

# The Extension Connection

Highlights from OSU Extension in Fairfield County

July | 2016



*SNAP-Ed Program Assistant Diane Sommers teaching students about the importance of physical activity.*

## WHAT IS SNAP-ED?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) is a free nutrition education and obesity prevention program serving low-income adults and youth. It is funded by the Food Nutrition Service (FNS) branch of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). SNAP-Ed operates in 52 states and territories, and its focus audience is individuals and families eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps).

SNAP-Ed facilitates voluntary adoption of healthy food and physical activity choices and other good nutrition-related behaviors.

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

SNAP-Ed Program Assistants in Fairfield County work with students in elementary schools, families with children, and individuals throughout Fairfield County to help them learn how to make healthy food choices and choose an active lifestyle.

For the first half of the grant year, Fairfield County SNAP-Ed Program Assistants taught **534 nutrition education classes**. Kids and adults are learning about the importance of good nutrition and physical activity and getting the chance to taste some healthy foods. In addition to area schools, the SNAP-Ed program partners with organizations like Head Start, Job and Family Services, Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and senior housing.

# Food Preservation and Safety

2016 Home Food Preservation classes featured topics on safe canning using water bath and pressure methods as well as dehydrating foods. 100% of participants reported learning new information and 76% plan to implement changes based on the information they learned in class. **Fifty-one people participated in eight home food preservation classes** in spring and early summer.

***DID YOU KNOW?  
Pressure canner dial  
gauge testing is  
available through our  
office!***



**Hands-On Jam Making Workshop.** Eleven participants learned how to make strawberry jam from start to finish in a special hands-on workshop led by Extension Educator Shannon Carter and canning volunteer Sandy Bohl.



# Community Events

Over 185 participants from five Central Ohio Counties were welcomed by the Fairfield County Master Gardener Volunteers to the **“Dig into Gardening” one day educational event.** Fifteen vendors, including a tool sharpening truck, gave participants a snapshot of plants and products available at Fairfield County garden centers, as well as gift items from local artisans and the ever-popular Green Machine Gardeners and their assortment of garden related items. Four speakers encouraged gardeners to learn more about Native Plant Gardening and the benefits attracting butterflies and bees into their landscapes to improve pollination efforts. Dig into Gardening has become a very popular spring time learning opportunity for many Central Ohio gardeners.



# Community Partnerships



The Decorative Arts Center partnered with OSU Extension to feature 4-H Clothing projects

sewn by 4-H youth ages 8 to 18. Garments were on display during the month of June along with the Edith Head costume design exhibition. The Decorative Arts Center also sponsored \$25 gift certificates to all of this year’s first place class winners toward an art class at the Decorative Arts Center.





# PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

Forty-five older 4-H members learned the record-keeping and writing skills necessary to succeed in college by completing the **Ohio Achievement Record Form**. Thirteen of these youth were selected for statewide recognition of their 4-H achievements. Seventy-five younger 4-H members completed a **Fairfield County Junior Achievement Form**.

Twenty-seven Fairfield County 4-H members learned communication and leadership skills by participating in the **Ohio 4-H Teen Conference**. Participating youth reported learning how to incorporate new ideas into future 4-H events and how to provide leadership as counselors for 4-H Camp.

Seventeen volunteers learned how to become effective 4-H Advisors by participating in **new 4-H volunteer training**. Participants reported that they increased their knowledge about the 4-H program and were better prepared to serve as a 4-H Advisor as a result of participating in the training program. Fourteen adult volunteers attended the **Ohio 4-H Volunteer Conference**.

A dedicated 751 4-H members learned how to ensure animal and food safety by attending one of 46 **Quality Assurance Trainings** taught by OSU Extension and Fairfield County Junior Fair volunteers. Participants learned through hands-on activities which emphasized the importance of maintaining medication and treatment records, educating all on proper administration techniques, and how to follow appropriate feed processor procedures and feed tag recommendations.

## Extension for YOU

OSU Extension engages people to strengthen their lives and communities through research-based educational programming....

Family and consumer sciences (FCS) gives people the knowledge, skills and tools needed to make healthy, informed choices. FCS professionals teach and promote safe food practices, better nutrition, better finances and better relationships – helping people acquire the knowledge and skills to make smart decisions in these areas.

4-H is a non-formal educational, youth development program offered to individuals age 5 and in kindergarten to age 19, helping kids “learn by doing” through hands-on activities. 4-H members learn valuable lessons in leadership, communication and collaboration while increasing their knowledge in math, science, technology and a variety of other topics.

The Agriculture and Natural Resources team provides Ohioans resources and educational programs focusing on profitable and sustainable agriculture, a clean environment and proper stewardship of Ohio's natural resources.

