

## Macomb County 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

### Message from the District Coordinator

With new tools like iPhones, iPods, BlackBerrys, tablets and GPS devices, we can store, find and share information in ways never before seen in history. Michigan State University Extension is joining this technology revolution to bring resources and information closer to you.

During 2012, MSU Extension revamped its web presence at [www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu) to provide quick and easy access to current, relevant, useful information. The search tool lets you find information updated daily by our educators and experts either by subject or location.

To find MSU Extension staff with specific expertise in your county, search by Macomb County, the area of interest, or name at <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>. Or you can utilize the online people and expertise search at <http://people.msue.msu.edu>. If you need specific expertise, you can utilize Extension's national system of experts by choosing the "eXtension Ask an Expert" link (<https://ask.extension.org/ask>) and your question is shared with Cooperative Extension and university faculty across the United States.

The MSU Extension web site also contains a robust set of current events and programs that are being offered in Macomb County, and Michigan. MSU Extension bulletins, soil tests and other materials are available on the web site or by visiting the MSU Extension Bookstore at <http://bookstore.msue.msu.edu/>.

I encourage you to visit the new "21st Century" MSU Extension to see how accessible it is to find what you're looking for. All this cannot and never will, replace our staff, but will certainly help make the work of our exceptional educators more accessible to you and to Macomb County.

Sincerely,  
Marie A. Ruemenapp  
District II Coordinator

### 2012 Program Participation Numbers

Children & Youth	4,151
Volunteers	1,242
Natural Resources & Sea Grant	6,804
Volunteers	315
Financial Stability & Community Development	1,223
Community Food Systems	1,450
Volunteers	318
Agriculture, Agribusiness & Horticulture	2,346
Master Gardener Volunteers	287
Nutrition, Health & Wellness	5,528
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,664</b>

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### Mission

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.



### Contact Us

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Michigan's food and agriculture system contributes \$91.4 billion annually to the state's economy. Farming and farm-raised commodities make up over \$13 billion of that figure. This begins with the less than 2 percent of the population on family farms creating a ripple effect impacting the entire state, nation and international exports of close to 200 raw and processed food and non-food products.

Second only to California in crop diversity; more than 330 different kinds of farm products are produced here in Michigan. For almost 50 of those commodities, Michigan ranks in the national top-10 in production. Michigan is also the number one producer of blueberries, tart cherries, Niagara grapes, Easter lilies, squash, pickling cucumbers, several varieties of dry beans and landscaping plants like geraniums, petunias and impatiens. Nationally, Michigan ranks second in production of carrots, celery, and dry beans and ranks third in production of apples, asparagus, snap beans and fresh cucumbers.

MSU Extension is unique in that it pulls together science-based faculty and staff members to provide unbiased information to Michigan residents. MSU Extension is a distinctive resource helping farmers and agricultural businesses learn to effectively manage production, financial and environmental systems for success from the individual farm to the state's natural resource base to the consumer's dinner plate. All of which comes together to ensure that food and agriculture continue to keep the economy viable.

The overarching goals of MSU Extension agriculture and agribusiness programs are to:

- Increase productivity and financial solvency of Michigan farms and agricultural enterprises. Agricultural revenue translates into more dollars spent in local communities, thereby increasing the tax base.
- Increase productivity encompassing not only the amount of food produced in Michigan but also high quality, safe and affordable food for Michigan residents and for global exports. Non-food crops supply high-quality and high-value products both in and out of state.
- Protect natural resources through educational programming that targets more efficient use of energy, water, fertilizers, pesticides and nutrients and increased use of managed energy sources thereby ensuring clean, abundant water, soil, air and energy resources for future generations.



## Agriculture in Macomb County

Agriculture is the second largest industry in Michigan, and an industry that utilizes MSU Extension's research and assistance to commercial agriculture and horticulture ventures as well as individual consumers across the state. Over 425 working farms in Macomb County produce agricultural products valued over \$52,000,000 annually. MSU Extension expertise provided to Macomb County agricultural producers and agribusinesses includes:

- A new invasive pest: the [Spotted Wing Drosophila](#) (SWD) has become a threat to berry growers in Michigan and in Macomb County. This small, vinegar fly can lay its eggs into ripening and ripe berries, and it has been found in all the major fruit-producing regions of the state. It is critical that growers monitor, identify and manage this pest both for production and quality/consumer acceptance. MSU Extension educational programs on this specific issue reached a total of 87 growers, several in Macomb County, who were surveyed. A total of 59 growers followed the MSU Extension recommendations and 28 did not. The total acreage surveyed was 5,870 acres, and out of those 3,185 were protected by following MSU Extension recommendations and 2,690 were lost to the SWD damage.
- MSU Extension educators work with farmers throughout Michigan to help maximize the production of cellulosic ethanol (fuel) producing crops, including switchgrass and miscanthus. Research on effective production methods for fuel producing crops is being conducted in southeast Michigan fields.
- Integrated Crop and Pest Management Updates reached 325 participants, both farmers and consultants who were able to reach many more farmers, including a number in Macomb County. MSU updated production information ranges from insects, diseases, weeds and nutrients and reflects the top issues of drought, rising input costs and rapidly evolving technologies.
- The dairy industry in Michigan accounts for about one-fourth of the total gross sales in Michigan's agriculture. According to "Milk Production, Dispersion and Income 2012 Summary (April 2013), USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, in 2012, Michigan ranked eighth in the nation for total milk production with a total of 8,889 million pounds. Dairy producers in Macomb County and southeast Michigan are able to access research based information from MSU Extension Educator Craig Thomas.
- The 2012 Nutrition Basics for Dairy Farmers resulted in an average annual savings of \$83,000 per farm based on their intentions to do one or several of the following: decrease expenses, improve milk yields, and improve milk fat and/or protein percentage; all of which increase farm profits assisting the last few remaining dairy farms in Macomb County to remain profitable.

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## MSU Product Center

Creation of new businesses, especially in the food and agriculture sector, has become important to the economic development and viability of Michigan. Local MSU Extension staff and campus-based staff of the MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assist Macomb County residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bioeconomy.

