



Alpena County

2020–2021 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Residents of Alpena County attended **241** different programs and classes



2,868 Alpena County Youth attended programs during the last year



6 Extension professionals based in Alpena County



Social media reached **14,531** during the last year, informing residents of class opportunities and sharing data such as crop testing trials and health information

100

Over **100** years of Extension in Alpena County. The first Extension agent began in 1912



MSU Extension website received **5,302** users from Alpena County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



This past year will go down in history as one like no other. As an organization who has been embedded in counties for over 100 years, our community education model changed and shifted like at no other time in our rich history. I am especially proud of the way our entire county team pivoted their educational efforts and provided online programming for our valuable stakeholders; which includes growers, families, youth, local businesses, and residents. Our content-rich programming allowed residents from across the state to access it from their homes, regardless of geographic location. This allowed individuals throughout Northern Lower Michigan to access programming being taught from Southern Michigan to the tip of the Upper Peninsula. This increased accessibility for all residents to access our outreach and education was an added value for our county partners. It is always my distinct honor to present this summary of our accomplishments and I deeply value our partnership with Alpena County.

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MSU Extension Alpena County, MI



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Connecting with Alpena Youth through Michigan 4-H & MSU Extension



Youth Day-Name Tag Award Winners



Large Animal Sweepstakes



Youth Day

Alpena 4-H Youth Day event

9 clubs participated in the decorating and name tag contest.

There were youth who presented projects in 16 different topics areas including STEM, animal & vet science. There were demonstrations and speech performances. Youth are required to do an interview style presentation with a judge who then offers questions and provides feedback.

Over 75 youth participated in youth day.

Spring & Summer clinics offered to youth

Swine Clinic

Rabbit & Poultry Clinic

Beef Clinic

Sheep Shearing & Rabbit tattooing events

Youth learn about the health, nutrition, parts, showmanship, breeding, and the process of picking a good market animal at these events. Youth also learned how to tie knots, and watch first hand sheep shearing and rabbit tattooing.

Learn by doing

Rabbit Showmanship



Fair Work-Bee Event

Alpena County Fair & Market Sale

- Over 100 4-H youth participated in the Alpena county fair.
- 83 youth had animal projects
- 9 Sportsmanship awards nominated by peers and leaders



Cattle Event





Alpena County 4-H had a 3-day summer camp offered to Alpena County youth. This event was open to 30 youth, 66% were new youth to 4-H.

- Youth learned about fire cooking safety while cooking pies over the fire
- Kayaking and water safety
- Fishing and fish identity
- Macroinvertebrates
- Tree identification and tree parts
- The significance in details while going on nature walks
- Youth were able to make paracord bracelets and fish printed shirts



Newly Developed Resources Help Consumers Better Understand Food Label Claims

In an effort to clear up confusion over label claims found on food products, MSU Extension agriculture literacy educator, Mary Dunckel, teamed up with two other colleagues to create infographics for a variety of commonly found label claims. Beginning in late 2020 and continuing to date, the team has researched, written and graphically designed eight label claim infographics that can be easily shared and reproduced by staff and general consumers.

Food labels can have a myriad of logos and claims as well as production and nutrition information. Label claims can be government defined and approved, third party certified or be a claim made by the manufacturer or producer that is verified through documentation. The US Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration oversee government approved claims in order to ensure that they are truthful and not misleading. For the consumer, it is important to be able to decipher the information on food labels in order to make sound purchasing decisions and these resources are just the ticket!

Food & Agriculture Business Assistance

Local business counseling is available to area food and "agriculture entrepreneurs through the MSU Extension Product Center.

Throughout the state, the Product Center has 10 innovation counselors who are ready to help guide entrepreneurs and Mary Dunckel is ready to assist in Northeast Michigan. From concept to product development, counselors help clients through the necessary steps to create a viable business. For food products, this often entails food safety product testing and special licensing which may be difficult to navigate alone.



