



Ottawa County

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2008 County Highlights

Preparing Youth for Success

- In 2008, the 4-H CARTEENS Program was established with the collaboration of the Ottawa County 4-H Program, the Ottawa County Juvenile Court, and the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department. Through recruitment efforts, fourteen 4-H members made the commitment to serve as instructors for the program. Since inception, the program has been presented four times to 85 participants. 98% of the participants rated the program good to excellent. Comments included the following: "It reinforced situations that kind of slipped away from Driver's Ed." "The educators are students just like us. It helps us understand that they aren't just preaching to us." "The ability to relate to the instructors because they are around my age."
- The Ottawa County 4-H Program continues to conduct 4-H programming for the Benton-Carroll-Salem After-School Program Acorn Alley and Port Clinton City Schools After-School Program Champions for Children. Due to the appeal of the "Acres of Adventure" curriculum, a second year was offered of this curriculum in the afterschool setting. In 2008, the 4-H Afterschool program received a \$1,000 grant from the Ottawa County Farm Bureau to offset supplies needed to conduct the program. In addition to the programs, four of the five sites have established 4-H clubs and hold monthly meetings. In 2008, 153 children were served in the 4-H Afterschool Program.
- The School Enrichment program has increased the number of classrooms served by improved recruitment efforts. A new brochure listing fourteen different programs was sent to kindergarten through fifth grade teachers in all elementary schools in Ottawa County. Programs are interactive and activity-based to promote youth development. In 2008, 33 classrooms registered to receive 4-H School Enrichment Programs, up from 25 classrooms in 2007. The majority of teachers selected three programs, for a total of 84 programs for the 2008 school year compared to 56 for the 2007 school year. By visiting 33 classrooms, approximately 650 kindergartners through fifth graders in Ottawa County will have participated in the 4-H School Enrichment program.
- The Tractor Safety Course was offered to youth of Ottawa and Sandusky counties. The course was taught at Oak Harbor High School with the help FFA instructor Louie Damschroder. Seven youth complete the course that included both classroom instruction and hands-on instruction driving tractors and lawn equipment.

Completion of this course allows participants who are between the ages of 14 through 16 to work for area producers under state labor law and restrictions.

Strengthening Families and Communities

- The Family Nutrition Program (FNP) conducted over 115 programs this year with 85% of the participants indicating they planned to make changes in their nutritional habits, and 93% indicating they learned new information regarding thrifty food shopping.
- The Family Nutrition Newsletter reached over 400 food stamp participants in Ottawa County each month. The newsletter provides easy reading tips on basic nutrition, food safety, thrifty food shopping, and food preparation.
- The Family Nutrition Program also reached out to over 960 families who receive a holiday food and gift package from the Ottawa County Holiday Bureau. The families received a packet of information relating to holiday food preparation and safety, a Family Nutrition and Activity Calendar, as well as suggestions to help stretch their food dollars.
- An educational program titled Spending Less, Living Better was presented at the Sutton Center in collaboration with the Salvation Army and Department of Job and Family Services who refer their clients to the class. This program is team-taught by the FNP program assistant and the FCS educator. This year, the class was taught monthly with over 35 participants this year. Special funding from the Ottawa County Community Foundation allowed each participant to receive special money management and meal planning tools to take home. Key concepts include meal planning, food shopping, developing a spending plan, and planning for occasional expenses. Evaluations indicated that 100% of the participants learned new information with 93% stating they would make changes in their shopping habits.
- Dining with Diabetes is a diabetes educational program that reached 36 persons with diabetes, as well as their spouses and support persons. The three-part class was offered twice in 2008 in collaboration with Magruder Hospital and their dietician. A key part of this series is the hands-on food demonstration and tasting that emphasized healthy food choices and how to make choices to fit the needs of the diabetic person. Exercise is also promoted to keep a healthy lifestyle when living with diabetes. Participants reported making changes in their food preparation techniques and increasing their exercise to keep blood sugar under control.

