

Investing in Iron County Youth with 4-H & MSU

According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University-

4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2x** more likely to be civically active, and **2x** more likely to make healthier choices.



In Iron County 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. By providing opportunities to learn and lead, 4-H helps youth become informed and engaged community members. While exploring new topics and activities in an experiential way, youth build the skills they need for life.

The management of the **Community Garden** has now been turned over to Chandra Ziegler, kindergarten teacher at Forest Park School. The teachers at Forest Park will use the garden space by extending their classroom walls outdoors. The children will experience the development of seeds into plants into edible vegetables. The garden is still available for 4-H and community use but all contact will be through Chandra. Also, the Contemporary Center will be holding a gardening class for children in June taught by Rebecca Krans, MSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Educator. Rebecca's class will be using garden space for her students.

The Community Garden received a \$5000.00 + donation from the 100 + Women Who Care – Iron County. Community Garden leader, Chandra Ziegler, was chosen to speak before this group telling them the purpose of the garden and the need for funding. Fortunately, all the women present agreed with Chandra and decided to support the efforts of the Green Thumb Community Garden. This donation will help provide the necessary supplies needed for the garden. Everyone in Iron County is invited to plant vegetables or flowers in a garden bed—young or old. The children from Forest Park are learning about plants in their classrooms and then have an opportunity to plant their seeds or plants in the garden beds. This is a wonderful activity for them by expanding their classroom experience into the real world. If anyone is interested in using a 4 X 8 garden plot, please contact Deb Divoky, who will share the information with Chandra.

Aspirus Iron River Hospital and Clinics will partner with the Iron County Farmers Market for the summer season. Aspirus will sponsor the markets in Crystal Falls and Iron River. As an advocate for health and wellness, Aspirus recognizes the importance of eating health, locally grown food, as well as supporting Iron County farmers. The Farmers Market in Crystal Falls will be at the Community Garden.



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Iron County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

100+ years in Iron County



3 Extension professionals located in Iron; 50 provide educational opportunities



266 youth involved in 4-H and other youth enrichment programs



104 MSU Alumni live in Iron County



MSU Extension website received 829 Iron County visitors; 71% were first-time visitors



\$3,866 spending with local businesses



MSU disbursed \$90,893 in financial aid to Iron County students



\$1,102,286 total economic impact in Iron County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Iron County to continue strengthening youth, families, businesses and communities. Your MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, serve by bringing the university's research and resources to provide outreach and education in the areas Iron County residents need it most.



In this report, we're excited to share about the people and programs that are improving the lives of Iron County residents in many ways, including helping grow Michigan's agriculture economy, encouraging sustainable use of our natural resources, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness and preparing tomorrow's leaders. From an in-person workshop to online education, MSU Extension professionals work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure their success – in the workplace, at home and in the community. We're passionate about serving Iron County and are looking forward to a new year of serving. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Paul Putnam, District Director

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MSU Extension Upper Peninsula



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Program Highlights



150 packets of Senior Project Fresh coupons were distributed in Iron County.



Beth Waitrovich, Extension Educator, held a ServSafe course for food service managers and others responsible for food safety when preparing food for the public.

Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

Fresh fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. They add vitamins, minerals and fiber to the diet, and are low in sodium, fat, and sugar. Fruits and vegetables can be used as main meals, side dishes and snacks.

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, known as Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH in Michigan, provides older adults who qualify with unprocessed, Michigan-grown products from authorized farmers markets and roadside stands throughout Michigan.

Qualified older adults receive coupons that are used to purchase Michigan-grown produce at registered roadside stands and farmers markets. Eligible items include: berries, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, beans, honey, and more.

The program is free for both the participant and the farmer. It's truly a win-win for Michigan farmers and older adults! Become a participating market or farmer.

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH originates from U.S. Department of Agriculture funding. It is part of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program and these federal dollars come out of the federal Farm Bill. The program was designed to benefit both farmers and seniors.

Food Safety

Sixteen people attended the eight hour course in Iron River. Beth also proctored the ANSI certified exam for certified food safety managers; the exam session immediately followed the course. Topics included were personal hygiene, forms of contamination, food allergens, monitoring time and temperature, food safety during purchasing and receiving, preparation, holding, reheating, and serving, pest management, emergencies that affect food safety in the facilities and cleaning and sanitizing.

Program Highlights

Consumer Horticulture

Smart Gardening programs focus on providing earth-friendly, sustainable practices that gardeners can use in their own yards and gardens. Participants learn about creating healthy soils, protecting pollinators, water conservation while learning about growing vegetables, tending their lawn, and other landscape plants. In 2018, three Smart Gardening outreach booths were provided in Iron County reaching over 500 people and provided free Smart Gardening tip sheets. 2 Extension Master Gardeners assisted with these events. Five different hands-on workshops were offered. These reached over 200 youth and adults.

Lawn & Garden Questions

Residents seeking answers to their lawn and garden questions can call the MSU Extension's Lawn and Garden hotline at 888-678-3464. Over 40 Iron County residents received assistance through this resource. Consumer Horticulture staff and specially trained Extension Master Gardeners assist callers with proper plant identification, soil test results, and providing solutions to plant problems. Advice provided assists gardeners in reduction of pesticides and/or nutrients and protecting pollinators.

Agriculture & Agribusiness

Monica Jean, Field Crops Educator, covers this region and serves as a conduit for this community to all the agricultural research and educational programs MSU offers. Programs available to the farming community in this region include business management, crop production, animal production and social-emotional health. In 2018, a cover crop research project took place on a farm in Hardwood, MI investigating the integration of millet into a potato rotation for soil health (Figure 1). MSU Extension is also working hard to provide opportunities for youth to get involved in agriculture. An example of this in your region is a land-based learning center with [Slagle's Family Farm and Iron Mountain High School](#).



Eight youth gardeners participated in a Garden Camp at the Green Thumb Community Garden sponsored by the Crystal Falls Contemporary Center and coordinated by MSUE Consumer Horticulture staff.



Over 103 youth and teachers from Forest Park Schools participated in a garden tour provided by MSU Extension staff.



Figure 1: Sampling on Mow Day.