

2014 County Highlights



VAN WERT County

MAUMEE VALLEY EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Recipients of the USDA's **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** learn how to stretch their food dollars through classes offered by OSU Extension. Program assistants offer interactive classes on diet quality, physical activity, food safety and food resource management. The Van Wert County SNAP-Ed program assistant provided 229 education programs to participants at 10 different agencies and schools throughout the county this year. This included two new agencies that received adult programming, and five new schools that received teen and youth programming. Among many topics, participants were introduced to MyPlate, which is the revised version of the food pyramid. Nutritional programming was provided for approximately 200 low-income youth from the county at the Summer Food Program held at the YWCA.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Van Wert Entrepreneur Development Council held the **Third Annual Business Plan Challenge**, awarding two new businesses over \$3,500 in business development funds, business cards and training programs.
- Van Wert County Extension held a business symposium as part of being a supporting partner in the Straight A Grant titled, **"Beyond the Classroom."** Local school districts were awarded \$1.7 million to improve student career and job readiness.
- AEP Ohio granted \$5,000 to update and improve the Van Wert City Economic Development website (whyvanwert.org).

- Van Wert County Extension developed three **community videos for marketing Van Wert, Ohio**, to business prospects that want to learn more about the community. The videos feature Van Wert's educational system, industry base and resources/infrastructure.
- Van Wert County Extension held monthly **"Starting Right" workshops** in collaboration with Wright State University Lake Campus' Business Enterprise Center at various locations throughout the county. A total of 27 participants learned the elements of starting a new business.
- Van Wert County Extension developed and delivered a new three-hour program titled, **"Starting Right for the Student."** During the program, nearly 100 seniors at Van Wert City High School were offered information on ways to start their own business after high school graduation.
- Van Wert County Extension conducted 50 **business retention and expansion visits** at local manufacturers throughout the Van Wert City. Efforts promoted local and state incentives, workforce education and training.
- Van Wert County Extension held monthly **economic development advisory group meetings** at various locations and with various guest speakers on topics of community and economic development interest.
- Cool Machines officially opened its new location after receiving a \$38,000 revolving loan from the **City Revolving Loan Fund** to help with equipment purchases.
- Braun Industries** expanded its operations to a nearby location after LifeStar announced the closure of their company. Braun hired several former LifeStar employees.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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- **Advanced Biological Marketing (ABM)** announced two expansion projects. The \$1.5 million expansion project at its current location was announced to allow production space to bridge the gap until the new \$15 million World Headquarters Building can begin construction in spring 2015.
- A 70-acre expansion of the **Vision Industrial Park** is underway with a capital campaign in progress to purchase the property and certify the property for the food and beverage sector.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Five hundred twenty-five Van Wert County youth are members or Cloverbuds of **Van Wert County 4-H**. Youth take part in 22 local clubs focused on social skill development, community service and personal project work in over 200 different 4-H projects. 4-H members graduating in 2014 indicate 4-H has had a major impact in their lives:
 - “4-H has left a huge impact on my life and will always have a special place in my heart. I will carry all the useful information and skills I have learned from instructors and group projects into my future to better adapt to a changing world.”
 - “Throughout 4-H I have had many opportunities to experience so many different things from livestock to cooking projects. I have accomplished many things I would never have dreamed of completing.”
 - “4-H has benefited me by allowing me to become a more outgoing, responsible and caring person—teaching me quality values that I may not have learned otherwise.”
- Approximately 109 youth campers, teen camp counselors and adult volunteers developed their skills at **4-H Camp Palmer** while canoeing, playing sports and exploring the great outdoors.
- One hundred thirty-nine youth participated in livestock **Quality Assurance Training** in 2014, learning good production practices and completing a sample Drug Use Notification Form. There were zero reported cases of drug residue in the 2014 Junior Fair market livestock program.
- Over 150 youth were schooled through **4-H CARTEENS** in 2014. CARTEENS focuses on driving safety for first-time traffic offenders. Two youth assisted in facilitating sessions with help from the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Crop and livestock research, coupled with Extension education, has generated greater than a 40 percent rate

of return on investment. **Agronomic studies** carried out in Van Wert County in 2014 included the following: western bean cutworm survey, and data collection on the impact of western corn rootworm on corn production after the introduction of rootworm-resistant corn hybrids.

- **Master Gardener Volunteers** completed more than 200 hours of service to the community in a variety of programs. This equates to \$3,774 worth of services provided to Van Wert County residents. Master Gardener Volunteers also teamed up with 4-H Clubs interested in gardening to teach youth about plants, vegetable gardening, plant health issues and integrated pest management.
- Eighty-six farmers and small business individuals undertook the three-hour **Pesticide Applicator Recertification** in 2014. Participants gained information about pesticide use, including proper use of fumigants and protection of livestock buildings from destructive insects.
- The Van Wert County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources educator is the full-time, lead editor of the **Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL) newsletter**. BYGL is delivered via email to greater than 2,400 subscribers every Thursday afternoon. The calculated value of the information that BYGL provided to horticulture professionals in 2014 was \$2.8 million. This value was largely based on changes made to customer service, plant problem diagnostics and pesticide use.
- The Van Wert County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources educator is also one of several part-time, lead editors of the **Crop Observation and Recommendation Network (CORN) newsletter**. Based on state survey data, the overall value of CORN to farmers and agribusiness personnel who read and follow the recommendations offered in the newsletter is in the millions of dollars.

Van Wert County receives \$47,330 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.