The local MSU Extension educator has special training as an innovation counselor to deliver these services. Business counseling is conducted on a one-on-one basis and may take place at the MSU Extension office or the client's home or business location. The assistance is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include things like developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain or seeking funding options.

In 2012, there were 48 Macomb County residents who were clients of the Product Center receiving education and support in developing their businesses. In the past year, 353 counseling sessions were conducted with entrepreneurs from Macomb County. This business development resulted in the creation of 17 new jobs and \$4,705,000 of new or increased sales. Total capital formation that resulted from these businesses during 2012 totaled \$1,195,000.

Statewide, MSU Extension educators assisted 193 venture start-ups based on a commencement of a business and continued planning of a new business, or an expansion of an existing business. During 2012, increased annual sales for the cumulative first-year only sales totaled over \$12,000,000 and the value of increased investment was over \$6,000,000.

## Urban Horticulture

Urban horticulture involves educating citizens in gardening and garden related issues. With trends moving toward community gardens and backyard gardening, there is a growing need for educational assistance in these areas. MSU Extension horticulture programs are helping residents make environmentally friendly choices by reducing pesticide use and making nutrient appropriate fertilizer choices to protect the quality of water sources. They promote gardening as a means of living a healthier lifestyle in terms of exercise and diet. For residents with limited space, staff help educate residents on alternatives to traditional gardening such as container gardens and intensive gardening in small spaces. Diagnostic services assist in identifying insects and plant problems for homeowners and provide information on invasive plants and pests and their management.

As churches, communities and schools develop community gardens, staff members

**MSUE Garden  
Hotline**

**1-888-MSUE-4MI**

**MSUE Gardening  
Web Site**

[www.migarden.msu.edu](http://www.migarden.msu.edu)

provide educational training and information on the establishment and maintenance of community gardens.

The MSU Extension consumer horticulture staff developed several tools aimed at providing answers to consumer and home owner questions whenever needed, 24/7.

- The toll-free **Lawn and Garden Hotline** connects consumers throughout the state. Over 3,200 Michigan gardeners including 72 people from Macomb County utilized this free service in 2012, by calling 1-888-MSUE-4MI (1-888-678-3464) for answers to gardening, lawn, landscape and pest questions. An additional 1,000 calls were handled locally.
- Residents looking for information or answers to gardening, lawn, landscape or pest questions may also visit [www.migarden.msu.edu](http://www.migarden.msu.edu) and use the “Ask an Expert” feature to submit their questions to Extension horticulture experts in Michigan, and across the United States. Responses are generally sent within 48 hours.
- Horticulture staff developed an easy to use **Soil Test Kit** self-mailer, available from the MSU Extension Bookstore ([www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu](http://www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu)) or at local Extension offices. The mailer can be used to test the nutrients of home soils for lawns vegetable gardens, trees, shrubs, flowers and small fruits. Based on the results, a custom fertilization program is developed for each sample. The cost of a Soil Test Kit is \$25.

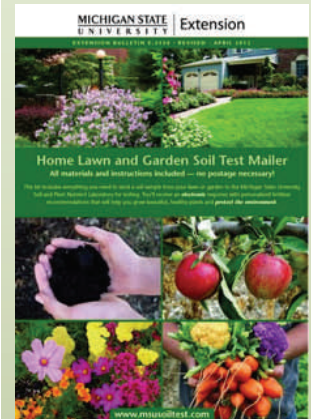
During 2012, workshops and classes provided by MSU Extension staff provided assistance, information and training throughout the county.

**Landscaping Programs:** Staff continued assisting the Warren Community Development block Grant program and Habitat for Humanity, providing programming on landscaping for residents to improve home values and beautify their neighborhoods.

**Growing Herbs:** A series of classes on herbs gave 213 residents information on growing them, cooking with herbs to provide more healthy food and preserving them properly. A sampling of participant survey for one class indicated the 74% planned to grow more herbs and 78% planned to include more herbs in their diet as a result of the program.

**Master Composter:** Classes on composting and vermicomposting provided 50 residents with information about correct methods to avoid odor issues, reduce rodent problems, and provide a free source of soil amendments for yards and gardens. Twenty Master Composters provided 426 volunteer-service hours educating residents on composting. According to Independent Sector, a Washington based coalition of foundations, corporations and nonprofit organizations, the value of a volunteer’s time is \$21.79 per hour, making the value of these donated service hours \$9,283.

**Beekeeping:** A class on Bees and Beekeeping had 13 participants interested in both the environmental importance of bees as pollinators and as a possible business opportunity.



**20 Master Composters provided 426 volunteer-service hours valued at \$9,283.**

**The MSU Extension Master Gardener Program has trained Macomb County volunteers for 34 years.**

## Master Gardener Programs

The MSU Extension Macomb Master Gardener program has helped Macomb residents for 34 years. MSU Extension staff trained 47 new Master Gardener volunteers in Macomb County. During 2012, the 267 Macomb County Master Gardener volunteers donated a total of 11,270 hours of volunteer service to local communities. Using figures calculated by the Independent Sector, a Washington based coalition of foundations, corporations and nonprofit organizations, the value of a volunteer's time is \$21.79 per hour. In 2012, the value of Macomb County Master Gardeners volunteer time donated to communities was \$245,573.

Working with MSU Extension horticulture staff, these volunteers assisted over 1,000 residents with gardening concerns, insect identification or plant diagnostic issues. For many years Macomb County Master Gardener volunteers primarily answered phones and hotline responses. However, today their roles have expanded to be more proactive and engaged in community based projects assisting with:

- Setting up exhibits and manning information booths at farmers markets in Mt. Clemens, Warren, New Baltimore, the Spring Plant Exchange, and Ask-A-Master Gardener retail connection.
- Writing news articles.
- Participating in community gardens, yards and neighborhood environmental programs, public demonstration gardens, community plantings and control of invasive plants. Historic home gardens at the Octagon House, Baumgartner House, Crocker House and Meadowbrook Hall received their attention, as did the Clinton

Township Spillway Bike Path, the Macomb County Martha T. Berry Medical Facility, and St. Clair Shores Memorial Park.

