

THE 2023

MSU EXTENSION

ANNUAL REPORT

NOTE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Like many of you, I grew up singing the iconic lyrics of “This Land is Your Land.” As we recall, it begins, “This land is your land, this land is my land.” With that melody echoing in your mind, I am pleased to present not just your annual report, but also mine. Stepping into this role not too long ago, this annual report has been instrumental in deepening my understanding of the profound impact MSU Extension has had on our county over the past year. It is my sincere hope that this document serves a similar purpose for you.

In the forthcoming year, I eagerly anticipate actively supporting the educators, instructors, and coordinators of MSU Extension. By doing so, I will gain first-hand experience of the projects, programs, and initiatives that will be detailed in next year’s annual report.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me via phone or email with any questions about this annual report of MSU Extension. While I may not have all the answers, I am quickly learning that someone within MSU Extension likely does.



M. Scott Korpak, District 7 Director

BY THE NUMBERS

Served
1,212 Barry
County
Residents

Answered 49
Ask an
Expert
Questions

207 Active
4-H
Volunteers

32 Active
4-H Clubs

64 Barry
County
Residents
utilized Food
Safety Classes

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



4-H Way

4-H empowers young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime. It's a research-based experience that includes a mentor, a hands-on project, and a meaningful leadership opportunity.

The goal of the 4-H Youth Development model is 4-H is to "provide kids with community, mentors, and learning opportunities to develop the skills they need to create positive change in their lives. "

You need to look no further than the amazing youth in the Barry County 4-H program. In 2023, Barry county had 32 active clubs with a total of 831 youth registered in club programs, 207 adult volunteers, and an additional 250 youth participating in other youth programs.

Agricultural Awareness Day



All the third graders in Barry county were invited to the Barry County Expo Center for a day of over 30 agriculture stations. 480 students, 75 FFA members (acting as tour guides for the different groups that came as well as presenters) and 60 adult volunteers helped out in many different ways including in the kitchen making the lunches, setting up, and teaching at the different stations. Arin Bowen was in charge of the animal barn and we received a lot of positive feedback regarding the event. For many of the children it was their first taste of aquaponics, soil health, and seeing animals up close. We hope this inspired the children to join 4-H in the future.



Fair Livestock Sale

The livestock sale is the culminating sale that ends the fair for the large animals (beef, sheep and swine). In 2023, the sale brought in \$1.4 million and a vast majority of that went to the 4-H members by selling their animals at the auction. Youth go out into the community and invite members to come to the auction and bid on their animals to fill their freezers for the year. Youth work hard for this all year.



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Exploration Days

In 2023, 12 Barry County youth attended MSU Extension's 4-H Exploration Days event. Each year about 2,000 youth (ages 12-19) and chaperones from across Michigan attend. This fun MSU pre-college program is designed to: increase responsibility, confidence, independence, accountability, problem-solving, decision-making and time management skills. It is also designed to increase communication, team work, citizenship, leadership skills, foster ability to meet new people and make new friends, develop and expand career and personal interests, increase college exploration and access to MSU campus and it's resources, develop social and academic skills needed for a successful transition to college and life as an adult. Exploration Days also gives youth opportunities to try new things that aren't available in their county.



County Wide Craft Event



Since the pandemic, the non-livestock area of 4-H has seen fewer participants so the Superintendent of the project and a few leaders in the Barry County 4-H community got together and put on a very successful craft day. There were 5 different crafts kids could sign up for, including recycled magazine bowls, soap making, wood burning and water color techniques for the 9-19 year olds. There was also three different crafts for the young clovers including rock painting, shell animals and puzzle picture frames. All of these crafts were ones that the participants could enter in the fair.

