



Mahoning County

490 S. Broad St.
Canfield 44406, 330-533-5538



2008 County Highlights

Strengthening Families and Communities

- The FCS educator provided more than 230 phone consultations on requests of food safety and preservation. At least 15 pressure canner gauges were tested to ensure accuracy during food preservation.
- The Ag/NR educator partnered with the Men's Garden Club of Youngstown and sponsored the *Annual Horticulture Seminar*. The daylong seminar was attended by 96 people who gained knowledge centered on OSU research related consumer horticulture topics.
- Two three-series classes, *Dining with Diabetes*, were provided to 24 participants in Mahoning County in collaboration with Forum Health Diabetes Help. Ninety-five percent of the participants responded they had learned new information and planned to make behavior changes that included increased physical activity, maintaining a meal plan, and increased monitoring of their blood glucose levels.
- Collaborating with the State 4-H Military Kids organization, five Mahoning County 4-H teens and the county 4-H educator assisted with a Family Mobilization Briefing by conducting activities for children whose parents are in the National Guard or Reserves and were being mobilized.
- Over 450 individuals attended trainings, classes, meetings, and health fairs focused on health, wellness, nutrition, and food safety principles conducted by the FCS educator. Participants indicated that they planned to use the information they received to improve their daily lives by increasing their physical activity, increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables they consume, and monitoring expiration dates of food items.
- The Mahoning Extension Master Gardener program was supported with monthly meetings and newsletters in 2008. Seventy-six trained Mahoning County Extension volunteers in the Master Gardener program contributed 2,350 hours of service projects in the communities of Mahoning County. These volunteer efforts equate into nearly \$30,000 of in-kind service to the Mahoning Valley.
- The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provided more than 860 families with information to increase their ability to provide their families with healthier meals. A total of 110 families completed a series of classes on food safety, stretching food dollars, menu planning, and healthy food choices.
- A grant sponsored by the Midwest Regional Food and Consumer Services, USDA, provided the opportunity for a Summer Food Program, focusing on nutrition and exercise to more than 1,445 urban youth ages 5–16 at 12 sites in Mahoning County. Participants gained awareness of MyPyramid, physical activity, and food safety through fun activities, facilitated dialogue, and weekly challenges.
- Utilizing an interactive, peer-instructor method, 11 4-H teens organized and presented a monthly *CARTEENS* traffic safety school for 211 Mahoning County juvenile traffic offenders. Using post-session surveys, 95% of the participants agreed that *CARTEENS* would make them a better driver, and 98% enjoyed that the classes were taught by teens.
- The EFNEP Program for Youth reached 408 children in 2008. Through 21 groups in classroom settings, community centers, churches, and afterschool programs children developed healthy eating patterns and skills in making wise food choices and preparing nutritious snacks.
- The grant-funded Family Nutrition Program conducted 39 nutrition education classes to more than 410 residents of Mahoning County. Indirect contacts were made with more than 2,400 residents through staffed displays or newsletters. Ninety-five percent of the participants indicated they had learned new methods to improve nutrition, shopping and spending habits, food safety, and meal planning.
- Working with the Mahoning County Juvenile Court, six 4-H teens taught four classes of tobacco awareness to 30 county youth referred by the Juvenile Court.
- 125 youth and 28 adults representing 18 growing teams participated in the "Good Natured Garden Partners" urban gardening program. The growing teams learned to grow produce with assistance from Ag/NR educator, program assistant, and volunteers. Participants gained confidence in producing vegetables from their efforts. Each child participant consumed an estimated average of 2.5 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables during the growing season, increasing the nutritional benefit of their food source, and correspondingly reducing their family food budget.

Preparing Youth for Success

- Mahoning County residents volunteered nearly 45,000 hours of service in 2008, leading 72 4-H community clubs.
- Mahoning County 4-H implemented a week-long summer camp for 96 youth, 9–14 years of age, using 21 teen role models as counselors and utilizing 7 adult volunteers.
- In collaboration with The Mahoning County Public Schools, at least 460 youth attended educational sessions conducted by the FCS educator to increase awareness on physical activity, MyPyramid, and financial management.
- Mahoning County 4-H hosted a Cloverbud Day Camp for children ages 5–8 in 2008. Thirty-four youth participated

in educational activities, learning about the culture of several foreign countries. Thirteen teens served as youth counselors.

