

2014 County Highlights

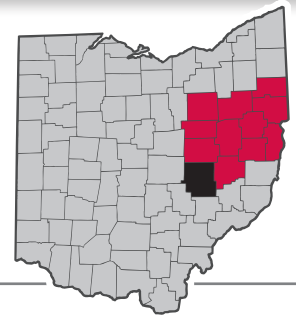


MUSKINGUM County

CROSSROADS EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Extension Centennial:** Extension celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2014. Local activities to commemorate the milestone included presentations to community groups about Extension, a display about the history of Extension in Muskingum County at several events and a celebratory proclamation by the Muskingum County Commissioners. A local greenhouse utilized the theme for its corn maze design and drew nearly 1,000 visitors on two days in September designated as “4-H Weekend”.
- Ag Breakfast:** OSU Extension sponsored the monthly Ag Breakfast, a forum where farmers, agricultural agency personnel and community leaders discuss relevant local issues. Topics in 2014 included a local economic development update, a Utica shale gas update, Extension’s 100th anniversary, county law enforcement efforts in combatting drugs, local fish farm operation, crop outlook for 2015, proposed federal carbon emission rules and feral swine in Ohio. One unique event this year was conducting one of the Ag Breakfasts at Christ’s Table, a food preparation ministry that serves meals to the needy. Ag Breakfast participants keep up to date on local ag happenings and have direct access to government officials. The breakfast is held the first Tuesday morning of each month at the Friendly Hills Grange Camp and is open to the public.
- Volunteer Training:** Thirty-eight new 4-H volunteers were approved through the volunteer selection process. Participation in interviews and a two-hour training session are part of the process. Volunteers learned about the history

of Extension and 4-H while getting a true understanding of the mission, vision and eight key elements to a successful 4-H program.

- Master Gardeners:** Nineteen new Master Gardener trainees completed 50 hours of training in 2014. These new volunteers along with 61 current Master Gardeners provided 2,680 hours of horticultural education through numerous activities including a farmer’s market booth, school horticultural projects and community gardening efforts.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Real Money, Real World:** This hands-on financial literacy program, engaged 484 eighth-grade students in learning about how education impacts income and lifestyle choices. The five-part curriculum included lessons on the ways in which occupation affects income, and checking and savings accounts. Students posed as married 25-year-old adults with children in a simulation activity during which they made consumer decisions. Forty-five community leaders, business representatives and others served as volunteers for this activity.
- The New Farm Bill:** Thirty-five farmers and agricultural agency personnel participated in a new Farm Bill webinar conducted by OSU Extension. Participants learned about the concepts and new terminology behind the recently-passed legislation. Nine farmers and ag lenders participated in an educational program that discussed the Dairy Margin Protection Program (DMPP), the portion of the Farm Bill that addresses dairy issues. The DMPP is designed to protect



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dairy producers from severe downturns in milk price or rising feed prices. A web-based decision-making tool was demonstrated to assist producers in determining if they plan to participate in the program.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- **4-H CARTEENS:** In 2014, 237 teens and 221 parents participated in 4-H CARTEENS, a two-hour traffic safety educational program for first-time juvenile traffic offenders. OSU Extension, 10 teen volunteers, the Ohio State Highway Patrol and car accident victims provided instruction during nine sessions. The 4-H CARTEENS program generated user fees that covered program costs and provided college scholarships for teen volunteers. Eighty-nine percent of the teen participants indicated they strongly agree or agree with the statement, “I am less likely to be a repeat traffic offender as a result of attending the CARTEENS program.”
- **Leadership Skills:** Providing opportunities for 4-H teens to develop leadership skills is a primary goal of 4-H youth development. Groups such as 4-H CARTEENS, Junior Fair Board, Junior Leaders and 4-H Camp Counselors offered training to 50 teens in public speaking, organization and planning, decision-making, and conflict management.
- **4-H Camp:** Five days and four nights at 4-H Camp Ohio for Muskingum County 4-H Junior Camp was a highlight of the summer for 152 campers, ages 8–13. The youth time-traveled to the “Blast from the Past” camp, as well as experienced nature, living history and outdoor adventures. Activities were led and directed by 37 teen counselors. Campers gained skills in the areas of independent living, communications, teamwork and leadership. Clover Dude Day Camp was conducted at KD Guest Ranch for 81 youth in kindergarten through second grade. The Cloverbuds participated in a variety of cowboy-themed learning activities including horse safety and husbandry, horse painting, a hay ride to learn the basics about beef cattle, creating a hand art project, and watching a rodeo.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Pesticide Applicator Training:** OSU Extension conducted training sessions in 2014 for 59 licensed Muskingum County pesticide applicators who are required to participate in a recertification session every three years. These pesticide applicators learned new information about pollinator protection, herbicide resistance in weeds, herbicide’s mode of actions and changes to pesticide laws. Almost all strongly agreed or agreed that pesticide applicator training

improved practices for personal safety, pesticide handling and protection of the environment.

- **Livestock Education for Youth:** Educating youth about livestock care is a high priority for OSU Extension. Five hundred ninety youth participated in livestock Quality Assurance Training workshops, where they learned good production practices to raise safe, high-quality food products for consumers. The annual Livestock Skillathon challenged 296 4-H and FFA members to gain knowledge in areas related to animal health, humane care and handling of livestock, and showmanship. Sixty Cloverbuds (ages 5–8) participated in “Barn to Barn” at the Muskingum County Fair with Junior Fair Board members teaching youth about caring for and showing animals during this two-hour program.
- **Stewards of the Soil:** OSU Extension provided soil testing services to area farmers and gardeners through Penn State University’s Ag Analytical Lab. Testing soil saved money with more precise, accurate fertilizer applications and protected the environment by ensuring that fertilizer was not over-applied. One hundred sixty-six soil tests were conducted through the OSU Extension office in 2014. OSU Extension assisted 75 farmers and gardeners with an interpretation of their soil test results.