- As part of a "Care and Share" program, Master Gardener Karen Burke shared her 17 years of experience in preserving fruits and vegetables through classes on dehydrating produce. This class drew 97 participants.

**Master Gardener, Karen Burke, teaching a dehydrating food class**



## Great Lakes Literacy: *Understanding the influence of the Great Lakes*

Many residents of Michigan are unaware of the value and effects of the Great Lakes. Knowing about these lakes is important since 20% of the world's fresh water is contained in the Great Lakes, approximately 95% of North America's surface fresh water is in them, and approximately 40 million people are dependent on the water from those lakes. How the lakes were formed, how the ecological systems are unique, how to preserve those systems, and how the lakes affect our economy – are all important features to understand, especially for Macomb residents who live in a county that borders this precious natural resource.

To raise awareness and increase the understanding of this valuable natural resource, MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant focus much of its programming in southeast Michigan on Great Lakes literacy. To this end, MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant educators, with assistance from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Centers for Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE), developed and provide the following programs in Macomb County:

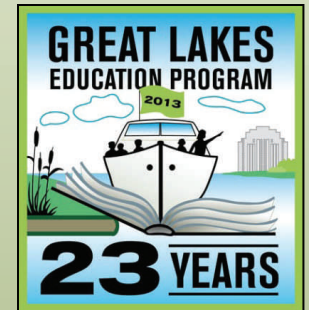
- Great Lakes Education Program (GLEP), a classroom and vessel-based education program for middle school students,
- Summer Discovery Cruises, a vessel-based educational program for the general public,
- Michigan Clean Marina Program, and
- Sea Grant Michigan resident education.

More information on all of these programs can be found on the Great Lakes Literacy Principles at the MSU Extension website: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/>, and search for *Great Lakes Literacy*.

### Great Lakes Education Program

While the Great Lakes are a key economic factor to all the Great Lakes states, there was little information regarding them in Michigan's K-12 curriculum. MSU Extension and Michigan Sea Grant designed an educational program called the Great Lakes Education Program (GLEP) to meet this need. With assistance from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the Centers for Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE), this program has continued to expand to new areas.

During 2012, classroom and vessel-based field experiences introduced 1,278 fourth-grade students from 51 classes and 10 districts to resources of the Great Lakes and its tributaries. The first phase of the program began in the classroom with teachers utilizing the GLEP curriculum. The program included segments that integrate history, geography, physical and biological sciences, math, literature and the arts to increase student interest



**23 years of  
advancing Great  
Lakes Literacy  
among K-12  
students  
throughout  
Southeast  
Michigan**

## NATURAL RESOURCES

in natural resources and encourage understanding of their role as environmental stewards, including activities that focus on water, land, people and life. These activities are designed to familiarize students with the Great Lakes and the ecosystems.



The second phase of the program provided a field experience aboard a sixty-five foot Coast Guard certified ship which converted into a floating classroom known as the “Schoolship”. Onboard, students engaged in exploration of the physical, chemical, cultural and biological dimensions of the Great Lakes watersheds, specifically Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River. They experienced hands-on activities such as weather observation, navigation, marlinespike and marine knot-tying, bottom sampling, plankton sampling, dissolved oxygen experiments, pH and carbon dioxide experiments, water clarity and color testing. A total of 243 parent chaperones and 51 teachers helped 21 volunteers provide this

experience. These volunteers donated over 435 hours of their time.

Teachers provided the third, or post cruise, phase of the program in their classroom using GLEP post cruise activities to reinforce the concepts they have experienced.

### Summer Discover Cruise

Michigan Sea Grant Extension has offered Michigan residents the opportunity to “learn about the Great Lakes by being on the Great Lakes” since 2001, through the Summer Discovery Cruise program. This past summer, 34 cruises involved 986 people, 474 from Macomb County, in learning more about Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River and Lake Erie, with participants coming from 13 Michigan counties and 15 other states.



Conducted in partnership with Lake St. Clair Metropark and Lake Erie Metropark marinas, hundreds of self-motivated learners take part in a variety of educational cruises that provide physical and informational access to Lake St. Clair, the



St. Clair River delta, the Detroit River and Lake Erie. Thirteen types of cruises were offered in 2012: Nature; Lake St. Clair History; Great Lakes Science for Teachers; Lighthouses; Shipping Out; Journey Through the Straits, Aliens Among Us, Night Watch, and Handy Billy. Partnering with other environmentally concerned groups provided Sea Grant educators the opportunity to offer *Wetlands & Wildlife* and *Fisheries* with Michigan Department of Natural Resources; *Shipwrecks!* with DTE Energy; and *Wind, Waves & Weather* with the National Weather Service.

### Michigan Clean Marina Program

The Michigan Clean Marina Program is a cooperative effort between Michigan Boating Industries Association, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and MSU Extension/Michigan Sea Grant. The program seeks to protect the Great Lakes and Michigan's waterways through education and adoption of practices at marinas that reduce or minimize impacts on water quality and aquatic and coastal habitats. The Michigan Sea Grant Extension educator leading this initiative has programmatic responsibility across the entire state, but a great deal of his work is focused on Macomb County which contains more marinas than any other county in Michigan. In 2012, there were three marinas certified as a Michigan Clean Marina in Macomb County, and over 15 additional marinas were visited to discuss the program.

**New Publications:** In 2012, Michigan Sea Grant released the following new publications available at <http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/publications/bookstore>

*Life of the Lakes* - From the earliest days, people have been drawn to the beauty, resources and way of life found in the Great Lakes. This book explores the part that the fishery has played in the life of the Great Lakes, examining the management, ecology, history, present and future of the lakes from a regional perspective.

The book is written for anglers, educators, natural resource managers, and anyone interested in Great Lakes issues. Now in its third edition, *The Life of the Lakes* continues to provide up-to-date information, focusing on the people, the resources and the fish that all play a part in the story.

