

2015 County Highlights

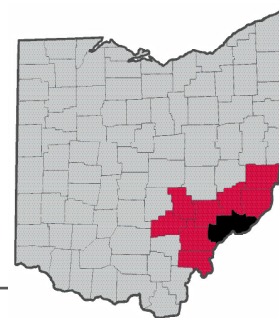
Washington County

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Live Healthy Live Well is a statewide program offered via blog, Facebook and interactive email challenges to help people improve their health. Through the program, Washington County Extension provides research-based information and encourages people to make informed choices about healthy eating, active living and overall improved wellness. More than 170 people took the email challenges during spring and fall 2015, which is a 59 percent increase from 2014. A more local program recently offered is a Healthy Living blog focusing on health and fitness. The blog helps participants eat healthier and live a more active lifestyle all while learning how to fit healthy living into a busy schedule. Also recently created was a local Pinterest page with nine boards that are following 24 other state/national Extension pages. The goal is to use this social media page to make it easier for the public to get access to research-based information in a more modern-day approach.
- Successful Co-Parenting is designed to equip divorcing parents with the knowledge, skills, tools, awareness and strategies to help their children adjust to their breakup. During 2015, about 200 individuals took the parenting class and submitted an evaluation. Ninety-two percent reported that they learned new information, and 94 percent reported that they felt more prepared to co-parent as a result of the program. Approximately 97 percent of co-parents plan to use the information that they learned in the 2.5-hour class during their divorce process. The class is offered twice a month for separating parents.
- In 2015, 615 unduplicated residents participated directly in at least one of 185 of USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) classes. Indirectly, 3,314 residents benefited from newsletters, displays, community events or educational packets. Two food pantries and one free meal site collaborated to turn indirect displays into monthly direct series sites by providing space and encouragement for participants. SNAP-Ed expanded

in Washington County in 2015 to include schools, so 667 children enjoyed the Balance My Day curriculum and learned the importance of breakfast, healthy meals and healthy snacks.

- Seventy Summer Food Service Programs were held at seven sites at various schools, parks and churches. Programs focused on encouraging youth to exercise; use MyPlate to increase the consumption of dairy, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains; and eat breakfast every day.
- Nutrition and exercise are integral to a healthy lifestyle. To encourage better eating choices, OSU Extension partnered with Creating Healthy Communities to enlarge a community garden. Another project completed with this partnership included enhancements to a walking path and a basketball court.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2015, 2,194 school-aged youth gained a variety of new skills by participating in Washington County 4-H activities. The 33 community clubs had 734 members led by 93 adult volunteers. Specifically, youth participated in projects in animal sciences (594); biological, earth, environmental, physical, and plant sciences (296); communications and expressive art (11); consumer and family sciences (31); food, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle education (1,206); leadership and personal development (725); and technology and engineering (128).
- Six to eight 4-H CARTEENS youth volunteers meet with advisors to discuss, plan and practice the traffic safety lessons they later present to 10 to 20 teen offenders and their parents/guardians. The juvenile offenders are ordered to attend the program by the juvenile court judge. Included in the presentation is a discussion led by a trooper from the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The program helps the teen volunteers increase their skills in public speaking, organization, teaching and teamwork. CARTEENS youth also volunteer for community service activities in our county.



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We are currently recruiting new members to join the 4-H CARTEENS Club.

- Self-discipline, decision making, concentration and responsibility are the focus of 4-H shooting sports, Washington County's largest 4-H special interest project area. In 2015, 126 youth learned the safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment from 16 adult and five teen certified volunteers.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Effective health management plans, administering animal health products and proper feed processor protocols were just a few of the topics at the 2015 Quality Assurance Training taught to 630 youth and adults who were raising livestock and/or food products for human consumption.
- At Washington County Extension's annual garden party event, Master Gardener Volunteers educated 100 gardeners about monarchs, hummingbirds, landscaping with Ohio native plants, 2015–2016 garden trends and tools for success, soil testing and heirloom gardening, and invasive non-native plants of southeast Ohio. Fifty-three gardeners participated in the daylong Garden Road Show to Adena Mansion in Chillicothe, Ohio, and 31 gardeners participated in the daylong Garden Road Show to Mill Creek MetroParks in Youngstown, Ohio, and Draime Legacy Gardens in Warren, Ohio. A Bring One Take One plant exchange attracted 50 gardeners from the community. Master Gardener Volunteers worked with a group of young adults from the community to plan, plant and harvest vegetables in the teaching garden outside the office
- Agriculture Outlook attracted 20 local farmers who listened to presentations on the grain market outlook, a specialty crops update about what is new in vegetable production, farm production economics, farm policy, and the 2014 Farm Bill implementation.
- Seven local farmers attended a good agricultural practices meeting to learn how to reduce the risk of on-farm produce contamination.
- All 53 farm businesses who attended Pesticide Applicator Recertification were recertified for their Ohio Department of Agriculture pesticide licenses. They stated that the program helped them become more aware of best-use practices on the farm in relation to their safety.
- Thirty-seven local farmers attended Row Crop Roundup and Fertilizer Certification, which covered precision agriculture, cover crops and weed control, and grid sampling. Those in attendance received their fertilizer certification.

- Our environment influences our enjoyment of and length of time exercising. Washington County OSU Extension Community Development assisted in securing grant funding for playground expansions in two villages. Creation of these dynamic outdoor play areas for children will support improved physical and mental health.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Infrastructure must be maintained and improved in order to encourage economic development. Working with Muskingum Township, OSU Extension secured funding for the township to complete riparian barrier formation along the Muskingum River in Washington County. By utilizing a modern deep-injection process by Uretek to stabilize the stream bank, continued erosion of the adjoining road base can be prevented. The initial investment of \$120,000 can help retain over \$1.5 million in property located along the road.

Washington County receives \$126,127 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension's local-state-federal partnership.