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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension

MSUE Report to Our Partners District 6

Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Mecosta, Missaukee, Osceola and Wexford Counties

January 2013

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Upcoming District 6 Events

1/12 Clare/Gladwin Rocketry Workshop

for more information contact:
Debbie Mason @ 989-426-7741 or
masondeb@anr.msu.edu

1/8 & 1/15 Farm Succession Planning Seminar, Winding Brook Conference Center in Shepherd

for more information contact:
Nonie Gross @ 989-772-0911 x214
grossn@msu.edu

Dear Partners,

Reflecting on 2012 and looking ahead to the possibilities for 2013

Tom Coon, Director

Happy New Year! As we break out new calendars and try to remember to use 2013 instead of 2012 in communication, it's also the time of year that we stop looking at the past year and think about the opportunities that the New Year brings.



I'm looking ahead at the opportunities we have to build expertise across our organization. When staff members retire it's always a bittersweet time for me. I so value their expertise in generating and disseminating information across our state, but I also am happy to see such great people move on to the new chapters in their lives, whether they choose to start second chapters in their professional lives (or maybe third chapters!) or enjoy well-deserved retirements.

As our educators, specialists, program associates and support staffers retire, we lose their experience, but if we are strategic and take advantage of their knowledge while they work for us, we can build on the foundations that they have helped us establish by moving forward with initiatives and programs that allow us to reprioritize and bring in new staffers with areas of expertise that allow us to continue to address Michigan's most pressing needs. Often those new employees bring new skills and new insights that help us to improve as an organization.

It makes me proud to know that as a result of very careful and thoughtful planning, we hired more staff members in the third and fourth quarters of 2012 than at any time in the past several years. The numbers fall far short of the numbers of colleagues who have departed. But we've kept our promise to you, our stakeholders, to manage our organization to make the best use of new tools and technologies to offer education, while still maintaining a strong, committed statewide network of educators.

What makes a university special is the people who make it a university. I get to work with Extension professionals - folks who

1/17 Pig Transition from Sow to Nursery, Isabella County Building for more information:
www.events.anr.msu.edu

1/21 Isabella/Gratiot Bean Day, Winding Brook Conference Center in Shepherd for more information contact: Nonie Gross @ 989-772-0911 x214
grossn@msu.edu

1/22 State 4-H Awards workshop, MSUE Learning Center, Midland 6:30-7:30pm contact Michelle Neff 989.539.7805 or
hydemich@anr.msu.edu

1/24 Growing Michigan Agriculture Conference, Lansing Center, Lansing for more information:
www.events.anr.msu.edu

1/29 Weed Control & IPM Meeting, Shifters in Alma for more information:
www.events.anr.msu.edu

2/2-3 4-H Winterfest, Kettunen Center contact Jodi Wrzesinski 989-895-4025 or
wzresinski.jodi@anr.msu.edu

2/8 4-H Annual Fish Fry, Knights of Columbus Hall, Gladwin for more information contact: Debbie Mason @ 989-426-7741 or
masondeb@anr.msu.edu

2/9 Clare/Gladwin/Isabella 4-H Arts Workshop contact Michelle Stiglich
stiglic2@msu.edu

2/14 Isabella County Pesticide Certification Review & Test, Isabella County building for more information contact: Nonie Gross @ 989-772-0911 x214
grossn@msu.edu

2/19-20 Integrated Pest Management Academy, Okemos, MI Register @ www.events.anr.msu.edu for more information contact: Erin Lizotte, taylor548@msu.edu

2/23 Isabella County 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show, West Intermediate School for more information call Angie Coldwell 828-6229 or Tammy Brecht 828-6394

are deeply committed to the people we serve in Michigan and the promise of our state's human and natural resources. I marvel at what they can accomplish and the difference they make in the lives of people across the state. This university would not be what it is without the spirit and dedication of my colleagues in MSU Extension, and I'm proud of the work they have done and anticipate sharing the work they'll do in the coming year. Stay tuned.

Look to MSU Extension for information and education in 2013



Shari Spoelman
District Coordinator

Happy New Year. Unless you've been living in a cave, you've been barraged with reminders that one year has ended, another has begun and you now have the chance to get a fresh start, improve your life, improve your health, organize your home and business, become more productive, spend more time with your family, save more money and generally live better.

If you're a newly elected -- or reelected -- county commissioner or state legislator, you're also busy with a new term and new set of challenges. We thank you for your service and commitment to our community and also want to remind you that Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is here to help you do your job.

