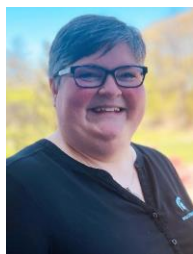


# ROSCOMMON COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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## Message from the District Director

At MSU Extension, we believe that learning and working together make our communities stronger. In 2024, we helped farmers grow food more efficiently and overcome emerging challenges, supported individuals and families in making healthy choices and gave young people opportunities to develop leadership skills and explore interests and careers. Our programs bring people together to solve problems and create new opportunities across District 4.

This year, we focused on supporting local communities, improving stewardship of our natural resources, and helping people prepare for the future. Whether through 4-H youth programs, farming workshops, community development support or health and wellness education, MSU Extension continues to provide valuable resources that make a difference in everyday life.

We are proud of the work we've done and excited for what's ahead. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Together, we can build a brighter future for Roscommon County.

### Impact



**42** commercial, farm, and homeowner soil samples processed



**295** county residents who participated in health and nutrition programs.



**769** participants from Roscommon County attended programs



**53** volunteers



**89** youth enrolled in 4-H



**360** participants in community, food and environment programs from Roscommon County



**191** programs (across the state) attended by participants from Roscommon County



**44** participants in county agriculture programs

## FIT Roscommon County

Roscommon County invested in a tourism experience assessment called First Impressions Tourism (FIT) Assessment. Focusing on major communities where visitors go in Roscommon County: Houghton Lake/Prudenville, Roscommon and St. Helen. Visitors assessed the area's amenities and documented their first-time tourist experiences, which were compiled into an outcomes report.

The FIT assessment was key for one community's grant application. St. Helen was awarded \$200,000 from the MDOT Michigan Shared Streets and Spaces Grant. As part of their FIT assessment, suggestions were given to St. Helen to consider improving their walkability/safety/streetscapes. Their FIT results, along with a team member's letter of support, was instrumental in the securing of funds for improvements



***“Want to let you know that we got the sidewalk grant! Thank you for being a part of this project’s success.”***



## Natural Resources programming

Each year, MSU Extension Natural Resources Educator Julie Crick participates in the Higgins Lake Foundation’s Lake Saver Day. During Lake Saver Day, the Fourth-Grade class from the Roscommon Area School District is broken into groups that rotate through a variety of educational stations; Julie’s focus is preventing erosion. On the Higgins Lake shoreline, this “classroom” provides real life examples for students to point out wave action erosion and explore some of the remediation techniques installed along the lakeshore.

In this impromptu classroom, Julie explains the process of soil erosion by wind or water and stresses the importance of native vegetation to limit wave action on the shoreline.

## Nutrition Education across the lifespan

Delivering education in nutrition and physical activity is only one element of how MSU Extension empowers people to make change in their daily lives that can positively impact their health. Curriculum focuses on building skills in cooking, meal planning, food budgeting, moving more and safe preparation which can result in reduction in chronic disease. Our programs reach people across their lifespan – youth to older adult– and are based in research. In addition to these efforts, MSU Extension engages coaching and goal setting to help people change policies, systems and environments that make healthy choices easier in schools, workplaces and other environments.

## ServSafe® Roscommon County, Food preservation

MSU Extension provides food safety education that has a positive impact on households and businesses through food preservation and preventing foodborne illnesses through educational programs that are based in current research. In Roscommon County, food businesses benefited from ServSafe® training and canning and preservation programs at local businesses.



## 4-H Coding Experience Leads to Robotics Engineering

A former 4-H'er stopped by the MSU Extension office to ask what the name of the program was that brought the activity of coding into the schools in our area each December through 4-H.

During the conversation, she shared how her involvement in various 4-H activities sparked her passion for technology. Today, she is preparing to attend Michigan Technological University in the Upper Peninsula, where she will pursue her dream of becoming a robotics engineer. She proudly credits 4-H for igniting her interest in computers and setting her on the path to success.

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## His Brother's Legacy – Cross Country Ski Program

In Roscommon County the 4-H Cross Country Ski Club is an event that people look forward to on an annual basis. One gentleman has been bringing his grandson for several years. Recently, this grandfather lost his brother and was left with a sum of money from his estate. He contacted us to make a donation as a tribute to his late brother. He donated enough money to pay for all 40 of the event fees for each participant, a donation of \$600.



***"I just really appreciate all that 4-H does for the kids and the community and this is just my way of giving back in memory of my brother, Charlie."***



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## Winning the 4-H Olympics

Each year for over three decades, youth look forward to the 4-H Cross Country Ski Club that is hosted annually by the Cross Country Ski Headquarters of Roscommon. There are now three different generations that have been involved in one way or another over the years. The groups are divided into three divisions, the beginner group called the Racoons, The intermediate group called the Bucks and the advanced group called the Eagles. At the final session of the program, during the sixth week, the 4-H Cross Country Ski Olympics are held and everyone is cheered on - win or lose.

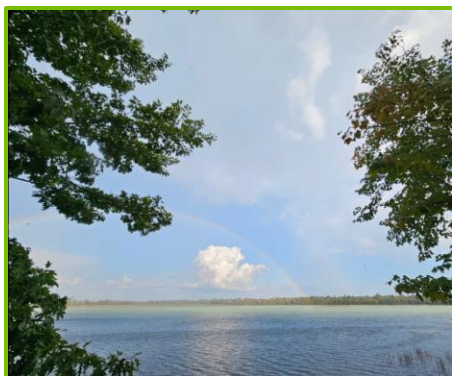
## The value of partnerships:

Michigan State University Extension engages community partnerships to leverage resources, expand outreach, and address local needs effectively. By collaborating with organizations, businesses and government agencies, MSU Extension strengthens programs in agriculture, health, youth development, and community vitality, fostering sustainable solutions and improving the well-being of individuals and communities across Michigan.

### MSU Extension and COOR-ISD Partnership

MSU Extension collaborates with the Crawford Oscoda Ogemaw Roscommon Intermediate School District (C.O.O.R. ISD) to provide inclusive, hands-on, educational experiences for individuals with disabilities, with a focus in Roscommon County. Through the ROOC program, MSU Extension delivers accessible nutrition education to special education participants, promoting healthy habits and independent living skills. Additionally, nature hikes and outdoor learning activities engage individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, fostering connection to nature, physical activity and social interaction.

### MSU Extension and Roscommon County Economic Development Committee Partnership



MSU Extension works in close partnership with the Roscommon County Economic Development Committee (EDC) to support community and economic development initiatives. The EDC led the successful completion of the First Impressions Tourism (FIT) Assessment in 2024, which provided valuable insights and recommendations for Houghton Lake/Prudenville, Roscommon and St. Helen. In collaboration with MSU Extension, the EDC also championed a millage effort to sustain and expand its work. While the proposal did not pass, it elevated awareness of the EDC's efforts to enhance the county's economic future—through initiatives focused on housing, broadband access, workforce training (including customer service) and securing grants to strengthen local businesses and communities.

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