



Wood County

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2008 County Highlights

Preparing Youth for Success

- In 2008, Wood County 4-H welcomed one new club, and the enrollment grew to 3,875 members. Of this membership 1,645 were enrolled in one of 70 community clubs and 2,230 youth participated in a 4-H School Enrichment project. A total of 832 4-H members participated in an overnight camp program, and 2,286 of our members were involved in an extra short-term program such as a leadership activity or training.
- Wood County's 4-H youth were taught life skills with the support of 300 adult and teen volunteers. According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, they estimate that 4-H volunteers donate 182 hours/year to the program. If one were to calculate the value of contribution at a rate of \$12/hour it would total a \$655,200 value of volunteer time donated in Wood County.
- Under the leadership of the 4-H Committee, hundreds of 4-H members, parents, and advisors dipped 17,000 milkshakes at the county fair and tractor pulls. This fundraising effort, along with local donor gifts funded camp scholarships, awards, and programs worth \$40,000 to 4-H members and volunteers in 2008.
- Once again 4-H Camp was filled to capacity. As a result of 24 hours of intensive training, 44 camp counselors were able to design a camp program that incorporated many of the critical elements needed in a positive 4-H experience including a positive relationship with a caring adult, an inclusive environment, engagement in learning, an emotionally and physically safe environment, and an opportunity for self-determination. This knowledge was applied at the Wood County 4-H Camp with 260 youth in creating a safe environment for the campers.
- One of the most highly visible events in the county was the Wood County Fair. Representing five youth organizations, the Wood County Junior Fair Board with membership of 50 teens conducted events and activities for more than 2,500 youth. Twenty hours of training was conducted by 4-H staff to prepare the board for the week's activities. As a result of the training, teen board members were prepared to deal with conflict, manage livestock shows, and work as a team with Senior Fair Board members. This Junior/Senior Fair Board working arrangement is unique to Ohio. Undoubtedly the strength of the Junior Fair is in strong correlation with this team effort.

- Twenty teens and volunteers received 4 hours of CPR training in preparation for their counselor and staff involvement at 4-H Camp. 100% of the participants felt more prepared and confident to attend camp knowing they had skills to conduct CPR if needed. As a result of this feedback the program has been scheduled in 2009.

Strengthening Families and Communities

- Sun Safety was the topic at many health fairs and festivals, where participants were able to view their skin under the ultraviolet light of the Dermascan machine. Ninety-four percent of participants responded positively to recommendations for suggestions to protect themselves from the sun's harmful rays.
- Sixteen-hour ServSafe food safety certification program was completed by 53 persons with an average passing score of 89%. Evaluations indicated knowledge in monitoring and safe handling of food during storage, preparation, and service of food products.
- Over 125 women attended the Extension Women in Agriculture program. Ninety-three person of participated stated that the program contributed to increased family communications on the farm, and 90% plan to make changes based of knowledge gained. Based on past program experiences, 65% of the participants have made at least one change in their farm operation.
- Several topics of interest were offered to Wood County government employees through their Wellness Committee's Lunch and Learn Series. One very popular and well-attended session presented by OSU Extension was Budgeting Basics and Credit101. All participants indicated the information they learned will help they better manage their personal finances.
- The Family Nutrition Program distributed over 11,000 newsletters to Wood County residents throughout the year, providing an easy-to-read resource on food safety, basic nutrition, and thrifty shopping.
- Over 1,510 people attended 326 demonstrations or presentations on the USDA MyPyramid Food Guidance System, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, food safety, and other nutrition topics. Seventy-six percent indicated they planned to make changes in their nutritional choices and food safety habits.
- Ninety-two percent of the 409 participants who learned about thrifty food shopping and meal preparation skills indicated they were planning to make changes.

- Over 23% of our contacts were with Wood County individuals aged 60 or older. We mainly interacted at congregate meal sites throughout the county, where their specific nutritional, food safety, and resource management needs were highlighted and discussed.

Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- Financial Management information was taught as necessary to those seeking assistance in money management skills, as well as weekly throughout the year, in collaboration with the Job Find program at Job and Family Services. Participants learned to use budgeting tools and shopping strategies to help become better money managers.
- New Start for Financial Success, an approved personal finance course for bankruptcy filers, was offered on a monthly basis. Fourteen individuals completed the required classwork, which covered topics including developing a budget, using credit wisely, finding reliable information, and money management skills. One hundred percent of the participants indicated they planned to make changes using knowledge they gained through the class.
- First-time Home Buyers Information Session was held in conjunction with the City of Bowling Green's grant program. Fourteen participants learned many facets of homeownership from obtaining a mortgage, to securing insurance, to keeping up on maintenance, while staying within their budgets.
- Annie's Project, a six-week class for farm women to be better farm partners and managers, was attended by 18 women. Over 50% of the participants responded to the six-month follow-up evaluations. Over 2/3 of the participants said they had become more involved in the decision-making process including goal setting and production goals. Fifty percent of the participants adopted new risk management practices as a result of Annie's Project.

Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- The Wood County Extension Master Gardener program is a cooperative effort between City of Bowling Green Parks and Recreation, Wood County Park District, and Ohio State University Extension Wood County. This collaboration has significantly improved the beautification of the scenery for all Wood County citizens.
- Ten Wood County Master Gardeners completed the program in 2008. They joined the ranks of 48 re-certified Wood County Master Gardeners, and together volun-

teered over 3,400 hours back to the community. Since the Wood County Master Gardener program inception, Wood County Master Gardeners have volunteered 24,375 hours in horticultural service at area locations such as Wood County Parks, Bowling Green City Parks, 577 Foundation, Wood County Humane Society, Wood County Public Libraries, and OSU Extension.

- Approximately 2,750 Wood County residents gained information on horticultural subject matter via telephone calls, e-mail, and horticultural seminars. Areas of the most importance in 2008 were questions and site visits responding to gypsy moth infestations, emerald ash borer, pond management, tree and small fruits, general outdoor landscape questions, and pest problems. Based on direct observations and comments, approximately 80% of the clients adopted one or more of the practices taught. This resulted in savings to the consumer based on the question and the overall scope of the project between a few dollars to upwards of a thousand dollars.
- Agricultural research projects conducted by Wood County Extension in 2008 sought to increase knowledge for producers, consultants, and ag professionals in the areas of nutrient management, soil and water quality improvement, integrated pest management, and production efficiency. Specific projects focused on cover crops, soil compaction, corn rootworm scouting, western bean cutworm monitoring, nitrogen rate comparison, crop rotation, and sustainable cropping systems.
- Private pesticide applicator license re-certification sessions were conducted for over 150 local farmers. Participants gained information about pesticide use including wearing personal protective equipment and using pesticide management practices to protect water supplies.
- The Crop Observation and Recommendation Network (C.O.R.N.) Newsletter was distributed to farmers and agri-business. The newsletter provides crop scouting, integrated pest management, cultural practice, and other practical information during the growing season plus updated research results during the winter months. This timely information has increased yields and reduced herbicide costs for thousands of acres of crops.
- Agronomic conferences were held to share research-based production information for Wood County farmers including Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference, Northern Ohio Crops Day, Winter Farm Fair, and OARDC Field Day. Knowledge gained by participants will improve farm profitability.

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