

2015 County Highlights

Huron County

Erie Basin Extension Education and Research Area

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- As the cornerstone of the USDA's nutrition assistance programs, the goal of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP (food stamps) will make healthy choices within a limited budget and choose active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate. Huron County has been part of this national program since 1994. The SNAP-Ed program assistant provides educational outreach to children and low-income adult participants being serviced by various social service organizations and food pantries. One participant who participated in a farmers' market walkabout stated that she learned how to purchase and prepare fresh, local foods. She then purchased the necessary ingredients to take home and make a fruit salsa!
- Huron County Extension will train a new class of Master Gardener Volunteer candidates in fall 2016. Candidates obtain full volunteer status upon completion of 50 hours of community service within any of 26 sponsored projects. Huron County Master Gardener Volunteers are currently 53 members strong and have documented over 7,450 volunteer hours over the past two years; that is a contribution of over \$164,000 to the Huron County community!

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Ohio 4-H Clubs, led by adult volunteer advisors, are the heart of the 4-H program. Huron County had 50 clubs with 197 advisors and 1,081 members in 2015. Developing life skills is the overall goal of 4-H youth development. Goal-setting and following through on commitments are two of the life skills members gain by completing membership requirements. Ninety-four percent of all members who joined 4-H in the spring were still members at the end of the year. Members completed 94 percent of all projects in which they enrolled.

- Huron County 4-H has been camping on the banks of the Huron River at 4-H Camp Conger since 1925. The Conger Family has graciously allowed 4-H to utilize their property for the benefit of our 4-H program. The Conger Family owns the land but leases it to Camp Conger Inc., on a 99-year lease. We hold three camps at Camp Conger each year: Intermediate Resident Camp for sixth through eighth graders, Junior Resident Camp for third through fifth graders and Cloverbud Day Camp for kindergarten through second graders. Last year we had 82 campers at Intermediate Resident Camp, 95 campers at Junior resident Camp and 105 campers at Cloverbud Day Camp (an overall increase of 5 percent).
- Older youth in 4-H (ages 14–18) have the opportunity to participate in 4-H activities beyond the club level. In 2015, 24 percent of all older 4-H youth took advantage of the opportunity to get involved. They served as 4-H Camp Counselors, Junior Fair Board members, 4-H Committee members, FCS Board members and 4-H CARTEENS peer teachers.
- The 4-H CARTEENS program is a traffic safety program conducted by 4-H teen leaders with the Ohio State Highway Patrol for first-time juvenile traffic offenders. The goal of CARTEENS is to increase teen awareness of traffic/vehicular safety. One hundred fifty-four traffic offenders attended a CARTEENS program during the last 12 months. A parent/guardian must attend with each juvenile. Many parents indicate that this type of program would be beneficial for all teens, before they get their driver's license. The teen participants take the program seriously and report plans to change their driving behavior. The program consists of a PowerPoint on texting while driving, videos about traffic safety and vehicular accidents, graphic pictures of actual accidents, and a lecture by an Ohio State Highway Patrol trooper. The responses from the teens are very positive, and many parents and teens thank us for presenting the program.



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ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- FFA and 4-H members taking livestock as projects are livestock producers. Therefore, they must understand their role in raising animals that perform at their highest level and are a safe, wholesome product for consumers. Youth exhibiting market livestock at the fair must complete Quality Assurance Training. In 2015, 393 youth attended Quality Assurance Training. Following the training, 86 percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed the training provided information that will help them in their livestock projects; 85 percent agreed or strongly agreed they learned something they will use this year; and 83 percent agreed or strongly agreed they felt better prepared for the fair after the training.
- Ohio law has created a three-year window for fertilizer applicators to receive certification credit through a three-hour Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training (FACT) course taught by OSU Extension. After September, 2017, all applicators of commercial fertilizer who apply fertilizer on 50 acres or more in a calendar year will need to take an exam to receive certification. The first full year of FACT was 2015. During 2015, Huron County Extension aided 780 individuals in obtaining their fertilizer applicator certification.
- Huron County Extension also contributed to the task of recertifying 720 private pesticide applicators in the Erie Basin EERA. In addition to four Pesticide Applicator Recertification programs hosted by Huron County, county personnel assisted in four other counties to ensure ample training opportunities for our clientele. Huron County also hosted two Pesticide Applicator Training exams that allowed new applicators access to a certificate. Seventy-six new applicators took the pesticide applicator exam in Huron County in 2015.
- The 2014 USDA Farm Bill provided an opportunity for farm producers and landowners to ensure a reasonable return on farmland that is enrolled with the Farm Service Agency. Because of the complexity of the Farm Bill, OSU Extension was charged with presenting producers with their options in a clear, concise manner. Huron County spearheaded the Farm Bill education effort for the Erie Basin EERA, hosting 22 two-hour meetings in seven counties. Total attendance was over 820 people. The response was extremely favorable. This program also renewed the bond between OSU Extension and the Farm Service Agency at the grassroots level.
- The financial impact of the 2014 USDA Farm Bill program will approach \$10 million for Huron County in 2015 and will potentially approach another \$10 million in 2016. With commodity prices substantially lower than any time since

2006, this boost to Huron County's farm economy is very welcome. Huron County Extension takes great pride in its efforts to help educate producers about the nuances of the 2014 USDA Farm Bill.

Huron County receives \$39,049 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.