

# USDA Cooperative Extension Service: Facilitating Engagement and Public Participation

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# What is Extension?

- Established by the Smith-Lever Act (1914)
- Designed as partnership of the USDA and the 1862 Land-Grant Universities
- Original Mission:  
“...to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture, home economics, and rural energy, and to encourage the application same...”

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# MSU Extension's Origins



MSU botany professor  
William J. Beal in 1873.

One of Beal's experiments  
on seed germination  
continues to this day.

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# MSU Extension's Origins



Edith F. McDermott – the first head of the Department of Home Economics at MSU. McDermott is seen teaching a cooking class in an Abbot Hall laboratory.

Photo circa 1890's.

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# MSU Extension's Origins



Men and women from all over Michigan came to MSC to participate in short courses, a form of adult education.

Short courses began in 1894 and set a new pattern in college services.

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# MSU Extension's Origins



4-H Action Club, seen here in 1966, was one of WKAR-TV's early children's programs. The children learned about a variety of topics from how to handle emergencies to gardening projects.

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# Today's Extension Service



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# Today's Extension Service

- Deep roots remain in agriculture
- Continued and emerging roles in
  - Children, Youth and Family Programs
  - Community and Economic Development



# Community Design Initiative

**What is STDI**

**Project Types**

**Who Qualifies**

**What to Expect**




**What is Required**

**How to Apply**

**Contacts**




# STDI

**Small Town Design Initiative**





**"Putting Knowledge to Work for Michigan's Communities"**

**SDTI Partners**



**College of Social Science**



# Strengths

- Rich history, experience
- Pervasive
  - All states and territories
  - Physical offices and staff in most counties

# Strengths

- Embedded in and engaged with communities
- Diversity of staff and clientele
  - Rural and urban
  - All income and education levels

# Strengths

- International engagement



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