

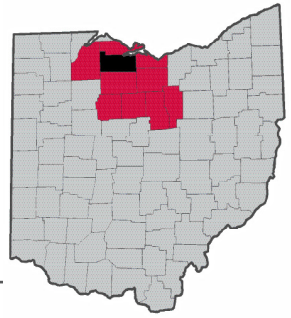
2015 County Highlights

Sandusky County

Erie Basin Extension Education and Research Area

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2015, 815 youth, ages 5–18, took part in 4-H community clubs, where they had the opportunity to build leadership and communication skills, provide service to their community, and learn about topic areas of their choice. A total of 130 adult volunteers served as club advisors for 33 different 4-H Clubs. Community clubs include both project member and Cloverbud programs, designed specifically to meet the age-related interests and abilities of youth. Evaluations indicate that the two most significant impacts of the program on youth are enhanced communication skills and the development of self-responsibility.
- At 4-H Junior Camp on Kelleys Island, 137 youth campers and counselors participated in five days of outdoor educational activities led by OSU Extension staff, adult volunteers and teen counselors. Campers, ages 9–13, learned about environmental issues, healthy outdoor recreation, independence and communication.
- Twenty-seven teen leaders served as camp counselors for 4-H Junior Camp. Teens planned and led camp sessions as well as supervised campers. Counselors built leadership skills and learned about child development, behavior management, emergency procedures, effective teaching and stressful coping mechanisms. These teens dedicated more than 2,000 volunteer hours to create an excellent experience for young campers.
- A teen driving safety program provided through a partnership between OSU Extension, Sandusky County Juvenile Court, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol, 4-H CARTEENS reached 129 teens in 2015. Program participants completed hands-on, interactive stations where they learned about laws, speeding, distracted driving and other driving-related topics. Program evaluations indicated that 89.7 percent of the participants planned to change their driving habits to be more cautious, limit distractions or be more aware when they were behind the wheel as a result of attending CARTEENS.

- “Exploring Your Backyard” Sandusky County Natural Resource Day was held for the 14th year in September. This two-day program is designed to introduce fourth grade students to the different natural and agricultural resources present in Sandusky County. This year, 750 students from 18 different schools participated. The program is made possible through the help of over 100 teen and adult volunteers who teach sessions, lead activities and serve as student guides. Evaluations from both teachers and presenters found the program to be an excellent teaching and learning experience for the students. This program is a collaboration between OSU Extension, Sandusky County SWCD, Sandusky County Parks District, and Farm Bureau.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Northern Ohio Crops Day continued to address timely topics that impact grain producers’ bottom line. One hundred sixty participants learned how new technologies and issues could be affecting their operations and management decisions for the coming crop year. Eighty of the participants received private or commercial pesticide recertification credits, and 25 Certified Crop Advisers obtained continuing educational credits. All participants received the necessary credits for Ohio’s Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training. The program is sponsored by 17 local ag businesses and the Erie Basin EERA.
- The Sandusky/Ottawa County Master Gardener Volunteers continue to have a very strong presence in the community. The program’s active roster has over 40 members. Major projects for the year included the ninth annual Master Gardener Plant Sale, a vegetable demonstration garden at the health department, coordination of the Sandusky County Community Garden plots, and beautification projects at the Sandusky County Court House and facilities in cooperation with the Sandusky County Juvenile Court’s Youth Works Program.



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- Vegetable research and education has become a major focus area. Outside funding was secured for the continuation of the Ohio sweet corn variety trials and cabbage variety trials, and new grant funding was secured for a pepper variety trial. All three studies examined variety performance, and the data was presented to marketers, seed companies and over 50 percent of the growers in the county at two separate Field Nights. Data is continually analyzed and presented at meetings around the county, state and country to help identify the future genetics of these crops. This information is ultimately used to provide the best combination of yield, profit and nutrient value for growers and consumers. Over 30 varieties of sweet corn, 40 varieties of peppers and 10 varieties of cabbage were analyzed in replicated plots.
- The production of livestock and forage has been on the increase in the county, with higher revenue opportunity in both areas. Individualized, on-farm instruction has been implemented to help many new producers develop detailed forage management and cost analysis plans. The instruction has also helped producers select forage varieties and analyze budget sheets for long-term capital investment decisions. Clientele has included zoos, wildlife parks, metroparks and hay growers from surrounding counties. Formalized livestock education material was presented to the Great Lakes Cattle Feeders Shortcourse, jointly hosted with Wood County and Michigan State University.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- In 2015, 115 contacts were made through 10 home food preservation classes, resource calls and pressure canner testing sessions. Class topics included water bath and pressure canning, freezing and drying, jams and jellies, and pickling.
- In an attempt to help low-income individuals with budgeting, a two-part money management class was held. It centered around financial goal-setting, determining expenses and income, spending habits, and ways to save. Forty participants were reached.
- Through OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, 174 youths and adults were reached via health and well-being programs such as Cooking for One or Two, MyPlate basics, fruit and vegetable education, and Live Healthy Live Well email challenges.
- An estimated 7,789, or 13 percent, of the people in Sandusky County received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) benefits as of September 2014. This number has increased over the last few years. In 2014, 2,184 Sandusky County residents participated in one of 234 classes taught by Extension's SNAP-Ed program. Here are some of the agencies that received the SNAP-Ed planned programs: Homes Casas, Inc., Corporate Anointing Ministries, Fremont City Schools (GRADS), WSOS After-School/Summer Feeding Program, Food Pantry, Job Store, Jobs and Family Services, Liberty Center, Ohio Migrant Education, Peak Industries, WSOS Senior Centers, Share and Care, Soup Kitchen, and WIC/Sandusky County Health Department.
- About 2,200 people were reached through communication and events in the form of newsletters, fact sheets, calendars and/or educational materials. Midwest Region Food and Nutrition Service and the USDA have been the funders for OSU Extension's SNAP-Ed program for the nineteenth year.

Sandusky County receives \$62,683 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.