

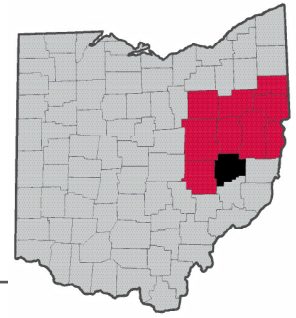
2015 County Highlights

Guernsey County

Crossroads Extension Education and Research Area

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The recent shale gas development has spurred an increased interest in local giving. OSU Extension Community Development provided guidance for a local anonymous donor to develop a plan for long-term giving. This resulted in the establishment of an endowment for East Guernsey School District. The first year of endowment distribution was \$18,763, benefiting 16 teachers and impacting 600 students.
- A \$19,000 North Central Region Center for Rural Development grant-funded project partnered OSU Extension Community Development with Guernsey County Planning Commission and Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) to update the county comprehensive strategic plan. The creation of a career specialist position was a top priority and goal of one of the 12 subcommittees established during the pilot project. This subcommittee (Education and Workforce) put into action one of their goals of increasing workforce-ready students by five percent. The committee executed this by including all school districts in two counties and five major manufacturers. The schools and manufacturers have worked cooperatively to develop a job description, and each school district and manufacturer is contributing dollars to fund the position.
- Because of the uncertainties in the current energy market projection, economic impact related to the development of oil and gas resources in Ohio was predicted to slow during 2015. OSU Extension Community Development educators provided educational sessions highlighting the economic, social and environmental impacts of the industry in rural communities. One of the comments on the evaluations summarized the consensus of the participants: "I learned a lot during these programs because you gave us a big-picture approach by having panel members that included shale industry representatives, OSU research and lessons learned from other states."
- The Community Action Team (A-Team) was developed for 4-H youth ages 12–18 who want to volunteer their time

in the community. This year, 28 4-H members reported 1,186 hours of volunteer work. Members help with service projects in schools, churches, the library and 4-H Clubs and at many events throughout the community. The A-Team awarded \$500 to 4-H Clubs for community service projects. The team's work has increased the visibility of 4-H, while providing a valuable service to the community.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Ag School Days, a hands-on educational program for third grade students of Guernsey and Noble counties was held in the spring. Approximately 400 youth attended this two-day program at the Ohio Agricultural and Development Center Eastern Outlying Agricultural Research Station. Attending youth participated in educational stations covering topics from livestock production to natural resources.
- Area farmers holding a private pesticide applicator license attended recertification. Ninety-two percent of them agree or strongly agree that they are better informed about how to apply pesticides safely. Ninety-three percent of attendees agree or strongly agree that the class brought them up-to-date on pesticide usage.
- Guernsey County Master Gardener Volunteers teach horticulture-related classes in schools and to the public. The Master Gardener Volunteers volunteered hundreds of hours, valued in the thousands of dollars and benefiting Guernsey County residents.
- Livestock owners protect the environment and increase production efficiencies by attending OSU Extension Grazing School. Livestock owners managing over 3,742 acres of hay and pastureland participated in this program. Eighty-eight percent of attendees expected the information gained would increase their net profit.
- Fertilizer certification classes were initiated in 2015. Forty area farmers completed training and obtained a fertilizer license. Ninety percent of participants indicated they were



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changing their nutrient management practices as a result of this training.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Pipeline right-of-way classes were offered to area residents. All 77 of the participants indicated the information presented would help them in a pipeline negotiation.
- Farm tax issues are complicated. To help area farmers, Guernsey County Extension hosted a farm tax workshop. All 20 attendees completing evaluations stated that they learned new information and that the information would help them in completing their farm taxes.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Guernsey County 4-H member enrollment totaled 1,624 youth, reaching 24 percent of youth in the county. Guernsey County offers 43 community 4-H Clubs led by 250 4-H advisors. Membership includes 956 youth in club groups and 788 in school and special-interest programs. Members were enrolled in 2,374 projects to learn about personal development, careers and life skills.
- In all, 106 campers made Guernsey County 4-H Camp a popular program for leadership and citizenship skill development. Almost \$6,150 was provided for scholarships and programs at camp from community and 4-H organizations. Over 12 hours of training and planning meetings enabled 23 counselors to develop skills to work with youth in a group setting.
- Real Money, Real World, a hands-on financial literacy program, engaged 284 eighth grade students in learning how education affects income and lifestyle. The six-part curriculum included lessons on deductions and how occupation affects income. Twenty community leaders, business representatives and OSU Extension personnel served as simulation assistants for this activity.
- Two-hundred thirty-five 4-H and FFA members participated in livestock Quality Assurance Training to learn how to raise a safe, wholesome food product for consumers. One hundred eighteen members participated in the livestock Skillathon contest consisting of interviews, evaluation of livestock records and simulation exercises. Over 60 volunteers donated 180 hours to plan and conduct these programs.
- Four hundred twenty-three kindergarten students celebrated Guernsey County 4-H Week by participating in the Reading Makes the Best Better program. Teen and adult volunteers read to students, distributed books and

encouraged students to join 4-H. Parents completing the program survey responded that a family member read the book with their child at home. This program encourages reading and increases public awareness about the opportunities available through 4-H.

- All 250 4-H volunteers participated in child protection training. This training included instructions on identifying child abuse and neglect as well as mandated reporting procedures. This training equipped 4-H volunteers with important information to help keep children safe in our community.