

Ogemaw County 2023 Annual Report

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- 220** PROGRAMS ATTENDED BY OGEMAW COUNTY RESIDENTS
- 34** SOIL SAMPLES FROM OGEMAW COUNTY PROCESSED
- 35** HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
- 127** RESIDENTS ATTENDED FOOD SAFETY PROGRAMS
- 18** RESIDENTS SERVED BY SNAP-ED
- 79** ANIMAL AGRICULTURE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
- 24** AGRIBUSINESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
- 283** YOUTHS ENROLLED IN 4-H

1,089
TOTAL OGEMAW COUNTY
RESIDENTS PARTICIPATED IN
MSU EXTENSION PROGRAMMING
IN 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

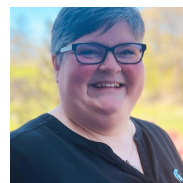
This annual report is a summary of the work that MSU Extension has done in Ogemaw County to help people improve their lives through an educational process that brings the vast knowledge and resources of Michigan State University to local communities in northeast Michigan.

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 4. From cultivating sustainable agriculture practices to 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 that 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,



Julie Darnton
District 4 Director



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

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS

The agriculture industry is developing and growing, contributing more than \$104.7 billion annually to Michigan's economy. MSU Extension works to increase farm success through workforce development opportunities, protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets, and advancing agriculture through applied research. In 2023, **213** residents from Ogemaw County participated in agriculture and agribusiness programs.

SUPPORTING LOCAL FARMERS

MSU Extension provides support to local farmers through farm visits, one-on-one and group meetings, and a wide variety of programs on topics including succession planning, record-keeping and farm financial analysis, nutrition and management, and more.



Calf production is an important agricultural business in Ogemaw County. 832 beef calves from 26 cow-calf farms sold at the 2023 West Branch Feeder Calf Sale with the total topping **\$1 million**.

MSU Extension supports calf production by communicating to farmers about market demands, assisting with weighing, bidding, and clerking sale during the auction, and providing a summary of price by weight class to producers.

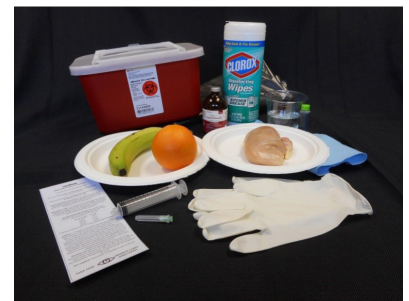
GROWING FUTURE FARMERS

While the agriculture industry continues to grow, the number of people from farming backgrounds continues to decrease. To address this gap and support new or transitioning farmers, MSU Extension has created the Developing and Educating and New Decision-makers (DEMaND) series. DEMaND is designed to help the next generation of farm operators learn about financial and business management strategies that can help them develop into managers and decision-makers on the farm.

In addition to supporting adults, MSU Extension continues to develop opportunities to introduce youth to agriculture sectors and potential areas of future employment. These efforts aim to introduce youth to different aspects of the industry, hopefully piquing their interest in further development as they consider employment options.



Breeding soundness exams can identify bulls that will not make for a successful calf crop. **28 cattle producers took 64 bulls to the West Branch Feeder Calf Stockyard** for a Breeding Soundness Exam clinic where Taylor Fritz of West Branch, a third-year veterinary student at MSU was able to assist in this hands-on learning opportunity.



20 Ogemaw County youths learned about specialized skills in animal care to ensure healthy animals and gained hands-on experience by practicing administering injections on oranges.



MSU is an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension is an equal opportunity organization. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY, FOOD & ENVIRONMENT

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, **34** Ogemaw County residents participated in natural resources programs including MI Paddle Stewards, Teaching Great Lakes Literacy workshops, Michigan Conservation Stewards, Michigan Birding 101, nature walks, and more.

SUPPORTING STRONG COMMUNITIES

Successful and thriving communities combine knowledgeable and engaged legislators, businesses, community groups, and residents. **11** residents from Ogemaw County participated in programs about leadership, planning and zoning, policy options, land use, and environmental issues.



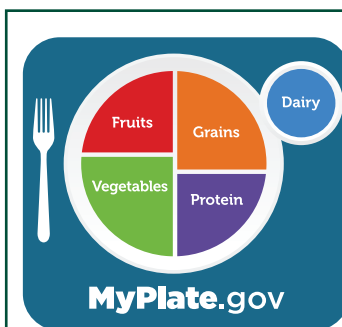
The Michigan Conservation Stewards program is designed for those interested in science-based ecosystem management principles and sharing this knowledge with others to help restore and conserve ecosystems throughout Michigan.

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, **153** Ogemaw County residents participated in **33** health and nutrition programs.

SUPPORTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

MSU Extension offers food preservation programs in-person and online. Classes cover a wide variety of topics, from water bath canning to blanching and freezing to making jam and jelly to preserving many Michigan grown vegetables to pickling to preserving venison and much, much more. After participating in MSU Extension's food safety programs including Cottage Food Law, ServSafe, and Home Food Preservation, **127** Ogemaw residents learned how to reduce their risk of illness when preparing food and how to preserve food safely; workers and volunteers learned how to protect their customers' health and sell food products safely and legally.



MSU Extension partners with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to provide

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), a nutrition education program designed to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits. MSU Extension SNAP-Ed nutrition instructors teach youth, teens, adults and seniors how to make health a priority through instructional series such as Show Me Nutrition, Eat Healthy Be Active, Cooking for One, and Healthy Eating Adds Up. **18** Ogemaw County residents participated in SNAP-Ed programs in 2023.



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 around them, youth gain valuable life skills such as responsibility, citizenship, teamwork, and problem solving. In 2023, **673** Ogemaw County youth participated in **103** programs.



More than 30 youths attended a 4-H Chocolate Party where they learned about the history of chocolate, how it grows, and tasted cacao nibs and samples of chocolate from all over the world.



14 youths learned about the Rainforest and the reptiles and amphibians that live in it at the West Branch District Library.

BREAKING RECORDS

At the 2023 Ogemaw County Fair, **195** youth marketed animals in the auction- *the highest number in more than ten years!*

In partnership with the Ogemaw Hills Sportsmen Association, 4-H Shooting Sports returned to Ogemaw County in 2023, with the club capped at **30** participants.



"My kids love this so much! We are so happy they have this opportunity. Thank you!"
-Parent of a youth participant

CONTACT US



205 South 8th Street
West Branch, MI 48661

989-345-0692

msue.ogemaw@msu.edu

canr.msu.edu/ogemaw

<https://www.facebook.com/MSUExtensionOgemawCounty4H>

Ian Sawyer, District Support,
sawyeria@msu.edu

Julie Darnton, District Director,
810-922-6483, darntonj@msu.edu

Colleen Van Goethem, County Support Staff,
colleen.vangoethem@affiliate.msu.edu

Stephanie Stephens, 4-H Program Coordinator,
steph544@msu.edu

Karen Collins, Program Instructor,
colli804@msu.edu

Alexandra Clemens, Community Nutrition Instructor,
cleme176@msu.edu

Phil Durst, Dairy & Beef Educator,
durstp@msu.edu

Dorothy Munn, Policy & Risk Management Educator,
[munnd@msu.edu](mailto:munn@msu.edu)