Survey Assessing Household Savings revealed that while most Americans are meeting immediate financial needs, they are worse off financially than several years ago. Fairfield County Extension is addressing this need by offering county participants a savings program called **Ohio Saves**. Participants in Ohio Saves commit to a personal savings goal and receive support and motivation as they progress toward their goal. During America Saves week in February, Fairfield County Extension partnered with Fairfield National Bank to reach consumers and create positive financial action. Fairfield County contributed as one of 1,319 organizations that reached over 40 million people. Cooperative Extension programs reached 175,726 people with 10,361 people setting a savings goal.
- More than 35 consumers learned safe canning methods in a **home food preservation series** taught by OSU Extension's Family and Consumer Sciences educator. One hundred percent of the participants indicated they planned to implement safe canning practices they learned through the program, decreasing the risk of foodborne illness caused by improper preservation methods.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Thirty-five individuals learned tree fruit care including soil testing, planting, fertilization, pruning, and insect and disease control at the **Basic Backyard Fruit class**. Small fruit care was also included, with information shared on brambles and grape survival rates last winter.
- Over 160 gardeners from a five-county area gathered at **Dig in Gardening** to learn from OSU Extension specialists about wildlife gardens and underused plants in the landscape. Master Gardener Volunteers contributed over 200 hours of time to plan, coordinate and implement the day's activities. Evaluations indicate significant increase in participant knowledge and increased awareness about volunteer programs within OSU Extension.
- Two events are causing farmers to take a fresh look at fertilizer use: the significant drop in the value of corn since 2013 and the algae blooms that precipitated the adoption of Senate Bill 150. This has emphasized the need for soil testing and following the Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendations when making fertilizer decisions. In response, the **Fertility 202 Workshop** was offered in Fairfield County and resulted in 49 participants learning how to properly test and fertilize their soils, potentially saving

\$200 per acre in fertilizer costs over the coming years, and also aiding in the protection of the county's water quality.

- In recent years the outbreak of disease in swine has been a growing concern nationwide. Some of these swine diseases have the potential to be shared with humans. The most recent is a devastating, production-related disease called **porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv)**. Detailed PEDv management concerns and protocol were shared with more than 50 4-H and FFA advisors who, in turn, educated some 200 swine exhibitors and their parents on the management required to prevent the spread of this highly contagious swine disease.
- Fairfield County farmers will experience \$125 million in agriculture and horticulture sales in 2014. This information and details of how the agriculture sector positively impacts the local economy was shared with more than 500 chamber members, local politicians and consumers during the annual **Taste of Fairfield County Agriculture**.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Thousands of Fairfield County residents are making connections with Fairfield County farmers and food producers thanks to a new publication developed by OSU Extension in Fairfield County. The **Fairfield County Local Foods Guide** lists more than 30 farms and farmers' markets in Fairfield County where consumers can buy local food and farm products directly from farmers and food producers.

Fairfield County receives \$95,492 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.