The team from Red'z Bulgogi in 2019

In addition to counseling, staff offer educational opportunities including Making It In Michigan, a premier conference and trade show. In 2021 the conference was held virtually, but planning is underway to resume as an in-person event and product showcase.

FOOD & Agriculture

Food Label Claims

Food Label Requirements

All information on food labels must not be false or misleading.

- Product name/statement of identity
- Net weight
- Manufacturer's name, city and state
- Nutrition facts (some exceptions)
- Ingredient list including identifying allergens
- Raw meat and poultry products require a safe handling statement

The 'Extra' Info on Food Labels

Food labels influence consumer purchasing decisions and it is important to understand them. What about all of the "extras" or additional information on food labels? These are label claims! Some, but not all label claims, are defined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Producer and manufacturing claims are added to enhance marketing strategies.

Where Do Label Claims Originate?

Government	Third-Party	Producer or Food Manufacturer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: USDA Organic • Claims defined by the FDA and USDA • Ensure fair competition among producers or manufacturers • Provide basic information for consumers to reduce health and safety risks • Health claims reviewed by FDA are allowed to show that a food or food component may reduce the risk of disease or health related condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Non-GMO Project Verified • Used to enhance the understanding and credibility of food attributes that can be used at the consumer's discretion • Each certifying organization has its own set of criteria and verification/certification standards • Product standards conveyed via third party websites • Not government defined but must comply with food labeling laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Free Range • Producer claims do not have to go through external third-party audits • Some but not all statements must meet certain standards in order to be used (e.g. "Free range" must meet USDA standards whereas "natural" is not so regulated) • Not government defined but must comply with food labeling laws

For more information, visit MSU Extension's Food Label Claims page
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tag/food-label-claims>

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

Infographic topics developed to date:

- Food Label Claims (general)
- Animal Raising Claims
- Antibiotic Claims
- Food Product Date Claims
- Hormone Claims
- Dairy Milk Claims
- Natural and Organic Claims
- GMO Claims

To view all infographics, visit:
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/tag/food-label-claims> or scan this QR code:



Supporting Food and Agriculture

MSU Extension facilitates the growth of agriculture, Michigan's second largest industry. Locally, we help our farmers increase their efficiency and productivity through consultation and on-farm research. We also serve the agriculture industry by connecting our producers to MSU faculty and experts across the State to identify solutions to their production challenges. In addition to serving farmers, we also serve the sportsman, home gardeners, and the general population at large by providing consultation, expertise, and education in agriculture related ventures.



Northern Michigan has so much to offer in terms of its natural resources. Our counties are homes to beautiful woods and waters, as well as many acres of productive farmland. In addition to growing the food that feeds many families across our towns, our state, and our nation; our farms are also the livelihood of many families that call our counties home. Agriculture is an essential component of building and maintaining rural economies. As an organization, we work diligently to provide our local farms with up to date, useful information, and research that contributes to their growth, economic security, and environmental sustainability.

Farming in Northern Michigan poses challenges that are unique to our area. Because of these unique challenges and isolation from many agricultural services, MSU Extension works to bridge the gap between our farms, and other areas of agriculture that our farms compete with. One way we help our farms in this respect is through multiple on-farm research projects. These local research projects give our area producers management and crop variety data that is specific to our area. No two farms are alike, therefore providing this data on the local level helps our county's farmers to be more competitive and more profitable.

Supporting MSU Extension also gives our local producers increased access to information and expertise from faculty and specialists within Michigan State University's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In turn, faculty and specialists also receive insight into issues facing agriculture in our area, which can aid or steer their research, to our local benefit. We also work to inform our area producers and agribusiness professionals of current issues facing agriculture through multiple forms of communication including newsletters, press releases, grower meetings, field days, and web meetings. This helps our producers to be prepared for any production issues that can affect their farms.



Supporting Food and Agriculture



In addition to serving farmers, MSU Extension also serves our local community at large. We field many questions from homeowners, gardeners, landowners, and sportsmen regarding any issues they face in their lawns, gardens, orchards, and wildlife plantings. Paul Gross and Christina Curell, Agriculture and Agribusiness Extension Educators, answered many questions and consulted with growers and landowners throughout the region.

