



Richland County

1495 W. Longview Ave., Suite 206
Mansfield 44906, 419-747-8755



2008 County Highlights

Preparing Youth for Success

- Teaching teen drivers to positively influence their attitudes and behaviors about drinking and driving, reducing speed, wearing seatbelts, and responsible driving behavior were emphasized in the prom-time mock crash for 1,549 students from nine high schools, the CARTEENS first-time juvenile traffic offender program for 313 students, and the “Grim Reaper” program instituted at four local high schools. “I am going to change my driving so I can save my life”; “I will be more cautious and slow down”; “I will be more careful and act responsible”; and “I’ll think more about the consequences and hopefully become a better driver” support the reasoning for each of these programs. Teen leaders/instructors stated, “I believe I helped to reduce injuries and/or save lives with my leadership role. I am helping the community be a safer place to live as a Youth Safety Council member.”
- 4-H and teen volunteers are a critical component of the Richland County 4-H program. The county’s 165 certified volunteers accounted for more than 38,000 hours of service at an estimated value of \$271,700 donated toward the development of the county’s 1,300 4-H members/youth participants. One volunteer stated, “The time I spend as a 4-H volunteer is an investment in Richland County’s future.”
- 420 youth and adults learned skills in organizational development, officer education and practice, committee leadership, parliamentary procedure, club management, personal development, and decision-making skills to enhance and strengthen the leadership of local club and county programs. A 12-year 4-H member stated, “What I am learning now in 4-H will help me get a better job in the future, plus help me be a better leader in my job and community.” Another 4-H member commented, “If I was not in 4-H, I would not have these same learning experiences.” Fifteen new adult volunteers completed the requirements to successfully provide leadership to 4-H club and county programs.
- 640 4-H and FFA youth taking market livestock and breeding projects, plus 200 adult volunteers and parents, increased their knowledge on selecting, feeding, and properly caring for livestock by participating in quality assurance training, livestock clinics/workshops and livestock interview judging. The successful care of the livestock owned by these members resulted in

\$268,000 worth of economic advancement at the Junior Livestock Auction at the county fair. Sixty adults gained skills in conducting livestock interviews by successfully completing judges’ training.

- OSU Extension, in collaboration with other educational organizations in the county, planned and implemented the “School Days” program for 600 third and fourth graders, and 100 teachers and parents from Richland, Crawford, Marion, Morrow, Knox and Ashland counties covering topics such as nature, science, environment, agriculture, history, and safety.

Strengthening Families and Communities

- The Family Nutrition Program taught 46 classes on nutrition, food safety and thrifty shopping skills, and household budgeting to 450 low-income participants. Evaluation reports note that 334 of these participants learned some/a lot of new information and 304 planned to make at least some changes as a result of the program. Many participants shared specific ways they planned to make a change in their lives. In addition, 1,403 indirect contacts were made with the public via newsletters, fact sheets, or other promotional materials that contained a nutritional or food safety message.
- Third through sixth grade students participated in a series of nutrition education classes via a partnership/grant with Madison Local Schools. Students “talked with parents” and verbalized they learned and practiced making healthier food choices, including eating more vegetables, planning healthy meals and snacks, and reading nutrients on food labels. Students commented, “I learned that I have to eat right now so I can be a healthy parent someday,” and “My family changed what we are eating because of what I learned in class.” Additional support was gained from parents and school personnel. More than 1,000 students received a colorful MyPyramid information sheet to share and discuss with family members. Teachers in these grade levels received nutritional education materials for follow-up use in the classroom as a result of the grant.
- Since uncontrolled diabetes can prompt expensive disease complications and medical costs, diabetes education can improve the quality of life for diabetics. Collaborative teaching by OSU Extension staff, a clinic and a local hospital registered dietician/certified diabetes educator taught a four-lesson series, “Dining

with Diabetes,” with 25 people in attendance. Evaluation results detailed life-saving measures and increased positive life-styles of participants by learning what and how much to eat, lowered sugar and salt intake, increased exercise, lost weight, improved blood sugar and blood pressure levels, and a better understanding of the disease of diabetes.

- More than 500 adults learned healthy nutrition practices with the potential to improve the quality of life and lower risk of chronic disease. Of those returning evaluations, at least 95% stated they plan to do things such as eat more fruits and vegetables, consider portion sizes, take time to prepare and eat more nutritious meals when living alone, and practice good food safety storage practices.
- Food safety is the main concern of phone calls from local citizens. The potential for serious and costly food-borne illness is decreased by answering consumer questions regarding occasional quantity food preparation for parties, community meals, thawed and improperly cooled foods, etc.

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- Master Gardener volunteers contributed more than 1,000 hours to teaching the citizens of Richland County about ornamental plants, insects, butterflies, emerald ash borer, and many other horticultural topics through hands-on educational programs and garden displays. The Richland County Master Gardeners’ volunteer teaching has provided an economic value of \$18,000 to the educational outreach of Extension in the county. This group has developed new PowerPoint educational programs to teach garden clubs and civic groups, answered calls from consumers from spring through fall in the Extension office, and maintained beautification spots/garden plots at Malabar Farm, the Richland County Fairgrounds, and the Longview Center.
- More than 100 livestock producers gained knowledge about the animal ID program, quality assurance, avian influenza, pasture management, marketing, livestock management, animal health, and controlling manure odors. They became aware of being proactive and telling the public about livestock production before activist groups and consumers force livestock producers to do practices that would affect their income. Dairy producers gained knowledge on dairy profitability, expanding production, embryo transplant, and improving and building new housing and milking facilities. Livestock producers are learning that management is the key to becoming profitable.

- The Ohio Department of Agriculture requires private applicators to attend a minimum of three hours of training every three years. A pesticide recertification class was taught to 57 farmers. Farmers received training on the latest research-based information on new pesticides, how to avoid pesticide spills and contamination, and how to properly record pesticide applications that comply with ODA regulation.
- OSU Extension collaborated with other educational organizations to help community leaders gain knowledge about the economic importance of agriculture through the LEAD program and the Pandemic Flu Forum.
- Seventy-five dairy producers, dairy industry personnel, and community and government leaders gained knowledge about the aggressiveness of the dairy industry in Israel and how these ideas and technical applications could help make the dairy industry in Ohio more profitable.

Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- Ohio pesticide law states that anyone applying pesticides in a public area must have a commercial applicators license from Ohio Department of Agriculture. Forty-one participants attended a special workshop to learn updated information to maintain their licensure by preparing for the commercial applicator license exam.
- Homemaker’s Day at the Richland County Fair provided educational sessions for more than 130 people. A mini money management session received positive verbal evaluation, including “I will try some of the ideas,” and created further individual requests for information in the financial management area. Money management is a growing emphasis with agencies and individuals in the county. Sharing educational resources and assisting with money management training, including improving discussions of finances with co-spenders and teenagers/young adults, will continue to be a major emphasis in Extension programming.

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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