

# Marion County Annual Report | 2016

## Putting Knowledge to Work!

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

## Highlights

STEM Summer Programming in Marion County increased in 2015. This year 518 individuals were able to participate in these activities around the county, which is a 24% increase from 2014.

10 members of the Marion County Community Education Outreach Service attended the National Volunteer Outreach Network Conference hosted in Martinsburg, WV in July 2015.

Lauren Prinzo, Families and Health Agent, and Tina Cowger, 4-H and Youth Development Agent, are pursuing research to determine how participation in “Bright Futures for Marion County Students” field trip day influenced student choices and behaviors. A series of focus groups will be conducted in spring of 2016 with eighth grade students who participated in the event.

## 4-H and Youth Development

- 155 youth attended county 4-H camp.
- 42 attended a state 4-H camp.
- 188 were active members of a community 4-H club.

In 2015, we celebrated 100 years of 4-H camping!

- 155 youth attended 4-H camp, which is the highest attendance in the past five years. Annual county 4-H camp is running near capacity at the local facility.
- 42 attended a state 4-H camping event, which was either an annual weeklong summer camp or a winter/spring weekend camp. We had 15 attend State Dance Weekend alone, which was our largest delegation in the past decade.
- 188 were active members of community 4-H clubs, Cloverbud program, and special interest clubs. There are 10 active 4-H clubs in Marion County, which includes special interest clubs covering Shootings Sports, Teen Leadership, and Livestock.
- 114 of trained volunteers involved with youth programs, such as 4-H and Energy Express. 78 of these volunteers are fully vetted through the WVU Extension Volunteer process before being able to work

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- with youth in our 4-H program.
- 56 4-H projects were completed by 4-H members in 2015 with 20 projects being exhibited at the State Fair. This is a 13% increase from last year.
  - Participation in specific 4-H and youth activities in our county:
    - 35 in Energy Express – a nutrition and summer literacy program for low-resource youth.
    - 518 in STEM programming.
    - 891 in health and nutrition education.
    - 30 in youth day report programming.
  - A total of 2,673 youth were reached through 4-H and youth development activities throughout the last year, which includes community clubs, specialty clubs, school enrichment, and afterschool activities.
  - For the second year in a row, we were able to offer free STEM activities to youth in Marion County. This year, funding was obtained through a grant from US Cellular. Utilizing the same student worker as last year, we were able to decrease training time and cost. This individual visited the MCPARC Playground Project sites, Boys and Girls Club sites, 4-H Camp, Energy Express, and the Mannington District Fair. Some of the activities included: Pocket Solar Systems, Marshmallow catapults, Scribble Bots, UV bead bracelets, Stomp Rockets, Lava Lamps, Leaning Towers of Pasta, etc. In total, this worker provided programming to 518 individuals, which is a 24% increase from 2014.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

- 157 soil tests were performed.
- 126 calls for assistance on a variety of agriculture and natural resource based topics were received.
- Eight site visits were completed to follow-up in various requests as needed.

As farmers fine tune their management of feed production, crop and livestock nutritional management, and livestock marketing and cow efficiency, they will reduce expenses related to producing cattle and be able to reap larger financial gains from the sale of cattle. This increased revenue will result in farmers increasing their incomes and contributing to the general economy.

- 88 producers increased their knowledge of baleage production to improve efficiency of production as well as nutritional quality.
- 21 producers increased their knowledge on the use of weed wipers to control certain weeds while reducing the amount of pesticide used and protecting valuable legumes in the existing forage.
- The Marion County office cooperated in regional trainings on heifer development and grazing management in neighboring counties which were attended by 144 individuals.

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Home gardens and landscaping provide opportunities for the residents of Marion County to grow fresh fruits and vegetables and receive exercise while gardening. The nutrition from fresh produce, exercise, and stress relief combine to make gardening a healthy hobby.

- 10 individuals increased their knowledge of gardening by completing the Master Gardener Training program.
- 40 Master Gardeners provided 1,417 hours of volunteer service during the 2014-2015 reporting year valued at \$28,695.
- Master Gardeners increased their knowledge by attending 520 hours of continuing education.

The Youth Agriculture program teaches kids the basics of the livestock industry and responsibility while caring for livestock projects.

- The Marion County Extension Office participated in Marion County Hands-On-Ag Days providing a presentation on agriculture by-products to approximately 580 eighth grade students from throughout the county.
- 7 youth participated in the Marion County 4-H and FFA Livestock program raising and selling 16 livestock projects for a total of \$24,560.

## Community, Economic and Workforce Development

The WVU Extension Office of Marion County worked very closely with Main Street Fairmont to increase awareness of the Fairmont Farmers Market to both vendors and the public.

As Marion county producers compete in local food markets, more of the food dollar stays in the county or in West Virginia. In addition, buying local, fresh produce has benefits related to healthy eating and nutrition.

- 15 farms produced products sold through three farmers markets in the county.