2020-2021FY Highlights:

- On-farm research projects covering Soybean, Corn Silage, Corn and Soil 4 area field days, drawing 94 participants.
- 1 local virtual field day with 30 participants.
- Local growers participated in 4 commodity based Virtual Field Day



MSU Extension works to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets and advancing agriculture through applied research. Agriculture is now one of the fastest growing sectors of the Michigan economy.



Connecting with our Lake Huron fisheries—past and present—for ecological, economic, and community values

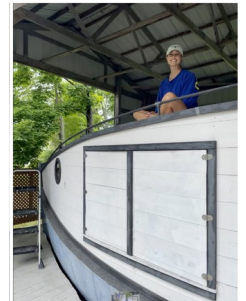


Michigan Sea Grant Extension promotes research, education, and outreach to enhance responsible and sustainable use of our diverse Great Lakes resources. Through MSU Extension, Michigan Sea Grant works with Michigan citizens, industries, and coastal communities to encourage their use, benefits, and enjoyment of Great Lakes resources that positively influences our state’s economy, environment and quality of life. Of highlight:

Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops

Two virtual **Lake Huron Regional Fisheries Workshops** webinars hosted online in April 2021 brought together over 190 anglers, charter captains, and others with fisheries researchers and managers from across Michigan. Participants gained better understanding of Lake Huron fisheries ecosystem changes, and connecting these stakeholders with information, research and management activities relating to Lake Huron and local communities. Workshop recordings are accessible online:

- **Open Water Fisheries Session:** <https://youtu.be/CTXVtHVUjcE>
- **Nearshore Fisheries Session:** <https://youtu.be/rMp83ZcJEMc>



Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Trail Network

Capturing and sharing the history and heritage reflected in our Great Lakes fisheries, 2020-2021 Sally Kress Tompkins Maritime Intern Cassandra Sadler has been working in Michigan this summer researching Great Lakes fishing vessels. This project is being undertaken by the National Park Service Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) program working in cooperation with Great Lakes Fisheries Heritage Trail partners and Michigan Sea Grant, with assistance from the Council of American Maritime Museums.

Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative

(NEMIGLSI) is a place-based education network and partnership that:

- engages youth in Great Lakes and natural resource stewardship projects
- provides support for schools and educators
- facilitates school-community partnerships.

Despite pandemic challenges, nearly 1,300 *Northeast Michigan youth* were engaged in hands-on, place-based learning through Great Lakes and natural resource stewardship projects in their communities in 2020. MSUE and Michigan Sea Grant supported this work through this NEMIGLSI network and partnership. Read more about how ‘Place-based education in a pandemic [was] challenging but possible’ in Northeast Michigan:

www.canr.msu.edu/news/place-based-education-in-a-pandemic-challenging-but-possible-msg21-schroeder21

Supporting school educators, our Sea Grant Center for Great Lakes Literacy team partnered and provided leadership for the 2021 Lake Huron Place-Based Education Summer Teacher Institute. This course was adapted this summer and offered as a hybrid course pairing online, interactive ‘Go with the Flow’ (learn at your own pace) learning with feet-wet educational field training experiences for 15 educators locally.

The most critical time in a person's life is the formative years between the ages of birth and five. Michigan State University Extension supports early childhood development through programs that help prepare Michigan's children from birth to eight years old for school and life success. MSU Extension improves school readiness by teaching parents and early childhood professionals methods to help increase early childhood math, science, reading and literacy knowledge. MSU Extension also provides programs that help set children up for school and life success by providing parents and early childhood professionals tips on how to help children practice mindfulness techniques and grow on a social-emotional level.

Child and Family Development

Parenting and Provider Education

Parenting Hour: Parenting hour is a weekly one-hour virtual training for parents with 30 minutes for questions and discussion. These trainings have a variety of topics including positive discipline, mindfulness, screen time, play, toddler development, literacy and resilience.