This newsletter is sent out quarterly to provide an update on the educational programs that MSU Extension provides. You'll get brief updates on our work on such subjects as disease prevention and management, preparing young people for college and careers, supporting entrepreneurs and helping farmers remain profitable.

Staff members are based locally and across the state through a network that enables them to access the most current research-based information generated at MSU. To find the individuals with responsibilities in our area, simply visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu> and search by county, area of interest or name.

Looking Back and Moving Forward

As we enter into the deep winter season and the beginning of a new year, we are provided with an opportunity to reflect on where we are and what we have yet to do. At this time of year, in the Extension offices, we are not bombarded with questions about pest identification and management or soil tests or plant identification and diseases. Nor do we get canning questions or tomato blight or angry wasps or huge "brown recluse" spiders. We're not out in the fields so much, nor are we visiting many farms. Yes, the work of Extension can be cyclical and seasonal in nature. So what are we doing in January and February? We're

2/27-29 Master Gardener Class,
Traverse City

for more information:

www.events.anr.msu.edu

3/7 Restricted Use Pesticide training/
exams, Mid Michigan Community
College in Harrison

contact Paul Gross

grossp@msu.edu

3/21 Mid-Michigan Farm & Garden
Show, Gladwin Arena

for more information contact:

Debbie Mason @ 989-426-7741 or

masondeb@anr.msu.edu

4/18 Gladwin Master Gardeners -
Earth Day Celebration, Gladwin High
School 5:30-9pm

for more information contact:

Debbie Mason @ 989-426-7741 or

masondeb@anr.msu.edu

4/13-13 Build Your Future: 4-H
Entrepreneurship and Career
Connections, Kettunen Center

[more information](#)

For other MSUE educational events go
to <http://www.events.anr.msu.edu>

MSU Extension Institute Directors

*Preparing Michigan's Children
and Youth for the Future*

Director, Julie Chapin

chapin@anr.msu.edu

Improving Health and Nutrition

Director, Dawn Contreras

contrer7@anr.msu.edu

*Greening Michigan:
Leveraging Natural and
Human Assets for Prosperity*

Director, Dave Ivan

ivand@msu.edu

*Enhancing Michigan's First
Green Industry: Agriculture
and Agribusiness*

Director, Wendy Powers

wpowers@anr.msu.edu

planning, reporting and programming. 4-H clubs are meeting and youth are working on projects. We're providing educational opportunities throughout the communities we serve. We're developing plans of work with our statewide work groups and Institute Directors. We're inputting into our reporting system (we actually try to do this year round) and measuring outcomes and impacts.

Staff Updates

Let me provide you with a few staff updates in District 6. Clare and Gladwin Counties has a new 4-H Coordinator, Michelle Stiglich, who started December 3. Michelle was previously employed with Mid Michigan Community Action Agency and she has a Bachelor of Arts degree. Michelle will be splitting her time equally between Clare and Gladwin counties, providing 4-H leadership to the many clubs and volunteers in the area.

Wexford County has a new 4-H Coordinator also. Jennie Peterson started in her half time position on December 3. She worked at Mercy Hospital of Cadillac before joining MSU and she has an Associate's degree in Business Administration. Jennie has been working with her Supervising Educator Dee Miller and is excited to start developing new 4-H clubs in Wexford County.

With the money received from the multi-state law suit regarding mortgage lending companies, MSU Extension will be hiring a number of foreclosure counselors / educators. We expect that one will be located in District 6 - in the Clare County office.

We are in the process of hiring an Extension Educator in the Health and Nutrition Institute to focus on Chronic Disease Prevention and Management. This individual will be serving both District 5 and 6.

The Greening Michigan Institute and the Health and Nutrition Institute are joining together to offer an Extension Educator position in District 6 to work with local food coalitions and food safety. Our goal is to provide support to the local community groups as well as the Saginaw Chippewa tribe.

As always, thank you for your support for MSU Extension. We are working hard to provide the residents of the state of Michigan with knowledge and resources to enhance their lives and our economy. If you have feedback to provide me, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Shari Spoelman, District 6 Coordinator
Serving Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Mecosta, Missaukee, Osceola,
and Wexford counties

Youth bullying, violence and aggression are issues of great concern to many Michigan citizens - so much so that MSU Extension has identified bullying-prevention education as an organizational priority.