Delton Elementary Garden Club



Each Wednesday from June until August in 2023 Arin Bowen hosted Garden Club at Delton Elementary School for the summer school participants. We had 74 participants week one, and 82 week two. These are all at risk students who were invited to the program. They learned all about compost, worms, and how to help the garden throughout 5 different stations. The students learned about compost in a hands-on way, including exploring worms, creating their own compost bins, doing some exercises and reading a book about compost. Everyone involved in the program had fun and nobody screamed when they saw the worms moving on the tables.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

234 Youth & Adults utilized SNAP-ED Programs

Health & Mindfulness

In a continued effort to manage our physical and mental health in 2023, residents found resources by taking part in a number of session opportunities. These sessions explored mindfulness basics such as breathing, moving, eating, walking, thought surfing, taming your busy mind, and more. Research has shown that people who are more mindful are generally happier and report less anxiety, symptoms of depression, anger and worries. Some of the session topics were:

- RELAX
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- Mindfulness for Stress Reduction
- Stress Less with Mindfulness
- Begin with a Breath
- Changing Negative Self-Talk
- Chronic Disease PATH
- Matter of Balance
- Chronic Disease PATH
- Diabetes PATH
- Mindfully Feeding Infants & Toddlers
- Tai Chi
- Falls Prevention



Food Safety

In 2023, 64 Barry County residents took classes and accessed resources from MSU Extension's Food Safety Team. These classes covered a variety of topics that helped residents gain the knowledge and training to prevent food borne illnesses. Some examples of the classes attended are:

- Food Safety for Food Service Workers
- Michigan Cottage Food Law
- Safe Food = Healthy Kids
- Food Safety Q & A
- ServSafe
- Women of the Wild
- Preserving Summers Gardens Bounty
- Preserving Michigan's Harvest - several topics
- Canning Basics



Healthy Eating for All

Lighthouse on the Lake has been a strong partner of MSU Extension since Sydney Miller began working for Extension. It is a drop-in facility for Barry County residents, providing free resources and activities for those who wouldn't have access otherwise. In years past, we have done Cooking for One and Cooking Matters programs, and in 2023 we provided Healthy Eating Adds Up. Thanks to the hard work of the facility director, a grant was secured to supplement MSU Extension's budget for taste tests and meals for the Healthy Eating Adds Up program. Participants in the program practiced basic cooking skills, specifically knife skills, in addition to nutrition education. We collaborated to have each of the six classes include a taste test and meal that participants made together. Meals made include: quick skillet lasagna, sweet potato muffins, Popeye power smoothies, turkey pita sandwiches, mini pizzas and ice cream in a bag. All recipes came from the NPA database. Additionally, participants taste tested mangos, rye bread, corn tortillas and muenster and gouda cheese.

11 residents
took part in
beekeeping
programs

BARRY COUNTY

NASHVILLE COMMUNITY GARDENS



MSU Extension and Blue Zones Activate Barry County have teamed up with interested community members to establish the Nashville Community Garden. Lily Arriaga, 4-H Program Coordinator and Catherine Getty, Barry County Commissioner worked in partnership to write a grant that the garden received to purchase supplies, such as a shed. Furthermore, Lily has used her expertise to design a garden layout and has been a resource for gardening facts/information, and incorporating 4-H. Currently, there are plans to add pollinator plots around the garden, a pizza garden area, a compost area, and a

sunflower hut. One of the goals of the garden is to provide space for youth programming, learning ideas include teaching youth how to grow produce and about farm to table food. We look forward to this project developing and the educational opportunities and partnerships it will bring.

TelFarm - Farm Financial Analysis

Farm Business Educator, Jonathan LaPorte, worked with producers in Barry County to analyze their farm business. The TelFarm program provides accounting and financial analysis support to farmers across the State of Michigan. These "Whole Farm" and "Enterprise" analysis reports outline the farm's financial situation and cost of production. It requires an updated year-end balance sheet and farm records for all cash transactions in the year. The analysis reconciles their cash transactions with balance sheet information to provide a "production year" viewpoint to make management decisions for their farm business. Part of this process includes check-in meetings and Tax Estimation. In Barry County 20 farm operations took advantage of these services offered by MSU Extension.



TelFarm Center
Morrill Hall of Agriculture
446 W Circle Drive, Room 414
East Lansing, MI 48824

517-355-4700
TelFarm email: telfarm@msu.edu
PcMars email: tfpcmars@msu.edu
www.canr.msu.edu/telfarm

- Or contact your MSU Extension Agent -



Breakfast on the Farm

Breakfast on the Farm is an MSU Extension program offering a free, farm-cooked breakfast and self-guided farm tour. On Saturday, July 29th, the 42nd BOTF event took place at De Grins Oer Dairy in Mecosta County. The farm is operated by Tjerk and Ramona Okkema and their children Cora, Dirk and Evelyn. The event was attended by 1,305 visitors and volunteers, 13 of them from Barry County. This event helps bridge the gap between consumers and modern agriculture.

