

Master Gardener Program

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer program which provides an extensive course in horticulture in exchange for a donation of volunteer hours to share gardening knowledge with others through OSU Extension-sponsored activities. The Wood County Extension Master Gardener program is a cooperative effort between the City of Bowling Green Parks and Recreation, Wood County Park District, and Ohio State University Extension Wood County. This collaboration has allowed the additional hiring of a part time Master Gardener Informational Associate. Thirteen Wood County Master Gardeners completed the program in 2006. They joined the ranks of thirty-two re-certified Wood County Master Gardeners, and together volunteered over 2000 hours back to the community in 2006. Since the Wood County Master Gardener program inception, Wood County Master Gardener's volunteered 15,668 hours in horticultural service, at area locations such as Wood County Parks, Bowling Green City Parks, City of Perrysburg, 577 Foundation and O.S.U Extension.

Gypsy Moth

The Gypsy Moth an insect in the Lepidoptera order has renewed its presence in Wood County. Areas of Wood County impacted by this threat include the areas around Rossford, Millbury, Perrysburg, Bowling Green, and most recently Pemberville. The larvae stage feeds in the canopy of deciduous and evergreen trees that eventually, depending on tree species, weakens and kills entire trees within one to three years. To help Wood County communities' address this insect threat the Wood County Extension office collaborated with the Ohio Department of Agriculture in surveying and monitoring Wood County to suppress, control, and limit the spread of this devastating insect.

Consumer Horticulture

Approximately 2,300 Wood County Residents gained information on horticultural subject matter via telephone calls and email. Additionally over 350 site visits were accomplished. Areas of the most importance in the year 2006 were questions and site visits responding to gypsy moth infestations, trees and shrubs including emerald ash borer, pond management, tree and small fruits, general outdoor landscape design questions, and insects and diseases. 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.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

On-farm research projects conducted by Wood County Extension in 2006 include:

- Soybean fungicide study – what benefit will pesticides have if the economic threshold is not reached.
- Corn rootworm sticky trap - what amount of infestation of rootworm beetles is occurring in soybean fields.
- Alfalfa leafhopper scouting – determining threshold levels weekly throughout Wood County.
- Cover Crop comparison-comparing nutrient cycling and biomass production of Oilseed Radish and Annual Ryegrass cover crops.
- Manure application study – what benefit does manure application have for corn production.

Agronomic research projects conducted by Wood County Extension in 2006 at Ohio State University Research facilities include:

- Soil compaction – 0, 10, and 20 ton axel load comparison on grain yield and soil tilth factors.
- Red Clover – under seeded in wheat, tillage versus herbicide destruction of clover, soil nitrogen benefit values also measured.
- Long – term crop rotation systems – Six crop rotation systems with tillage vs. no-till.
- Sustainable cropping systems – Five grain cropping systems including three certified organic.
- Organic corn variety trial – Organic corn varieties evaluated for performance traits.

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 electronically and in print 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 & Technology Conference, Northern Ohio Crops Day, Winter Farm Fair, and OARDC Field Day.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1) In 2006, Wood County 4-H welcomed four new clubs. Enrollment grew by over 1100 members with a total of 5407 members. Of this membership 1379 were enrolled in one of 70 community clubs and 3268 youth participated in a 4-H School Enrichment project.

2) Wood County's 4-H youth were taught life skills with the support of 250 adult volunteers, hundreds of teen leaders and 5 paid 4-H professionals. 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 \$546,000 value of volunteer time donated in Wood County.

3) Under the leadership of the 4-H Committee, hundreds of 4-H members, parents and advisors dipped 20,000 milkshakes at the county fair and tractor pulls. This fundraising effort, along with local donor gifts funded camp scholarships, awards and programs worth \$30,000 to 4-H members and volunteers in 2006.

4) In 2006, the Wood County 4-H program offered 3200 projects in 60 classrooms. Two new programs including Agriculture and Quilts in the class room were highly successful. Other programs enriched the school's classroom curriculum in the areas of mathematics, history, and science with valuable hands-on activities. Teens teaching in the classroom added necessary support and offered valuable career exploration as a result.