*Great Lakes Basin Map* - includes a depth profile of the lakes and major rivers within the system, shows the direction and volume of flow through each of the lakes, and represents the journey of water from Lake Superior out to the Atlantic Ocean. It was designed to be attractive as well as educational and is easy to use –



## NATURAL RESOURCE

which makes it great for the classroom or as a framed homage to the amazing Great Lakes.

*Divers & Dabblers Poster* - Figuring out the identity of any animal can be an engaging challenge. One clue on its own won't likely provide all of the evidence you need. Yet, adding up observations creates a mosaic of information that can reveal what species you've spotted. This poster helps you find clues on identifying the duck as a dabbler or diver.



### Natural Resources Education

The Macomb County MSU Extension natural resources and environmental education programs connect county citizens, particularly youth, with the natural resources of our state. Several curriculums are designed as stand-alone programs to complement and increase students' knowledge as they advance through elementary school. All of the programs are age appropriate and provide hands-on learning to reinforce specific concepts.

**Water Conservation Program:** This classroom program for first through third grades focuses on where water comes from, how to use it wisely, and how to protect and conserve this resource. In 2012 3,668 students in 152 classes from 16 districts of the 21 Macomb school districts participated in this Extension program. Each student received a family take-home packet about the program that encouraged water conservation in the home. Unfortunately, the availability of this program is restricted by the number of volunteers available to provide the enrichment program. Three volunteers provided 42 hours of presentations in 2012, but the requests for the program this past year numbered in the hundreds, as they have each year since it was piloted in 2000.

**Green Schools Teachers' Training:** The [Michigan Green Schools Initiative](#) is a statewide program started in 2006 that encourages teachers in K-12 public and private schools to participate in environmentally friendly activities with their students. Schools earn points for adopting and improving their environmental practices by using fewer natural resources, and providing educational outreach and presentations thereby saving scarce school operating funds.

In 2012, MSU Extension educators from across District II came together to provide training and resources to more than 250 teachers and parent volunteers, including 86 teachers from Macomb County, on the topics of Water, Watersheds and the Great Lakes; Community Food Systems; Energy Conservation; and Growing a School Garden.

Teachers received hands-on activities, curriculum and resources that could be taught in their classrooms. Activities that earn points include coordinating a school-wide recycling program or waste-free lunch program, implementing a school-wide energy saving program, participating in activities that promote the health of the Great Lakes watershed such as a local watershed festival or Earth Day event and create a pollinator or vegetable garden and tasting local foods.

In Macomb County, Patti Dibb, Macomb's Green Schools Coordinator, modified the points earned system by adding purchasing locally grown food from local farms for classroom tasting or participating in farm field trips to add some new challenges for the schools.

Southeast Michigan teachers left the workshops knowing more about resources and curriculum tied to Green Schools activities and how to earn points for their school. To learn how a school can become a green school visit the [Macomb Green Schools website](#).



## Government & Public Policy

MSU Extension works diligently to provide timely information regarding public announcements and concerns regarding Michigan's natural resources. In January, 2012, P.A. 299 of 2010, which amended fertilizer use in Michigan by restricting some types of fertilizers and requiring some best management practices, became law. These new requirements pertained to governments, businesses, professional landscapers and homeowners. MSU Extension partnered with Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) to develop an educational program on the new amendments to Michigan's Fertilizer Law and the impacts on water quality. Piloted in Macomb County in partnership with the annual Pesticide Applicator trainings, over 65 pesticide applicators and landscape professionals and owners participated. It was then offered as a statewide live webinar at 90 sites in 32

counties, including Macomb County at the start of the 2012 growing season and can be seen at <http://connect.msu.edu/p33azwwonh6/>.

A follow-up survey was emailed to webinar participants near the end of the growing season in August, to identify impact from the webinar. Some of the results follow.

Pre-webinar Survey Results	Post-webinar Survey Results
15% indicated they were knowledgeable of new amendments	67% reported they were knowledgeable 22% reported they were very knowledgeable 74% more knowledgeable about nutrient use 50% changed one or more practices as a result of webinar 40% added soil testing to their practices 84% shared the information with friends, co-workers and family

### Climate Change Program

Climate change is a controversial issue. Some believe it is real – others don't. To help residents better understand and make informed decisions about this issue a workshop called "Climate Change and Water Quality – Implications for the Future" was held in Macomb County. With water playing a vital role in the local economy and "sense of place" it is important for Macomb residents to have an understanding the impact of climate has on water resources.

MSU professors Dr. Jeff Andresen, Dr. David Lusch, Dr. Joan Rose and MSU Extension specialist Claire Layman, along with other nationally known experts, presented on four aspects of the climate change debate:

- The causes of climate change including global trends and projected future changes,
- The impacts of weather changes on hydrological changes over the next 40 years and its impact on the Great Lakes, inland lakes and rivers,
- The health impacts from climate, water quality changes and tools to detect fecal sources of pollution and drinking water risks, and
- Public perception of climate change, why it is a contentious issue and how to engage stakeholders in dialogue on the topic.

Forty-three residents from Macomb and Oakland counties participated in the half-day educational program. Post program feedback indicated that participants increased their knowledge about the climate change issue, the controversy around this issue and the impacts on this region regarding water quality, agriculture and the economy.

Successful, thriving communities combine knowledgeable and engaged legislators, businesses, community groups and residents. By connecting these groups with the best research based tools, MSU Extension helps enhance the quality of life in Michigan, helps communities create and retain important jobs and gives residents and group the tools to positively impact their cities, towns, townships and the state.

**Ballot Forum Webinar** — The 2012 election had more statewide ballot proposals than any election in 40 years. The Government & Public Policy Work Group of MSU Extension organized two live webinars to educate residents on the ballot issues. Eight sites around the state hosted these webinars.

Over 40 residents attended the Macomb Ballot Forum at the MSU Extension office. The program provided objective, research-based information on each statewide and local ballot issues. Participants heard MSU Extension specialists and staff outline each proposal before breaking into discussion groups based on the issue they wanted to further discuss. Each table had an Extension Advisory Council member as a facilitator. After discussion, questions formulated by the groups were submitted to campus and answered by a specialist live, via the web. Participant evaluations indicated more knowledge on the issues and confidence on how they would vote on them.

