

2014 County Highlights



SANDUSKY County

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- A total of 758 youth ages 5–18 took part in the **4-H Community Club Program**, where they had the opportunity to build leadership and communication skills, provide service to their community, and learn about topic areas of their choice. A total of 135 adult volunteers served as club advisors for 33 different 4-H Clubs in 2014. Community clubs include both project member and Cloverbud programs, designed specifically to meet the age-related interests and abilities of youth. Program evaluations indicate that the two most significant impacts of youth participating in the program are building communication skills and developing a sense of responsibility for one's own actions.
- At **4-H Junior Camp** on Kelleys Island, 137 youth campers and counselors participated in five days of outdoor educational activities led by OSU Extension staff, adult volunteers and teen counselors. Campers, ages 9–13, learned about environmental issues, healthy outdoor recreation, independence and communication.
- Twenty-eight teen leaders served as **4-H Camp Counselors** at Cloverbud Day Camp, Junior Camp, or both. Teens planned and led camp sessions, as well as supervised campers. Counselors built leadership skills and learned about child development, behavior management, handling emergencies, teaching effectively and dealing with stressful situations. These teens dedicated more than 2,000 volunteer hours to create an excellent experience for young campers.
- **4-H CARTEENS**—a teen driving safety program provided through a partnership between OSU Extension, Sandusky

County juvenile court, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol—reached 128 teens in 2014. Program participants complete hands-on and interactive stations where they learn about laws, speeding, distracted driving and other driving-related topics. Program evaluations indicate 89.7 percent of the participants plan to change their driving habits to be more cautious, limit distractions or be more aware when they are behind the wheel as a result of attending CARTEENS.

- **“Exploring Your Backyard” Sandusky County Natural Resource Day** was held for the 14th year in September. This two-day program is designed to introduce fourth-grade students to the different natural resources and agricultural resources present in Sandusky County. This year, 915 students from 18 different schools participated. The program is made possible through the help of over 100 teen and adult volunteers who teach sessions, lead activities and serve as student guides. Evaluations from both teachers and presenters found the program to be an excellent teaching and learning experience for the students. This program is a collaboration between OSU Extension, Sandusky County Soil and Water District, the Sandusky County Parks District, and Farm Bureau.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Northern Ohio Crops Day** continues to address timely topics that impact grain producers' bottom line. A total of 160 participants learned how new technologies and issues could be affecting their operations and management decisions for the coming crop year. Eighty of the participants received



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private or commercial pesticide recertification credits, and 25 Certified Crop Advisers obtained continuing educational credits.

- The Sandusky/Ottawa County Master Gardener program continues to have a very strong presence in the community. Eight new Master Gardeners were trained, bringing the active roster to over 50 members. Major projects for the year included the Eighth Annual Master Gardener Plant Sale; the “Planting the Seed” program hosted with OARDC for 225 elementary age youth; a vegetable demonstration garden at the Sandusky County Health Department; and beautification projects at the Sandusky County court house and facilities in cooperation with the Sandusky County juvenile court’s “Youth Works” program.
- **Vegetable research and education** has become a major focus area, with outside funding secured for continuation of the Ohio sweet corn variety trials, cabbage variety trials funded by The Fremont Company and new grant funding secured for a pepper variety trial. All three studies examined variety performance, with data presented at two separate field nights for growers, marketers and seed companies. Data is continually analyzed and presented at meetings around the county, state and country to help identify the future genetics of the crops that will provide the best combination of yield, profit and nutrient value for growers and consumers. Over 50 varieties of sweet corn, 40 varieties of peppers and 10 varieties of cabbage were analyzed in replicated plots, with over 50 percent of the growers in the county attending at least one of the two field nights.
- **Livestock and forage production** has been on the increase in the county, with higher revenue opportunity in both areas. Individualized on-farm instruction has been implemented to help many new producers develop detailed forage management and cost analysis plans, select forage varieties and analyze budget sheets for long-term capital investment decisions. Clientele has included zoos, wildlife parks and metro parks from surrounding counties. Growers have supplied hay for these same operations. Formalized livestock education material was presented to the Great Lakes Cattle Feeders Short Course, jointly hosted with Wood County and Michigan State University. For his efforts in education, outreach and industry involvement—as well as production—the Agriculture and Natural Resources educator was presented the Young Cattleman of the Year award by the Ohio Cattlemen’s Association.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- An estimated 7,789, or 13 percent, of the people in Sandusky County received **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance**

Program Education (SNAP-Ed) benefits as of September 2014. This number has increased over the last few years. In 2014, 2,184 Sandusky County residents participated in one of 234 classes taught by Extension’s SNAP-Ed program. Here are some of the agencies that received the SNAP-Ed planned programs: Homes Casas, Inc., Corporate Anointing Ministries, Fremont City Schools (GRADS), WSOS Afterschool/Summer Feeding Program, Food Pantry, Job Store, Jobs and Family, Liberty Center, Ohio Migrant Education, Peak Industries, WSOS Seniors Centers, Share and Care, Soup Kitchen, and WIC/Sandusky County Health Department.

- About 2,200 people were reached through communication and events in the form of newsletters, fact sheets, calendars and/or educational materials. Midwest Region Food and Nutrition Service and the USDA have been the funders for OSU Extension’s SNAP-Ed program for the nineteenth year.

Sandusky County receives \$62,683 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.