

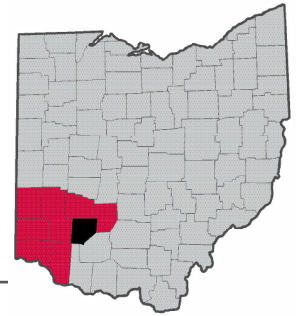
2015 County Highlights

Clinton County

Miami Valley Extension Education and Research Area

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ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Corn College helped producers realize management strategies that could improve their yields and, in turn, increase profits. Thirty-eight corn producers attended the program, reaching over 27,133 acres of cropland. As a result of the program, 73 percent of participants indicated they learned a new idea/practice, and 55 percent indicated they would adopt an idea/practice that could help increase crop yields and/or reduce costs on their farm. Examples of farm practices that participants planned to change or adopt include variable rate technology to apply nitrogen, nitrogen application timing, using the maximum return to nitrogen (MRTN), better nitrogen placement, better drainage, variable rate seeding and nutrient technology, and more efficient use of fungicides.
- Forty-two area farmers attended Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification to recertify their private pesticide applicator license. Over 160 farmers are licensed in Clinton County and must obtain three hours of recertification every three years. Participants (97.5 percent) are better informed about pesticide issues and regulations. Ninety-five percent learned how to control insects, diseases or weeds more effectively, and 85 percent improved pesticide handling practices such as mixing, loading, storing and applying. Evaluations indicate the most important thing learned was herbicide mode/site of action to avoid weed resistance to herbicides and measuring and storing pesticides correctly. On average, each participant applies pesticides on 863 acres making this year's program reach 36,246 acres of cropland.
- An Ohio law now requires farmers and commercial applicators of fertilizer to be certified by September 2017. OSU Extension is the exclusive provider of the Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training (FACT). Certification is required if commercial fertilizer is applied on 50 acres or more of cropland. Ohio farmers and ag dealers that have a pesticide applicator license will attend a two-hour training to obtain fertilizer certification while farmers without a pesticide applicator license will attend a three-hour training to obtain fertilizer certification. Clinton County Extension co-taught seven EERA area FACT meetings, reaching 300 fertilizer applicators with information about water quality, proper soil sampling, calculating fertilizer recommendations and utilizing plant nutrients where needed and not needed.
- The New and Small Farm Colleges were hosted by Greene and Darke counties, with 62 farms and 90 individuals. Since the program's inception in 2005, 783 individuals and 584 farms representing 52 Ohio counties and beyond have completed the colleges. In 2015, farms were represented from Ohio, Indiana, Virginia and Alaska. Participants represented 17 counties with 44 percent of participants being female and 78.9 percent as new clientele to Extension programming. The average farm size was 27.7 acres owned with an average ownership of 9.7 years. Post-surveys indicated 66.7 percent of the participants developed or changed their farm use plan after attending these colleges. The participants rated the overall program a 9.02/10-point scale, with 10 being best. Ninety-six percent of all participants responding would recommend this program to others, and 96.5 percent felt the program met or exceeded their expectations.
- In 2015, 250 small farm owners and enthusiasts participated in two conferences held in Wilmington and Wooster, Ohio. Participants represented 47 Ohio counties and the states of Kentucky, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Average farm size reported was 96 acres. Responses to post-conference surveys indicated 42.7 percent of the attendees were women and another 4.45 percent represented minority farmers. Forty (39.9) percent of respondents considered themselves part-time farming operators, and 22.3 percent were not yet engaged in an agricultural operation. Also, 90 percent indicated the subjects and content of the conferences would help them improve the profitability of their farm enterprise(s). As a result of attending, 81.5 percent



