

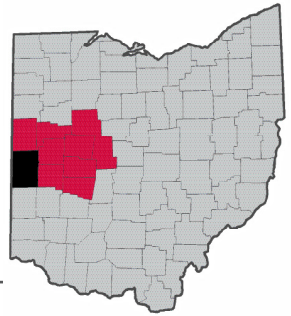
2015 County Highlights

Darke County

Top of Ohio Extension Education and Research Area

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- A total of 1,180 youth participated in 46 community 4-H Clubs. Youth improved life skills related to organization, time management, responsibility, financial management, communication and leadership. Comments from members included “4-H taught me leadership and responsibility” and “Being a 4-H member taught me about community service and giving back.”
- Two hundred thirty-six adult volunteers served as advisors for the 1,180 youth enrolled in 46 community 4-H Clubs. Volunteers provided leadership in project-related work and community service activities and served as mentors and positive role models for youth.
- One hundred thirty-two campers, ages 9–14, participated in a four-day residential 4-H Camp. Campers learned life and leadership skills, and the value of collaboration. Campers said, for example, “I love 4-H camp” and “Camp gives me the chance to be outdoors and try new things.” Ninety percent of the campers reported that they learned something new.
- Thirty-four teens served as 4-H Camp Counselors. Counselors completed a minimum of 24 hours of training and developed personal skills related to supervision and management, leadership, communication, and teamwork. Eighty-five percent of the counselors reported an increase in their skills related to communication and teamwork.
- Forty-four Junior Fair Board members planned and conducted Junior Fair activities for over 3,000 exhibitors. Junior Fair Board members reported an increase in life skills related to conflict management, organization and communication. Eighty-two percent reported that they are better able to deal with conflict as a result of serving on the Junior Fair Board.
- Darke County 4-H partnered with the Darke County ESC to offer Real Money, Real World to 26 special-needs students. Participants learned the importance of setting and

obtaining career and educational goals, as well as financial management skills. Sixteen local businesses donated their time to enrich this educational program. Comments from students included “Money goes quickly; spend it wisely” and “Living on your own can be expensive.”

- The livestock Quality Assurance Training program instructed 527 youth about animal welfare, good production practices, ethical farming and basic livestock management. Youth participants reported an increase in their understanding of the importance of properly caring for their animals and presenting a positive image to the public in regard to animal care.
- Students in grades K–5 (2,042 in all) participated in 4-H school enrichment projects designed to teach science-related concepts. Students were able to explain key science concepts such as pollination, germination, the life cycle, the importance of earthworms in our soil and the basic needs of plants.
- Ninety-five teens and their parents participated in classes for first-time traffic offenders, called 4-H CARTEENS. Teen participants reported an increase in the awareness and importance of sobriety, as well as an increase in the awareness and importance of using safety belts. Parents reported an increase in the awareness of risks related to teenage drivers as a result of attending CARTEENS.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- In the monthly Successful Co-Parenting Class, divorcing parents learned how to communicate with their children about divorce. They also learned the importance of minimizing conflict with their child’s other parent by keeping the lines of communication open, not arguing in front of the child and working together to help their child.
- Eight hundred adults participated in several health fairs where they received information pertaining to healthy foods and keeping foods at the correct temperature.



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- Thirty-five people attended food preservations workshops on pressure canning, water bath canning, and freezing fruits and vegetables. Attendees were informed of the correct way to use their canner and preserve their food. Twenty-three clientele had their dial gauge pressure canner checked to ensure safe food preservation.
- Preschool Vision Screening was provided to one area preschool. A total of 85 three-, four- and five-year-olds were screened to see if they would benefit from a visit to an eye doctor.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Eighty Darke County farmers who hold a private pesticide applicator license attended Pesticide Applicator Recertification. Ninety percent of the attendees reported that they were better informed about compliance with pesticide and environmental regulations, 88 percent reported that they have increased the efficiency of their applications, and 95.6 percent reported that they had improved personal safety practices as a result of their last training. Purdue University places a \$625 value per-hour on pesticide certification training based on Extension pest management knowledge, cooperation with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, prevention of individual and commercial mishandling of toxic chemicals, and potential increases in productivity. In Darke County this translates to \$150,000 of economic benefit.
- One hundred twenty producers attended a two-hour Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training for those that hold a pesticide license, and 110 producers attended a three-hour program. Nearly 80 percent of the producers at these meetings reported that they believe phosphorus leaving their farm fields is a problem. Forty-five percent said they will change their nutrient management practices as a result of what they learned in the meeting.
- OSU Extension collaborated with SWCD to offer a Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Workshop Series. Twenty-one producers participated in the series, which included four sessions. Participants were able to identify basic agronomy principles and nutrient sources, and collect soil samples from their farms. Their soil samples were analyzed, and they learned how interpret their soil tests. They also learned about the requirements of their crops. Each farmer, using the information they learned, built field and application plans with nutrient-retention objectives. One hundred percent reported knowledge gained in the series.
- Six hundred seventy-seven persons attended a 2014 Farm Bill meeting to learn about the decisions they will have to make regarding dairy and grain crops. Survey responses following the meeting indicated that over 500,000 acres of cropland were represented at the meeting. Producers may receive as much as \$74 per corn acre, resulting in safety net receipts in Darke County of nearly \$10 million.
- Agricultural research projects conducted by Darke County Extension in 2015 sought to increase knowledge for producers, consultants and agriculture professionals in the areas of nutrient management, soil and water quality improvement, integrated pest management, and production efficiency. Specific projects focused on three corn swine manure side-dress replicated plots, corn and soybean population studies, a corn nitrogen response study, and two soybean fields for the Yield-Limiting Factors in Ohio Soybean Production study. The three swine dress manure plots that covered 200 acres resulted in a savings of \$179 per acre over a two-year period, resulting in a total savings of \$35,8000. One hundred sixty acres were done using a drag hose. This will open a new window for manure application by placing the manure in the right place at the right time for maximum value.
- Two hundred forty persons attended the Ohio Manure Science Review and Field Day held in Darke County. Producers participated in educational presentations and equipment demonstrations. Fifty-four percent of the attendees indicated they would consider side dressing corn with swine manure if the equipment would be available.

Darke County receives \$54,898 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.