When you support University of Missouri’s Extension programming in the Central Missouri Region significant impact can be gained by individuals and communities that directly participate in them. In addition to participant impact, many of our programs have critical public value where individuals, communities and government entities who have not directly participated in these programs realize important benefits.

**VIBRANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Rural Tourism Development Program:** Businesses and communities use the skills learned to become more visitor-ready and to increase tourism in the region. Leaders, communities and counties working together maximize tourism economic development for the region.

**Business Development Program:** Over 304 jobs were created at the local level and 7,473 jobs were created across the state. The Business Development Program works to improve sales, start businesses and obtain government contracts. This contributes to creating and retaining jobs as well as improving the economy.

**Family Financial Education Programs:** Participants learn quality financial strategies which result in increased success in reaching financial goals, stronger credit reports and better informed consumer purchasing decisions. These all work to lower costs for public assistance programs, reduce debt discharged in bankruptcy and result in more productive employees. It has become especially clear in recent years that individual financial decisions collectively impact the local and state economy.

**Community Emergency Management Program:** Local emergency management groups, communities, businesses, schools and residents work together to reduce the disaster recovery period. This action saves lives and substantial dollars in emergency recovery operations’ costs and avoids job loss. Additionally the whole community builds a greater sense of cohesion.

**Community Leadership Program:** Participants learn effective economic development principles and replace myths and incorrect perceptions with correct county data and facts. Leaders emerge and become energized or re-energized when they have a network of caring, energetic leaders with similar interests. Communities and Missouri benefits as the leadership capacity is increased now and for the future.

**Family Financial Game Plan Workshops:** Participants learn to take more control of their financial future. When families get and stay current on bills it helps local businesses stay in business. Robust economic activity fuels a stable tax base and that is fundamental economic development for counties and the state of Missouri.

**Small Business Development Program:** Owners and managers contribute to local economic development through job growth, sales, innovation, technology development and commercialization, thus ensuring that the state’s economy continues to be productive.
Women in Ag Conferences: Women keep better farm records and communicate more effectively with farm business partners, thus increasing profitability of their farming efforts. This increased profitability benefits their community by increasing cost flow through the community and providing increased tax base for public services.

Plant Protection for the 21st Century Program: Producers are able to identify crop problems and pests and choose the most cost-effective and environmentally-friendly solution to the problem, increasing farm profitability and improving the economic well-being in rural Missouri communities while helping protect the environment for all.

Crop Management Program: Producers become more adept at selecting the most economical and sustainable production practices for their operation. This increases profitability while reducing potential water quality impacts from nutrient loading in their community, our state and the nation.

RESILIENT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Focus on Kids Program: Divorcing parents learn how sustained parental involvement by both parents is in the best interests of their children. Statistics on success in school, delayed sexual activity and reduced drug experimentation are improved for children with two involved parents. This reduces costs of education special services and the legal system costs.

Family Financial Internet Education Project: Missouri residents have access to unbiased, science-based web page resources on financial management that are accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Just-in-time quality information contributes to better financial decisions which builds a stronger foundation for the county’s economy and the state of Missouri’s economy.

4-H Programs: Kids not only learn valuable life skills, they develop skills and values that will help them to be contributing members of their communities for their entire lives. Communities reap long-term benefits by supporting 4-H. Engaged youth are 60 percent more likely to vote than non-engaged peers. In addition, 4-H youth are more likely to volunteer and contribute to their communities than youth participating in other youth programs.

Eating from the Garden Program: Children learn gardening skills, increase their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, improve nutritional habits and reduce the potential of becoming obese which reduces the taxpayer costs associated with obesity and public health care.

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program: Limited resource families are taught to make healthier food purchases and improve food safety practices. A healthy labor force is critical to attracting and keeping jobs in Missouri. In addition, this important program reduces health care costs of the participants during their lifetime, saving taxpayers money in reduced public health benefits and insurance premiums.

Matter of Balance Program: Participants increase their physical strength, make their homes safer and work to prevent falls and injuries. Not only do falls represent a major threat to adults getting to spend their senior years in their homes, they are incredibly expensive to our society in terms of health care and long-term care costs to Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance companies.

Program information in this document was provided by regional faculty and staff, and organized by Cynthia Crawford, Vivian Mason and Mark Stewart as members of the Public Value Workgroup.