5) Wood County 4-H members completed an active year of service to their community. Thirty-five youth and their mentors learned the art of quilting while stitching lap quilts later donated to women in the local domestic violence shelter. 50 teens from the Food, Fashion and Family Board sought breakfast foods and donated to the Hoytville Youth Community Outreach Program. Seven hundred comfort pillows were constructed by youth and volunteers and donated to hospice patients in NW Ohio. Grant funding totaling over \$1400 was utilized to conduct many of these projects on the county level.

6) Once again 4-H Camp was filled to capacity! As a result of 24 hours of intensive training, 42 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.

7) One of the most highly visible events in the county was the Wood County Fair. Representing 5 youth organizations, the Wood County Junior Fair Board with membership of 52 teens conducted events and activities for more than 2500 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. 8) It's been a banner year for Wood County 4-H in the news! Publicity through numerous feature articles increased not only on the local level, but on the state and national level as well. Wood County was featured on two occasions in the National 4-H On-line newsletter and National Quilters Association magazine regarding the high level of community service

offered by teens. The 4-H program has been offered a permanent home in the Wood County Historical Museum after a year of temporary displays. The Wood County 4-H Website has increased its viewer support with over 11,000 visits in 2006. Members and volunteers offer appreciation for the up-to-date information available.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Served as one of the coordinators of Chamber of Commerce AG Day: a visit of Wood County Agriculture. Thirty-five individuals experienced the county ag industry. Results indicated they learned so much more about ag in area. One participant commented, "Tremendous experience learning what was in my own back yard". Women in Agriculture programming included a trip to St. Louis to tour Monsanto, Farm Service Agency and Anheiser-Busch grain buying division. The participants gained knowledge and a better understanding of ag issues from a federal perspective. 89% indicated that the meeting generated looks of discussion with family and peers. Farm families (82%) valued their networking opportunities provided on the trip.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Forty-three individuals employed at local eating establishments attended a four hour food safety training to gain knowledge and increase skills that resulted in a safer food product for customers. Over 80% of the participants stated they had learned skills that would be transferred into their work place. 41% percent learned new practices for cleaning and sanitizing. ServSafe training for food service managers was held for 28 restaurant managers. After completing the 16 hour class, participants reported a gaining knowledge in areas of food borne illness, cleaning and sanitizing, food preparation, serving and storage. 90% percent of the participants indicated they had changed at least one food safety practice as a result of the class. 87% of the participants passed the National restaurant association ServSafe test. The 14th annual Women In Ag Conference was held with 160 participants. The evaluation results showed 87% of the participants gained knowledge on the farm topics and anticipated implementing at least one new idea. As a result of the program new programs will be introduced for farm partners in 2007. With the cooperation of Wood County Hospital, Wellness Center, a local pharmacist, and the University of Toledo pharmacy students presented You and Your Medications for 16 senior citizens. Written evaluations indicated all participants learned new information about their health and 66 percent learn new information about their health. Information presented by pharmacists and students was very helpful. SNACKWISE a vending machine project to increase the healthy snacks provided for children and increase the income of the vending machine was held in two local schools. Both schools increased their number of nutritious snacks in the vending machines and more youth became aware of healthy food choices. The program positively influenced the choices of the youth. LET'S TALK MONEY, an interactive research based web-site, provides access to up to date practical information in six financial management topics. The web site has 6193 visitors and 12706 hits in 2006. The average length of a visit was 5 minutes.

Family Nutrition Program

Over 6500 newsletters were distributed to Wood County residents throughout the year, providing an easy-to-read resource on food safety, basic nutrition and thrifty shopping.

Of the nearly 800 people who attended demonstrations or presentations on the USDA MyPyramid Food Guidance System, Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and other nutrition topics, over 78% indicated they planned to make changes in their nutritional habits and dietary quality.

Forty-two people learned new information regarding food safety. Fifty-seven percent indicated they intended to make changes in their handling of foods. Sixty-eight percent of the 400 participants indicated they were planning to make changes when practicing thrifty shopping for nutritious foods. Evaluations indicated that 62% of the participants had increased their knowledge in food budgeting skills.

Six percent of the programs offered, were attended by senior citizens at congregate meal sites throughout the county, where their specific nutritional, food safety, and resource management needs were highlighted and discussed.