Ohio County Annual Report 2018

Putting Knowledge to Work!

West Virginia University Extension Service works to provide solutions in your community through key programs and resources, including agriculture and natural resources, 4-H and youth development, food and nutrition, health and wellness, financial planning and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all Ohio County residents thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners, including the Board of Education and County Commission.

Highlights

- Ohio County 4-H engaged 185 youths through clubs and 157 youths through county 4-H camps.

- 4-H members completed 157 4-H projects that were displayed at county, regional and state fairs.

- Master Gardener public garden lecture series included four educational programs that reached 120 local residents.

- The West Virginia Women in Agriculture conference was held at Oglebay, bringing 186 people from across the state to Wheeling.

- The Family Nutrition Program reached more than 900 youths through 44 classrooms, 50 adults through community programs and over 2,700 citizens through a variety of public health initiatives.

- Extension volunteers donated over 9,000 hours of service to educational programs and community service projects.

4-H and Youth Development

As the largest youth-development organization in the world, 4-H strives to empower youth to reach their full potential by working and learning in partnership with caring adults. 4-H provides an effective network of programs that engage youth in education related to citizenship, science and healthy living while promoting the four-fold development of each member’s head, heart, hands and health.
Research conducted by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University shows that youths engaged in 4-H programs excel beyond their peers.

4-H youths are:
**Four** times more likely to contribute to their communities.
**Twice** as likely to be civically active.
**Nearly twice** as likely to make healthier choices.
**Nearly twice** as likely to participate in science, engineering, and computer technology programs during out-of-school time.

Ohio County 4-H encourages youth to learn by doing through a network of community clubs, special interest clubs, camps and school-based activities. Ohio County 4-H programs are conducted by WVU Extension Service faculty and 4-H volunteers with support from the Ohio County 4-H Leaders’ Association, the Ohio County 4-H Foundation, the Ohio County 4-H All Stars and the Ohio County Community Educational Outreach Service.

**Camping**
Through Ohio County’s residential and day-time camps:
- 157 youths participated in at least one 4-H camping program.
  - 71 campers (ages 13 to 21) participated in Ohio County Older 4-H camp.
  - 57 campers (ages 9 to 12) participated in Ohio County Younger 4-H camp.
  - 12 campers (ages 5 to 8) participated in Cloverbud day camp.
  - 27 campers (ages 9 to 12) participated in Ohio County 4-H STEM day camp.
- More than 2,100 nutritious meals were served to youths participating in Ohio County 4-H camps.
  - 651 of the meals were in partnership with the Summer Food program.
- Residential camp evaluations show that youths gain valuable life skills through camp.
  - 88% of participants had a chance to lead a group activity.
  - 84% of participants identified things they are good at.
  - 75% of participants learned a new skill.
  - 62% of participants now have a better idea of what they will do after high school.
- STEM day camp evaluation results indicate that as a result of camp:
  - 87% of participants learned something new.
  - 96% of participants get excited about new discoveries.
  - 77% of participants want to learn more about science.
  - 52% of participants would like to have a job related to science.

**4-H School-Based Programs**
- 110 students at three elementary schools engaged in WeDo 2.0 Lego Robotics lessons.
- 92 students at two elementary schools learned how to properly wash their hands.
- 55 students engaged in the Incredible Wearables lesson in school or an afterschool program.
Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs

Through Ohio County’s five community clubs and four special interest clubs:

- 173 youths joined a 4-H club and experienced an organizational business meeting.
- 12 youths joined 4-H as Cloverbud members (ages 5 to 8).
- 359 hours of community service were performed by 127 members.
- 157 4-H project books and exhibits were completed.
  - 111 projects scored blue ribbons.
  - 85 project exhibits were taken to the State Fair of West Virginia.
    - Two were named “Best of Show” at the State Fair.
- 49 youths participated in educational classes and teambuilding activities at 4-H Fun Night.
- 20 youths participated in Ohio County 4-H Round Up through presentations and exhibits.
- One member won first place at the West Virginia 4-H Day for her speech.
- 25 members participated in at least one state-level 4-H camping program.

Through the network of local organizations that support Ohio County 4-H:

- More than $22,000 was raised to support Ohio County 4-H through fundraisers, grants, and donations.
  - $7,486 was donated to the Ohio County 4-H Foundation.
  - $9,388 was given to Ohio County 4-H camp via grants and donations.
  - $5,160 was raised by the Ohio County 4-H Leaders Association for county programming.
- More than $4,300 in scholarships were awarded to 4-H members to help them attend county, state and national 4-H events.
- Adult volunteers donated well over 4,500 hours to support and assist with club and county 4-H events.
- In addition, 4-H members earned more than $900 in premiums from county, regional and state fairs.

Special Interest Programs

- 113 students experienced at least one virtual reality Google Expedition through school or the 2018 West Virginia NASA Day held at Wheeling Jesuit University.
- 46 members engaged in science and art activities on a monthly basis through the 4-H Dragon STEAM club at Elm Grove Elementary.
- 25 members learned safe practices and skill mastery in air rifle, archery and shotgun at Ohio County 4-H shooting sports club at Lewis Wetzel Pistol and Rifle Club.
Nine middle school students engaged in leadership and teambuilding activities at Laughlin Memorial Chapel afterschool program.

