

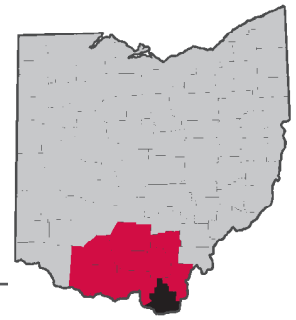
2015 County Highlights

Lawrence County

Ohio Valley Extension and Education Research Area

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Obesity, poor nutrition and physical inactivity disproportionately affect minority and low-income citizens. In 2012, an estimated 1.8 million Ohioans lived in poverty. In an effort to reduce this disparity and improve the health and well-being of Ohioans, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teaches an eight-lesson nutrition education series to low-income families with children. EFNEP, funded by USDA-NIFA, supports 1 FTE staff in the Lawrence County OSU Extension office. In 2015, EFNEP partnered with four new groups/organizations: Dawson-Bryant Head Start, Symmes Valley Head Start, River Hills Community Center, and 4-H families. It exceeded the targeted goal for graduates and impacted 398 people in the program families. Graduates increased knowledge and improved behaviors in diet quality (97 percent), food resource management (99 percent) and food safety (76 percent), resulting in 45 percent of graduates running out of food less often each month. Chronic diseases are largely preventable through a healthy lifestyle involving a balanced diet and regular physical activity. Twenty-seven percent of graduates increased their physical activity levels, 71 percent improved fruit consumption, and 67 percent improved vegetable consumption upon completing the program.
- Lawrence County is currently ranked 87/88 Ohio counties for good health outcomes as reported in the County Health Rankings (countyhealthranking.org/ohio), with 15.4 percent of the population being treated for diabetes based on data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (hrsa.gov). OSU Extension in partnership with Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital (Ashland, KY) conducted a Dining with Diabetes program with a total of 15 participants. One hundred percent of the participants reported learning new information, and 72 percent were planning to make a change based on what they learned.
- In partnership with the Lawrence County Wellness Coordinator, a series of three Lunch and Learn classes were

held with a total of 30 county employees in attendance. As a result, 87 percent of the participants indicated they learned new information, and 53 percent said they planned to make a change in their physical activity level.

- With approximately \$7,100 of support from the Ohio 4-H Foundation and Lawrence County Appalachian Family and Children First Council, the Lawrence County EFNEP and 4-H programs collaborated to support healthy lifestyles. The new opportunity provided hands-on nutrition and physical activity lessons for youth, and EFNEP lessons for parents/caregivers. Lessons were taught as part of a four-week series, aiming to implement consistent messaging about nutrition, physical activity, food safety and food resource management to parents and their children at the same time. The families were also allotted time to cook and enjoy a healthy, cost-effective meal together. Some comments from the youth participants included, "Foods can taste good, as well as be good for me too" and "I will spend less time on electronics" and "I need to eat healthy and exercise right to live a healthy lifestyle".

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2015, Lawrence County reached 558 individual youth through traditional 4-H Club opportunities. The primary goal of 4-H is to help youth develop into caring, competent and contributing members of society by providing a safe, inclusive environment for youth to determine goals, make decisions and envision the future. These activities are led by 125 screened, trained adult volunteers within 30 clubs, 11 of which completed the new volunteer process this year. The nine percent increase of volunteers from 2014 is substantial considering the implementation of OSU Policy 1.50, which created additional requirements from each volunteer to further ensure the safety of our youth. With each volunteer serving a minimum of 35 hours annually, the value of their service to Lawrence County youth exceeds \$100,931.



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- Lawrence County 4-H CARTEENS is a partnership of OSU Extension, the Lawrence County Juvenile Court System and the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The 4-H CARTEENS initiative is a self-sustaining program, generating over \$1,400 in 2015. One hundred forty-seven offenders completed the monthly court-mandated traffic safety program led by seven 4-H CARTEENS members. Every youth offender is given a post-test at the end of each session, of which 98 percent passed. In addition to preparing and presenting the peer-led program, the 4-H CARTEENS members were a vital part of presenting annual prom safety programs to all eight high schools and the vocational school in Lawrence County. Three mock crashes were conducted in participation with St. Mary's Hospital (Huntington, WV), the Lawrence County sheriff's office, the Lawrence County EMS, the Lawrence County coroner's office, the Lawrence County Air Evac Lifeteam, and local fire departments and other agencies. Superintendants and principals of Lawrence County High Schools have stated that the presentations have made a valuable impact on the safety of their students.
- After-school enrichment provides youth with a safe, caring and educational environment. In 2015, Lawrence County 4-H collaborated with the YEA After-School Program supported by the Community Action Organization (\$1,800) to provide youth with 4-H in an after-school setting. Forty youth completed 4-H group projects, gaining knowledge in STEM-based activities such as the science behind baking, gardening and the forces of nature.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Through participation in 4-H, members select a project of interest to complete during the 4-H year. Through hands-on 4-H projects, activities and Skillathons, youth improve their knowledge and then demonstrate how they have mastered their skills. During 2015, 430 4-H projects were completed, with topics including livestock, gardening, food science, clothing, shooting sports, photography, dog obedience and more. Exhibitors earned over \$3,000 in premiums and prizes from local community supporters.
- Through Quality Assurance Training, approximately 325 Lawrence County 4-H youth learned to use best practices to ensure quality products; responsible animal handling; and responsible care and welfare of all livestock, companion, and performance animals. All exhibitors participate in Quality Assurance Training, promising their 4-H animals are well cared for and safe for consumers. As a result, 400 quality market projects were sold to community supporters at the 2015 Lawrence County Fair, for a sale total of \$243,582.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

- Lawrence County Extension, Lawrence County SWCD, and Lawrence County Farm Bureau collaborated with local farmers to offer a Drive-It-Yourself Farm Tour. The farm tours showcased the agricultural and conservation interests of Lawrence County. Over 300 visits were made by community members to the five offered tour stops, which included a beef farm, a dairy farm, a llama farm, an equine medical center and a greenhouse.

Lawrence County receives \$55,405 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.