

# MONROE COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

MSU Extension Monroe County  
963 South Raisinville Road  
Monroe, MI 48161

Email: [msu.Monroe@county.msu.edu](mailto:msu.Monroe@county.msu.edu)

Phone: 734-240-3170

Website: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/monroe/index>

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## Message from the District Director

Thank you for another great programming year of partnership between Monroe 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. MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational outreach to county residents. Our programs reach all audiences and age groups. From youth learning essential life skills and farmers exploring ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness, to older adults being able to access healthier foods and local communities discovering ways to increase economic impact.

Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

The following pages highlight just some of the programming that staff delivered to Monroe County residents in 2024. We continue to provide our programs in a variety of spaces and delivery methods that are convenient for our participants to engage in and access. Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving the County, thank you for another great year! We look forward to your continued support and hope you will be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.



**74** Commercial and Farm Soil Tests sold



**1,377** people impacted by sites receiving nutrition or physical activity Policy, Systems, or Environmental education within the county



**4,490** participants attended programs hosted in Monroe County



**1,008** Volunteers in the county

## Overall Impact

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**29** community coalitions within the county that MSU Extension employees are members of



**8** Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy System and Environmental sites receiving PSE education within the county



**5,454** participants from the county attending programs



**28** policy, systems, and environmental changes with those PSE sites



**473** programs (across the state) attended by participants from this county



**190** client consultations

## Economic Development, Environmental Conservation, and Agricultural Productivity

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**67,320** participants in community, food, and environment programs from across Michigan



**470** virtual programs related to Financial Education, Food Systems, Water and Environmental Quality, Government and Businesses



**5,971** contacts through social media, web activity, e-newsletters, and handouts



**\$246.5 Billion** annual impact of food and agriculture on Michigan's economy Statewide



**477** participants in the Agriculture/Agribusiness Institute programs in Monroe County



**4,490** participants attending programs hosted in Monroe County

## Organic Vegetable Workshop at the Tollgate Center

The workshop organized in part by the Monroe Ag Educator took place early September (which is also National Organic Month) of 2024. It featured presentations for the organic vegetable grower on a selection of topics: weed control in high tunnels, disease management, produce safety, and an overview of farming practices employed at the Tollgate Center market garden. The event concluded with a tour of the center and a crop walk through the Tollgate center vegetable fields to discuss the farming practices used over the past summer. Evaluation feedback was positive, and attendees seemed happy with their experience. The event organizers plan for the Organic Vegetable Workshop to be a new tradition - an annual program that will gain in popularity, attendance, and impact as the years go on.

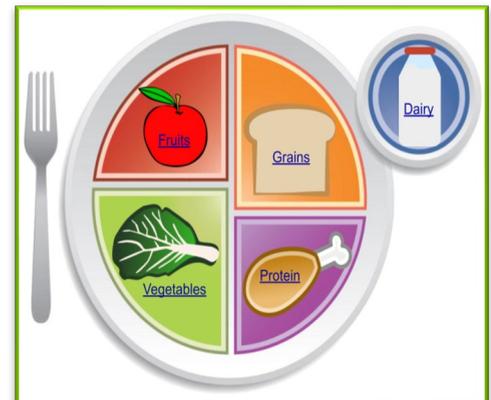


## Agriculture Awareness Day

Agriculture Awareness Day is a staple in our community going on for over 30 years. After Covid participation dropped to 250 youth. These youth come from schools around the district to participate in a one day, station rotation where they learn about agriculture commodities, get exposed to 4-H and safety topics. In 2024, enrollment was 1300 youth. This great increase in attendance is largely due to extensive advertising and marketing to schools and the removal of previous fees. This gap in funds has been made up by collectively working with Farm Bureau and community partners to raise the funds in alternative formats.

## Feeding your Picky Eaters

The Monroe County Head Start program encourages parent involvement with the school experience of their children. The Head Start program hosts parent meetings once a month throughout the county, where they invite families and caregivers to request topics they have an interest in. One of the biggest requests is always, Feeding Your Picky Eater. MSU Extension is invited to come and share tips and ideas that families can use and help navigate the challenges and joys of why children eat the way the do. In December MSUE was invited to share the Feeding Your Picky Eaters presentation at Monroe County ISD Parent meeting. During the presentation, one of the participants shared that last year, her daughter was enrolled in Head Start program and she attended the Feeding Your Picky Eater presentation and that the information she learned absolutely worked in her home! She now has a son in the program and wanted to attend this years meeting to share with the other parents how much things improved in her home and how it does work!





