

2014 County Highlights



PICKAWAY County

HEART OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

110 Island Road, Suite B, P.O. Box 9, Circleville, Ohio 43113-0009

Phone: (740) 474-7534 pickaway.osu.edu



ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Ohio Fresh Food Corridor:** The Ohio Fresh Foods Corridor is a brand created by Pickaway County growers who want to help people experience the connection with their food. Under the leadership of the Pickaway Competitiveness Network Ag Committee, chaired by the Pickaway County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources educator, the goal is to help people experience the connection with their food by promoting homegrown entrepreneurship, new investment and the value of Pickaway County's existing strengths in food and agriculture. Program highlights in 2014 include the following:
 - Twenty-one specialty crop producers participated in two one-day workshops dedicated to direct marketing of specialty crops. End-of-meeting surveys of both workshops indicated significant changes in knowledge and awareness of direct marketing topics presented.
 - Ten thousand travel rack cards were printed and distributed, and website updates and social media materials were produced to promote Pickaway County specialty crop producers to consumers in the Central Ohio region.
 - The Ohio Fresh Foods Corridor was a lead sponsor of the WBNS-TV Health and Wellness Expo held at the Columbus Convention Center. A display and trade show booth was used to promote the Ohio Fresh Food Corridor. Over 600 direct contacts with consumers were made.

- The last event of the summer was a "Taste of Pickaway" fundraiser at a local farm. Local food products were highlighted in an array of food entrees. Over 200 people attended the event, with proceeds benefiting the Ag Endowment Fund of the Pickaway County Community Foundation and the Mid-Ohio Food Bank.
- **Ag Outlook and Policy Meeting:** Changes in the agricultural economy coming off a record high in prices for commodities received in 2012–2013 had many ag producers concerned about long-term economic sustainability. Over 100 farmers, agricultural lenders and agribusiness personnel attended the Pickaway County Ag Outlook and Policy Meeting, resourced by faculty in The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences' Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- **4-H Project Education:** Pickaway County 4-H hosted two events to inform 4-H members and the public about 4-H projects and opportunities available through the 4-H program. The Pickaway County 4-H Open House involved 14 4-H members and seven volunteers sharing their project experiences. Thirty-seven potential 4-H families attended. The Pickaway 4-H Opportunities Day involved 38 4-H members and volunteers teaching hands-on activities to 4-H members. The event was dependent on a grant from the Ohio 4-H Foundation. At both events, 4-H members had the opportunity to practice their public speaking and leadership skills through presenting their projects, leading activities and speaking with others.



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- **Real Money, Real World:** More than ever, the youth of today need a clear understanding of how to manage their finances. Enter Real Money, Real World, an OSU Extension signature program that gives middle school students an understanding of how current education, income and life choices affect future income. Participants learn how much to expect to pay for housing, transportation, food, utilities, college loans, clothing, insurance and childcare, and how to balance “wants” and “needs.” In collaboration with Pickaway H.E.L.P.S, OSU Extension offered this hands-on program to 704 eighth graders. Forty community partners participated in the simulation, staffing booths, teaching financial education and assisting the students in making sound financial decisions. Students self-assessment statements included, “I would buy less brand name clothes,” “Kids are expensive,” “Life is a whole lot harder than I thought,” and “Money doesn’t go very far.”
- **4-H Camp:** Young people know 4-H Camp is fun. And youth development experts know 4-H Camp helps build critical life skills for both campers and youth counselors. Thirty-two teens served as 4-H Camp Counselors, participating in 28 hours of a combination of on-site and classroom training. 4-H camp counseling helps build teamwork, communications, and leadership, cultivating job readiness skills all the while. Pickaway County’s traditional 4-H Camp at Tar Hollow State Park Resident Camp offered outdoor experiences to 78 campers ages 9–13. Other camping experiences offered to Pickaway County youth were 4-H Shooting Sports Camp, Forestry Camp, Ohio 4-H Sea Camp, State 4-H Leadership Camp, and Citizenship-Washington Focus, providing specialized educational opportunities to 12 Pickaway County youth. The community contributed \$3,240 to support teens attending award trips and to assist families in-need in sending their kids to 4-H Camp.

conducted three six-week online wellness challenges with over 2,027 adults participating during the past year. Biweekly email messages encouraged participants to increase their physical activity, improve their diet, and use coping techniques to reduce stress. Over 81 percent of Challenge participants report adopting one or more of the recommended practices that might help reduce their risk of developing chronic disease such as heart disease, cancer or diabetes; and 88 percent report in post-challenge surveys that they’ve maintained or lost weight. While research on the cost savings of workplace wellness programs varies, studies have typically shown a return on investment of \$4 per \$1 spent. A new study shows health insurance premiums rose just one percent for one company as opposed to 4.7 percent for its peers.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Educational (SNAP-Ed):** A total of 1,649 limited-income individuals participated directly in 182 SNAP-Ed interactive classes in 2014. Program topics included My Plate, vegetables and fruits, whole grains, protein foods, food shopping, food preparation, and food safety. Nine hundred twenty-six youth participated in 59 programs of the Summer Food Service Program at the YMCA or the Head Start Center.

Pickaway County receives \$50,890 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- **Wellness Grant Program:** Sixty-one Pickaway County employees are participating in the four-year Bureau of Workers’ Compensation Wellness Grant program. The employees completed a biometric health screening and health risk appraisal. The top five health promotion priorities based on prevalence of risks include the following: physical activity, good nutrition, blood pressure, stress and appropriate weight for height. Seventy percent of the participating employees indicated that they experience high stress levels. Eighty-one percent of participants have at least one high risk factor (high total cholesterol, high blood pressure, body mass index and glucose).
- **Live Healthy, Live Well:** Using social media, the Pickaway County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educator