

# 2015 County Highlights

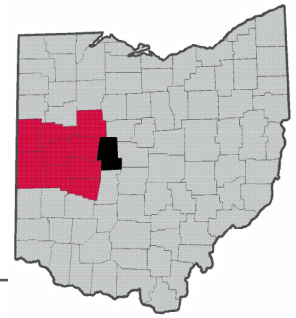
## Union County

### Top of Ohio Extension Education and Research Area

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#### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- A series of five classes using an evidence-based curriculum addressing parenting styles, child development, communication, effective discipline strategies and building family strengths attracted 11 parents. All participants said they made changes in their parenting practices as a result.
- A variety of classes including the evidence-based Matter of Balance curriculum, as well as Aging Smart, and Master of Memory reached 44 older adults. Evaluations indicate that 94 percent of participants feel more confident to remain independent in their homes and less socially isolated. Additionally, 200 older adults learned about Matter of Balance and Universal Design at the Union County Falls Prevention Event.
- Home food preservation safety fact sheets were distributed to 75 adults at the Union County Farmers' Market and Pressure Canner Lid Testing at Ace Hardware. Seventy-two adults participated in three multicounty home food preservation classes. All participants indicated an increase in knowledge, and all planned to make changes in their procedures for canning and freezing food.
- Information was given at 93 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) programs to Head Start youth and adult participants who learned to select fruits and vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products for a healthy diet. Participants also learned to do the following: use limited resources to plan, purchase and prepare food for the family; be physically active every day; and store and handle food so it is safe to eat. Over 72 percent of the adults indicated they now use MyPlate and food labels to make healthier food choices. At least 78 percent of these adults are now eating at least one kind of fruit or vegetable of a different color each day. These programs were held in cooperation with Union County Department of Job and Family Services, nonprofit social services agencies, low-income housing sites, area civic centers or community centers, and Head Start sites in Marysville and Richwood.

- Extension offered sun safety training and DermaScan screenings to 100 county and city employees at a health fair. All indicated increased knowledge as a result of attending.
- The three adults who attended the basic budgeting class indicated a 95 percent increase in knowledge related to improving their practices in managing daily finances.

#### PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2015, Union County 4-H had 1,043 members in 51 4-H Clubs led by 167 volunteers. These youth enrolled in over 2,000 projects in 2015. Over 650 youth and their families participated in youth livestock Quality Assurance Training taught and coordinated by the 4-H educator. The training is designed to assure quality care for animals being raised in 4-H projects. In 2015, the key topics studied by livestock project members included responsible use of antibiotics in food animals and related recordkeeping skills.
- All 42 Union County teens who volunteer as 4-H Camp Counselors completed 24 hours of training and contributed 92 hours of volunteer service as leaders at 4-H Camp. Their participation provides quality staffing for a camp experience for younger 4-H members while at the same time providing job training and skill development for teens. In evaluations, 95 percent of the teen counselors self-reported gains in their ability to be responsible for others. They also reported learning or enhancing skills related to leadership, time management and communication.
- Union County provides an opportunity for teens to participate in fair management and leadership responsibility through two Junior Fair Boards. In 2015, 104 teens served on Junior Fair Boards and participated in eight hours of leadership training including event management, public speaking and conflict resolution taught by the 4-H educator. Teens contributed an average of 25 hours each of leadership service through their participation on the Union County and Richwood Junior Fair Boards, for a total of over 2,600 hours of service.



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- The countywide 4-H Cloverbud program involved 93 youth ages 5–8 years old. Monthly meetings in 2015 focused on science, engineering and technology topics. Each meeting included a hands-on experiment or activity to teach the principles of observation and hypothesis-testing.

## **ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Three Farm Bill informational meetings were held with a total attendance of 220. Pesticide Applicator Training was facilitated with a total attendance of 42.
- A grain outlook meeting was held in cooperation with the Union County Agriculture Association. Topics included using retirement plans to reduce farm taxes, examining land values, cash rents, crop input costs and potential crop profitability, and grain outlook. Attendance was 61 individuals.
- Fifty-one active Master Gardener Volunteers and 10 trainees are currently taking the Master Gardener Volunteer training class. Project GROW received the state award for Master Gardener Project of the Year for a medium-sized group in the Backyard and Local Foods category. In addition, Project GROW received a Search for Excellence Award at the International Master Gardener Conference. For the past three years, the Master Gardener Volunteers have received the Platinum-Level State Recognition for Standards of Excellence. The Master Gardener Volunteers again awarded a scholarship to a Union County resident attending The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster. From October 1, 2014, to September 28, 2015, our Master Gardener Volunteers drove 26,673 miles and volunteered 2,609 hours of service to 20 different projects. These projects reached a total of 729 people: 609 adults and 120 youths. In addition, Master Gardener Volunteers attained 779 hours of horticulture education.

**Union County receives \$33,338 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.**