



Barry County

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



170 MSU Extension programs had participants from Barry County



2,353 Barry County youth participated in 4-H programming



219 Barry County families utilized the MSU Extension Remote Learning resources website



36,158 MSU Extension webpage visits from Barry County residents

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Once again I am delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Barry County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses, and communities.



The 2020 programming year has been like none other. As the novel coronavirus entered Michigan and the state put protections in place in the form of the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, MSU Extension staff went to work to adapt their classes to a virtual setting. Within a week, MSU Extension launched the Remote Learning and Resources website and set to work to create resources that individuals, businesses and families needed. MSU Extension is proud to have continued its strong partnership with Barry County.

Local MSU Extension staff and the statewide network of Educators provided information and expertise to local farmers, government officials, local and state employees, as well as, county youth and adult residents. This annual report gives examples of some of MSU Extension's accomplishments and the impact that we continue to have in the County. Thank you for the opportunity to share our most valuable resource – our people who strive to provide answers to questions that help solve real problems right here in Barry County.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Barry County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

Erin Moore, District 7 Director

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Program Highlights



Wade Syers, joined the MSUE Food Safety team this year and looks forward to growing partnerships in Barry County.

FOOD SAFETY

In 2020, MSU Extension brought on a new Food Safety Educator. While starting only a month before the state went into the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, Wade Syers was able to quickly adjust programming to an online setting. In Barry county, many residents took advantage of the different courses that the Food Safety team had to offer. These courses included cottage food law, cooking for crowds, waste reduction through freezing and, the most popular of all, home food preservation. With more time at home, Michiganders set out to preserve more of their summer harvest. The series brought over 3,800 residents of Michigan to its sessions, with 44 coming from Barry County.



Learning lessons for healthy eating habits are invaluable and strengthen the foundation for a healthy lifestyle.

SHOW ME NUTRITION

Community Nutrition Instructor, Sydney Miller, worked with several different schools in Barry County to deliver nutrition education. In 2020, youth received education via the Show me Nutrition curriculum at the beginning of the year. While the course was not able to be finished in person, the partnership has been developed and we look forward to continuing Nutrition education with these schools in the future. The Show Me Nutrition curriculum is adaptable by grade and age and, in addition, can be coupled with educational standards. Students and teachers alike enjoy learning about health snacking, reducing sugar sweetened beverages and introducing more physical activity into our daily lives.

LIVESTOCK LEARNING

While the pandemic offered many challenges for program implementation in 4-H, it also offered some opportunities. Youth in Barry had access to virtual programs hosted by Program Coordinators across the entire state. One PC hosted a virtual livestock learning program that covered trainings on nutrition, showmanship, biosecurity, selection and daily care. The program brought over 400 youth from around the state, 20 of which were from Barry County. 4-H youth participants throughout the state, moved through the year with resilience and adjusted to new virtual learning opportunities.



4-H is Michigan's largest youth development program serving over 200,000 youth each year.

Program Highlights

HEALTHY RECOVERY

In 2020, a brand new partnership was formed with between MSU Extension and Lighthouse on the Lake. Based in Hastings, Lighthouse on the Lake serves individuals suffering from mental illnesses and offers them supportive services to aid in their recovery. This was a great place for MSU Extension to bring education. Educators implemented “Stress Less with Mindfulness: Begin with a Breath” and “Mindful Eating” as well as “Cooking for One.” These classes help residents build skillsets that they need to increase confidence and create the mindset needed for recovery. We look forward to this continued partnership in the future.



MSUE strives to strengthen families' and communities' understanding of and response to mental health crises.

APICULTURE EDUCATION

The MSU Extension Apiculture Team delivered a series of webinars for new and experienced beekeepers. The group reached over 2,000 people across the state of Michigan, including 41 in ABarry County. The team covered topics such as preparing for swarm season, early season management, and first year colonies. MSU Extension provides robust education on beekeeping. The College of Natural Science runs the Michigan Pollinator Initiative which houses many resources for experienced and aspiring beekeepers. Additionally, all the MSU Extension webinars are housed with the initiative to provide continual and ongoing education for the growing interest in beekeeping.



MSUE Veteran Liaison, Adam Ingrao, holding up a hive. To access, please visit: <https://pollinators.msu.edu/resources/beekeepers/>

ADULTING 101

Adulting 101 programming allows youth and young adults to gain skills and knowledge of useful information that will help them to be successful in an everchanging world. This exciting series of Adulting 101 was offered for high school youth and with topics that included Household Tasks, Developing a Spending Plan, Cooking 101, Debt vs. Credit and Being an Informed Renter. This webinar series had multiple states represented with over 1,000 registrations and 7 Barry County residents participating. This program will continue to expand in 2021 and we look forward to continuing to prepare young people in our community for success with vital life skills.



The Adulting 101 program accommodated the need to offer this series via zoom. MSUE was able to reach young people in Barry County as well as in other states.

Featured County Story: 4-H Pivots during COVID-19

The mission in 4-H is to “create non-formal, experiential, educational opportunities designed to connect in-school learning with out-of-school time activities that help youth thrive in a complex and changing world.” That mission was surely put to test in the 2020 programming year. What we discovered is that Barry County is full of resilient, creative youth that stepped up to this challenge and learned new life skills while living through the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, we accomplished our 4-H Mission through 42 4-H Clubs which include 1,066 youth age 5 – 19, managed by 279 volunteers with the assistance of 50 teen leaders. 4-H projects are centered around life skills, leadership, expressive arts, animal science, healthy living, community service, technology and so many more.