**Financial, Housing and Energy Education** — MSU Extension staff provided Macomb County residents with classes, seminars and workshops to help them manage personal finances. In 2012, over 1,200 residents attended housing, foreclosure prevention, personal finance or energy education programs to assist with improving their economic stability. The educational programming offered by MSU Extension staff focused on helping individuals and families understand their personal financial situations, identifying debt repayment strategies, purchasing their first home, maintaining their current home and avoiding foreclosure.

**Housing Education Programs** — MSU Extension's financial literacy and housing education program helps inform consumer's decision-making. Providing unbiased information in financial educational programs help reduce fraud in the market place, rewards quality businesses and help families provide capital for our economy by saving and spending. Consumer spending provides fuel for Michigan's sales tax revenues. Supporting participation in MSU Extension housing educational courses can reduce mortgage defaults and increase the likelihood of asset preservation among homeowners. Stable housing ownership is a foundation for healthy community and county tax base in Michigan.

The goal of the MSU Extension **Pre-Purchase Home Buyer Education Program** is to help homebuyers make affordable and informed choices in advance of the purchase of their new home. This six hour class assists prospective homebuyers who need guidance to save money for a down payment and become aware of mortgage products that offer down payment assistance. MSU Extension educated 172 residents in 2012.



**Mi Money Health  
website:**  
[www.mimoneyhealth.org](http://www.mimoneyhealth.org)

The post session evaluations indicate that as a result of this program participants plan to:

Home Ownership Outcomes	Yes	Already Doing This	Total
Saving money to prepare for home ownership.	40%	56%	96%
Set aside funds for home maintenance costs.	60.6%	27.5%	88.1%
Calculate reasonable monthly housing costs based on your budget.	54.1%	33.0%	87.1%
Pay mortgage on time every month.	70.1%	15.0%	85.1%
Identify down payment and closing requirements for each type of mortgage loan.	56%	28.4%	84.4%
Making changes as needed, to improve credit report and score.	33%	51.4%	84.4%

The MSU Extension Home Buyer Education Program also provides certificates of completion for residents seeking state Michigan Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) down payment assistance. The home ownership education program helps get buyers into lower-cost mortgages, increases credit scores, reduces defaults, improves borrowers' financial standing and increases the likelihood that troubled borrowers seek foreclosure assistance in advance of a problem.

The MSU Extension Home Buyer Education Program also promotes and encourages participants to "[Make Macomb Your Home](#)" by connecting with Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel's countywide initiative.

**Home Preservation and Foreclosure Prevention** — MSU Extension's Home Preservation and Foreclosure Prevention classes were attended by 383 Macomb County residents. The monthly three-hour sessions presented by MSU Extension staff helped homeowners analyze their current budget, understand the foreclosure process and begin to assess their options: stay, sell or foreclosure.

In 2012, 369 Macomb County residents took advantage of MSU Extension's one-on-one housing counseling services to assess their housing and financial situation and determine a plan of action. At the end of the year, 144 homeowners remained in foreclosure counseling as the process can take as long as 18 months to complete; 74 homeowners received loan modification and were able to remain in their homes with a lower mortgage payment; 76 clients withdrew from counseling or were non-responsive;

49 clients were referred to Legal Aid or another social service agency; and, 23 homeowners made the decision to let the foreclosure proceed.

As a MSHDA certified counseling agency, MSU Extension offers assistance to residents seeking help in applying for Help for Hardest Hit – [Step Forward Michigan Program](#). In the fall of 2012, MSU Extension worked with the staff at the Macomb County Treasurer’s Office to market these programs directly to Macomb County residents facing tax foreclosure. In December, 15 homeowners completed online applications with the assistance of the MSU Extension counseling staff. Beginning January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013, the Step Forward Michigan program expanded to assist residents who are without mortgages but have fallen behind on property taxes. The Hardest Hit Funds are available to pay up to \$30,000 in back county property taxes.



### Personal Financial Education

Providing unbiased information in financial educational programs helps reduce fraud in the marketplace, rewards quality businesses, and helps families provide capital for our economy by saving and spending. Residents of Macomb County must regain the ability to deal with their personal financial situations. Consumers need financial education to positively impact their behaviors and decision making skills. According to the *National Research Symposium on Financial Literacy and Education* in October 2008, there is consistent evidence that financial education leads to increases in financial knowledge and more positive changes in financial attitude, motivation, and planned behavior.

- *Personal Financial Education Programs* were presented by MSU Extension staff to 113 Macomb residents. These sessions are made possible with a continuing partnership with the City of Warren and Habitat for Humanity. Participants choose to attend these classes in order to improve their money management skills, prepare for homeownership or to prevent or recover from foreclosure or other financial crises. The eight week sessions focused on the *National Strategy for Financial Literacy* core competencies. The topics: Making Decisions about Money; Making and Managing a Spending Plan; Credit and Borrowing; Earning



**“This is a fun way to learn about financial management.”  
- A Money Management Participant.**

Power and Insurance; Financial Services; Consumer Problems and Organization Skills; and Home Ownership.

Pre and post-assessments were given to attendees that established evidence for program effectiveness. Scores improved from pre to post ratings in a statistically significant way and indicate that the program was successful in improving financial literacy knowledge and behaviors. The greatest improvements noted were writing S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Time bound) financial goals and writing a spending plan.

- A targeted *Money Management program* was also provided for Warren Drug Court participants. This 4-session series included information on making decisions about: goal setting using the SMART goals model; understanding a spending plan and spending leaks; tracking spending and creating a budget; credit and borrowing including the application processes, costs for loans, credit cards and credit score reports; financial services including account types, fees, service options, transaction tracking, and using technology; and reasons to save: goals, options, risks and rewards and the time value of money.
- *Financial Coaching* was also provided by MSU as part of the Community Financial Center Network supported by United Way for Southeast Michigan. The Macomb MSU Extension Financial Coaching program served 20 residents. Two financial coaches provided direct educational services to low- to moderate-income individuals. The financial coaches' main goal was to assist participants in developing plans of action intended to help the individual reach their goals and achieve financial stability. Coaches taught participants how to resolve current financial situations, while providing a holistic view on their financial health to shift the approach to proactive financial management rather than crisis management. They worked with participants to complete a detailed financial assessment, document a budget and provide strategies for budget improvements. Participants were instructed on how to access their credit report/score and provided strategies for credit building. The financial coaches also instructed participants on how to conduct a general benefits screening. Financial coaches act as a knowledge broker -





understanding other services offered by MSU Extension and other community organizations, such as employment services and income-support counseling, and connect the participants to these opportunities.

