OSU Extension brings the resources of The Ohio State University to every county. See extension.osu.edu for locations and contact information.

OSU Extension in the City

OSU Extension addresses Ohio’s urban influence and the unique aspects of Extension in and around Ohio’s largest cities. Essential elements include:

- **Positioning:** How Extension engages in relevant communications and locations for Extension at the neighborhood, city, county, and regional levels
- **Programs:** How Extension leads, collaborates, and innovates to address the multitude of issues and priorities in the city
- **Personnel:** How Extension attracts, develops, retains, and structures competent talent that reflects the diversity of audiences and issues in the city
- **Partnerships:** How Extension collaborates to leverage resources for collective impact

OSU Extension Administration

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Relevant Locally
Responsive Statewide
Recognized Nationally
Ohio’s Urban Influence

More than half of Ohio’s residents live in 10 of the state’s 88 counties, and many others travel to cities for work and recreation. Ohio’s largest cities and counties bring complex opportunities and challenges due to population density and the diversity of residents, labor force, community partners, and visitors. Urban-Agriculture

Urban Agriculture

In 2015, OSU Extension in Franklin County developed the Columbus Local Foods Guide and led education such as a full-day urban ag conference, the Master Urban Farmer workshop series, and urban farm tours. Urban agriculture serves as an economic engine, fosters community development, and improves food access.

Partnerships for Youth Success

Youth in Cuyahoga County benefit from numerous OSU Extension partnerships, including the Youth Advocacy and Leadership Coalition, Cleveland Metropolitan, Cleveland State University, the Community Awareness and Prevention Association, schools via Farm to School and Agri-science in the City, and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Juvenile Detention Center, Department of Children and Family Services.

Urban-Suburban-Rural Connections

In northwest Ohio, more than 300 people from urban, suburban, and rural areas attended Breakfast on the Farm, a special event hosted less than 30 minutes from Toledo. This collaborative effort involved OSU Extension educators from both Fulton and Lucas counties, as well as multiple other agencies. Attendees learned about modern food production practices and met the farmers who work hard to produce a wholesome, safe food supply for Ohio communities and the world.

Food Security

The Vacant to Vibrant project increased food security in Dayton’s identified food deserts. Combined with other Extension programs, more than 1,300 youth and adults in Montgomery County increased knowledge and improved healthy behaviors through education on food production practices, participation in a food safety research study, and learning through nutritional programs.

Ohio’s Urban Influence

Ohio’s urban influence by linking research-based education with local knowledge and collaborators to improve lives and communities is recognized through various stakeholder partnerships, supported through campus and national networks, and approached through multi-disciplinary teams and resources.

Ohio State University Extension

Ohio State University Extension and the City of Columbus are connected through a diverse Extension portfolio, comprised of emerging areas of focus identified through campus and national networks. OSU Extension in the City partnerships include a mix of public and private organizations at the city, county, state and national levels. The traditional model of county, state and federal funding is frequently expanded in urban areas, with city, philanthropic, education, faith-based, and other community contributions playing an essential part of community capacity building in the city. OSU Extension is the nationwide transformational education system operating through land-grant universities in partnership with federal, state, and local governments.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

• More than 800 people from Ohio’s 10 largest counties participated in OSU Extension’s Live Healthy Live Well workplace wellness program that encourages healthy habits to improve participants’ well-being, reduce the need for healthcare services, lower absenteeism rates at work, and help control costs for employers. Surveys indicate that 90% of all respondents are using the new information that they learned and more than 83% have adopted one or more of the recommended practices.

• 30,136 adults in 22 of Ohio’s most populated counties participated in the Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Improved nutrition practices were reported by 91% of the participants. In addition, 6,596 youth in grades 6–12 in the highest populated counties participated in the EFNEP education, and 85% reported improvement in diet quality.

• In 5 of Ohio’s most populated counties, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is offered to participants aged pre-school to senior citizen. Starting with Ohio SNAP-Ed reached over 200,000 participants using the Ohio NOURISH curriculum for adults, and Balance My Day for youth and over ¾ of SNAP-Ed participants reported increasing the use of MyPlate to make healthier food choices.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

• In Ohio’s 10 most populated counties, OSU Extension worked with more than 1,683 adult volunteers to serve more than 33,700 youth through 4-H clubs, camps, school enrichment and other innovative programs that are reaching diverse audiences through community partnerships.

• OSU Extension professionals developed a Real Money Real World curriculum that simulates real-life experiences to help youth achieve financial literacy. In 19 of Ohio’s most populated counties, 5,760 youth learned how to pay monthly expenses on a fixed income.

• In a survey of parents of 2015 first year 4-H members in Ohio’s ten most populated counties, 87% stated they very much or somewhat wanted to enroll their child in 4-H in 2016.

• Agri-science in the City reached 1000 students from March 2014 – May 2015 in Cincinnati and Cleveland.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

• Through OSU Extension education and leadership, 1,045 Master Gardener Volunteers in nine of Ohio’s most populated counties provided 63,549 hours of service to address local needs.

• The Master Urban Farmer program, initially launched in Franklin County, has expanded to other urban areas, demonstrating how OSU Extension is relevant locally and responsive statewide.

• Extension Community Development is engaged in providing assistance to the city of Columbus in updating their Watershed Management Plan for the Upper Scioto and Big Walnut watershed which cover 1,200 square miles of Columbus.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

• More than 235 Franklin County residents learned about the potential for urban agriculture to serve as an economic engine in the city of Columbus at a series of four urban farm tours conducted in Columbus. In addition, 43 Franklin County residents completed an 11-week Master Urban Farmer course where they gained the knowledge and skills to produce food in an urban environment and became certified Master Urban Farmers. Two participants started new food businesses in Franklin County; 46% of participants planned to start new food-based businesses; 68% planned to produce more food from existing operations.

• In Franklin County’s University District, OSU Extension provided financial literacy and HUD-certified homebuyer education for 164 prospective homebuyers, nearly 40% of whom are now homeowners.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Three indicators of increased interest in urban Extension include:

• The Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) identified urban Extension as one of its top priorities. ECOP is the representative leadership and governing body of national Cooperative Extension.

• The Ohio State University engaged representatives from all 15 colleges and regional campuses to engage in dialogue on OSU’s urban mission.

• Central State University has been designated an 1890 land-grant university, which brings additional resources for Ohio for research and Extension. Cooperative Extension is the nationwide transformational education system operating through land-grant universities in partnership with federal, state, and local governments.

Ohio State University Extension

Innovation Through Co-Discovery

Ohio's urban influence by linking research-based education with local knowledge and collaborators to improve lives and communities is recognized through various stakeholder partnerships, supported through campus and national networks, and approached through multi-disciplinary teams and resources.