1,331 4-H youth enrollments



1,209 nutrition and physical activity participants hosted in-county



983 4-H Volunteers



1,347 county residents who participated in health and nutrition programs



\$31,052.97 4-H volunteer hour value



9,808 people participating in Food Safety programs including ServSafe (Statewide)



### Embryology In the Classroom

In 2024, 4-H staff introduced a new egg incubation project. Young 5's-4th grade students fell in love with the eggs and later the chicks. Students monitored the eggs, learned how to candle the eggs, and eventually got to watch a video of them hatching! (hatched, they hatched at night without the kids around) After they hatched, they got to watch them grow for a week and learn all about chick care in their brooder. It was a wonderful way to connect with many 4-H member students as they were raising their own chicks at home for the fair and enjoyed comparing their growth.



### Being A 4-H Volunteer

“Every-day a volunteer is ensuring 4-H experiences are available to youth in Monroe County. These experiences are essential not only to youth experiencing positive relationships with a caring adult, but also to making communities stronger.”  
- From a Monroe County 4-H Volunteer

## Monroe County Staff:

Name	Role	Phone	Email
Mary Bohling	D12 District Director	313-410-9431	bohling@msu.edu
Chelsea Butler	4-H Program Coordinator	734-240-3174	butle301@msu.edu
Chris Galbraith	Vegetable Extension Educator	734-240-3178	galbra53@msu.edu
Jean Genaw	4-H Program Coordinator	734-240-3188	genawjea@msu.edu
Heather Hampel	Community Nutrition Instructor	734-240-3171	hampel@msu.edu
Diane Longanbach	Innovation Counselor		longbach@msu.edu
Sarah Rhinehart	Secretary I	734-240-3182	rhineha5@msu.edu
Allen Russell	Community Nutrition Instructor	734-240-3175	russe414@msu.edu

## A Statewide Network of Resources to Help You

MSU Extension is the home of the latest in research, education, and outreach covering a wide range of issues from agriculture & agribusiness, health and nutrition, youth education and outreach, and community and economic vitality. If MSU Extension doesn't have an expert in your county to answer your questions, we can connect you to our statewide resources to connect you to the information you need.

**Ask Extension** offers one-to-one answers from MSU Extension experts and Extension Master Gardener volunteers on topics such as lawns, gardening, agriculture, nutrition, physical activity, food safety, food preservation, natural resources, community development, youth programming, and more! **Ask Extension:** <https://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/ask-an-expert>

**Lawn and Garden Hotline:** 888-678-3464 Hours: M, W, F 9:00 am–12:00 pm (Year- round) Crabgrass, brown spots, or powdery mildew, the Lawn and Garden Hotline can give you information on all your home gardening questions.

**Food Safety Hotline:** 877-643-9882 Hours M/W/F, 9:00 am-5:00 pm Do you have questions about food expiration dates, how long will last, or preserving foods at home? The Michigan State University Extension food safety hotline can help answer these types of questions and concerns.

**MSU Extension Bookstore** <https://shop.msu.edu/collections/msu-extension-bookstore>  
Look for bulletins, publications, and MSU Extension products at the Bookstore!

**Soil Mailers** MSU Extension home lawn and garden and commercial soil mailers provide access to personalized fertilizer recommendations for thousands of Michigan residents every year. The home lawn and garden mailer can be purchased in person at [MSU Extension offices](#) or online from the [MSU Extension bookstore](#). Commercial soil mailers are purchased in person at [MSU Extension offices](#). Questions about soil results can be sent to [MSUsoiltest@msu.edu](mailto:MSUsoiltest@msu.edu)

# Our Partners

Agriculture Advisory Council	Monroe County Head Start
Arborwood Head Start	Monroe County Youth Center
Cabbage Industry	Monroe High School
Carleton Co-Op Senior Living	Niedermeier Elementary
Dawn Farm Down Town	Niedermeier Head Start
Dundee FFA Program	Paula’s House
Dundee Head Start	Raisinville Elementary
First Merchants Bank	Riverside Head Start
Ida Elementary School	Salvation Army Harbor Light
Ida FFA Program	Selma Rankin Community Garden
Ida Head Start	Smith Road Elementary
ISD Work Program	The Right Place
Manor Elementary School	Trinity Health
MCCC Head Start	USDA Rual Development
MEDC Partnership for MIIM	Washtenaw County Farm Bureau
Monroe Community Credit Union	WLEB Extension Partnership
Monroe County Fair Board	YMCA Head Start
Monroe County Farm Bureau	

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