



Oakland County 2023 Annual Report

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MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

Oakland County 2023 Annual Report



MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

This annual report is a summary of the work that MSU Extension has done in Oakland County to help people improve their lives through an educational process that brings the vast knowledge and resources of Michigan State University to local communities in southeast Michigan.

In the following pages, you will discover the stories of progress, resilience, and empowerment that have defined our engagement with individuals, families, and organizations across District 11North. From cultivating sustainable agriculture to improving the health of families and nurturing the potential of our youth through 4-H programs, each achievement is a testament to the dedication of our team and the unwavering support of our communities.

We could not do this work without local partners in community government, local volunteers and supporters, or people who turn to us for the information and education we provide. Please continue to use us as a resource for information and ask us questions.

Thank you for your support in 2023 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Kristi Evans

District 11North Director- Macomb & Oakland Counties

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Tollgate Education Center

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Food Safety Hotline

877-643-9882

Ask Extension

canr.msu.edu/outreach/ask-an-expert

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

SUPPORTING STRONG COMMUNITIES

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS

MSU Extension plays a crucial role in supporting entrepreneurs by providing education, resources, technical assistance, and community engagement opportunities that help entrepreneurs start and grow successful businesses in Michigan.

39 Oakland County residents participated in Savvy Tips for Starting a Small Business.

MSU PRODUCT CENTER

The MSU Product Center supports innovation and growth for business, industry and entrepreneurs in food, agriculture, and natural resource sectors. Field-based innovation counselors advise entrepreneurs on business planning, regulatory requirements, and product development needs to help define

and launch innovative products. The MSU Product Center engaged **281** Oakland County residents in 2023 through programs and workshops, one-on-one client counselling, events including the Making It In Michigan Conference and Trade Show.



14 Oakland County residents completed the free online course “How

to Start a Food Truck Business”, where they learned the process of developing a business plan, developing a menu, selecting a food truck, trailer, or cart, writing a marketing plan and identifying target customers and competitors, and the process of becoming licensed in Michigan.

PROMOTING FINANCIAL STABILITY

MSU Extension provides resources and education on money management, foreclosure prevention, buying your own home, retirement planning and more to help individuals and families be more financially healthy.

187 Oakland County residents participated in financial and homeownership education programs including Informed Renter, Spending Plans and Credit, Financial Preparedness for Disasters, Protecting Your Identity, Property Tax, Foreclosure Basics, Homebuyer Education, and more.



In partnership with Oakland County Michigan Works!, **23** residents

participated in Wealth Building programs and learned about creating savings plans, growing savings, evaluating investing risks, goal setting, different types of investments, and tips on finding a financial advisor.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY VITALITY

Thriving communities combine knowledgeable and engaged legislators, businesses, community groups, and residents. **244** Oakland County residents participated in **39** programs about leadership, planning and zoning, policy options, land use, and environmental issues.



The MSU Extension Citizen Planner Program offers land use education for locally appointed and elected planning officials and interested residents throughout Michigan. Participants learn about positive land use decisions for their communities regarding zoning regulation, best practices for planning and zoning, and sustainable community planning. **25** Oakland County residents completed the Citizen Planner program in 2023.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

AGRICULTURE, AGRIBUSINESS & CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

MSU Extension serves the agriculture and floriculture industries by engaging in research, education and outreach that enhances the quality of life of Michigan residents. This includes providing resources and information in areas that directly affect human health for those involved in these industries.

In 2023, **2,980** Oakland County residents participated in 136 programs related to:

- animal agriculture;
- agribusiness management;
- beekeeping;
- consumer and ornamental horticulture;
- and field crops, fruit crops, and vegetables.

ASK EXTENSION

Through the Ask Extension system, Michigan residents can ask questions and receive expert answers quickly on a broad range of subjects through an [online](#) form.

In 2023, experts answered 6,471 questions and almost 14 percent of those questions were asked by residents of Oakland County.

SMART GARDENING

MSU Extension offers programs and resources to support residential and commercial gardeners at all levels of experience. In 2023,

530 Oakland County residents participated in gardening programs including: 2023 Plant Quest, where participants learned about plants, breeding vegetables, and how to create a colorful garden filled with annuals, perennials, and shrubs; Dig In!, a year-long series of one-hour presentations on topics related to Michigan gardening; Foundations of Gardening, where participants learn about many aspects of gardening, and more.

MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

MSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers are committed to improving the quality of life in Michigan through horticulture-based volunteerism and beautifying communities. Oakland County Master Gardeners represent the largest cohort in the state (19%). With 364 Active-Gold certified volunteers, Oakland County Master Gardeners contributed **14,344** hours of service in Oakland County throughout 2023.

SUPPORTING BEES, POLLINATORS & BEEKEEPERS

MSU Extension works with partners around the state to support beekeepers, growers, land managers, and policymakers to promote economic vitality and ecological stability. In 2023, more than **130** Oakland County residents participated in in-person, in-hive, and virtual programs on commercial and hobby beekeeping, gardening and planting for pollinators, and pesticide applicator training continuing education to protect bees and pollinators, and more.



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48 Oakland County residents became Pollinator Champions through a free- online course. Participants learned about different types of pollinators and their role in our environment, risk factors that affect pollinators, and how to establish a pollinator-supportive habitat.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Our natural resources programs improve public understanding, help landowners and communities use those assets for sustainable long-term social and economic development and conserve natural resources for future generations.

