

2014 County Highlights



HAMILTON County

MIAMI VALLEY EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

5093 Colerain Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45223

Phone: (513) 946-8989 hamilton.osu.edu



PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- **4-H Agri-Science in the City** began in March through a legislative initiative sponsored by Representative Buchy. Four hundred students at Rothenberg Preparatory Academy and 1,246 students from local agencies received over 213 hours of programming. Students studied the life cycle, space, applications of agriculture and aquaculture. Lessons utilized the 4-H curriculum and were aligned to state standards. Eighty-five percent of teachers indicated they are likely to incorporate agriculture into their curriculum, and 90 percent of teachers and adults reported an increased understanding of agriculture that is easily translated to students.
- Through a partnership with the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) and the OSU Alumni Association, the Hamilton County Extension office co-sponsored **OSU Day at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden**. More than 100 legislators and donors participated in the event, which included a celebration of Extension's 100th anniversary. CFAES Dean Bruce McPheron and Extension Director Keith Smith shared the history of OSU Extension and of the programs provided by the Hamilton County Extension office. Legislators presented proclamations in recognition of the anniversary.
- To expand and improve the **4-H youth development program**, volunteer and advisor training programs reached 162 youth and adult volunteers. Volunteers work with youth to establish sound programming through clubs and activities. Over 4,668 youth were reached.

- Through livestock **Quality Assurance Training**, judging, and Skillathons, 118 youth experienced friendly competition, success in completing projects and a better knowledge of skills necessary for success, including interviewing skills, public speaking, demonstrating knowledge and team work.
- Over 1,349 youth were introduced to **ChickQuest**—a chick embryology program. ChickQuest participants use science, engineering and technology to investigate the chick life cycle. Curiosity, collaboration and communication are encouraged as participants monitor living eggs and observe newly hatched chicks.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The 2014 Annual National Survey Assessing Household Savings revealed that most Americans meet immediate financial needs but are worse off than several years ago. County participants can enroll in **Ohio Saves** and commit to a personal savings goal while receiving support, encouragement and motivation as they progress. During America Saves week in February, Hamilton County Extension was one of 1,319 organizations that reached over 40 million people with motivational messages.
- OSU Extension offers several nutrition programs for Ohioans. **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** reached more than 67,000 Ohioans in 66 counties. The program helps SNAP recipients make healthier choices. SNAP-Ed continues to focus on low-income adults and seniors throughout Cincinnati and the county. Adults receive an average of three lessons



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of 60-minutes each in a three-week or longer series.

Evaluations showed that more than 85 percent reported “a lot of new information was learned.” SNAP-Ed federal funds brought \$54,352 into Hamilton County in 2014.

- In Hamilton County, SNAP-Ed has expanded to youth in the Cincinnati Public School District and the **Summer Food Service Program**. In summer, a partnership with Cincinnati Parks and The Boys and Girls Club reached children with three lessons over three weeks. The youth gained knowledge in food safety, and they learned about choosing low-fat drinks and healthy snacks.
- Obesity, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity disproportionately affect minority and low-income citizens. In an effort to address this issue, the **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** teaches a series to low-income families with children. EFNEP, funded by USDA-NIFA, contributed \$245,715 to our county, funding 5.25 full-time staff. In 2014, a total of 353 families were reached. Ninety-eight percent of graduates significantly increased knowledge and improved behaviors in diet quality, food resource management (81 percent) and food safety (75 percent), resulting in 45 percent of graduates running out of food less often each month. Also in 2014, a total of 1,616 youth participated in EFNEP. Nine hundred fifteen youth reported significant increases in knowledge and positive behavior changes in the areas of diet quality (83 percent), food safety (37 percent) and physical activity (27 percent).

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Vendors and educators came together for the **Tri-State Green Industry Conference (GIC)** in February. The event is a collaboration between OSU Extension in Hamilton and Clermont counties, and Purdue Extension in Dearborn County. Participants earned 352 Ohio pesticide recertification credits and continuing education units for International Society of Arboriculture-certified arborists and landscape architects. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 meaning “strongly agree,” the rated average of 405 participants for the category “new knowledge gained from the Tri-State GIC will be useful to my job, business, organization or personal interest” was 4.41. The survey also showed that as a result of the “new knowledge gained” at the Tri-State GIC, the average participant saved \$3,375. The total saved was \$820,125.
- **Southwest Ohio Diagnostic Walk-Abouts** returned for the 17th year. These multistate, monthly, hands-on programs help horticulture professionals avoid costly mistakes by making them more proficient at plant problem diagnostics

and pest and disease management. Seven Walk-Abouts attracted 272 participants and included 22 teaching hours. Landscape architects earned professional credits to maintain certification; other participants earned professionals continuing education units from the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association and the International Society of Arboriculture.

- Non-native tree pests and diseases can cost citizens, government agencies and businesses billions of dollars. Hamilton County Extension has nationally recognized expertise on developing and conducting **educational programs on non-native tree pests and disease**. That expertise led to acquiring an \$85,000 Farm Bill grant from the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service for “Developing and Teaching Standardized Asian Longhorned Beetle Early Detection Certification Training Programs.” Development of a standardized training program was tested with a 4-H audience, Master Gardener Volunteer audiences and a professional horticulture audience. Local, statewide and multistate outreach training was also offered in 2014 on emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid and thousand cankers disease of black walnut.
- In 2014, 89 active **Master Gardener Volunteers**, 20 Master Gardener Volunteer interns and 18 new applicants completed 50 hours of training. Master Gardener Volunteers contributed over 5,100 volunteer hours and earned 1,100 continuing education hours.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Six 4-H Camp Counselors, 23 Junior Leaders, and 118 4-H members developed **workforce preparation skills** including leadership, communication, teamwork, independence and completion. These youth will ultimately rely on these skills for success in college, the workforce and family life.

Hamilton County receives \$300,067 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.