- Thirty urban, at-risk youth and 10 adults spent four days at 4-H Camp Whitewood. The Urban 4-H camp participants learned about aerospace technology by making rockets, buoyancy by making cardboard boats, nature, and arts and crafts.
- In 2008, 32 new volunteers were screened and received a total of 32 hours of training to assist with the 4-H program in Mahoning County. An additional 145 hours of training were provided to 273 returning 4-H volunteers.

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- Mahoning Extension continued the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists program with monthly meetings and newsletters in 2008. The program's 26 trained volunteers contributed some 880 hours of community service to local parks and publicly owned natural areas. This volunteer labor increased public awareness of local natural resource assets and donated to these local organizations nearly \$11,000 of in-kind services.
- The Ag/NR educator partnered with the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) to offer two Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification Trainings that 101 license holders participated in. Of those attending, 100% completed the recertification requirements.
- Eight individuals participated in the Mahoning Extension New Pesticide Applicator Training. This training improves the participants' chances of successfully passing the Ohio Department of Agriculture pesticide applicator exam. Passing this exam is necessary in order to legally use restricted-use plant health products in their business activities.
- Nearly 2,550 Mahoning Valley residents relied on the Mahoning Extension Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic to find answers to their plant health and household pest problems in 2008. These inquiries came to the office via phone calls and walk-in traffic.
- Mahoning Extension collaborated with ODA and acquired 23 Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) traps for Mahoning County. The Ag/NR educator worked with Mill Creek MetroParks, and several county golf courses to set the EAB traps in 2008. The traps increased public awareness of this invasive pest and will help these organizations monitor the populations and spread of the insect to better help them manage their ash tree resources.
- Quality assurance training was provided to 382 youth taking dairy or market animal 4-H projects. Each youth received at least four hours of training. This resulted in increased awareness of food safety and quality, leading to 100% compliance with Ohio Department of Agriculture procedures and policies.

Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- In collaboration with The Children's Hunger Alliance Task Force, the FCS educator provided two training sessions in Nutrition, Wellness, and Physical Activity to 84 certified childcare providers for continued education credits to maintain their licensure.
- The Mahoning Ag/NR educator partnered with the Mahoning Valley Landscape Nursery Association and sponsored a Spring Clinic for the area green goods industry. More than 135 green goods business owners attended. These business owners gained knowledge in current commercial horticulture and business related topics which improves industry standards and the owner's competitiveness.
- The Ag/NR educator partnered with ODA and offered 5 Ohio Pesticide Applicator Testing sites in Mahoning County in 2008. Over 200 people registered and tested at these sites.
- Seventy-two community 4-H clubs provided opportunities for 1,260 youth to develop leadership skills, social skills, subject matter knowledge, and other skills that will help them become positive, productive citizens for our community.
- Approximately 120 individuals attended Money Management trainings held by the FCS educator to implement a budget, save money, and reduce debt. Ninety-five percent of the participants indicated they planned to develop a budget and take control of their finances.
- Partnering with the Mahoning County Youth Director, the Mahoning County Juvenile Court, and two Youngstown city schools, the 4-H educator continued working with five traditional 4-H community clubs in Youngstown, representing under-represented audiences. A total of 122 urban, at-risk youth participated in club activities, 4-H camp, gardening projects, and the Mahoning County Fair.
- The Agriculture educator performed 81 direct contact consultations for various green industry and agricultural firms in 2008, resulting in improved pest diagnostics and plant management techniques.
- Mahoning Extension partnered with Mahoning Soil and Water Conservation District, Mahoning County Farm Bureau, and local commercial fruit/vegetable growers and developed a *Buy Fresh, Buy Local*, Mahoning Valley Agriculture Guide. Three thousand brochures were printed for distribution identifying over 30 local producers. Growers declared a collective marketing tool like this will increase sales at their farm markets. Consumers indicated they planned to use this guide to aid them in their search to find fresh produce close to home.

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Keith L. Smith, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, Ohio State University Extension
TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868