



# Hardin County

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EXTENSION

## 2008 County Highlights

### Strengthening Families and Communities

- In partnership with Hardin Memorial Hospital and Hardin County YMCA, one series of Dining with Diabetes classes was held in 2008. Each session included a PowerPoint presentation by a certified diabetes educator, an exercise demonstration by a fitness instructor, and cooking/tasting demonstrations by Extension. Participants (23) were people with diabetes and their family members. Ninety-three percent of the participants felt their knowledge of diabetes had increased after attending the classes. The three most often cited changes that they were implementing included counting carbohydrates, reading food labels, and controlling portion sizes. They noted the following positive changes at the three-month reunion: improved blood sugar control, weight control or weight loss, and increases in activity/exercise levels. Participants reported, "I am so pleased with the positive changes that counting carbs has had on my health as a diabetic," and, "Trying the new recipes and cooking techniques got me excited about cooking again."
- Twenty adults completed Hardin Leadership in 2008. This was the program's sixteenth year. All twenty graduates report being more involved in community organizations and in influencing local issues. On pre-post assessments, all participants reported an increase in their personal level of confidence in the twelve leadership tasks addressed in the program. Over 290 of the past years' graduates are still active in the Hardin County community leadership structure with seventy-five having accepted elected or appointed local governmental leadership positions since their involvement in the program. The participants are from all areas of the county and from all walks of life, yet have one thing in common—the desire to be involved in the betterment of Hardin County.
- Goo Crew is an ongoing parenting education support group in Hardin County. Parents and their children who are active participants report that the group encourages them to make strong friendships with other parents of young children, thus giving them the support they need to make it through some tough family and parenting situations. This year's monthly parent-talk topic focused on emotional reactivity. Fifty families have been involved in Goo Crew during the year, with twenty of them attending at least once monthly. Parent comments included, "Because of reading and talking about our study book (**Screamfree Parenting**), I have made big changes in how I respond to my children's behaviors, especially my son. I used to get so angry, lose it, do and say things that I regret. I have now learned to respond in a consistent and calm manner and it has made a huge difference in how my son behaves. It is so much better for all of us. Even our parents have made comments about how much better we get along."
- The "Eating Smart, Being Active" series of eight lessons, based on the new MyPyramid, was available to homemakers of limited income families with children through the Pilot Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. From January through July, twenty completed the series with all of the participants reporting they learned new information that will help them in eating more nutritious meals, stretching food dollars, and preparing food more safely. One participant said, "Even though we are on food stamps, that doesn't mean we can't eat healthy. I'm telling everyone I know about eating healthy." Most of the participants voiced an increased awareness of how to use nutrition labels and ingredients lists on food packaging to make healthier food choices. One participant who is diabetic said, "I've been drinking this for a long time, but now that I see how much sugar is in it, I will be making another choice." Another stated, "I thought my bread was whole grain, but after I learned how to read the label, I found out it didn't have any whole grain in it at all."
- The Family Nutrition Program (FNP) reached 1,108 persons in face-to-face educational lessons and 1,042 persons reported that they learned some or a lot of new information. Ninety percent of these participants indicated they planned to make some or a lot of changes as a result of their new knowledge. These classes are delivered in targeted locations to reach out to specific audiences including Harco MRDD; the Hardin Northern, Forest Jackson, Ada and Mary-Lou Johnson Libraries; and five senior citizen/subsidized housing complexes throughout the county. Classes have also been established monthly with We Care Mental Health facility as part of a life skills support group. The FNP program distributed 7,948 pieces of educational materials during the 2008 fiscal year (an average of 662 monthly) from eight food box distribution sites and bi-monthly newsletter mailings. The program assistant interacts with the clientele at the Alger site and reports that 85% have positive comments concerning the educational material they receive and how it relates to the commodities and food received.

### Preparing Youth for Success

- 150 4-H members participated in the county 4-H sponsored residential camp program. Campers participated in a variety of educational experiences designed to enhance knowledge and personal life skills in a setting where positive youth development principals were the basis for educational experience offered for campers. Camper reactions indicated camp had provided an appropriate environment in which

participants were able to achieve the expected outcomes of a camping experience, which included developing self-reliance, increased interpersonal skills, learning to work with others, creating new friendships, and expanding their personal knowledge through a variety of educational experiences in which they participated.