- Leadership Ottawa County graduated its eighth class in May with 15 participants completing the nine-month program. The FCS educator with OSU Extension serves as the program coordinator for LOC under the direction of the non-profit board of directors and the volunteer curriculum committee. In addition to coordinating the classes, Extension provides various educational leadership programs throughout the class year. After graduating 15 participants in May, a new class of 16 community leaders began their leadership journey in September. These young men and women have become active leaders in their workplaces and communities.
- New Start for Financial Success is an online class to enhance skills in personal finance offered quarterly by OSU Extension. The two-hour class is an approved Personal Finance Instructional Course that meets the requirement for bankruptcy filers. Six participants received the training this year.
- Home Child Care Providers play an important role for parents by providing loving, competent care for their children. Ongoing training for providers is an important requirement. OSU Extension serves as a trainer and provided three trainings for child care providers throughout the year. Over 45 providers learned more about nutrition for young children and working with parents and children to strengthen relationships.

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- Agricultural producers are now dealing with input costs that are increasing at an alarming rate. Keeping with our mission to give research-based information to our clientele, a series of soybean plots were planted on the Oak Harbor High School's farm. The soybean population trial was to evaluate which planting population would result in the best return to seed investment. This trial is in its third year. The other plot funded by the Ohio Soybean Council was an Asian Soybean Rust Sentinel Plot. This plot had four different maturity groups to increase the time that soybean rust could infect the crop. Scouted weekly no rust was detected. This plot was part of the USDA Sentinel Plot system designed to help alert producers in case of an outbreak.
 - Insect scouting continues to help producers and consultants use IPM in insect management. Working with agronomic and vegetable producers, crop consultants and state specialist several trapping stations were set up in Ottawa County. Insects scouted for in Ottawa County include the European Corn Borer, Corn Ear Worm, Western Bean Cutworm, Beet Army Worm, and First Year Western Corn Root Worm. As seed costs increase, producers need to examine how to better utilize inputs
- in their operation. Knowing what insects are present is key to variety selection. Stations were checked and results were reported weekly to state specialist, consultants, and producers. Consultants used the information to adjust spray schedules and or increase their scouting of high-dollar vegetable crops.
- The Master Gardener Program conducted its seventh class with twelve participants. The Master Gardener program is a joint effort between Ottawa and Sandusky counties, and participants in this year's class were about split between the two counties. The class is nine weeks long and examines various horticultural topics that are taught by Ohio State University or local experts within the field. New trainees are required to volunteer 50 hours to the program to help the community with home horticultural questions or problems. All participants are well on their way in completing their obligation. This group of volunteers continues to be a strong support for various horticultural activities in the community.

Partnerships and Collaborations

OSU Extension works with many local agencies and groups to deliver educational programming and research vital to clientele interests and needs.

- Ottawa County Commissioners
- Ottawa County Health Department: WIC
- Ottawa County Emergency Management Agency: Davis-Besse Emergency Response
- Ottawa County Juvenile Court
- Ottawa County Sheriff Department
- Ottawa County Sr. and Jr. Fair Boards, Jr. Fair Coordinator
- Ottawa County Improvement Corporation/Job Store
- Ottawa County Department of Job and Family Services
- Ottawa County Holiday Bureau
- Leadership Ottawa County
- United Way
- Salvation Army
- Transitional Housing
- WSOS Child Development Programs
- Local Food Pantries
- Magruder Hospital
- All Local Schools K-5 classrooms
- Acorn Alley and Champions for Children Afterschool programs
- Port Clinton and BCS Wellness Advisory Councils
- Family and Children First Council
- Council of Health and Social Concerns
- Ottawa County Cattlemen Association
- Ottawa Soil and Water Conservation District
- Farm Service Agency
- Oak Harbor Young Farmers
- Farm Bureau
- Ottawa County Senior Resources
- Chamber of Commerce in Port Clinton and Oak Harbor
- Conestoga Project

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