New 4-H Program Supervisor

In 2023, MSU Extension brought on a new 4-H Program Supervisor, Kellie Kieren! Kellie began her 4-H experience at the age of 5 when she showed animals at the Newaygo County Free Fair. She continued her engagement in 4-H until she aged out of the program. Over the years she engaged in a variety of project areas including goats, rabbits, chickens, horses, pigs, and lambs. Kellie has experience building community partnerships and gaining support for programs. Please welcome Kellie to MSU Extension!



BARRY COUNTY SUCCESS STORIES

Grow It, Try It, Like It

At the start of our Grow It, Try It, Like It series at Delton Kellogg Elementary, all the students planted lettuce seeds. Each classroom had their own trays and throughout the course of the six week series the classes watered their seeds and watched them grow. At the last class in the series we took the plants and transplanted them into the raised beds in the community garden.



In total, there were 8 classrooms who participated ranging from kindergarten to second grade and a special education class as well. Also during the last class we had a “lettuce be healthy” party. The school nurse coordinated with the teachers to provide salads for the students to have in honor of the lettuce the students planted. Thanks to multiple donations from families, there was a variety of vegetables and other toppings. For some students this was their first time trying lettuce and having salad. One second grade student in particular told his teacher that he went home and “asked his mom to buy salad after the lettuce party because he was craving salad”. - Submitted by Sydney Miller

Completed a program for the first time

We facilitated an in-person Chronic Disease PATH program. One particular participant walked in with his wife with body language that signaled he was not happy to be in the program. His wife signed him up in the hopes that they could both gain some information to help him better manage his chronic disease. This participant shared with the class that he had recently undergone two hip replacements and was not “bouncing” back from the surgeries like he thought he should. This caused him to feel defeated and depressed. He mentioned that he had put on extra weight, which made things worse. We did not think he would return to the class as he sat through the first session with his arms crossed, slouched, and had a slight bit of attitude when making an action plan for the week. The participant attended session two and reported against his action plan. His wife let us know she would not be attending session 4 because she would be on vacation, and he stated he would not be attending either. We encouraged him to attend and share the information with his wife when she returned from her travels.

By session 4, our “doubtful” participant came to class with a smile on his face, offering to help others in the class, and handing out the name tags. By the end of the class in session 6, this participant was visibly happier, had worked to complete his action plans weekly, lost weight, and shared with us how this program had changed his life. His wife let us know he had never stayed past the first session of any other program she registered him for. This made us feel like our program and facilitation skills saved his life in some way. - Submitted by Laura Anderson

Wanted to continue at home



Over the summer we hosted different programs at the library. During the Ice Cream Engineering program participants made 2 recipes, and then they developed their own using a variety of ingredients. 24 youth and their parents participated in the ice cream engineering session. They all had a lot of fun and learned about the engineering process and how it includes food. One of the participants requested the recipes so that they could make it again at home!

BARRY COUNTY 2023



New 4-H Program Coordinator

LilyRose Arriaga began her work as a Barry County 4-H Program Coordinator in July on the first day of fair week! Lily is a native of the greater Chicago area, and discovered a love of horticulture while pursuing an associate degree from Joliet Community College. Lily went on to graduate from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Science in Sustainable and Organic Horticulture. During her time as a student at MSU she was a field research aide with MSU's Brainard Lab and a member of MSU Student Horticulture. Lily enjoys exploring different parts of Michigan, taking care of her house plants, playing with her dog, cooking and baking. She is excited to work with the youth and volunteers within 4-H Barry County and continue to help the program grow!

New Support Staff

Patty Snyder joined the Barry County office in 2023 and is the friendly face you see as you walk into the office. Patty has been a horse leader for many years and brings a great deal of 4-H knowledge and experience with her. Patty is a wonderful addition to the team and looks forward to learning and providing support to help our programs run smoothly.



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