*One Macomb County resident increased monthly net worth by \$1,300 after a financial coach assisted him in obtaining a tax repayment plan with the IRS. The client's social security check was being garnished \$1,600/month to meet past due tax liabilities. After conversing with an IRS agent and submitting the client's income information, the IRS ceased the garnishments from his social security and put him on a repayment plan where he pays \$300 monthly instead of the \$1,600 monthly garnishment.*

- *Habitat for Humanity Family Nights* is a partnership that provided a monthly educational evening program to 35 Habitat families focused on mortgages, home insurance, closing documents, how to take care of your yard, home maintenance and repair, pet ownership, holiday budgeting and being safe in your home.
- As Macomb County residents strive to pay bills on time, handle credit card debt, think about investments for retirement or plan to build a college fund, MSU Extension works to provide the expertise that can help. MSU Extension assists individuals, households, organizations and communities to become sustainable through workshops and other education related to financial capability. MSU Extension also offers printed and online resources, including [MI Money Health](#), a website maintained to provide Michigan citizens with access to non-commercial, reliable personal financial information. In addition Macomb County residents have access to [eXtension](#), including the “[Ask an Expert](#)” widget. Ask an Expert is a website where consumers can get expert answers and help from Cooperative Extension staff, university faculty and volunteers from across the United States.
- *Energy Education:* As part of a renewable energy grant, Energy Education classes, counseling and presentations were provided to over 500 residents. The MSU Extension staff also provided information at six outreach events during 2012 at Lincoln Middle School, the Energy Fair with DTW at the Warren Community Center, the Resource Fair with the Macomb Department of Human Service, Prospective Homeowners Meeting of the Habitat for Humanity, the HSCB Information Exchange Table in October, and at an Energy Fair at the Selfridge Air National Guard Base.





MSU Extension supports the development of community food systems throughout Michigan by providing resources, specialists and educational programs to develop local food policy councils, farm- to- institutional purchasing, food hubs and farmers markets.

A sustainable community food system integrates food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of residents. Farmers, consumers and communities partner to create a more locally-based, self-reliant food economy which improves access to all community members to an adequate, affordable nutritious diet.

### Macomb Food Collaborative

Made up of passionate representatives of various Macomb County agencies including MSU Extension, organizations, county government and community volunteers, the Macomb Food Collaborative meets monthly with the goal of developing and creating a platform to discuss issues around food access and good food health and education. Early in 2012, the **All about Food from Farm to Fork Conference** was held with almost 200 people learning about food issues in the county, good food and the impact of agriculture on Macomb County and the region.

Additionally, the Collaborative's second goal was to help create better low income food access by encouraging Macomb County farmers markets and farm stands to accept Bridge Cards.

By the end of 2012, plans for the **2013 All about Food Conference** were in the works and the Food Collaborative had expanded their community agenda to also include:

- Provide a forum to discuss food issues and food access in Macomb County and beyond.
- Improve awareness regarding healthy food access for all residents.
- Encourage economic development by supporting growers, processors and distributors along with small and mid-size food business owners.
- Expand and diversify membership.
- Foster cooperation between major and minor players in the local food system.



Planting the community garden  
at Immanuel Lutheran Church

## School and Community Gardens

MSU Extension staff partnered with United Way of Southeast Michigan to facilitate the Garden Resource Mini Grant program. Over 60 schools and organizations in Southeast Michigan counties, including 35 from Macomb County, received grants from \$100 to \$500 to establish and support their garden programs, provide garden and nutrition education and secure tools and resources leading to food access in communities and neighborhoods across southeast Michigan.

The gardens participating range from small non-profit organizations and elementary schools, to community and church gardens. The fresh food was donated to food pantries, church pantries, schools, neighborhoods and residents to get healthy food to families.

School and community gardens involved in the mini-grant program produced 16,952 pounds of food. Macomb County gardens produced several tons of that food.

In addition, Forgotten Harvest began producing food for their food pantry sites. In this first year of large scale farming, Forgotten Harvest produced 416,257 pounds, bringing the total volume of produce grown in Southeast Michigan to 433,209 pounds.

The Garden Mini-Grant Programs in 2012 reached 1,250 students in Macomb County with 318 MSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers, parents and church members helping plant, maintain, and harvest 9,512 pounds of produce. Without these volunteers, many of these gardens could not have been successful. Students and adults were exposed to plant and soil sciences, learned techniques to grow, cook and eat healthy food.



**Student workers in L'anse Cruese work hard in the school garden at Atwood Elementary School.**

## 4-H Youth Development

MSU Extension's 4-H Youth Development Programs are designed to uniquely prepare Macomb County's youth to meet today's challenges and prepare for the future. It provides developmentally appropriate opportunities for participants aged 5-19 to learn, experience, practice and apply life skills. Programs provide hands-on learning opportunities in communities across the country through 4-H clubs, after-school programs, school enrichment programs and local, state, and national events.

Typically, 4-H volunteers spend an average of five hours of personal time every week assisting youth programs. Using figures calculated by the Independent Sector, a Washington based coalition of foundations, corporations and nonprofit organizations, the value of a volunteer's time is \$21.79 per hour. In 2012, 908 adult volunteers and 334 youth volunteers in Macomb County donated a value of \$989,266 to provide programs for 9,097 Macomb youth.

### 4-H Exploration Days

The annual statewide 4-H Exploration Days Conference was attended by 87 Macomb County youth aged 11-19. 4-H Exploration Days is a three-day pre-college event held on the campus of MSU annually where youth stay in the residence halls, attend educational sessions, and experience personal growth as they explore career and personal options for their future. MSU Extension's pre-college programs promote college awareness and develop skills necessary to succeed in college and adult life.

