

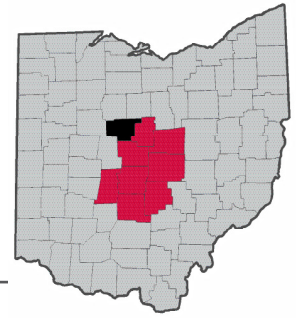
2015 County Highlights

Marion County

Heart of Ohio Extension Education and Research Area

222 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302

Phone: 740-223-4040 marion.osu.edu



PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Young people know 4-H Camp is fun. Youth development experts know 4-H Camp helps build critical life skills for both campers and youth counselors. Camp helps build teamwork, communication, and leadership, cultivating job readiness skills while giving campers a chance to connect to nature. One hundred twenty-six youth, ages 9 to 13, participated in Marion County 4-H Camp. This four-night, five-day camp gave the youth an opportunity to learn valuable life skills. They also learned about and participated in educational sessions, recreation, team-building activities and other educational opportunities. Forty-eight teen counselors and 16 adult staff were involved in the successful completion of this camp.
- Marion County supported 44 4-H Clubs. These clubs involved nearly 700 youth, ages 5 to 19, and 127 adult volunteers. Volunteers contributed over 3,000 hours of time to teach youth life skills such as leadership, decision making and communication. Members completed educational projects, completed community service projects and practiced public speaking through demonstrations and presentations to their clubs.
- Nearly 850 youth participated in Quality Assurance Training and animal Skillathons. These educational programs were offered for sheep, swine, rabbits, poultry, beef, dairy, horses and goats. The programs covered a variety of topics including showmanship, proper animal care, nutrition, equipment and grooming. Following the programs, many participants indicated they felt more prepared to care for and exhibit their animal project.
- Fifty-six teens participated in at least 16 hours of leadership and event management training taught by the Extension educator. Through their participation on the Marion County Junior Fair Board, the teens contributed an average of 20 hours of leadership service each.
- Forty-eight teens completed approximately 30 hours of 4-H Camp Counselor Training. They learned the responsibility

of caring for children, as well as how to plan and coordinate camp activities and educational sessions.

- Fifty-seven 5- to 8-year-olds were active participants in countywide 4-H Cloverbud meetings, and 42 attended a two-day Cloverbud Camp. Participants indicated they made new friends, learned new skills and had fun.
- Real Money, Real World gives students an awareness of how income and life choices affect lifestyle. Participants simulate life experience at age 27 and pay for housing, transportation, child care and other monthly expenses. This hands-on program reached nearly 200 Marion County eighth graders, and nearly 90 percent believed the program gave them a better idea of what is involved in earning, spending and managing money.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- After many years without an OSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources educator in the Marion County Extension office, a half-time position was re-established in 2015. This position will allow the local agriculture community as well as the general public to take advantage of Extension's resources and educational opportunities.
- Nineteen farm businesses were recertified in Pesticide Applicator Recertification with the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
- The Sheep Color Gene website was developed to provide information to producers on the genetic predictability of the shades of red color in Tunis sheep. Thirty-five producers have been educated in the basic transfer of red pigment within their flocks.
- A solar energy workshop was sponsored with Marion Technical College. Participants were presented with solar energy benefits, cost incentives and grant programs that can reduce business and home energy costs.



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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is a free nutrition education program serving low-income adults and youth. This program is funded by the Food Nutrition Service's branch of the USDA. The goal is to improve, within a limited budget, the likelihood of families and individuals who are receiving food assistance benefits (formerly known as food stamps) to make healthy food choices and to choose active lifestyles.
- Using MyPlate recommendations as a guide, participants learn to select fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean forms of protein and low-fat dairy products for a healthy diet that decreases the risk of chronic disease. Other subjects include lowering sodium intake and understanding nutrition labels, proper portioning, calorie intake and expenditure, and the importance of exercise.
- SNAP-Ed program assistants carry out a series of interactive presentations to both youth and adult participants to help them make nutritious, budget-friendly food choices. Locations for these lessons included five area schools, a community after-school program, the Boys and Girls Club, four Summer Food Service Program sites, an adult community education/rehabilitation agency and summer community garden sites. Weekly, nearly 300 children participated in SNAP-Ed programming over the summer at Boys and Girls Club alone.

Marion County receives \$60,563 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.