



Morrow County

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2008 County Highlights

Strengthening Families and Communities

- Morrow County Family Nutrition Program met the federal grant guidelines of working with the local Job and Family Services and teaching classes in a series. This enabled us to continue to receive federal and state support for this program.
- In Morrow County, the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) is fortunate to have a working relationship with the local Job and Family Services through the Job Training office. Two classes are taught through the Job Training office each month, with new participants each session. One session is titled "Stretch Your Food Dollars" and the second is titled "Budget 101" using the FNP approved curriculum "Count your Money Calendar." Twenty-nine per cent of the classes taught in the FNP Grant Year 2008 were taught under the food shopping objective with 91% of those classes held in the JFS office. Because we see different people each time (no series), there is no change data available. However, 223 participants self-report under the food shopping objective that they plan to make changes from materials learned in these classes.
- Family Nutrition Program classes in Morrow County are taught in a series at three public housing sites, the No Limits Center, and at the Trinity United Methodist Church food pantry. These classes account for 46% of the classes taught in Morrow County.
- Latest figures show unemployment remains steady at about seven percent in Morrow County. 39% of participants self-report receiving food stamps, a number the program assistant sees declining slightly each year. 58% of the participants self-report receiving food at local food pantries, a number that rises each year. Alarmingly, 42% of the participants self-report running out of food by the end of the month.
- ToMorrow's Farm News and Scarlet and Gray News newsletters are published each month to advertise programs, honor outstanding 4-H members and advisors, and educate readers on topics related to agriculture, natural resources, community development, youth development, nutrition, and family living. The ToMorrow's Farm News is sent bi-monthly to more than 2,600 families. The Scarlet and Gray News is sent to over 1,600 families, also bi-monthly. These are free, and copies may be requested by calling 419-947-1070.

Preparing Youth for Success

- "I plan to utilize the materials presented at this workshop in my classroom," was the response of all 12 elementary teachers attending a teacher environmental training provided by OSU Extension 4-H, Morrow County Litter and Recycling, Mt. Gilead State Park, Farm Bureau, Mt. Gilead Elementary Principal, Lutheran Memorial Camp, and Ohio Department of Natural Resources. One participant commented, "I've always enjoyed the workshops in the past and have collected valuable information."
- Over \$10,000 has been received through 4-H after-school programming. Weekly educational program visits to the two Northmor Elementary sites and one Highland Elementary site provided 88 youth hands-on activities exploring science, nutrition, and physical fitness. Year-end evaluations results indicated youth enjoyment with the program, an expressed want for continued programming.
- 452 Morrow County 5th graders attended the 2008 Safety Day Camp organized by OSU Extension and Farm Bureau. Twelve county agencies and businesses provided programming for this daylong event. When students were asked the question, "I learned a lot from this day camp," results showed a mean score of 3.26 on a 4-point scale.
- Morrow County 4-H reaches approximately 2,500 youth through 4-H clubs and research-based educational programming, such as school enrichment, safety programs, environmental education, summer day camps, and afterschool programs.
- Developing self-esteem, independent living skills, and other life skills through a 4-H camping experience was the objective of collaboration between Job and Family Services and Morrow County 4-H. Eighteen members received free camperships through this collaboration, totaling \$2,700. A total of 183 youth camped in 2008, an increase of 29 campers from the previous year.
- Each year 4-H is responsible for providing 11 hands-on educational skillathon contests for approximately 840 Junior Fair youth utilizing 100 volunteers. Sixty percent of the youth received a score of at least 90 out of 100 points. Prior to the existing state skillathon kits, Morrow County 4-H developed a goat, rabbit, poultry, and llama kit. Since 1996, all Junior Fair animal participants

have been required to participate in the skillathons to test their knowledge prior to fair. Since 2001, youth have received project grades, premiums, and additional awards for their participation.

- 2008 Earth Day for 418 Morrow County 2nd graders provided hands-on educational programs based on current science standards and benchmarks. Animals, plants, insects, and weather were the programs highlighted. Eleven out of twelve teachers ranked the day as excellent.

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- Agriculture continues to be one of the largest industries in Morrow County. There are 840 farms that produced more than \$51 million of products during 2007. When combined with the economic spin-off that the industry creates, agriculture generates over 84.1 million dollars for the county's economy per year.
- A total of 50 private pesticide applicators received recertification training during 2008.
- Reproduction and calving were the focus of the Morrow County Cattlemen Education Series held in 2008. Over 30 dairy and beef cattlemen attended these educational programs presented by an OSU Extension Dairy Specialist, a local Veterinarian, and Semex Inc. Without the availability of a large animal veterinarian in Morrow County and the knowledge gained from this year's programs, producers have requested several new reproduction topics for educational meetings in 2009.
- The topics discussed at the Morrow/Marion Good Agriculture Practices seminar included standards for producing high-quality, safe products for consumers; reviewing county and state regulations for selling certain items; and providing marketing tips to increase sales. Thirty individuals serving farmers markets were a part of this opportunity to meet the state health standards.
- 759 4-H and FFA students participated in Livestock Quality Assurance education sessions provided by OSU Extension and the Morrow County Junior Fair Coordinator. Sixteen adult and teen volunteers were trained to help conduct the educational programs. All animals tested for drug residues passed their tests and were deemed drug-free. After attending at least two years of Quality Assurance sessions 22 teens attempted and passed a Quality Assurance test enabling them to test out of this state-mandated program.

- Clean roadsides and helping the environment are the goals of the Morrow County Trash Bash. Each year over 30 4-H clubs and 20 other youth organizations participate in this event. In 2008 a total of 155 miles of county roads and 295 miles of township roads were cleaned.
- OSU Extension in Morrow County was devastated by the death of Steve Ruhl, long-time Ag/NR educator and Morrow County citizen. Steve's impact on Morrow County was exceptional and he will be missed. Every effort is being made to hire a new Ag/NR educator.

Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- Twelve county residents/employees completed the six-part leadership program during 2007–2008. The sessions were designed for participants to gain more knowledge about county issues and to enhance personal leadership skills. At the conclusion of the program the group spent three days in Washington, D.C., to study the history and heritage of our great country.

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