Of the participants who attended in 2012, 97.4% plan to attend college and 88% agreed that the event helped them prepare for higher education.

#### 4-H Exploration Days attendees



**“4-H  
Exploration Days  
has helped me  
get a taste of  
what college life  
is like and the  
independence,  
responsibility,  
and need for  
good choices  
that come with**



## CHILDREN & YOUTH

### Community Service and Civic Engagement

Over 516 youth in Macomb County 4-H were involved in community service projects and “making the best, better!” by making the community a better and cleaner place to live by participating in roadside cleanups, fairground cleanup, community gardens, and Earth Day events.

Each year the 4-H'ers come together to volunteer at the Capuchin Service Center to box up and pass out meat, canned goods, fresh produce and fruit. In 2012, they packed over 600 boxes for families in need.

**4-H youth representing county clubs and the mentoring program pack food boxes at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.**



They also participated in a sock puppet marathon making puppets to assist the children in Haiti when they receive immunizations.

Each year 4-H volunteers gather to assemble hero packs for youth with deployed parents. These packs help youth stay connected to their families.

### Additional 4-H Grants

Funding through grants written by Macomb County MSU Extension 4-H helps provide the specialized programs in the county. Four grants or donations provided additional funds this year for 4-H nutrition, financial education and mentoring programs. Tractor Supply Company donated \$1,450.74, a grant from Amachi provided \$10,657 for mentoring services to at-risk youth, a \$4,000 grant was received to support nutrition education, and \$11,448 was secured to support financial education.





### 4-H Youth Mentoring

The 4-H Youth Mentoring program serviced 30 youth through community, peer, and group-based mentoring programs. Various mentor-pairs allow unique opportunities of interaction and reach more at-risk youth keeping them connected with their families and out of residential placement. Each week the mentoring matches shared activities such as preparing meals, bowling, attending sporting events or participating in community service activities.

The mentors contributed 1,284 hours of volunteer time, a donation of \$27,978 back to Macomb County. The youth who participated in this program know they will always have someone to talk to when needed, as well as, have the opportunity to participate in new activities.

The positive relationships made through this program have diverted youth from becoming adjudicated or placed in residential treatment. For the first time, in 2012, Macomb youth participated in the 4-H Mentoring Weekend, a statewide short term, special interest program at Kettunen Center, the Michigan 4-H Foundation volunteer training facility near Cadillac, Michigan. They were exposed to canoeing, shelter building, and team building activities that helped them strengthen their mentoring relationship and gain confidence.



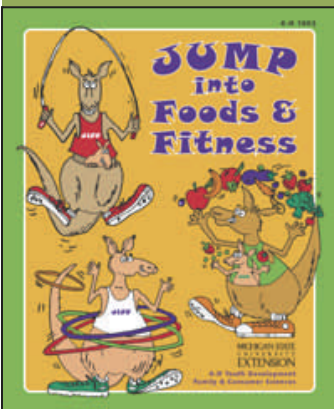
**Mentoring participants attend a Tigers' game.**



### Healthy Lifestyles

In the summer of 2012, a grant for \$4,000 was secured to implement the Jump into Food and Fitness (JIFF) program, which aims to teach young people aged 8 - 12 about healthy living. 164 participants were provided with nutrition, health, and physical fitness education.

As part of this program 30 high school students were trained as leaders in all eight units of the JIFF curriculum. These students developed leadership and communications skills as well as learning the importance of giving back to their community. To showcase their learning, these teen leaders organized a community health carnival. Over 100 people attended the carnival to enjoy healthy food, fitness games, and informational display boards about the different types of food and proper hand washing.



### 4-H China Art

For the past ten years Macomb County has participated in the 4-H China Art exchange program. Students from across the globe share “visual letters” with children in China. Seven schools from across Macomb were involved as the teachers used it as a unique and fun instrument to teach social studies, geography, and math. In 2012, over 2,250 students created art to be sent through the Children’s Art Exchange. In the follow up evaluations the schools agreed that the China Art Exchange did the following:

- Increased knowledge of how to talk about art
- Increased awareness that art communicates ideas, feelings, and stories
- Gained new knowledge about China
- Increased awareness of the similarities between themselves and Chinese children
- Increased interest to learn more about China and Chinese children
- Taught how to create a visual letter to children their own age

Thirteen out of 70 of the selected items from Michigan were created by Macomb County students. The Michigan children’s artwork will be displayed in schools in the Shandong Province, China.

### Building Careers, Business, and Financial Literacy

In 2012, Macomb County began this nine-unit program designed to educate youth, adults, teachers, and volunteers on career development, workforce preparation, and financial literacy. A day-long youth development conference at the Macomb Intermediate School District trained 99 youth and adults in 20 different topics including: interviews to get results, turn your passions into profits, creating a youth farm stand, and creating a PowerPoint presentation.

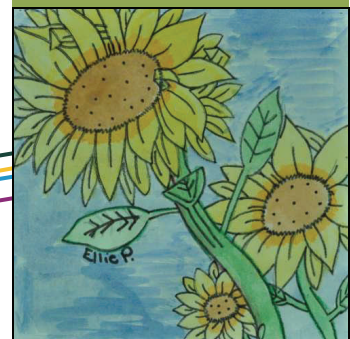
Thirty-six teachers and youth professionals from 16 Macomb County districts were trained on the High School Financial Planning Program, which is run through the National Endowment for Financial Education. MSU Extension managed to secure \$11,448 in grant money to coordinate 18 hours of curriculum training for adults interested in teaching middle and high school students about entrepreneurship using the Generation E program.

### 4-H Tech Wizards

This STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) focused program was introduced in Macomb County in 2012. At weekly meetings the members explored a variety of STEM projects to build STEM literacy and interest in an informal, long-term setting. This program began in Ottawa and Wayne counties in 2011, but because of interest it was expanded to Macomb and Oakland Counties in 2012. At the end of 2012, funding was secured for the 2013 calendar year to support the growing number of 4-H Tech Wizards groups meeting in Macomb County.



