

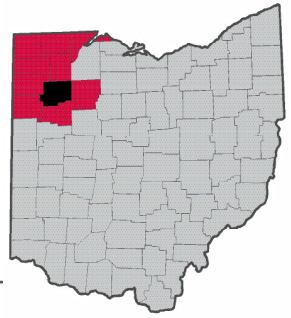
2015 County Highlights

Putnam County

Maumee Valley Extension Education and Research Area

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- 4-H Tech Wizards is a STEM after-school/group mentoring program for youth in fourth and fifth grades. The program capitalizes on emerging technology as a way of involving under-represented youth and their families in learning basic life and workforce skills. The program helps youth aspire to post-secondary education, productive jobs, careers and community engagement. The weekly sessions are offered in collaboration with Ottawa Local Schools, and they enroll 20 youth annually with seven trained mentors. Tech Wizards met 42 times in 2015.
- Putnam County Extension worked collaboratively with the Putnam County Health Department to conduct the 16th annual Farm Safety Camp. All nine school districts participated in the countywide program. Putnam County's third grade students rotated through several safety sessions including grain entrapment, pond safety, working safely around chemicals, electricity, tractors and techniques in basic first aid. There were 560 students that attended the camp. Students completed a survey with a 92 percent response rate. With a minimum accuracy level of 88 percent, third graders were able to recall nine out of 12 safety messages taught at the day camps.
- Putnam County 4-H had 740 traditional 4-H members completing over 1,300 4-H projects. These members made up 24 community clubs led by 132 trained adult advisors. The expanded shooting sports program doubled enrollment in 2015, as it added two new shooting disciplines to its list of offerings. The 4-H Camp enrollment held steady at 150 campers and trained counselors attending in 2015.
- Real Money, Real World is a hands-on experience that gives young people the opportunity to make lifestyle and budget choices similar to those they will face as adults. Putnam County 4-H offered the program to 1,021 students in grades seven through 12. Real Money, Real World consisted of a pre-simulation preparation (including lessons on managing a checkbook, understanding a paycheck, and lifestyle

choices); a hands-on budget management and decision making simulation; and a post-session evaluation of choices made. Students participated in four hours of classroom training and two hours in the simulation.

- Over 342 Putnam County youth participated in livestock Quality Assurance Training taught by local Extension educators. Participants learned how to raise their 4-H and FFA livestock projects in a humane manner while safely contributing their market animals to our nation's wholesome food supply. Proper animal care, nutrition, reading a feed tag label and the correct use of antibiotics were some of the topics addressed.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Over 95 farmers (one-fourth of the Putnam County cropland) learned about corn and soybean pests, UAV drones and reducing nutrients in surface water at Agronomy Night.
- For 281 participants, Extension conducted six Pesticide Applicator Training sessions consisting of three hours on proper pesticide usage. Two hundred seventy-eight farmers also received two hours of Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training. The Pesticide Applicator Training program had 24 farmers trained to sit for the exam.
- Extension hosted a CAUV meeting (153 people), an OSU Income Tax School (32), Annie's Project (23), a Quicken Workshop (10), a Beef/Dairy Marketing meeting (11), Blanchard River Flooding (51), New Manure Rules (24), and monthly Ag Council Meetings. The Conservation Tillage Conference (Ada, 868 farmers) and the National No-Till Conference (Cincinnati, 868 farmers) were hosted. Two Putnam County Commodity Banquets were held for 600 people, and a Putnam County Farm Bureau "Farmer Share Breakfast" was held for 100 people.
- Eleven soil health workshops (405 participants) and three SARE cover crops/soil health tours (150) helped farmers learn how to improve their soil and efficiently utilize soil nutrients to minimize fertilizer costs.



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- Putnam County commissioners gave nine acres for replicated (4x) long-term soil health research on a corn-soybean-wheat rotation using conventional tillage, no-till and no-till plus cover crops (ECO farming). Wheat averaged 52 bushels, soybeans 60 bushels (no difference between treatments), and corn 167 bushels on no-till and ECO farming plots but only 143 bushels on conventional tillage (23 bushels difference).
- Articles on cover crops nutrient management, soil compaction, and water quality were published in the *Putnam County Sentinel* (52), adjoining county papers (14), and in several other state and national publications (18). Four fact sheets and four papers on cover crops were also written. Two NRCS videos were produced on soil compaction, plants, and microbes (more than 17,000 hits). And a webinar on manure, drainage, and cover crops had 163 in attendance.
- Over 418 phone calls, emails and office visits on cover crops, manure, farm rental arrangements, farm management issues (CAUV, taxes) and horticulture were handled this year.
- Master Gardener Volunteers completed 300 hours of service to the community in a variety of programs, which included an informational booth at the First Friday's Farmers' Markets in Ottawa, and at the 2015 Master Gardener Garden Tour.

Putnam County receives \$68,257 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) of Putnam County offered over 240 classes to residents of all ages in 2015.
- School and after-school programming for Ottawa Elementary and the ESC Migrant School reached more than 230 children. Balance My Day, a research-based curriculum, was used to teach skills for making choices in healthy eating and activities. Fifty-four preschool children in the Putnam County Head Start program and Leipsic Early Discovery programs received bimonthly lessons.
- Tawa Manor, an elderly subsidized housing complex, received 18 lessons on nutrition, food safety and food budgeting.
- Cooking Matters, a national curriculum, was offered twice to eligible residents. SNAP-ED partnered with St. Rita's Health Partners and Walmart to bring these hands-on, two-hour classes to the county. Twenty-five participants graduated from the six-week course. Participants were more confident in their abilities to purchase and cook nutritious meals after attending SNAP-Ed classes.