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of the survey respondents indicated they would add an additional enterprise, increase production, enter into a new market such as a farmers' market or CSA or buy/rent more acreage.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- A total of 524 eighth grade students learned about career education and financial literacy by participating in Real Money, Real World. The program was taught in three county public school systems in 2015. Over 45 trained community members came together to partner with Wilmington Middle School, Clinton Massie Middle School and Blanchester Middle School students this year. The coalition included middle school staff and administrators, Wilmington College, the Kroger Company, Clinton County commissioners, Farm Bureau, Clinton County Solid Waste, Clinton County Juvenile Court, Bennett Real Estate, Falgner Real Estate, OSU Extension staff, Nationwide Insurance-Blanchester, People's Bank, Clinton County Health Department, Southern State Community College, County Homemakers, Master Gardener Volunteers, Wilmington Kiwanis, Wright-Patt Credit Union, and many 4-H volunteers.
- After completing the Real Money, Real World simulation, over 70 percent of the students interviewed at the final station identified childcare and food as the two budget items that most drastically impacted their monthly budget and most drastically limited their spending choices. One hundred percent of students interviewed at Clinton Massie Middle School stated they gained awareness of a monthly budget.
- The Clinton County 4-H program focuses on better preparing members and families in order to keep them active and engaged in the program for many years. In 2015, two new member nights were designed and offered to members ranging in age from 6–16 years old plus parents and family members with 0–3 years of 4-H experience. The member nights focused on the following topics: showing livestock, Cloverbud opportunities, clubs and projects, county camps, fair, Skillathon, special fair contests, project requirements, interview judging, 4-H enrollment, 4-H forms and 4-H entries. The newly designed program offered demonstrations of show ring attire to interviewing judging and gave members time to visit project stations to learn more about specific topics. The Ohio 4-H Foundation provided funding to give all families a new member packet, and the 4-H Committee provided funding to give each new member a 4-H book. The final portion of each new member night was a quality assurance certification in a smaller environment with other new members. The program engaged over 15 4-H teen and adult volunteers, and the program reached 29 members.
- Clinton County 4-H continues to think outside of the box to promote and grow 4-H programming. With a 2014 Ohio 4-H Foundation grant of over \$1,200, a county design team took a fresh look at impacting new audiences by designing a new member packet to help educate new and potential members and families about the 4-H program. Clinton County 4-H also designed a 4-H float for use during holiday parades; the float will reach over 9,000 spectators annually. Further, 4-H billboards were placed in three locations alongside county highways to showcase 4-H programming and recruit new members. These efforts were combined with classroom visits and open house events in Clinton County schools. In all, 60 new members were recruited.
- By designing a unique partnership with the Clinton County commissioners, direct funding was provided in 2013 and has been maintained into 2015 to staff a Junior Fair Coordinator at the Clinton County Extension office. The Junior Fair Coordinator works with 180 4-H volunteers, 650 members, 750 Junior Fair buyers, 225 award donors and several county committees and boards. The Junior Fair Coordinator has proven to be invaluable to Clinton County Extension, as over 1,600 hours of time have been saved because of the position. The Junior Fair Coordinator provides support to livestock and nonlivestock shows and sales, pre-fair events, exhibits, award programs, contests, horticulture and farm displays, and cooking and sewing contests. The position helps decrease the amount of time the support staff and 4-H educator spend on fair management so that efforts can focus more on county program needs.
- The year 2015 marks a very exciting time for the Clinton County 4-H program, as the county moved the Clinton County Junior 4-H Camp program to 4-H Camp Graham in Clarksville, Ohio. An outstanding team of adults and teens provided excellent educational planning, counselor instruction and two successful camps at 4-H Camp Graham. The camp program grows between 1–2 percent annually. Some of the fun activities packed into a four-night camp include archery, swimming, canoeing, fishing, recreational sports, flag ceremonies, nature hikes, team games, dancing, movies, special guest speakers, zip lining and cabin fun. Cloverbud Camp is offered to meet the needs of our county Cloverbud membership to provide a safe pre-camp experience for youth ages 5–8 years old. Over 25 youth with teen counselors participated in the 2015 Cloverbud Camp.