- 106 high school seniors participated in a two-hour program entitled College 101—Strategies for 1st Year Success. The program provided participants with information on a wide variety of topics that would be relevant during their first year of college and provided them with tools they could use during their first experience in post-secondary education. Evaluations indicated participants found the information to be helpful and most indicated they planned to use the information they had received to help them successfully navigate their first year of college.
- 54 teens participated in a variety of camp counselor educational training programs during 2008. These youth participated in these various meetings to help themselves prepare for their role as 4-H camp counselors and counselors-in-training for the Hardin County 4-H Residential Summer Camp. The teens learned skills they would need to be effective leaders in the residential camp experience. Participants learned skills that would help them be effective teachers, to work effectively with campers, to work with other counselors and counselors-in-training, get along with people they met for the first time, work effectively in an environment that requires constant adjustments and modifications to the original program plan, to make decisions, and be personally responsible for their accepted duties as it related to reaching the educational goals of 4-H residential camping.
- 36 sophomores completed the 2008 Hardin County Youth Leadership program. Extension plans and oversees the eight personal/community leadership development training sessions held monthly during the school year. The six student advisors for the Youth Leadership program state it prepares these students to be more positive forces within their school. The students develop the confidence and skills to take charge when a job needs to be done. These students are more likely to volunteer and show a passion to make things better for the benefit of all students and their community. The fifteenth year of Hardin Youth Leadership with 36 sophomores has begun for 2009. This program is a true model of cooperation between schools, businesses, and community organizations.
- This summer was the first year that Hardin County Extension offered six weeks of programming during the Summer Food Service mealsites at four Kenton locations. A total of 238 youth chose to participate in hands-on activities focused on MyPyramid information from the *Professor Popcorn* curriculum. A 4-H club was organized at the Club 180 site and six students completed the 4-H year. Only one of these students had previous 4-H experience. These 4-H members were able to present a food demonstration for about 50 peers and adults at the Hardin County Fair. A par-

ent noticed a positive change in her daughter's interest in food, nutrition, and food preparation during the summer months. "She would come home from the meetings and say 'mom did you know ... and we need to make this change in our diet ... and can I help make supper tonight.' These were real changes for her. I hope she can be part of this program next summer too."

## Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- A series of five breakfast programs was held in 2008 on conservation and farm management topics. These programs were offered in cooperation with OSU Extension and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Hardin and Logan counties. Local lenders, farm suppliers, and farm organizations contributed \$2,600 toward the program expenses. A total of 136 different people attended the series, with an average of 61 participants at each program. A total of 116,416 acres were represented by program participants, or an average of 856 acres in each farm operation. The producers said as a result of this program they planned to fine-tune their cash rental arrangements and improve crop marketing decisions. The financial impact reported ranged from \$2.00 to \$18.00 per acre. If we assume a \$10.00 benefit per acre, these producers will have made (or saved) \$1,164,160 as a result of attending programs in this series.
- 33 active Master Gardeners were busy helping plan landscaping, planting and maintaining demonstration gardens, holding horticultural programs, writing horticultural news items for the newspaper, conducting a plant sale, and offering gardening expertise at the Extension Help Line, Earthday, and the Farmers Market. Nearly 300 hours of educational training were taken by the volunteers and more than 1,000 volunteer hours of service were given by this group. Over 50,000 contacts were made by the Master Gardener volunteers.
- A replicated field-size research plot was conducted with the help of farmer Tim Manchester. The use of two soybean foliar fungicides was tested against a control. This was part of a statewide research project, with similar plots in three other Ohio locations. The Headline fungicide was effective in reducing the amount of Brown Spot in the lower canopy, but the Manchester plots showed Domark fungicide was significantly better than non-treated, but not significantly better than the Headline fungicide plots in Hardin County.
- In February, the 2008 Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference (CTTC) was held at Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio. The two-day conference attended by 768 people from 4 states rated the speakers and usefulness of information as 4.46 based on a 5-point scale. Conference attendees estimated the average value per farm gained from CTTC as \$16.25 per acre. Based on the conference survey, the estimated total acres impacted was 16 million, with a total estimated impact at \$250,000,000. The Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference is a multi-agency educational program.

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