

2015 County Highlights

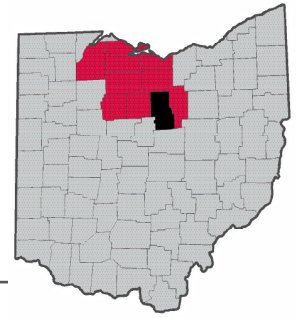
Richland County

Erie Basin Extension Education and Research Area

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- The county's 138 certified volunteers accounted for more than 31,878 hours of service at an estimated value of \$735,425 that led to the personal development of the county's 2,413 4-H community club members and/or youth participants. This investment decreases the number of youth that are at risk of getting into trouble. It also provides a base for workforce development and creates a positive resource for the community. One volunteer stated, "As a 4-H advisor, I get as much out of 4-H as the youth. It's a positive learning experience that youth probably wouldn't get anywhere else." A former 4-H member commented, "Ohio 4-H made me the person I am today. I wouldn't have succeeded in college or in my career without what I learned as a 4-H member."
- Positively influencing teen drivers' attitudes and behaviors about drinking and driving, avoiding distractions, reducing speed, wearing seat belts, and being responsible drivers was achieved in a variety of teen safety education programs. The mock crash safety docu-drama (held for 870 students from eight high schools in 2015) has reached 40,373 students since its inception in 1990. In 2015, the 4-H CARTEENS monthly program helped 249 first-time juvenile traffic offenders refine their driving skills through hands-on learning experiences. With the estimate that each vehicular crash costs millions of dollars, preventing these crashes creates a significant economic savings in addition to protecting the health and safety of our youth.
- Campers know 4-H Camp is fun, but the 4-H Camp experience also helps build critical life skills for both campers and teen counselors. Camp experiences teach teamwork, communication and leadership, developing job readiness skills while giving campers a chance to connect to nature. The leadership skills practiced by teen 4-H Camp Counselors were transformed into high-quality, work-based learning experiences through their guidance for residential and day camp-type experiences for 126 youth ages 5–15.

- Research shows that youth who volunteer just one hour per week are 50 percent less likely to abuse drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes, or engage in destructive behavior. Teen leaders involved as Junior Fair Board members, camp counselors, Junior Leaders and 4-H CARTEENS instructors provided to our county more than 5,982 hours of volunteer service valued at \$48,454 (based on the student minimum wage of \$8.10 per hour). The benefit of preventing destructive behavior by youth to the community is much greater.
- More than 410 youth and adults learned skills in organizational development, officer education and practice, committee leadership, parliamentary procedure, club management, personal development, and decision making to enhance and strengthen the leadership of their local club and county programs. A 13-year-old 4-H member stated, "Ohio 4-H is helping me learn leadership skills I can use when I become an adult."
- OSU Extension assists more than 675 youth taking livestock projects in learning responsibility, caring for others, increasing knowledge on proper animal care and raising a quality product by participating in Quality Assurance Training, livestock clinics and livestock interview judging. The members' successful care of livestock resulted in more than \$500,000 worth of economic advancement at the livestock auction at the county fair.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Recipients of the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-E), learn how to select fruits and vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products for a healthy diet. They also learned to decrease the risk of obesity, using the USDA's MyPlate as a guideline. A main factor that sets SNAP-E apart from a typical nutrition class is that the curriculum is mindful that the population served has limited resources to plan, purchase and prepare food for family meals.



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- Since June 2015, OSU Extension has offered classes at churches, neighborhood centers, independent living/disabled adult centers, preschools and after-school programs to more than 150 youth and adult participants who learned daily about the importance of physical activity, food shopping/budgeting, and safe food storage and handling. One participant stated, “I learned how to choose and prepare healthy food, and how to budget at the store.” Another participant commented that these classes “helped (her) renew (her) enthusiasm for cooking again.” A class graduate stated, “You have helped me strive to eat healthier for myself and my kids.”
- Cooking Matters, a pilot program in Ohio for families who cook on a budget, focused on teaching participants about food selection and food preparation. Fourteen residents graduated from the six-week program.
- Balancing nutrition with physical activity and making healthier food choices were the primary goals of countywide nutrition education programs for more than 275 homemakers, community events, low-income housing units, 4-H campers and others. Nutrition programs strive to prevent obesity, and they nurture good health habits in children and adults. They also teach children to select healthy choices for meals in their own homes.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- In 2015, Master Gardener Volunteers shared research-based information with gardeners through workshops, programs at Kingwood Center and Malabar Farm Days, Raising Richland (garden summit), community gardens, newsletters, speakers’ bureaus, and one-on-one consultations. In Richland County, a new set of 2015 Master Gardener Volunteer graduates and current Master Gardener Volunteers contributed more than 5,750 hours teaching about vegetable and fruit plants/trees, lawn care, plant and disease identification, insects and other pests, emerald ash borer, and many other horticultural topics. The total economic value of these programs is \$132,653.
- Pesticide Applicator Recertification provides an opportunity for those handling pesticides to learn new information and update current knowledge on pests while also protecting the environment and the public. Approximately 87 adults learned about current ODA regulations and increasing profitability in the workplace.
- A new OSU Extension program for Richland County in 2015 was the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists program. Seventeen adults completed training in topics such as interpretation, plants, watersheds, aquatic life, stewardship, insects, birds, reptiles and amphibians, forests, soils, mammals, geology and ecological concepts. Class graduates will be providing more than 40 hours of service to the community as a part of the program in 2016.
- OSU Extension provides critical information to citizens via the Ohioline website, fact sheets and one-on-one consultations. Use of this research-based information helps farmers, homeowners, backyard gardeners and those involved in agriculture or agriculture-type hobbies to keep abreast of the latest technology and production practices.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Inner-city family units worked together to plant, maintain and harvest healthy foods for the family while also decreasing their grocery bills via community gardens. Hundreds of youth learned to manage money and look at career decisions as a part of their 4-H project.