

2015 County Highlights

Warren County

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ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Because of an increase in harmful algal blooms in Ohio's lakes and streams, the state passed legislation that requires farmers to be certified if they apply fertilizer on more than 50 acres. OSU Extension is the only organization permitted to provide Fertilizer Applicator Certification Training for Ohio farmers. In Warren County, two meetings were held, and 45 farms became certified.
- The correct use of pesticides was the primary focus at OSU Extension's 2015 agronomy meeting. Fourteen farmers, representing over 7,500 acres, were provided up-to-date, research-based information to better manage their crops while protecting the environment. Evaluations indicated that 93 percent learned how to control pests, diseases and weeds more effectively because of this program.
- Locally grown, healthy food is important to Warren County citizens. OSU Extension works directly with our local growers at the Southwestern Ohio Fruit and Vegetable Grower School to provide information on food safety and crop protection. In 2015, more than 20 Ohio growers representing 1,562 acres of produce attended the school. Based upon their evaluations, these growers expected to increase their profits by \$14.43 per acre by utilizing the management information they learned at the school.
- Learning to grow food at home was a popular subject of OSU Extension programming and personal consultations. Warren County held a backyard grower school to teach individuals how to grow fruit and vegetables at home. More than 35 people attended the school, and 97 percent of the participants indicated that they planned to use something they learned to improve their own gardens. Between personal consultations and other public meetings, more than 200 individuals were taught how to grow food at home.
- Honeybees are vital to the production of food, and the interest in beekeeping has never been higher. OSU Extension coordinates an annual school for beekeepers to

inform the clientele about current management issues. In 2015, more than 400 beekeepers from three different states attended the school, and every evaluation indicated that they learned something new.

- Working cooperatively with OSU Extension, more than 40 Warren County Master Gardener Volunteers donated almost 2,000 hours of time to community service projects in the county. The projects included educational gardens, school programs and adult education.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

- Ohio Works First clients were provided practical lessons on employability skills, exploring personal values, coping with change and stress, consumerism skills, and communication skills. In 2015, the OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) educator provided 94 one-hour lessons to nearly 300 clients at Warren County Workforce ONE.
- The re-energization of Warren County Community Services Board of Trustees resulted through the FCS educator's rewrite of bylaws, creation of a membership agreement, revision of the member handbook and coordination of a retreat designed to strengthen board members' understanding and commitment to the work.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) was started in Warren County in 2015. Clients of Warren County Jobs and Family Services and other low-income audiences will now receive education on the importance of healthy eating.
- A two-hour session on understanding poverty and its impact on families was provided to 50 Warren County Child Support Enforcement staff.
- Two 90-minute sessions on understanding poverty and caring for oneself were provided to court-appointed special advocates in Warren County followed by a three-hour workshop provided at their statewide conference to 40 attendees.



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- A parenting styles session was provided to over 60 attendees of the Ohio Court-Appointed Special Advocacy Conference.
- Ohio school teachers were introduced to the National Endowment for Financial Education high school curriculum at three separate conferences.
- Twenty clients of Warren County Metropolitan Housing were provided resources regarding basic financial management.
- The FCS educator serves on numerous county collaborations and coalitions to improve multi-agency decision making, to decrease duplication of effort and to identify priority areas to better utilize limited resources.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2015, 952 youth from 45 4-H Clubs participated in 2,495 projects in 174 project areas. Twenty-two newly trained volunteers joined 198 experienced leaders to guide and support club activities and county events promoting leadership, citizenship and character development.
- In partnership with local high schools, businesses and community volunteers, more than 800 high school students from five local schools participated in the Real Money, Real World program. Real Money, Real World is an interactive financial literacy program that gives youth a “real” look into the costs of maintaining a household and the interrelationships between education, jobs and money. Through participation in this program, youth reported an 87 percent increase in gaining a better idea of what is involved in earning, spending and managing money.
- Forty-six youth, new to the 4-H horse program, developed and improved their knowledge and skills in horse safety and equine nutrition as part of a 4-H safety, ethics and horse management program. In addition, 95 youth and adults involved in the 4-H horse project participated in two clinics focusing on showmanship, horsemanship and driving.
- Two hundred seventeen young people from around Warren County participated in three local 4-H Camps. Campers had the opportunity to engage in individual and group living skills, developmentally appropriate recreational activities and healthy decision making.
- Sixty-seven county teen counselors were involved in the 4-H Camp Counselor program, which involved over 30 hours in training in team-building, leadership development and program-planning skills. The training program also enhanced teens’ understanding of child behavior and development as well as grasping camp risk management issues.
- A four-day 4-H urban immersion project trip took place in Washington, D.C., and included 15 teenage youth from several Ohio and Kentucky county 4-H programs. Service projects included work at local social service agencies and community centers. Participants also shared cultural experiences that took them out of their comfort zone and included interactions with persons experiencing homelessness, mental illness and poverty.
- In cooperation with the Ohio State Highway Patrol and Warren County Juvenile Court, a team of eight 4-H teen educators provided peer-to-peer instruction to 531 first-time juvenile traffic offenders in Warren County through 4-H CARTEENS. The program includes interactive sessions on seat belt use, defensive driving, and the consequences of road rage. Substance abuse and other irresponsible driving choices are also covered. Based on survey results, 98 percent of participants believed the CARTEENS program would help them improve their driving skills.
- Twelve senior 4-H youth participated in a wide variety of statewide camps and one national trip opportunity. Participants received full or partial scholarships to Leadership Camp, Forestry Camp and Citizenship Washington Focus in the amount of \$6,000 from the Warren County 4-H Committee.
- Twelve graduating seniors were awarded a total of \$6,250 with the support of the Warren County 4-H Committee, Warren County Horse Advisors, 4-H CARTEENS, and local 4-H alumni and their families.
- More than 900 4-H youth and over 450 parents and adult volunteers participated in Warren County Junior Fair activities. County fair participation is designed to showcase project knowledge, leadership, citizenship and sportsmanship through exhibits, interviews and contests. Experts evaluated more than 5,000 4-H projects, offering feedback to participants through placings as well as verbal and written evaluations based on performance, knowledge, communication skills and positive attitude.
- Forty-nine Warren County teens served on the Warren County Junior Fair Board. Together, members completed over 3,600 hours of volunteer service as they committed to a yearlong program of training and meetings designed to prepare them to organize and conduct the Junior Fair events and shows.
- Warren County’s 4-H endowment fund continues to grow. With principal funds nearing \$55,000, the endowment provides funds to the Warren County 4-H Committee to support current programs and activities, and to provide leadership development opportunities for youth and adult volunteers.