

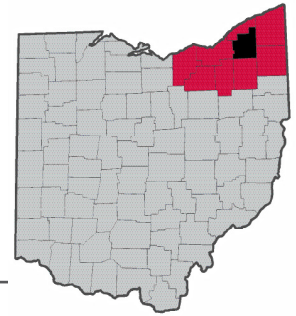
2015 County Highlights

Geauga County

Western Reserve Extension Education and Research Area

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- With emerging concerns over harmful algal blooms impacting Lake Erie, Geauga County Extension has begun Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training. Geauga County contains three major watershed areas: the Chagrin River, the Cuyahoga River, and the Grand River. Geauga County Extension trained 225 individuals not only on the safe and productive use of pesticides, but also on how to correctly read soil nutrient tests, how to determine the needs of their crops, and the best timing for when to apply fertilizers.
- Agriculture and horticulture are the largest industries in Geauga County, consisting of 959 farms. The total yearly revenue generated from Geauga County farms is \$43.6 million. Of the \$43.6 million, over \$28.3 million is generated on small dairy and fresh produce farms. In Geauga County, there are 40 individual dairy farms shipping milk, the most of any county in northeastern Ohio, and many are Amish-owned. Unique to Geauga County, this revenue is generated on small farms, most averaging 70 acres.
- Ohio annually produces about \$6 million worth of maple syrup, and 26 percent of that syrup is produced in Geauga County. That figure represents the liquid product and does not include any other maple sugar products or sales. Our maple industry and its subsequent tourism dollars, attracted by maple products, has become a major contributor to the local economy.
- The Geauga Growers Auction sold over \$1.1 million of wholesale goods in 2015. This auction in Middlefield is the major venue by which most of Geauga County's commercial fruit and vegetable growers sell their produce and crops.
- We are working with Holden Arboretum to continue to expand maple contracts, land leasing and sugarbush preservation for maple producers in Geauga County. We are striving to become the No. 1 county in Ohio for maple syrup, maple candy and maple confections. We also are striving to become the No. 1 county in Ohio for the generation of all maple products while also working toward expanding the industry throughout Ohio. This includes the program of Saving Sugar Maples for the Next Generation, which is helping to preserve our maple heritage.
- Twelve Master Gardener Volunteer interns each donated at least 50 volunteer hours for a total of 600 hours. Currently, 61 certified Master Gardener Volunteers donated approximately 4,885 hours of volunteer service, for a total of 5,485 hours. The Independent Sector organization estimates the 2014 value of volunteer time in Ohio at \$21.46 per hour. Therefore, these Master Gardener Volunteers donated approximately \$117,708 to Geauga County's communities on behalf of OSU Extension.
- During the fair, over 450 youth from Kenston and West Geauga school districts were introduced to the "What Is Agriculture in Geauga County" educational program. This is an ongoing joint effort of judges Diane and Tim Grendell, Geauga County Farm Bureau, and OSU Extension.
- OSU Extension provided more than 600 individual on-farm consultations this year. These expert consultations provide timely advice regarding insects, diseases, nutrient usage, irrigation timing and fungicide applications to ensure the success, profitability and perpetuation of Geauga County's farming community.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- The Geauga County 4-H Advisory Committee provided \$1,800 of camperships grants to 14 youths for 4-H Camp Whitewood, and it paid \$4,320 to cover the fees for 24 older youth camp counselors. There were 110 total campers involved in Geauga County's camp this year, utilizing all 24 youth counselors and four camp deans, making the weeklong camp a great success.
- Totally Dogs 4-H Club held their annual benefit dinner and raised over \$6,000. The funds generated were split among the Geauga County Dog Shelter, the Geauga County K-9 Unit, and Wags4Warriors.



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- Geauga County 4-H created a “Family-A-Fair” opportunity for families to experience the Geauga County Fair. Sponsorships awarded were donated by 12 4-H Clubs, one Grange Chapter, and Geauga Horse and Pony Association for over \$3,400. Geauga County 4-H partnered with Geauga County Job and Family Services to select families. Each family selected received admission tickets for every family member, ride tickets for all children, concession vouchers (\$20/adult, \$15/child), Junior Leaders milkshake tokens, and a \$10 gas card for travel to and from the fair. A total of 33 families were selected (70 adults, 65 children) and 12 concession vendors also participated.
- The Geauga County Horse Committee awarded two \$500 scholarships to Geauga County 4-H Horse Club members who are pursuing higher education.
- The Geauga County 4-H Advisory Committee sponsored its third annual Educational Field to Plate Trip for 4-H members and visited the Burton Equine Hospital, a miscanthus farm for NewBio materials, and the Linesville Fish Hatchery.
- Eight hundred youths are enrolled in Geauga County 4-H, which utilizes 123 adult volunteers to organize and lead 42 county based 4-H Clubs.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The Geauga County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educator has been trained in an employer-based stress management program entitled Mindfulness in Motion. Employees are taught tools to effectively cope with stress, improve sleep quality and increase engagement at work to foster a positive work climate. This program has been rigorously tested medically, and the program is ready and available to all Geauga-area businesses.
- Parenting classes including Peacefully Parenting and Successful Co-Parenting were offered six times throughout the year. We also conducted three well-attended canning classes so that area residents could take advantage of their own garden’s produce and the many farmers’ markets available throughout the county.
- The Geauga County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educator also serves as faculty of the Supreme Court’s Guardian ad Litem training program. This training assists lawyers, judges and magistrates on child development and family issues that impact children in their court systems.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Youth desperately need a clear understanding of how to manage finances. Six hundred Geauga County students in four schools participated in Real Money, Real World, a real-life simulation that teaches middle and high school students that what they do in school today affects their ability to get a job, which in turn affects their future lifestyle. Many area banks and business partners staff booths and assist students in real-life financial decisions.
- The Geauga County Extension office team and the Geauga County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educator were given recognition awards from State Treasurer Josh Mandel for outstanding commitment to the advancement of financial education. Our educator will be featured in a series of videos with Mandel’s staff to promote the program. Presenting this outstanding program in every school in the county is our office goal for the 2015–2016 school year.
- Twenty-five families attended financial education classes conducted in collaboration with the Chardon Library. In collaboration with the United Way’s Income Initiative committee, our educator is planning to facilitate and expand these same classes at area businesses.