Family FAQ's: Family FAQ's is a live one hour program features MSU Extension child and family development experts answering pressing parenting questions. Topics covered in these sessions include Let's Talk: Parent Provider Communication, Screen Time, Preschool U, Surviving Virtual School for Parents and Mindfulness.

Local Early Childhood Education Classes: One-time presentations ranging from 60-90 minutes on a variety of early childhood topics, including, positive discipline, toddler development and social emotional health. These trainings were attended by parents, childcare providers, early childhood professionals, foster care workers and grandparents attended these programs.

The Child and Family Development team facilitated 232 classes, reaching 8,862 community members.

Online Parenting Series: We offered three different online series workshops ranging from **Guiding Principles for Highly Effective Families**, **Building Early Emotional Skills (BEES)** and **Parent Talk**. So far there have been 27 series workshops that have consisted of 119 sessions and have reached 359 people.

The virtual calming room page was created by a group of individuals from the Children and Youth Institute with the purpose of providing a place youth and adults can go (virtually) to take care of themselves, calm, reset, re-center, or just take a break in their day. The virtual calming room has a variety of resources, some of which are exclusive to MSU Extension, and some we have curated from other sites. This page will be refreshed on a quarterly basis, where we will be adding more MSU Extension content, including videos produced by our own 4-H youth! Visit this link to check out the virtual calming room:

Mindful Monday posts on the MI Stronger Family Facebook page provide tips and tricks for parents, child care providers and early childhood professionals on how to help children better understand emotions and how to cope with strong emotions in a healthy way.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/virtual-calming-room/>

Kit work included social emotional health, literacy and STEM activities. These kits were created to provide parents, caregivers and early childhood professionals a set of different activities that they can do with their children at home or in childcare centers to extend a child's development and learning. Some activities from these kits include creating a calming jar, body scan, building encouragement, reading with emotions, feeling mask, emotion cards, clothespin letters, cereal box search, flip-flop rhyming, birds eating worms, glitter gelling, breathe-cotton ball challenge, colorful rain, dancing raisins, let's race: force and friction and magnetic bottle.



Health and Nutrition

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) instructors deliver evidence-based, hands-on nutrition and physical activity learning opportunities that empower limited income youth and adults with information and strategies to make healthy behavior and lifestyle choices.

Statewide Virtual Nutrition Programs

Due to the Michigan executive orders of stay home, stay safe, MSU Extension increased their virtual outreach through indirect intervention channels by 45%. This included increased offerings through articles, fact sheets, radio podcasts, social media postings, web presence, and educational videos.

Alpena County MSU Extension promoted weekly nutrition education through Facebook posts designed to engage viewers in relevant resources.

- The focus of Tasty Tuesday was to demonstrate the importance of stocking your pantry and recipes included items available at low cost but high in taste and nutrition.
- In September of 2020, we began a series of Fresh Fridays posts with topics such as hydration, portion control, healthy recipes, and staying safe while exercising outside.

Community Engagement

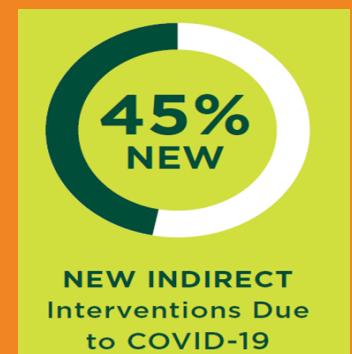
In the winter of 2021, MSU Extension instructors held 6 virtual Healthy Eating Adds Up lessons with the cognitive impaired Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle Educational Service District classroom. Lessons focused on Slow, Whoa and Go foods, Healthy snacks, and included physical activity.

New This Year

We offered a self paced online course titled My Way to Wellness. A participant stated that she had lost weight during the program.

- She also shared “I am tracking my food and beverages and have cut down on my daily calories and especially fat grams in order to reach a healthier weight and BMI. Looking for healthy recipes that are satisfying. Eating more fish.”

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



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