In a normal year, this is accomplished through hands on activities and experiences; however, the 4-H program went virtual starting in March of 2020. While virtual programming offers unique challenges, it also offered opportunities for creativity! And there is nothing more creative than a group of 4-H Volunteers! Rabbit leaders created a virtual rabbit costume contest – members researched the origin of their rabbit breed and submitted a virtual poster or photo.

Our Horse leaders created a virtual horse show to keep members working with their horses. We were disappointed when fair was canceled and so proud that our members with livestock projects put into practice their business skills and were able to sell their animals independently. We turned what would have been a face to face poultry nutrition clinic into a virtual clinic and one of the participants reported using the information for a school report. The 4-H Council awarded six scholarships for continuing education to six graduating seniors. The council also sent cards to nursing homes during the lock down. We provided instructions to build a raised a garden bed and basic gardening in partnership with the United Way and Walmart. We included a lesson from our Teaching Science When You Don't Know Diddly Squat series in Kids' World News with instructions on how to make a wind powered care using supplies kids would have at home. Our 4-H Facebook following continues to grow and we continue to get calls about joining 4-H.



The 4-H Program in Barry County thrives due to the support of our partners. We want to thank Barry County and United Way for their continued support of this amazing program.



Program Highlights



Many older adults experience a fear of falling causing them to limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, making the risk of falling even greater.



MSUE supports community food systems by providing resources and programs to develop local food policy councils, farm-to-institutional purchasing, food hubs and farmers markets.



How individuals handle their anger and stress affects the people around them.

MATTER OF BALANCE

In 2020, Health Educator, Christi Demitz, partnered with the Barry County Commission on Aging to bring a new program to its clients, Matter of Balance. This evidenced-based course is recommended for participants over 60 who are concerned about falls and who are interested in improving their flexibility, balance, and strength. Participants learn how to set movement goals, view falls as controllable, make changes to reduce their fall risk at home, and exercise to increase strength and balance. This was an 8 week course that brought together 11 participants from Barry County.

COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

MSU Extension is taking an active role in the Barry County Blue Zones initiative. This past year, District Director, Erin Moore served on the Steering Committee, while two other staff Syndey Miller, Community Nutrition Instructor, and Garrett Ziegler, Community Food Systems Educator, served on the Food Policy Committee. In preparation for the Blue Zones Summits, Garrett Ziegler presented on the Farm to Institution Network to 35 residents. MSU Extension has expertise in the area of Food Systems/Policy and connectivity to the many partners that work in this area. We will continue to work to bring to connect Barry County to the resources it needs to be successful with its marquee projects.

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

MSU Extension partnered with the Family Support Center to bring two programs to Barry County, implemented at Hastings Baptist Church. Two Health Educators, Georgina Perry and Holly Tiret implemented classes. The first was Mindfulness for Parents and Caregivers: Teaching Children Mindfulness. The second was RELAX: Alternatives to Anger For Parents and Caregivers: The Four Developmental Stages of Self Control in Children. This program helps adults, parents, and caregivers understand and manage anger and stress, and develop the communication and problem solving skills needed for healthy relationships. There were 24 Barry County residents in attendance.

Program Highlights

GARDENING IN A PANDEMIC

While MSU Extension encounters passionate gardeners in Barry County every year, 2020 was a season to be reckoned with. With the Stay Home, Stay Safe order in place, residents had more time to spend in their gardens. MSU offered diverse gardening classes such as Pruning Workshops and Tree and Shrub Identification. Additionally, Barry county residents participated in Bumble Bees of the Great Lakes, Pollinator Prime Time and Smart Gardening Outreach! MSU Extension hopes to build on the interest in gardening with new initiatives coming in 2021/2022.



Barry County is the home to a variety of beautiful gardens with residents learning from MSUE experts.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Barry County is rich in natural resources, specifically bodies of water. In 2020, Barry County residents took advantage of multiple types of classes offered by the Natural Resources team at MSU Extension. Ten Barry County residents participated in the Virtual Michigan Inland Lakes Convention that took place in September. Participants learned conservation tools, fish and aquatic plant identification, and cyanobacterial blooms among other topics. They also had the benefit of connecting with over 400 people across the state with similar interested and goals in conservation. Residents in Barry also took classes on backyard conservation, introduction to lakes and conservation stewards, among others.



To learn more about MSUE water programs visit <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/msu-extension-water-programs-lakes-streams-and-watersheds>

RAPID RESPONSE TO AGRICULTURE

At the onset of the pandemic in 2020, there were many unknowns in the Agriculture Sector. MSU Extension went to work to develop a resource page that housed a COVID-19 response for Ag producers. This resource page became a one stop place for Barry County farmers to learn how to adapt their businesses in the pandemic. Topics included translated information for the workers about stopping the spread, housing information for incoming migrant workers, a risk reduction tool, loan information and interpretation among many other issues. To view the page, please visit: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/agriculture/Rapid-Response-for-Agriculture/covid-19-pandemic-response-for-agriculture>



MSUE has formed a Rapid Response to Agriculture work team to help counties understand the unique issues Agriculture faces.

MSU Extension staff located in Barry County

Laura Anderson	Disease Prevention Educator	Extension #1026	ander359@msu.edu
Erika Garner	Nutrition Training Coordinator	Extension #1030	prineeri@msu.edu
Wendy Hunt	Office Manager	Extension #1024	blake113@msu.edu
Sydney Miller	Community Nutrition Instructor	Extension #1093	mill2481@msu.edu
Erin Moore	District 7 Director	734-717-0917	mooree16@msu.edu
Kathy Pennington	4-H Program Coordinator	Extension #1022	pennin25@msu.edu

Through successful partnership and collaboration with Barry County, MSU Extension is able to continue its local presence and to provide vital educational resources and programming in such areas as community and economic development, agriculture, land use, health and nutrition, and youth development.

Thank you Barry County!



MISSION:

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

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