

# **MSU Extension's Role in Addressing PFAS in Michigan**

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# Who is MSU Extension?

- Experts throughout entire State of Michigan with 100+ year history
- Statewide health delivery system
- Business start-up, tech transfer and product development expertise (MSU Product Center)
- Reach every school system in the state; 200,000+ youth in 4-H; 20,000+ adult volunteers
- Rapid response for agriculture, human health and other emergencies – e.g., Flint
- Partner with state agencies on environmental and economic development initiatives
- Resource to local government on public policy and budgeting education



# Where is MSU Extension?

- Field staff in 14 districts
  - 273 educators
  - 145 specialists
  - 183 program staff
  - ≈100 temporary, on-call & students
- 300+ campus faculty
- We live and work in the communities being impacted by PFAS



## Challenges for Extension

- Health effects of PFAS are still not well understood
  - Animal studies vs. human epidemiological studies
- PFAS pathways have not been adequately studied
- Living with uncertainty
  - Demand for information from communities
  - Testing is prohibitively expensive
  - Other pathways have not been adequately studied
  - 2+ years to understand toxicity of PFAS group
    - Estimated 4-5k different chemicals
- EPA health advisory at 70 ppt, but no PFAS legal safety limit



## What has Been/ is Being Done

- “Ask an Expert” on eXtension platform
- Communications via video conference for updates with internal and external partners on PFAS
- Adapting existing curriculum on water toxicity and nutrition; providing education to tribal and other communities near identified sites
- Partnering on wastewater biosolids research
- Offering support to other research efforts as needed for community engagement at different phases
- Sharing resources from MPART and SoM
- Creating platforms for research to be shared (in communities and most recently the PFAS speed meeting on campus)



## Opportunities in the Future

- Statewide presence
- County partnership – already jointly housed in many county services/ health department buildings
- Partnerships with university researchers and state agencies to provide entry to communities as well as:
  - Trained educators
  - Trained facilitators
  - Development of tools and materials that are not only useful, but also usable
  - Support to research beyond health effects (packaging, food production, land use, bioaccumulation, etc.)



# Thank You!

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