

2015 County Highlights

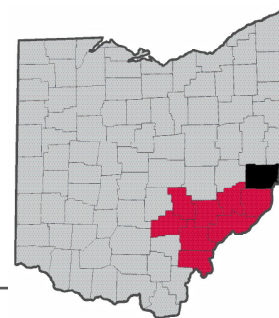
Belmont County

Buckeye Hills Extension Education and Research Area

101 North Market, Suite A, Saint Clairsville, Ohio 43950-9772

Phone: 740-695-1455

belmont.osu.edu



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The Belmont County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) program continues to work within the schools and community to increase awareness of wellness practices, including better nutrition choices and increased physical activity. Highlights include the 2015 Email Wellness Challenge, a six-week program featuring biweekly nutrition/physical activity messages with 85 participants; Manage Your Money, a six-lesson series of online, interactive financial management lessons featuring original video messages with 28 participants; and Dining with Diabetes, a three-session series with the educational message that diabetes is manageable with nine participants.
- The Impact of Shale Development on Families in Appalachia Ohio is a research project based in Belmont County in collaboration with Jim Bates, Extension Field Specialist, Family Wellness. The project investigates the perceptions of landowners and residents with regard to the impact of sudden wealth from shale development on family relationships, identity and interpersonal relationships within communities. Once completed, data will be used to extrapolate healthy relational behaviors or adaptations from participants to other families and individuals in the form of Extension educational material. Thirty interviews have been completed and transcribed with data coding and analysis to follow.
- A \$15,500 grant funded Road Trip Life: Navigating Your Future in 2015. This life-skills program reached all Belmont County ninth- and tenth-grade girls with multimedia presentations about nutrition, exercise, smart and safe dating, wellness, stress management, and financial management. Over 700 girls participated in the half-day sessions delivered by a team of presenters in all seven Belmont County high schools in November and December.
- Divorce education programming reached over 200 adults, teaching parents to help children cope with divorce. This 2.5-hour multimedia, cost-recovery program is

court-mandated and contracted by the Belmont County magistrate. Participants indicate that most learned something new and/or useful and will utilize suggested strategies in dealing with difficult interpersonal situations arising from their divorce.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) continues to be funded by a federal grant in Belmont County. Basic nutrition, food safety and food security skills are taught to food stamp-eligible audiences throughout the county. In 2015, 2,755 participants attended 248 direct programs, 96.4 percent of which were held in a series. A total of 58 percent of participants reported “some or a lot of new information learned” while 48 percent planned to make changes due to knowledge gained.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Thirty-two teens completed approximately 40 hours of 4-H Camp Counselor Camp and Training. They learned about responsibly caring for children and planning and coordinating camp activities and educational sessions. The training helped these teens gain useful employment skills.
- One hundred fifteen youth ages 9–13 participated in Belmont County 4-H Junior Camp. The camp program gave youth an opportunity to learn valuable life skills during their four-day stay. They also learned about and participated in natural resources lessons, athletics, boating, swimming, crafts and other educational activities. Another 30 youth, ages 5–8, participated in Cloverbud Day Camp Programs.
- A total of 85 youth campers, teen counselors, and adult staff from throughout Ohio participated in the 2015 Piedmont 4-H Shooting Sports Camp. Seventy-eight percent of participants strongly agreed they learned safe use of shooting sports equipment, whereas 65 percent strongly agreed they learned range safety. In addition to learning specific skills related to shooting sports, youth participants were given an opportunity to meet others and make new friends from outside their counties.



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- Designed to use positive peer pressure to elicit positive change in the driving habits of first-time juvenile traffic offenders, 4-H CARTEENS continues to operate in Belmont County in cooperation with the Belmont County juvenile court. This year, approximately 163 teens attended with a parent, learning about the dangers of texting while driving, driving too fast and distracted driving. Nine teens serve as instructors of this program.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- In 2015, 32 producers attended a grazing workshop to learn about proper grazing management. Participants learned about growth, forage quality and mineral supplementation, soil characteristics, how to capitalize on their water and land resources, rotational grazing economics, and how to extend the grazing season utilizing grass stockpiling. As a result of this program, over 4,000 acres will be better managed in eastern Ohio.
- In 2015, 25 Master Gardener Volunteers provided 500 hours of service and made more than 1,300 individual contacts. Several new Master Gardener Volunteer programs were introduced to the county, providing educational information to the public through weekly call-ins, farmers' markets and other events and workshops.
- The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) requires Pesticide Applicator Recertification every three years for applicators. In 2015, 10 individuals participated in the training—learning proper calibration and recordkeeping practices. This program has maintained ODA compliance standards for private licensed applicators in the county.
- Three Quality Assurance Training sessions were offered, reaching 220 4-H and FFA members. This program teaches youth how to use best practices that ensure producing quality and safe animal products for consumers, as well as responsible animal handling and care and welfare in farm animal production. Additionally, 10 older youth tested out of the program, indicating that they have mastered the program content.
- Four hundred fifteen elementary school students attended Fair Field Days at the Belmont County Fair. Participants learned about agriculture, history and safety by touring exhibits and workshops throughout the fairgrounds. Ohio 4-H members, Master Gardener Volunteers and other volunteers served as resource people, teaching youth at the various stops along the self-guided tour of the fairgrounds.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- In 2015, four oil and gas seminars were offered in the local area. Topics included pipeline easements, water quality workshops, pipeline jurisdiction and reseeding of easements. The total number attended exceeded 100 landowners. The OSU Extension Shale Education Work Group has continued to meet on a monthly basis in Columbus. As a result of these workshops, over 90 percent of participants indicated that they have significantly increased their knowledge on shale development in the area.
- The Belmont County Family and Consumer Sciences educator contributes to the ongoing Building Sustainable Communities in Ohio's Shale Region: Leveraging Manufacturing Clusters and Local Assets with Strategic Planning project as the chair of the Social Impact Committee. Activity in 2015 included identifying and reporting data regarding social impacts in shale development counties in four eastern Ohio economic development regions.

Belmont County receives \$64,163 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.