

2014 County Highlights

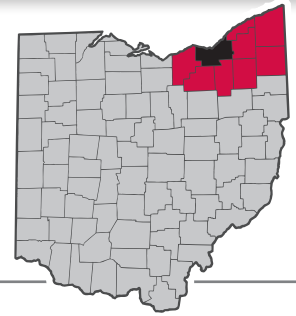


CUYAHOGA County

WESTERN RESERVE EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

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ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Thirty-three **urban agriculture workshops** were held, with topics ranging from growing in high tunnels to sharing the harvest. These were attended by 452 community members.
- The **Dig In! Community Gardener Training Program** impacted 24 projects. Participants gained a better understanding of community gardening. For the sixth consecutive year, 100 percent of participants agree that they would recommend this training.
- One hundred ninety **Summer Sprout community gardens** in Cleveland were supported by OSU Extension. Also, nearly 60 acres of vacant land was repurposed, providing fresh, healthy produce to residents.
- Three thousand feet of row cover and 217 pounds of cover crop seeds were distributed to 50 community gardens in 16 communities—**extending the growing season and improving soil quality**.
- Twelve schools and early care professionals, from kitchen staff to classroom teachers, attended a pilot **“School to Farm” field trip** to visit regional farms. Participants learned about ways to involve young people, families and the community in bringing more local food into educational settings.
- **Kinsman Farms**, part of OSU Extension’s six-acre incubator farm, sold produce at 10 farmer’s markets throughout the county, including the Bridgeport Café Mobile Market.
- OSU Extension partnered with Case Western Reserve University, the Salvation Army and the Cleveland Public

Library to develop and deliver an **AgriScience program** for 20 third- through fifth-grade youth.

- Thirty-five new **Master Gardener Volunteers** were trained to provide the public with research-based horticulture information, and 12 Master Gardener Volunteers trained 18 consumers of the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities for employment as part of the Cleveland Crops vocational agriculture program.
- OSU Extension and the Master Gardener Volunteers partnered with Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers to offer a four-part series entitled **“Families Growing Good Food,”** which was attended by 60 youth.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Two hundred sixty-eight middle school and high school students participated in **Real Money, Real World**, a financial literacy program. Over 80 percent of participants said they increased their knowledge significantly about household costs and the need for postponing parenthood until they could afford having children.
- Eighty-four Cleveland Central neighborhood youth participated in the first annual **AgriScience in the City Summer Day Camp**, which was offered in partnership with St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Campers, who consumed over 100 pounds of fresh fruit during the summer, cared for chicks, rabbits, red worms and a garden. They also participated in farm-themed food and craft activities.
- Some 300 students at **Cleveland’s George Washington Carver STEM K–8 school** participated in agriculture-themed



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activities during the school year. One hundred percent of the classrooms visited the science lab weekly, and 100 percent of the teachers gave the program its highest rating—“Excellent.” Student surveys showed positive gains on all 11 indicators, including 31 percent of students who chose science as their favorite subject.

- **Youth Outdoors**, a partnership with Cleveland Metroparks, provided leadership for 532 outdoor adventure experiences for 31 urban youth groups in Cleveland. Youth and adults (10,027 total) participated in outings and special events, and 696 youth were engaged in ongoing clubs. One hundred nineteen youth provided 1,115 hours of service to others.
- Seventy-four teens preparing to age out of the foster care system participated in **life skills workshops** on 10 topics in partnership with the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services, and the Employment Connection Youth Resource Center. Seventy-six percent who completed all workshops indicated they had gained useful information that will help prepare them for independent living and adulthood.
- Sixty-four male residents of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center received **education in career planning** to help them focus on positive alternatives for their futures. Eighty-six percent identified a personal career goal and increased their knowledge of worksite expectations.
- Members of the **Youth Advocacy and Leadership Coalition (YALC)** provided educational workshops to over 1,000 teens on topics such as financial literacy, teen dating violence, drug prevention, STEM, and poverty and homelessness.
- Through a new partnership with NASA and YALC, 500 youth participated in the **4-H National Science Program Rockets to the Rescue**. The program increased youths’ scientific inquiry through the engineering design process.
- YALC members, in partnership with the Community Awareness and Prevention Association and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, provided **drug prevention and awareness** to seventh and eighth graders throughout Cuyahoga County and led the “We Are the Majority” rally in downtown Cleveland.
- One hundred percent of senior YALC members **graduated high school and are enrolled in degree programs**. Ninety-two percent of YALC alumni have continued to be involved in service or advocacy efforts following high school graduation.
- For the second year in a row, YALC members presented three workshops at the **National Service Learning Conference**, reaching over 2,000 participants from around the world.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (convened by OSU Extension), in partnership with local agencies, expanded the **Produce Prescription program** to connect mothers and pregnant women to local farmer’s markets. One hundred eighty women and their families redeemed \$3,920 in vouchers, purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Produce Perks EBT Incentive program** increased to 21 farmer’s markets and farm stands in 2014. EBT sales surpassed 2013 totals, reaching over \$22,497. During the 2014 season, Produce Perks brought 260 new food assistance customers to farmer’s markets for the first time.
- The **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** taught nutrition education to low-income families with children. Participants showed improvements in diet quality, food resource management and food safety, resulting in some of the graduates running out of food less often each month. Chronic diseases are largely preventable through a healthy lifestyle involving a balanced diet and regular physical activity. Many EFNEP graduates increased their physical activity levels and fruit and vegetable consumption. Youth also participated in EFNEP. They reported significant increases in knowledge and positive behavior changes in diet quality, food safety, food resource management and physical activity.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Twenty-five residents completed the 12-week **Market Gardener Training Program**. Participants received education and training in developing an agricultural enterprise. Ten participants developed or expanded an agricultural business as a result of this program.

Cuyahoga County receives \$352,002 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.