



Fayette County

1415 US Rt. 22 SW, Suite 100
Washington CH 43160, 740-335-1150



2008 County Highlights

Strengthening Families and Communities

In the Fayette County Family Nutrition Program's 133 classes, 888 people received nutrition, food safety, and thrifty food shopping information. The program works with welfare and welfare-eligible adult groups in the county. 46.3% of the participants were on the food stamp program this year.

- One woman now looks at grocery ads, plans meals, makes a list, and uses unit pricing when shopping for food. Another participant is buying no pop, examining labels, and avoiding sugars.
- In one class the group shares and compiles recipes for low-cost, easy meals, modifying recipes and developing creative ways to use leftovers, to help each other.

Budgeting sessions with twenty-three individuals referred through a Community Action grant have resulted in helping people improve their financial situation. Grant administrators have commented that people are using the tools and appreciate the knowledge they have gained. In one instance, a couple realized that they could buy a car, get car insurance, purchase gasoline, and have money for maintenance of the car if they quit smoking and did not have to use a cab service to get back and forth to work. They had no idea they were spending that much money on those items.

- Post-class Dining with Diabetes evaluation forms showed increased knowledge on sources of carbohydrates, use of Nutrition Facts food labels in making food choices, and understanding the Plate method.
- Ninety-one percent of the 136 participants completing surveys after attending "Healthy Eating Out" sessions planned to make some or many changes. This program was prepared for participants in the Health Department's summer Health Walkers program. Over 65% of the participants planned to eat smaller portions and/or make changes in what they ordered to eat healthier.
- Twelve 4-H youth helped Head Start students learn more about healthy eating and being physically active by the 4-H grant "Get a Head Start in Nutrition." Head Start students tried different fruits and vegetables the 4-H members helped them make for snacks. Parents attending Head Start meetings received nutritional instruction in improving their child's eating and physical activity.

Strategic planning sessions helped Commission on Aging Board of Trustees develop ideas to address the current budget situation and changes to enhance the Center.

The Fayette County Horticulture Program includes 27 active Master Gardeners volunteering over 675 hours of community service. Using an economic value of \$10-\$17 per hour of volunteer work, Fayette County Master Gardeners contributed \$6,750-\$11,475 to Fayette County this year.

The Farmer's Market continued in downtown Washington Courthouse with a great response. Over 30 vendors offered the residents of Fayette County locally grown, fresh, and great tasting produce on Saturdays through the summer. The horticulture program assistant conducted meetings to teach producers marketing and better yield practices with over 30 attending. Then the Master Gardeners worked with her to manage the market. This project helps community members eat healthier with more fruits and vegetables as well as support their local farmers. Eating and buying locally uses less of our valuable resources in shipping and also enhances the local economy. This past year a Farmers Market Management Network was created to help with marketing and food safety issues. Fayette County Farmers Market is a part of this group and will report next year about the changes.

Over 250 adults and youth were screened with the Dermascan machine checking for sun damage on their face. At least five people reported that they had a spot removed after being told to check with their dermatologist last year. Over 50% of the adults and youth were shocked at the damage to their skin by the sun.

Preparing Youth for Success

- In Fayette County, 883 youth (ages 5-19) participated in 4-H club project work and exhibited 4-H project work at the Junior Fair. Coordinating 4-H club work and activities for youth were 167 4-H adult volunteers. Youth volunteers (15 to 18 years old) included 31 teens who served on the Junior Fair Board and were responsible for planning the Junior Fair activities for over 1,300 Fayette County Junior fair members. Junior Fair Board members learned and practiced life skills that included leadership skills, team building, program planning, decision making, conflict management, Junior Fair policies, money management, ethics, and communication skills by being engaged in planning a major event like the county fair. Older teens shared their experience as a Junior Fair Board member helped them when seeking employment or in their academic pursuits.
- A fun and educational outdoor living experience was conducted for 141 Fayette County campers through two three-day overnight 4-H camps and a day Cloverbud Camp held at Camp Clifton. Over a five-month period, 40 teens (15-19 years old) were responsible for planning and coordinating a junior, a senior camp, and two-day Cloverbud Camp. First aid, conflict management, decision making, communication skills, leadership skills, and team building were taught to camp counselors through an on-site camp counselor overnight training and monthly meetings. Following camp, counselors evaluated themselves and their peer's skills and job performance using a counselor evaluation form. Later, counselors met to reflect on the overall camps to discuss

how they could improve camp and what skills they needed to improve to be a better counselor. Throughout their training and the reflection, counselors were taught what skills they could use in future employment, college, and what types of summer jobs they could apply for in the future due to their counselor experiences.

