

2014 County Highlights

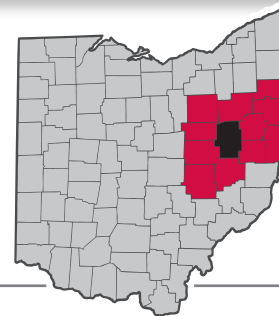


TUSCARAWAS County

CROSSROADS EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

419 16th Street Southwest, New Philadelphia, Ohio 44663-6403

Phone: (330) 339-2337 tuscarawas.osu.edu



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The annual **Fit Youth Initiative Summer Walking Challenge** was conducted May 1 through August 1, 2014. This year, we celebrated 10 years of health promotion with the theme “Blaze a Trail.” Ten “adventure” hikes took place at trails and recreational areas throughout the county. Eight hundred seventy-nine individuals took steps to improve their health and fitness, with 305 walkers completing the 30-hour challenge. One hundred seventy-four individuals participated in at least one adventure hike, with 40 completing five or more hikes. A participant noted, “I want to stay physically active now that I am retired, and I felt participating in the walking program would enable me to do that. I enjoyed seeing new trails and learning about their history.”
- Family connections are stronger in Tuscarawas County thanks to a grant from the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund and OSU Extension. The grant allowed OSU Extension to offer **parenting programs**, including workshops for parents of children in three distinct age brackets (birth–4, 5–12, and tweens/teens). Participants received tools to improve communication, build their child’s self-esteem and develop a more effective discipline plan. Tuscarawas County families attended monthly “Family Connect” events. These free events provided families opportunities to interact with their children in positive environments while receiving resources and support.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** taught 82 adult programs and 78 youth programs for a total of 160 programs and 2,203 total participants.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Volunteers are the 4-H program’s most valuable asset. Over 300 **4-H volunteers** contributed to the success of 1,241 4-H members. Two hundred twenty-six provided leadership to 61 clubs, while other volunteers served on committees and assisted with 4-H project evaluation and other 4-H programs and activities. Thirty-three adult volunteers attended the Ohio 4-H Conference for educational opportunities to enhance their leadership. Louise Harding, 45-year volunteer, was recognized for her years of service and dedication to the 4-H program. Volunteer training and resources are available at the local, state and national level.
- 4-H brought “Science Alive” to 30 classrooms throughout Tuscarawas County as students experienced chick embryology with the ChickQuest 4-H curriculum, and 12 classrooms learned about force and motion via rocketry as they participated in Rockets Away! Other students increased their knowledge of sewing and agriculture with other **4-H school programs** conducted.
- Tuscarawas County 4-H members participated in over 50 different community service projects. Forty-five members of the Buckhorn Buckshots 4-H Club received a 4-H State Community Service Award for their Barbie doll recycling project. Over 300 dolls were collected and donated to be redesigned as chemotherapy dolls for girls undergoing cancer treatments. **4-H service projects** enhanced communities and improved the lives of county residents. It’s 4-H’s way of giving back to the communities and people that support 4-H.



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- **4-H Camp** continues to be the highlight of the summer. One hundred forty-nine campers, led by 31 teen counselors, interacted with youth from around the county. Through group activities and cooperation, campers developed life skills, positive attitudes and enhanced leadership skills. These skills help the campers become self-directing and productive members of society. Camp builds lifetime friendships along with great memories.
- More than 680 youth learned how to provide proper nutrition to their project animal, provide appropriate housing and space, and safely move and work with their animal at livestock **Quality Assurance Training**. Hands-on exercises reinforced the importance of biosecurity when working with livestock.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Pesticides play an important role in crop production. Using pesticides in a manner that both protects the environment and results in minimal cost were taught at **Pesticide Applicator Recertification**. Farmers wanting to apply restricted-use pesticides are licensed and receive recertification training every three years. Evaluations indicated 93 percent of participants have improved personal safety practices; 95 percent have taken environmental protection steps; 87 percent have improved pesticide handling; and 91 percent have learned how to control pests on nearly 20,000 acres of land.
- Transferring a farm business to the next generation can be very difficult. **Planning for the Future Transition of Your Agricultural Business** program taught participants the steps involved in making the transition successful. One participant said, "I've been reading for several months in 'Farm Journal' magazine about this and haven't done anything about it, but after your talk I'm going to."
- Teaching women who are involved in agriculture about farm management and transition planning was the focus of a presentation at the **Annie's Project Women in Agriculture Conference**. Topics included the functions of a manager, financial management, developing goals and mission statements, developing new managers, communication and asset transfer. Participants indicated a desire to begin developing personal and farm goals, and a desire to begin developing farm business mission statements.
- Landowners have several **questions related to easements and construction standards** as pipeline installation has begun. OSU Extension fact sheets and resources have provided more than 100 landowners help in answering questions and making informed decisions. Feedback has been positive, and landowners reported the materials to be of great value.
- An **Agronomy School** evaluation indicated knowledge gain in all topics. Additionally, 91 percent reported a greater understanding of water quality and nutrient management; 97 percent reported a greater understanding of methods to control Palmer Amaranth; 89 percent intended to adopt practices that minimize the loss of phosphorus from cropland; and 95 percent reported a greater understanding of Senate Bill 150 and its impacts on production agriculture. Farmers represented more than 20,000 acres of cropland and reported an average savings of \$1,200 per person as a result of their participation.
- The inaugural **Northeast Ohio Women in Agriculture Conference** was held in March in New Philadelphia. The conference featured four interest tracks, including 12 breakout sessions. A special youth track was offered for young women in high school and college interested in learning more about agriculture. Over 70 women from 23 counties in Ohio and Pennsylvania attended. Evaluations indicated 94 percent plan to use information learned, with 84 percent planning to take action on at least one learning experience in the next six months and 76 percent planning to take action on at least two learning experiences in the next six months. The event was held in partnership with Kent State University Tuscarawas Campus's Small Business Development Center.

Tuscarawas County receives \$26,755 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.