"Be SAFE: Safe, Affirming and Fair Environments" is an MSU Extension initiative that builds on years of education around anti-bullying and social-emotional health and well-being. Be SAFE was created in 2012 to focus on ways that young people and adults can work in partnership to create relationships and settings that are physically and emotionally safe, and that prevent bullying, bias and harassment.



As part of this effort, MSU Extension provides community workshops titled "ABCs of Bullying Prevention: Addressing Bullying in Community Settings." During 2012, these workshops were held at eight Michigan locations and were attended by 315 people, including parents, volunteers and staff from schools, afterschool programs, youth and family agencies, juvenile justice, faith-based groups and youth organizations such as 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Camp Fire USA.

According to workshop evaluations, 75 percent of participants reported improving their knowledge about bullying issues, and 55 percent reported improving their skills for addressing these issues within their communities. Additional workshops will be offered at locations around the state during 2013.

The Be SAFE initiative also includes a "Be SAFE Core Curriculum," which is designed for use in classroom and out-of-school time youth settings for kids ages 11 to 14 (afterschool programs, 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, scouts, etc.). During 2012, staff, volunteers and kids from nine youth program sites across Michigan pilot-tested the materials and professionals from a variety of disciplines (including social and emotional health and youth development) reviewed the curriculum. Pilot and reviewer feedback is being incorporated into a finished curriculum that will be available for use across the state during 2013.

Through the work of its educators, MSU Extension provides a variety of additional programs designed to help people build skills for creating healthy relationships and settings. These include "RELAX: Alternatives to Anger" (an anger management program), "Safe Dates" (a dating violence prevention program), and "Community-Based Nurturing Parenting" (a parenting education program). For more information, contact [Janet Olsen](#) or [Carolyn Penniman](#).

MSU Extension pest management activities help growers save money, protect the environment and preserve yields

Agriculture and Agribusiness Institute



In February 2012, MSU Extension hosted the first Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Academy, a

new program that was developed for farmers and other agribusiness professionals and introduced attendees to IPM tools and resources.

The IPM Academy focused on increasing the adoption of practices that increase sustainable agriculture by improving crop efficiency and minimizing pesticide use. The program drew agricultural producers, consultants and scouts, landscapers, agricultural educators, and chemical distributors from the public and private sectors and served as an important professional development opportunity.

Academy presenters addressed topics related to entomology, weed science, plant physiology and judicious pesticide use. During crop-specific breakout sessions, participants learned about IPM related to fruits, vegetables, hops, woody ornamentals and field crops.

The program was assessed using participant evaluations immediately after the event and six months later. The 46 survey respondents manage 57,778 acres of agricultural land and included corn, soybean, fruit, wheat, vegetable, evergreen, small grain and ornamental producers.

Our area of Michigan was well represented with eight attendees from the region returning to the area with a new understanding of sustainable agricultural production.

In the evaluations completed immediately after the event, respondents reported intentions to use information from the IPM Academy as a springboard to apply for new jobs, improve their current jobs, start businesses, or improve the financial viability of an existing business.

In the post-growing-season survey conducted in October 2012, participants indicated that they adopted new practices and technologies on 43,788 acres of Michigan agricultural land as a result of attending the Academy. Some of the new practices and technologies adopted included pest scouting, using weather modeling, encouraging beneficial insects and natural enemies, minimizing pesticide use and protecting native pollinators.

The IPM Academy is one example of how supporting MSU Extension helps support a sustainable future for Michigan. Growers from around the state have reported that information from MSUE educational programming has led to the adoption of new tools and technologies that mitigated environmental impacts on 57,848 acres of Michigan farm land, reduced pesticide use by 40,600 pounds and decreased fertilizer applications by 133,524 pounds.

New management strategies helped farmers prevent the loss of 880,100 pounds of nutrients and 1,014,932 tons of soil from Michigan cropland. These numbers represent only a fraction of the thousands of Michigan farmers who attended MSUE educational programs during 2012, suggesting that the true reach and impact of MSUE on Michigan agriculture is truly remarkable!

Interested in attending an MSU IPM event? Visit <http://events.anr.msu.edu> for a list of upcoming opportunities or <http://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?folder=IPMAcademy2013> for more information about the 2013 IPM Academy.

MSU Extension provides assistance to fiscally strapped local governments

Greening Michigan Institute



Since the financial crisis of 2008, Michigan local governments have experienced ever increasing degrees of fiscal stress. This stress has been caused by the decline of revenues, including state aid and property taxes, as well as the increasing costs of providing benefit coverage and other costs

related to employees.