**“4-H Tech Wizards has already provided our military and Department of Defense civilian community with an excellent foundation for program growth as it offers mentorship with some of the brightest engineers in the area, which are in our backyard!” – community site partner**



### Health and Nutrition Programs

MSU Extension Health and Nutrition programs served 5,388 individuals that reside in Macomb County during 2012. These programs are focused on helping low income families make healthy food decisions that will reduce their chances of obtaining a chronic disease due to lifestyle choices. Physical activity and food safety are incorporated into the interactive, research-based lessons that are taught to individuals throughout the county.

### Youth & Nutrition

MSU Extension staff delivered a nutrition program, called *Show Me Nutrition*, to over 3,475 Macomb County youth in settings such as day camps, public schools, parks and recreation events, community centers, and churches. An interactive, hands-on educational approach was used to teach youth the importance of food safety, positive body image, label reading, and ways to address world hunger. After the six-week *Show Me Nutrition* program was completed, 199 youth in 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade were assessed and found to have significantly increased in the following areas:

- 25% of the students increased their fruit consumption.
- 27% of the students increased their vegetable consumption.
- 26% of the students understood the need of physical activity and the role it plays in their overall health.
- 20% of the students learned the basics of food safety.

### Adults & Seniors

A nutrition series lasting for six weeks was offered in Macomb County for 1,914 adults and seniors at risk for hunger, nutritional issues and food security. 1,386 of these adults were bridge card recipients who had 3,384 face-to-face contacts with MSU Extension nutrition instructors who delivered the program. Food safety, fiber in food, physical activity, stretching food dollars, and label reading were some of the topics covered. The participants also observed a cooking demonstration and taste-tested, healthy meals. After the sessions, 27 participants were assessed and showed changes in the following areas:

- 48% used herbs and spices to make food taste better.
- 40% eat more than one kind of fruit per day.
- 43% eat food high in fiber.
- 33% do at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily.





## WIC Project Fresh

Project Fresh is a partnership between the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), MSU Extension and Michigan farmers to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption in homes with women of childbearing ages and young children. Educational lessons are taught primarily in the summer at local farmers' markets so recipients can use their food coupons the same day they receive them. In 2012, the coupon amount was increased from \$10 to \$20 without reducing the amount of food benefits the participant may have received from the bridge card or WIC food benefits.

WIC Project Fresh coupons are only redeemable at participating farmers' markets throughout the state. Macomb County received 400 coupons, which meant \$8,000 went to local families to spend with local farmers and thereby, back into the community.

Evaluation data from Project Fresh showed:

- Project Fresh was the first farmer's market experience for 20% of participants
- 96% of participants reported they will eat more fresh vegetables a day
- Over 90% of the participants learned new ways to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their meals and snacks
- 94% of the participants reported that they will eat more fresh fruits per day
- 98% of the participants intended to buy fruits and vegetables at the local farmer's market



## Food Safety

Through MSU Extension programs, community food handlers are taught food safety and preservation. MSU Extension uses the ServSafe™ and Cooking for Crowds curricula to educate the public on how to safely cook for large groups. With the food preservation workshops the participants are taught information about the temperatures for storing foods, cooling hot foods, storing temperatures, freezing and



dehydrating food, as well as canning under United States Department of Agriculture guidelines for safe food preservation. During 2012, there were 46 food preservation events held reaching 681 people statewide. In Macomb County, 61 people attended the ServSafe training or the food preservation workshops.

Cooking for Crowds is a program for nonprofit groups that prepare food for public events, such as fundraisers. The average participant served up to 300 individuals in the three months after their training. Throughout 2012, three residents attended one of the 15 events that were offered across the state.

### Dining With Diabetes

Chronic diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure are among the most prevalent, costly, and preventable of all health issues. Leading a healthy lifestyle greatly reduces a person's risk for developing chronic disease. Access to high quality and affordable prevention measures are essential steps in saving lives, reducing disabilities and lowering costs for medical care.

According to the 2012 County Health Rankings report published by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Macomb County is ranked 41 among the 83 counties in Michigan in health factors such as obesity, physical inactivity, diabetic screening and premature death. Obesity, often caused by poor diet and limited physical activity, increases the risk for such chronic diseases as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, coronary hypertension, stroke and respiratory problems. Thirty-one percent of Macomb county residents are obese, based on adults who report a body mass index greater than or equal to 30. The national benchmark for obesity is 25% and the overall rate in Michigan is 32%. In Macomb County 7% of the population has diabetes.

In 2012, MSU Extension provided education to 23 Macomb County residents focused on the prevention and management of



leading chronic diseases. The Dining with Diabetes class was held at the Village of Warren Glen in October and the Village of Peace Manor in November. Evaluations show that residents increased their understanding of the nutrition facts label and also increased their use of the label when deciding what foods to eat. They increased their knowledge of foods that contain carbohydrates and which fats are healthiest. Their understanding of trans-fats and what foods contain them was also increased. Finally, residents reported that they are eating less fried foods following Dining with Diabetes.

### **RELAX: Alternatives to Anger**

RELAX: Alternatives to Anger is designed to engage adults in a group setting to increase knowledge and skills around anger management and give them constructive ways to deal with anger. In 2012, MSU Extension offered RELAX as a series of sessions, either online or face-to-face, as well as RELAX Train the Trainer for professionals. Fifty-five RELAX sessions took place statewide during the year. In those sessions, were 117 participants from Macomb County.

After the workshops, participants were assessed with positive results reported across the board:

- 52% increased their knowledge about the impacts of healthy and unhealthy relationships on individuals and settings.
- 51% of participants improved their ability to respond to one's own social-emotional needs and the social-emotional needs of others.
- 51% gained knowledge about ways to foster safe and fair relationships by using positive communication skills.
- 46% decreased involvement with unhealthy/abusive behaviors and

relationships as a result of the program including being respectful of others feelings, working hard to make sure that those loved ones are not hurt emotionally or physically, and taking time to understand how others feel.



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