- Thirty-nine teens, ages 12 and up, were involved in 4-H Junior Leadership Club. Teens conducted on-going community service projects, including a monthly canned food donation for the county food pantry, “Adopt-A-Highway,” and “Make A Difference Day.” Team-building experiences and independent living skills were learned on an overnight snow ski trip in Pennsylvania.
- 4-H Junior Leaders Club successfully planned and organized their third Make A Difference Day service project. Teens learned about planning, decision making, budgets, and time management when they had to change their original project two weeks before the scheduled dates. Learning how to find an alternative plan was a good life experience. Teens were involved in planting six trees to replace trees around a new fair building. Following their tree planting, teens wrote letters to military children who had a parent(s) deployed. The teens packed their letters in Hero Packs with other items for the children. The experience of writing letters made the teens realize the sacrifices other families were making for them and their country. The Junior Leaders were recipients of a Richard and Nancy Stahl Ohio 4-H Foundation Grant.
- Through a Fifth Third Bank grant 65 eighth graders learned about personal finance through this 4-H signature program. The participants were assigned occupations and received a monthly “salary” for that occupation. Their “salaries” are spent on items found in a typical monthly budget. Throughout the activity, students keep track of their finances by recording them in their checkbook. Whether they have adequate funds or run out of money determines how successful they are at managing their money. Comments at the booths included, “I would buy less expensive stuff,” “I learned that I need a better job,” “Life is a whole lot harder than I thought,” and “How do Mom and Dad do it?”

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- All businesses have two things in common. They all produce a product or service and in turn market that product or service to their customer base. Agriculture accounts for over \$54 million in income for Fayette County agribusinesses. Agriculture has the unique position of being told what price they will receive for their product. In order to maximize the profit potential of their business, producers must work to improve the efficiency of their farming operation and utilize all the marketing tools available to ensure top dollar for their commodity. Therefore, the Agriculture and Natural Resources program in Fayette County has targeted research to maximize production of cash crops and established marketing and farm business programs to assist producers in understanding the marketing tools at their disposal.

- Fayette County Demonstration Farm conducted five Applied Research Projects in coordination with six private farms in 2008. The projects focused on liquid fertilizer alternatives for corn and soybeans, an evaluation of two levels of phosphorus and potassium fertilization in corn and soybeans under different tillage and crop rotation management, and management strategies for maximum soybean production.
- Producers were provided assistance in understanding grain marketing tools. Classroom instruction was provided with the Professional Marketer Program, which featured well-known marketing specialists from The Ohio State University and private industry. Topics included developing a marketing plan, the basics of futures/options/basis, future’s market technical analysis, weather prediction and market effects, determining your financial situation, and livestock marketing. Hands-on marketing experience has been gained by participation in the Fayette County Marketing Club. Club participants pool money to practice trading actual commodity on the Chicago Board of Trade. In total, the programs’ participants accounted for 43,710 acres of crop production and \$29.4 million in gross annual receipts. On post-program surveys, the participants indicated a \$0.10 per bushel increase in their marketing of commodities because of these programs. This translates into an increase of \$13,000 per farm in gross income.
- The Phenology garden located at the Washington Cemetery sends collected data into the state. Phenology is the study of recurring biological phenomena and their relationship to weather. Bird migration, hunting and gathering seasons, blooming of wildflowers and trees, and the seasonal appearance of insects are examples of phenological events. The goal of this study is reduced use of chemicals in our environment.
- Master Gardeners taught children at Head Start about pollination. This year over 500 horticulture questions from the community were answered through the “horticulture hotline” calls and Extension office visits. This includes pest and plant diagnosis and management.
- Master Gardeners and the horticulture program assistant educate homeowners in sustainable yard care practices, thus reducing yard waste in landfills. A rain barrel program was held to teach the community how to conserve water. Teaching the public to plant the right plant in the right place helps with sustainable landscapes and highlights the advantages of using native species.

Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- Working with OSU Extension personnel in Clinton, Highland, Greene, and Montgomery counties, a web site providing resources for those losing employment or facing difficult financial issues has been established. This web site provides information and materials to help families facing these issues. A series of newspaper articles has also been written and published in local papers by Extension educators in these counties to provide needed information.

Ohio State University Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all research and related educational programs are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or veteran status. This statement is in accordance with United States Civil Rights Laws and the USDA.

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