WVU Extension Service coordinates the Ohio County Youth Organization Network, a collection of youth-focused organizations in Ohio County. The organization met three times in 2018, allowing representatives from 15 local organizations to share ideas and resources.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Youth Agriculture

- Members of the Ohio County 4-H livestock club earned $59,839 at the West Alexander Fair Youth Livestock Auction.
- 2018 West Alexander Ribbons include: Reserve Champion Middle Weight Steer, one Steer first in class, two steers third in class, rate of gain lamb, second and third in class for hogs, and most importantly, champion senior showman.
- 11 Livestock Club members conducted demonstrations and educational activities at the Ohio County Country Fair.

Master Gardeners

- More than 500 volunteer hours contributed.
- More than 1,000 contacts with community members.
- Hosted four educational programs through the Master Gardener public garden lecture series reaching 120 local residents. Topics included composting, tomatoes, container gardening and native butterflies.
- Hosted summer garden days in cooperation with the Edelman Garden on Wheeling Island.
- Maintained the Corson Butterfly garden and the Peterson Rehabilitation garden.
- Responded to nearly 150 phone inquiries to answer garden and plant related questions from the community.

Agriculture Business Development

- The WVU Ohio County Extension office has been working with behind the scenes with local businesses including: Family Roots Farm since 2015, Grow OV since 2015, Zeb’s Barky Bites since 2016, Blended Homestead since 2016 and Freeland’s Berry Farm since 2016.

- Provided 18 hours of in-depth farm business management training to 12 business owners and managers.
- Increased record keeping skills of 13 business owners through six hours of hands-on Excel training.
- Educated more than 20 farm business managers from the region about starting and managing cooperatives.
- Supported multiple farmers markets in the Northern Panhandle through training and advice.
• Delivered three hours of education to 26 local beef producers to improve their safety and profit margin through the winter educational dinner series.

• Organized a local farm tour and hosted an outreach and networking dinner with the West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture (December 2017) reaching over 120 local farms and associated businesses.

• Additional sponsorship raised for local programming totaled $3,000.

• WVU Soils lab conducted soil tests for 39 different Ohio County residents. Soil testing reduces excessive fertilizer use and improves production.

• Responded to over 800 inquiries from over 300 different contacts.

Food Safety

• Improved the safety of food entering the local food chain by introducing food safety information and strategies to 58 local producers and farmers market vendors.

• Cooperatively trained and awarded certificates to 10 local participants on how to write a farm food safety plan using a statewide curriculum.

• Cooperatively trained and awarded PSA certification to 14 local participants on food safety skills associated with the Food Safety Management Act using a national curriculum.

• Throughout West Virginia, the West Virginia food safety team cooperatively trained 232 produce growers about keeping produce safe and regulations of the Food Safety Management Act.

Women in Agriculture Conference

• 186 people attended the West Virginia Women in Agriculture Conference at Oglebay Park, it’s first time in the Northern Panhandle.

• Over two days, participants visited local farms and took classes to improve their businesses.

• Meat and produce was purchased from local farms, providing hundreds of dollars to small, local businesses and connecting Oglebay chefs with local food sources.

• All speaker gifts were purchased from local agriculture businesses.

• Each year this conference moves to a new region of the state, bringing thousands of dollars to local businesses.

• Over $26,000 in sponsorships were raised to support the conference.

Extension Calling

• 52 episodes of this weekly radio program were recorded with Dan Lima, Ohio State Extension Agent from Belmont County, and aired on WWVA and WWOV. This production delivers research based information for the farm, garden and home. It is now a downloadable podcast and available at https://extensioncalling.libsyn.com/rss.

Family and Health
**Family Nutrition Program**

- In Ohio and Marshall Counties, 929 youths were engaged through 44 elementary classes through the WVU Extension Service Family Nutrition Program.
- Five public health sites were coordinated, which reached 2,723 participants including:
  - Kids farmers markets at Middle Creek Elementary and the Ohio County Country Fair that allowed students to select fresh produce purchased from local farmers.
  - Development and support of a school garden at Bridge Street Middle School.
  - Rethink Your Drink promotion at Ritchie Elementary’s back-to-school event.
- 50 participants engaged in programs such as “Eating Smart, Being Active” and 27 adults graduated the program.
- Classes were held in partnership with local programs such as SPOKES, Lee Day Report Center, YWCA and Wheeling Health Right’s FARMacy program.

**Community Educational Outreach Service**

- 30 members participated in the Green Acres CEOS Club in 2018.
- An estimated 4,000 hours of community service were completed by members.
- Members engaged in monthly lessons on a variety of topics.
- A public wreath-hanging was held in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month that featured a guest speaker from the local fundraiser, Think Pink.

**Community Development/Tourism/Economic Development**

- WVU Extension Service works collaboratively with organizations in 11 counties to grow regional tourism in and around the Northern Panhandle. The group now called, Visit Upper Ohio Valley Regional Tourism, launched a website (www.visitupperohiovalley.com) in December.