

# OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

## 2014 Highlights



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## Impact in 2014

Evaluating our engagement with residents, businesses, organizations and communities enables us to assess the effectiveness of our teaching and creative outputs and investment of our Extension resources. CD professionals organize their program efforts among OSU Extension's impact areas.

### ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- To better inform decisions pertaining to pricing changes and for streamlining the pricing structure for an improved customer experience, Extension and the **Center of Science and Industry (COSI)** partnered to study customers' **"Willingness to Pay."** The questionnaire is considered a model for other similar types of work involving museums and public service organizations (e.g., zoos, aquariums, etc.).
- To assist local businesses in achieving their growth objectives and to improve the overall business environment, Extension CD partnered with residents and officials in **Weinland Park**, a neighborhood one mile north of downtown Columbus, to conduct a **Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program**. Participants learned that almost half of respondents plan to increase investment and nearly three-quarters expect to grow.
- Extension CD, FCS and ANR colleagues partnered with local officials in eastern Ohio in **"Building Sustainable Communities in Ohio's Shale Region: Leveraging Manufacturing Clusters and Local Assets with Strategic Planning."** The three-year Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant-funded (\$200,000) project has measured longitudinal economic, social and environmental changes occurring in the **25-county shale impacted region**.
- Over 45 consultations with individuals interested in **business start-ups, small business expansions, farming, local foods and non-profit management** were conducted in **Miami County** and the surrounding area. Three organizations were assisted with strategic planning and two major market surveys were conducted to inform decision making.
- To assist new small business startups in **Fayette County**, Extension worked with the **Ohio Small Business Administration** office to secure over \$350,000 in **loans**. The businesses were able to create ten full-time jobs and seven part-time jobs, helping to increase financial security and promote higher living standards, increase spending and generate higher sales and profits.
- One of the fastest growing industry sectors in Ohio, tourism accounts for nearly 9% of Ohio jobs. As the industry grows in strength so does the need for education in the tourism workforce. Extension partnered with the **Ohio Travel Association** to conduct an **industry-wide needs assessment** to identify educational gaps and effective educational delivery methods. In the process, the OTA Board of Directors was able to partner with other state level organizations to foster job development and retention among Ohio's tourism workforce.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

*Empowerment Through Education*

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- To create a control command location for the collection of information and the coordination of response and recovery efforts during times of emergency and disaster, Extension partnered with **Ohio Emergency Management Agency and Washington County Commissioners** to secure \$475,000 to establish a state-of-the-art **Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**.
- The **Cleveland-Cuyahoga County** Food Policy Coalition (convened by Extension), in partnership with local agencies, expanded the **Produce Prescription program** to connect one hundred eighty mothers, pregnant women and their families to fresh and nutritious foods at local farmers' markets. The **Double Value Produce Perks EBT Incentive program** increased to 21 farmers' markets and farm stands in 2014. EBT sales surpassed 2013 totals, reaching over \$39,000. During the 2014 season, Produce Perks brought 260 new food assistance customers to farmers' markets for the first time.
- Extension partnered with local health officials, engaging in **comprehensive community health planning** to identify and address the most critical health and wellness needs for residents in **Highland and Clinton counties**. Currently in the fifth year, this multi-phase project has resulted in both counties implementing a strategic plan focused on improving access to health care and creating awareness campaigns around concerns for prenatal care and substance abuse.
- In partnership with **Ohio Sea Grant and the Chambers of Commerce from Toledo, Youngstown/Warren and Upper Sandusky**, 58 local officials participated in **local government leadership development programs** conducted in Mahoning, Lucas and Wyandot counties. Local leaders indicated they became better informed about the economic, social and environmental impacts of the decisions they make regarding land use and the environment and nearly three-quarters of participants indicated they would factor this information into their decision making.
- Working in partnership with the **Noble County Community Foundation**, on local **philanthropy** efforts, Extension helped to coordinate the award of \$14,000 in general grants and \$6,000 in scholarships.
- Budget and volunteer issues are causing many rural fire departments to look at combination or joint fire and EMS services. Extension partnered with local officials and residents in a **12-month study of options for a local rural fire department**. The result of this study: local decision makers have embarked on a plan to combine fire departments.

- A \$19,000 North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCD) grant-funded project partnered Extension Community Development with **Guernsey County Planning Commission and Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)** to **update the county comprehensive strategic plan**. A proactive approach was employed focused on the economic, social and environmental impacts for long-term sustainability related to shale development in the region.

## PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- To help address the declining rate of entrepreneurship, nearly 100 **Van Wert City High School seniors** participated in **"Starting Right for the Student,"** a new program delivered by Extension and Wright State University's Business Enterprise Center. After entrepreneurial strength self-assessments, small group business planning exercises and financial analyses, more than half of the students indicated they would consider starting their own business at some time in their future.

## ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- An **On-Farm Solar Energy program** was developed and delivered at **15 events involving 600 participants** to help ag producers identify on-farm energy applications and inform energy investment decisions. Four farmers installed solar systems on their farms, generating roughly 118,800 kWh of electricity and offsetting nearly 180,600 (lbs./CO<sub>2</sub>e) of greenhouse gas emissions annually.
- More than **100 Extension educators, researchers and community partners** from Land Grant Universities and local non-profit organizations in 23 states converged in downtown Cleveland for a 3-day, USDA AFRI-funded **Food Security Conference**. The conference was hosted by the eXtension Community, Local & Regional Food Systems Community of Practice. Participants left the conference with ideas, tools and methods to conduct impactful programming around food systems in their home locations.
- Lake Erie is home to the largest charter fishing fleet of all five Great Lakes. **Well over 150 charter captains** attended the **33rd Annual Charter Captains Conference** which helped them improve operations, modify practices and increase profitability. In addition to licensing requirements, they also learned more about international border crossing and the latest U.S. Coast Guard rules and regulations.