In 2023, **738** Oakland County residents participated in natural resources programs including Introduction to Lakes, Michigan Conservation Stewards program, Michigan Master Naturalist program, nature walks, and more.

Designed for lake users, lakefront property owners, and lake managers, Introduction to Lakes is a six-week online course in which **31** Oakland County residents increased their knowledge of understanding of lake ecology, watersheds, shorelines, Michigan water law, aquatic plants, and community involvement in 2023.



“This course has been a wonderful opportunity for me. I’m so glad I found out about it! I have disabilities that make it difficult to see and hear at times, and the videos were extremely clear and bright with well-done closed captioning. All of the instructors were easy to understand. The lists of resources has been invaluable to me. I’m glad to be able to pass along everything I’m learning to friends and family. Please keep these classes and classes like this available to the public. They’re amazing!”

-Program Participant



SUPPORTING CLEAN WATERS

The Clean Boats, Clean Waters program is funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and is a partnership between MSU Extension and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. The program grants supply up to

\$3,000 to organizations communicating aquatic invasive species prevention information through outreach materials and in-person educational events to boaters. In 2023, the Lakeville Property Owners Association received funding to support installing a CD3 Roadside boat cleaning station at the Lakeville Lake DNR boat launch, hosting educational events, and sharing information and resources with property owners.



26 Oakland County residents learned about science-based ecosystem management principles, restoration and conservation in the Michigan Stewards Program.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



CHILDREN & YOUTH

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Michigan 4-H is growing current and future leaders. The largest youth development organization in Michigan, 4-H provides thousands of young people with experiential learning opportunities to explore new interests and discover their passion. While learning about the world, youth gain valuable life skills such as responsibility, citizenship, teamwork, and problem-solving. In 2023, **1,593** Oakland County youth participated in **206** programs.



BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

The goal of Michigan 4-H Youth Development is that every youth possesses

the necessary skills to be successful. In 2023, **316** Oakland County youths participated in career and workforce development, leadership, and financial literacy programs. Youths learned about wealth building, building and protecting their credit, professionalism in the workplace, paychecks and taxes, eating healthy on a budget, basic sewing, buying a vehicle, medical insurance, and more.



In partnership with Growing Pontiac, **60** Oakland County youths at Walt Whitman Elementary School participated in a

4-H Garden Beautification Project, where they learned about planting, soil, and maintaining a garden.



28 youths at Oakland County 4-H Horse Camp learned about animal science; riding, showing, and caring for horses while gaining life skills such as leadership and teamwork over the course of four days.



One camper, Grayson B. (age 9) had a perfect time learning and making friends. With physical disabilities, instructor Will made a deal with Grayson that if he could lead his mini horse through all the obstacles, Will would put on a blindfold for Grayson to lead *him* through the obstacles as well.



SUPPORTING PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

Research shows that the possession of skills such as verbal and nonverbal communication, the ability to work cooperatively, a sense of responsibility and respect, community involvement, decision making and problem-solving are all predictors of academic, community, and workforce success. To help address this critical area of need, MSU Extension provides programs that help parents, caregivers, or other important adults in the lives of children develop important skills. In 2023, **536** Oakland County residents participated in these programs.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTH & NUTRITION

Through MSU Extension's nutrition and physical activity programming, Michigan adults, families, and children gain crucial knowledge about nutrition and healthy foods, increase their daily activity, and improve their food security. In 2023, **4,870** Oakland County residents participated in **514** health and nutrition programs.

Funded through the Farm Bill, MSU Extension offers two nutrition programs designed to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits:

SNAP-Ed:

(Supplemental Nutrition Education Program)

provides SNAP-eligible individuals or families with nutrition education, resources, and support to increase their likelihood of making healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles.

2,583

Oakland County residents attended **124** SNAP-Ed programs in 2023.

EFNEP:

(Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program)

focuses on improving the dietary habits and overall health for limited-resource adults who are responsible for planning, shopping and preparing food for children in their household.

633

Oakland County residents attended **33** EFNEP programs in 2023.

FOOD SAFETY

After participating in MSU Extension's food safety programming, **575** Oakland County residents learned how to reduce their risk of illness when preparing food and to preserve food safely; childcare providers learned how to reduce foodborne illnesses in the children they care for, and food service managers, workers and volunteers learned how to protect their customers' health and sell food products safely and legally.

Cooking for One participants at Southfield Parks & Recreation learned ways to make cooking simple and enjoyable; helpful tips and tricks to make healthy choices to eat well and be active; and participated in cooking real recipes for one.

(pictured: brussels sprouts hash & eggs)



"I enjoyed preparing dishes I never thought I could make!"

-Program participant



IMPACT AT A GLANCE

15,579

TOTAL OAKLAND COUNTY RESIDENTS PARTICIPATED IN MSU EXTENSION PROGRAMMING IN 2023



1,196

PROGRAMS HOSTED IN OAKLAND COUNTY



244

GOVERNMENT & COMMUNITY VITALITY PARTICIPANTS VOLUNTEERS



364

ACTIVE-GOLD MASTER GARDENER



166

4-H VOLUNTEERS



1,593

4-H YOUTH PARTICIPANTS



96

YOUTH LEADERSHIP & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS



738

NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



187

FINANCIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



413

COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS PARTICIPANTS



1,122

HEALTH & WELLNESS PARTICIPANTS



575

FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



3,216

NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS



More than 322,000 people in Michigan visited our website last year. You may want to look here too!

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