This equation of falling revenues and rising costs has led to the reality of a structural deficit. A structural deficit means that as each budget cycle opens, the government faces the need to make major changes to operations. One reflection of these changes is the reduction of nearly 20 percent of the Michigan local police force in the last five years.

MSU Extension has been at the forefront of responding to these local fiscal challenges via a number of tools and educational strategies. In 2011 and 2012, MSUE trained more than 500 local officials in a series of workshops to prepare for addressing and handling these financial problems and how to deal with new Emergency Manager Law (PA 4 of 2011).

This training was extended to communities that were facing significant and immediate financial problems and the prospect of state takeover. In one example, MSU Extension staff members provided members of the Inkster City Council with training that helped avoid a state takeover and led to a consent agreement being signed by the city and the state. Similar assistance has been provided to other cities across the state.

These trainings were supplemented by MSU Extension publications, including a major report concerning the city of Flint that informed local and state policy makers concerning that city's problems. Several frequently asked question documents have been produced about the city of Detroit's challenges.

MSU Extension stands ready to provide even more information and tools to communities facing short- and long-term fiscal stress. New publications are being launched aimed at educating the public and policy makers about the issues surrounding municipal bankruptcy.

Specialists and educators are also working to identify both the scope of the pension and health care challenges facing local governments and some strategies for addressing these issues. These costs remain a critical topic in identifying the solutions that will move local governments towards long-term fiscal solvency.

While these tools are aimed at the hard pressed local governments of southeast Michigan, they are easily adaptable to other parts of the state as well. Please contact MSU Extension specialist [Eric Scorsone](#) at 517-353-9460 if you are aware of a situation or are a local policy maker where a local government is in need of fiscal assistance. You can also find a local MSU Extension educator who works with [state and local government](#) issues by [visiting the MSU Extension webpage expert search](#).

MSU Extension prepares today's youth to be tomorrow's scientists

Children & Youth Institute



MSU Extension staff members across the state have provided numerous hands-on educational opportunities for young people to learn about and engage in science. One opportunity was 4-H National Youth Science Day (NYSD) that allowed thousands of Michigan youth to become scientists for the day.

These events took place in communities across the state and were intended to spark an interest in science and future science careers. As part of 4-H NYSD 2012, youth participated in an experiment that introduced them to robotic engineering concepts as they programmed a robot to clean up a simulated environmental spill.

"Our nation is falling behind other countries in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math," said Donald T. Floyd, Jr., president and CEO of the National 4-H Council. "However, participation in high-quality positive youth development programs like 4-H NYSD offers youth and adult mentors the opportunity to engage together in exciting, hands-on scientific exploration in order to build the next generation of scientists, engineers and mathematicians."

In addition to the 4-H NYSD experiment, MSU Extension staff members offered 4-H Science Blast events to introduce youth to many areas of science. Science Blasts are community events that allow 4-H to partner with local schools and businesses to demonstrate the importance of science literacy and highlight what opportunities are available to youth and parents in their communities. Youth participate in hands-on activities and learn about 4-H science programs and science-related career possibilities.



Research has shown that participation in 4-H programs makes a positive difference in the lives of youth. Longitudinal research conducted by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University has found that a child involved in 4-H is more likely to be an engaged, effective citizen than a youth who participates in any other youth organization. When compared to their peers, 4-Hers are:

- * Nearly two times more likely to get better grades in school;
- * Nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college;
- * 41 percent less likely to engage in risky behaviors;
- * 25 percent more likely to positively contribute to their families and communities; and
- * Performing better in science, engineering, technology and applied math subjects and are more interested in pursuing science careers.

The study found that the advantages of 4-H participation include higher educational achievement and higher motivation for future education.

Through the work of locally based MSU Extension 4-H educators and program coordinators, a variety of programs designed to build youth interest and knowledge in science were offered in north central lower Michigan during 2012. Efforts around NYSD and 4-H Science Blast included activities in which 4-H partnered with area schools and superintendents to offer these learning opportunities.

Thank you for reading this Report to our Partners. It's full of information related to the work MSU Extension is providing around the state and in our district. Please forward this to others who may benefit from knowing more about MSU Extension. If you would like more information about any of these, or other services, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Shari Spoelman
District 6 Coordinator
MSU Extension

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