## Families and Health

- 491 eight grade students from all middle schools in Marion County participated in the Bright Futures for Marion County Students event held on the campus of Fairmont State University and participated in activities in the areas of substance abuse, team building, and healthy lifestyles through nutrition and physical activity.
- Nutrition education encourages youth to try a variety of healthy foods. 1102 youth were reached in 2015.
- 240 preschool students completed the six session “Show Me Nutrition” in 2015.
- 240 preschool students participate in “Rethink Your Drink Week” at school and took home a copy of the book, “Potter the Otter, A Tale about Water.”
- 862 children from eight schools completed an eight session nutrition curriculum with our

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Youth Nutrition Outreach Instructor.

- Six people completed hands on food preservation courses in safe canning methods.
- 759 people participated in healthy lifestyle programs such as obesity prevention programs.
- 19 people participated in chronic disease prevention programs such as Dining with Diabetes.
- 12 people participated in parenting programs.
- 12 parents participated in domestic abuse prevention programs.
- 63 people participated in stress reduction programs.
- 150 state employees participated in the “Smart Money” series on financial planning during the transition from semi-monthly pay to bi-weekly pay.
- 137 volunteers participating in family and health programs.
- Five educational articles on various health topics were published, reaching over 33,000 people.
- \$4,625 in grant money was raised for family and health programs.
- Participation in specific programs in family and health.
- 1102 in the Family Nutrition program.
- 19 in Dining with Diabetes.
- 63 in the Stress Less with Mindfulness Program.
- Six in Home Canning.
- 108 in CEOS.

**Participants Reached:**

Preschool Nutrition Program: Post survey of parents show that after participating in the program:

- 72% report that their child increased consumption of water .
- 61% report that their child decreased their consumption of sugary beverages.
- 63% report that their child tries vegetables more often.
- 90% report that their child washes their hands more often.
- 50% report that their child chooses whole grain more often.
- 84% report that their child chooses fruit more often.
- 61% report that their child chooses low fat dairy more often.

Stress Less: After participating in the program:

- 98% of participants were able to identify three tools to help manage stress.
- 97% were able to use mindful breathing to calm themselves in the face of stress.

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- 97% were able to use mindful eating.
- 97% planned to be more positive about dealing with stress in their lives by using mindfulness tools.

Smart Money: Post surveys of participants show:

- The majority of participants planned to use information from the program in the next six months to manage money (mean score: 3.3/4).
- The majority of participants felt more confident about their ability to prepare for the change to bi-weekly pay checks (Mean 3.3/4).
- The majority of participants were able to identify three categories of expenditures that they can control (Mean 3.5/4).

Body Image: Post surveys of participants demonstrate that after participating in the program:

- 64% planned to work to improve their own body image.
- 82% planned to work to improve the body image of other women in their lives.
- 82% planned to use the information presented to promote positive body image among children and teens.
- 64% planned to practice positive self-talk.
- 91% stated that they will be more critical of media messages.
- 64% stated that they would make a list of things they like about their bodies.

Bright Futures for Marion County Students: Results of a pre/posttest of students participating in this county-wide eighth grade field trip day show significant increases in knowledge in the following areas:

- Identifying a healthy amount of physical activity to do each day (62% PRE/89% POST).
- Identifying a healthy limit for daily screen time (38% PRE/74% POST).
- Identifying the greatest source of added sugar as sugary beverages (79% PRE/92% POST).
- Identifying water as the best way to hydrate your body during physical activity (70% PRE/85% POST).
- Demonstrating the ability to convert grams of sugar on a nutrition label to teaspoons (39% PRE/77% POST).
- Correctly identifying prescription drugs as highly addictive, like illegal drugs (PRE 81%/POST 88%).
- Correctly identifying the legal limit for Blood Alcohol Concentration as 0.0 for individuals under 21 years of age (51% PRE/ 59% POST).

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**Public Value Messages:**

Families and Health Programs provide education and service in areas of health, nutrition, relationship education, family dynamics and finances. In addition, we serve as advisors for the Marion County Community Educational Outreach Service (CEOS) clubs. Whether it's helping manage diabetes, learning to prepare meals on a limited budget, or improving parent/child relationships, WVU Extension's Families and Health programs provide education and support that meets the needs of families. WVU Extension Service agents and specialists strive to improve the overall wellness of West Virginians through relevant, research-based programs resulting in behavior change and enhanced quality of life for individuals, families and communities.

The Family Nutrition Program is a statewide outreach service that focuses on nutrition, food, and physical activity through multiple projects, community-based initiatives and key partnerships. It maintains a strong research base and uses an experiential, facilitative approach to delivering information to the people of West Virginia in order to improve their health. FNP targets limited resource adults living below 185% of the federal poverty level and youth at schools, groups, and summer camps where more than 50% of the attendants are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program. Health can be improved with the reduction of risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and other chronic diseases.

In 2015, the Marion County Families and Health Agent reached a total of 1,195 children and adults through 114 educational sessions in 2015 and invested over 1,000 hours coordinating or assisting with 25 service projects serving Marion County families.

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