

2014 County Highlights

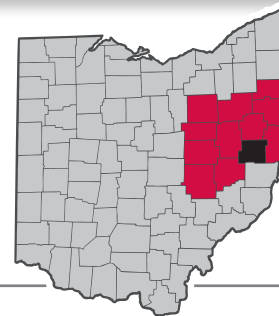


HARRISON County

CROSSROADS EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- One hundred fifty-one eligible citizens attended 21 direct-contact educational events of OSU Extension's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)**. Ninety-five percent of participants reported learning new information, and 82 percent were planning to make personal or family changes. The goal of SNAP-Ed is to increase the likelihood that participants will make healthy food and active lifestyle choices. SNAP-Ed is a grant-funded program made possible with partnership from the USDA, Job and Family Services and OSU Extension.
- Parenting is challenging, especially for dads and moms in the midst of a divorce or those involved with child protective services. In Harrison County, **parenting education programs** (Successful Co-Parenting for divorcing parents; Active Parenting; Dads and Moms in Families for parents of children enrolled in HARCATUS Head Start; Parenting Basics for parents involved with Child Protective Services) are designed to provide participants with information to improve their parenting and relationship skills.
- As confirmed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's 2014 Health Factors ratings, many Harrison County residents are challenged by health issues such as inactivity, weight management and diabetes. To address these challenges, research-based educational programs such as the Family Nutrition Program, Dining with Diabetes, Health Savvy Seniors, and Parenting Healthy Children are offered at the local WIC clinic, senior center and Job and Family Services. The goal is to provide participants with **research-based health and nutrition information** so they can make healthier

lifestyle choices such as increasing their exercise and physical activity, eating healthier varieties and amounts of food and managing their weight.

- Youth in Harrison County Child Protective Services who reside in foster group homes will need many skills to live independently. To help these youth learn such skills, Extension meets monthly to provide information on the **skills to successfully transition from foster care to independent living**. Skills stressed include maintaining healthy relationships, maintaining productive work and study habits, planning and goal-setting, daily living activities, and budgeting and paying bills.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- School funding shortfalls have diminished student access to experiential education in public schools. By providing cost-effective services, Extension staff filled part of this void with our school enrichment opportunities. ChickQuest, Fishy Science, Go Plants! and Rockets Away! were four **supplemental curriculum programs** taught to over 190 county third and fourth graders. A new, innovative STEM Field Day at 4-H Camp Piedmont exposed 120 county sixth graders to excellent science-based instruction. These programs help public teachers meet academic content standards through engaging, hands-on lessons.
- The **Junior Camp** experience provides a valuable opportunity for teen leadership development and positive relationship-building in a safe learning environment. This year 26 older youth participated as camp counselors and 74 youth as campers—a growth of 50 percent in the past



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five years. Ninety-two percent of counselors improved their workforce development skills such as problem-solving, interviewing and positive interpersonal communications.

- Studies have indicated the importance of reaching young children with positive activities and role models. In **Harrison County 4-H**, community club advisors and older youth guide the program experience. To ensure strong leadership, over 40 advisors from 19 community clubs participated in advisor training workshops that promoted the 4-H mission of education, safety, health and fun.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Nearly 70 farmers and agency representatives participated in **Tri-County Agronomy Day**. Participants learned how to identify and manage pests, how to protect the environment when using pesticides and how to minimize pesticide use. Most of the program participants noted they would likely improve their practices and save money based on the training.
- Over 1,000 volunteer hours have been given to the community by 35 local **Master Gardener Volunteers** and Master Gardener interns. Master Gardener Volunteers have taught free gardening education sessions at multiple schools, an assisted living facility, a senior center, community gardens, farmer's markets and several libraries. Master Gardeners receive ongoing training and supervision from Extension personnel.
- Sixty-eight individuals participated in two **oil and gas development presentations**. Two Agriculture and Natural Resources educators discussed current oil and gas development, including hydraulic fracturing, water quality, water testing, pipeline easements and leasing.
- Approximately 90 people participated in the first annual **Sustainable Living Field Day**. Program attendees heard sessions on solar and geothermal energy, water conservation, and small-scale gardening. A state senator and a state house representative attended the event.
- The Agriculture and Natural Resources educator supported **local foods education** by teaching various free gardening sessions throughout the community, including the following venues: a social service agency, a farmer's market, a senior center, several libraries, a radio show, a woman's club meeting and multiple garden club meetings

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- According to a recent Tufts study, 4-H youth are 1.6 times more likely than their peers to attend college or technical school. This is due, in large part, to the life skills developed as youth work through their **4-H projects**. This year, over 275 county youth completed a 4-H project in topics as diverse as robotics, scrapbooking, teen leadership and livestock sciences.
- Unemployment is an issue with many residents in the county. **Increasing Employability** is an educational event offered weekly to high-risk, unemployed participants in the Ohio Works Program at Harrison County Job and Family Services. The program is also offered monthly to low-level, non-violent offenders on felony probation at Harrison County Adult Probation. Participants receive educational information on a holistic assortment of topics including the following: setting and achieving personal goals, managing finances, writing a resume and cover letters, exhibiting supervisory skills, exploring careers, preparing for an interview, balancing work and family, and healthy eating and physical activity. The goal is for participants to use this information to both get and keep a job, as well as to become financially self-sufficient.
- Almost 600 county families are increasing their knowledge about 4-H youth development, agriculture and natural resources, and family and consumer sciences through an innovative **bimonthly Extension newsletter**. As a result of expanded programming, Extension's reach has improved by almost 35 families in 2014.

Harrison County receives \$25,599 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.