Extension's Community Development programs aim to engage people in strengthening their organizations, communities and ultimately social, economic, civic and environmental conditions to improve the quality of life in Ohio.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Discover 4-H Day

More than 350 youth and parents learned about the educational benefits of the 4-H Youth Development Program by participating in Fairfield County's 8th Annual Discover 4-H Day. 100% of program participants who completed an after-event evaluation indicated that they learned something by participating in the event, and that they would recommend the event to other families!



## CULTIVATING 4-H AWARENESS

Twenty-two older 4-H members developed leadership skills and public speaking skills by visiting elementary schools in Fairfield County to teach students about the 4-H Youth Development Program, and encourage participation in the 4-H Program.



*Amanda-Clearcreek*



*Millersport*



*Pickerington - Tollgate*

## 4-H CAMP TEACHES LIFE SKILLS

Nearly 300 Fairfield county youth had the opportunity to learn life skills when they participated in one of **3 different 4-H camps** conducted this summer by the Fairfield County 4-H Program. Campers indicated they met new people, learned and practiced new skills, citizenship, outdoor living, responsibility and improved self-esteem. More than 97% of the campers indicated they wanted to return to camp the following year.



49 teens served as 4-H camp counselors and completed a comprehensive **4-H camp counselor training program** and utilized the life skills which they developed both at camp and upon camp completion. These individuals participated in at least 24 hours of training where they learned how to handle camp situations and ensure camper safety. They also planned and implemented the educational programs and activities while at camp. Evaluations indicated that as a result of this training, counselors developed leadership, social, emergency preparedness, and organizational skills to better provide younger 4-H members with learning experiences.







*Fruit Tree Pruning class was held on March 19th at Hugus Fruit Farm. Over 40 participants learned how to properly prune and care for their fruit trees.*

## ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Training was offered to 116 local farmers to meet the new **Statewide Fertilizer Certification** requirement. This 3 hour training emphasizes conducting a soil test and then adding only the needed amount of fertilizer based on the soil test results. Emphasis is also given to timing the application so as not to apply before a large precipitation event. The goal is to save the farmer money and reduce harmful algae blooms in local waterways caused by fertilizer runoff. OSU Extension will continue to offer this training at no cost through our winter trainings of 2017.



Every three years farmers are required to complete 3 hours of classes to renew their pesticide license. 2016 was a busy year with 105 local producers renewing their **pesticide license**.

**The Ohio Beef School webinar series** offered a unique opportunity for local cattlemen to participate in presentations by outstanding speakers from throughout the country via webinar technology without needing to travel outside the county's boundaries. The series was held on three different winter evenings in 2016 and was hosted by Fairfield County's OSU Extension office and attended by 42 local cattlemen and high school students. The programs each addressed some of the most important issues currently facing Ohio's beef industry including economics, risk management, reproduction, genetics and meeting consumers' expectations.

### Making a Difference....

The Fairfield County Master Gardeners continue to work on the renovation of the landscape at the Fairfield County Agriculture Center. Since late Fall of 2015 over 280 hours of volunteer service have been given to the project. Overgrown shrubs and trees were removed and small slower growing shrubs have been installed as well as colorful annuals to brighten the exterior of the building.



In addition, soaker hoses have been incorporated into the planting and are run via a battery operated timers, to ensure the plantings survive as well as conserve water usage at the building.

The Ohio State University Master Gardener program assigns a value of \$23.00 per hour for every volunteer hour "given back" to the program. This results in a \$6,400.00 donation of service to the Ag Center Landscape Renovation project to date.

## WE ARE EXTENSION...

Ohio State University Extension brings the knowledge of the university directly to you. We fulfill the land-grant mission of The Ohio State University by interpreting knowledge and research developed by Extension and other faculty and staff at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Ohio State main campus, and other land-grant universities – so Ohioans can use the scientifically based information to better their lives, businesses and communities.

The Extension system is the world's largest non-formal educational system. Extension's hallmark is programming delivered by professionals to address the needs of the local community while also addressing state, national, and global issues. Our practical educational programs combine the needs of local citizens and communities with new research and technical information.

Building better lives, better businesses and better communities since 1914...

With sharing knowledge as our primary mission, communications are obviously a high priority for us. To accomplish that we use a variety of tools including a website where timely information is updated nearly every day, electronic newsletters, weekly local radio shows, Facebook where we enjoy more than 1000 friends and followers, and weekly newspaper columns. In all, **more than 200,000 pieces of electronic and print information are distributed annually to the residents of Fairfield County.**



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COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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