

# Carrying out the land-grant mission of education in the 21st century

## *Putting our people and resources to work in areas that matter to Michigan*

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension was created in the early 20th century to disseminate the knowledge generated by the university's faculty members to residents in every county to help them improve their lives, families and farms.

Today, MSU Extension continues its work with the same mission: to help people in every community improve their lives through applicable science-based, university-generated knowledge.

The dissemination methods may have changed with the times, but at its core, the organization is committed to serving people in every county with focused, need-based information.

As it continuously works to make the best use of its resources, whether those resources come from county, state or federal government, grant-making foundations or other sources, MSU Extension maintains its commitment to making its information and its staff accessible and relevant to the people of Michigan.

Faculty and staff members work across the state in issue-oriented workgroups that conduct educational initiatives under the auspices of four broad-themed institutes.

While yesterday's Extension educator had to be a generalist with a broad knowledge base, today, these professionals have deeper, more specialized responsibilities, yet maintain a network of resources to address the state's most pressing needs.

Technological advances such as the Internet and webcasts allow them to share information more widely than their predecessors.

Regardless of how or where they do their work, MSU Extension professionals will first work to remain accessible to the state's residents. Though some people may have new responsibilities in different geographic areas, finding assistance is as easy as turning on a computer.

To find the MSU Extension staff member who can help address the issue that's affecting your community, family, farm or other business, simply visit <http://people.msue.msu.edu> and enter your location or topic.

To learn more about MSU Extension's institutes and workgroups, see the other side of this paper or visit [www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu).

### For More Information

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## Agriculture and Agribusiness

Increasing the viability of Michigan agriculture and agribusinesses will ensure a safe, affordable food supply for Michigan residents while maintaining or increasing farm profitability and contributing to job growth.

- **Food production and marketing** will concentrate on educating farmers and others about practices that produce safe, affordable and nutritious food.
- **Environmental quality** will be a key theme as MSUE strives to conserve and preserve water, land and air while maintaining and enhancing aquatic habitats, ornamental plants and food production.
- **Business management practices**, that aid producers while encouraging entrepreneurship will ensure that the agriculture sector continues to thrive.
- **Bioproducts and bioenergy** will maximize the productivity of farmland and marginal lands thereby lessening dependence on fossil fuels and increasing job opportunities and economic activity.
- **Ornamentals, landscape and turf production** will strategically position non-food agriculture to be competitive in a national and global environment while contributing to the growth of Michigan's economy.

## Health and Nutrition

Increasing productivity and reducing healthcare costs will give Michigan residents tools to embrace healthy living. A healthy population is a sound financial investment.

- **Increasing good habits in nutrition and physical activity** through programs that teach healthy eating, the value of exercise, breastfeeding basics and food budget management.
- **Chronic disease prevention and management** through training for people with diabetes and their caregivers in nutrition and self-care, support group development and distribution of research-based information.
- **Social-emotional health and wellbeing** through programs to promote anger and stress management and prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- **Food safety** through training for food service employees, farmers and food distributors; food preservation workshops and safe food handling.

## Children and Youth

The MSUE Children and Youth Institute will work through four statewide project focus areas:

- **Academic success** through programs like 4-H that develop life skills; childcare-provider and parenting education; and an enhanced focus on skill development in science, engineering, technology and applied mathematics.
- **Leadership and civic engagement** through programs that expose youth to the workings of our government at all levels, provide leadership opportunities and offer community service experiences.
- **Career and workforce preparation** through exposure to career options, financial literacy education, entrepreneurial training and career preparation.
- **Capacity building** for youth skill development through home visits, club programs, planned youth mentoring, after-school and out-of-school programs, technology and caregiver education.

## Greening Michigan

The MSUE Greening Michigan Institute will work with individuals, private and public sector leaders and others under the auspices of workgroups that are committed to strengthening:

- **Community food systems** by working with growers, community leaders, volunteers and institutions to address the issue of hunger and food deserts and access to locally grown and processed foods.
- **Community prosperity** through initiatives with local, regional and statewide development groups in efforts to develop strategic plans, seek grants and promote cooperation that leads to sustainable growth.
- **Financial, housing and energy resources** by engaging resources to support educational programs that will lead to future communities that have adequate housing for financially stable residents and model energy efficient technologies.
- **Natural resources appreciation and stewardship** by connecting partners in conservation, local and state agencies, tourism and local government to work together through education to ensure that the state's natural assets are sustainably managed.