A young 4-H'er learning about hard work as she helps plant flowers outside the Polk County Courthouse.
Extension’s Program Guidance Comes From You

The University of Missouri Extension council and staff would like to thank the Polk County Commissioners for their support and funding during this past year. In turn, the council and staff remain committed to improving people’s lives by helping them meet the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century with research-based education and information.

Current programming efforts focus on agricultural profitability and viability, building family and individual strengths, business, community and economic development, enhancing health and nutrition, environmental quality, and youth development.

The mission of University of Missouri Extension is to: "serve Missouri by extending the unbiased research-based knowledge and problem-solving resources of the University of Missouri to focus on high-priority needs of people throughout the state."

The contents of this report are a brief summary of some of the highlights of our educational efforts during the past year. We hope this report provides a greater understanding of University of Missouri Extension programming efforts in Polk County.

Submitted by,

LaNelda Presley  
Janieca Hancock  
Wesley Tucker

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Janieca Hancock  
Wesley Tucker
Council Secretary  
Council Chairperson  
County Program Director
Experienced and Committed Staff

The staff of the University of Missouri Extension office in Polk County represent a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Staff members have owned their own farms and businesses, worked for many government agencies, and bring a wide range of backgrounds and knowledge to Polk County.
Active 4-H’ers excel

A ground-breaking national study has confirmed what we already knew: Kids who are active 4-H members excel in leadership and volunteer service. Equally important, active 4-H’ers report fewer unhealthy behaviors such as drinking, smoking, and other drug use. That’s good news for parents, community leaders, and citizens. The 4-H Study began at the national level in 2002. Since then, nearly 5,000 adolescents from 34 states have been surveyed. In 2007, 338 Missouri youth at 21 sites around the state were surveyed. The Missouri students were evenly divided between 4-H and non-4-H participants. Most were in the 8th or 9th grades. Significant differences were found between active 4-H participants and non-4-H’ers. Active 4-H participation is defined as participating in a 4-H activity at least twice a month. Active 4-H’ers had higher scores on service, more leadership experiences and more adult mentors. Plus, they had lower scores on unhealthy behaviors. Clearly, 4-H is a good investment for kids, parents and civic leaders.

Impact in 2009

**Polk County Clubs:** In 2009, Polk County had seven 4-H clubs with a total membership of 145 youth. County 4-H clubs offer long-term educational experiences in which members learn life skills like decision making, public speaking and working with others. Members learn by doing under the guidance of adult volunteers who teach projects ranging from aerospace and arts to veterinary science and sport fishing. Clubs involve children and teens in community service, leadership & educational trips.

**4-H Volunteers:** Polk County 4-H members are supported by 73 Polk County adult volunteers. A national report suggests that the average volunteer in Missouri contributes 43.5 hours per year. Based on average Missouri incomes the contribution of Polk County volunteers was worth more than $84,094 in 2009! Important Adult/youth partnerships are formed as leaders instruct youth in their project areas.

**Community Service Projects:**

Going Green - Outside the Polk County Courthouse, 4-H Council members planted and maintained the annuals and perennials in the flower pots and around the statue. 4-H’ers also acquired 150 trees which were taken home to plant in their home communities. Polk County clubs complete countless projects to better their communities and reach out to elderly, children and others in need. This has included everything from collecting packets of cocoa to package and distribute to Polk County residents through Share Your Christmas, making cards for those living in Nursing Homes, and ringing bells for the Salvation Army.
4-H Youth Development

Polk County Fair— 295 4-H exhibits were showcased and judged, and two members participated in Fashion Revue.

Ozark Empire Fair- Polk County was represented with 83 exhibits with 2 being chosen as Grand or Reserve Champion. 21 Polk County 4-H’ers participated in the OEF Parade.

State Fair- Polk County was represented with 43 exhibits and Polk County’s very own Wilma Jean Lower was honored as a 4-H Hall of Fame nominee.

State Contest- Fashion Revue— Michaela Higgensonbotham qualified to represent Polk county in the Fashion Revue.

State Contest- Shooting Sports– Eleven 4-H’ers represented Polk County at the State Shooting Sports contest. Jonathan McAtee brought home a blue ribbon with the entire team bringing home an additional seven red ribbons, and three white ribbon s.

State Contest- Public Speaking - Steven Whitney qualified and attended the 4-H public speaking contest.

State Contest—BBQ - Steven and Donald Whitney participated in the 4-H state BBQ contest.

Project Night– Over 67 members, prospective members and families attended Project Night as a chance to sample a few of the many projects 4-H has to offer.

4-H Camp- Polk County had representation at all 4-H camps with a total of 6 members attending. Two of those members also served as counselors at Clover Camp. Ten Polk County Clover kids also attended the Polk County Clover Kids Day Camp!

Polk County Achievement Day– 60 youth, parents, and leaders participated to showcase the accomplishments of the 4-H program. Fourteen 4-H’ers participated in Regional 4-H Day.

Citizenship Washington Focus Trip – Emma Igo represented Polk County at this leadership program at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center near Washington DC.

Teen Conference - Julie Choate attended State Teen Conference in Columbia, MO.

National 4-H Week – Each of the county clubs contributed fair exhibits to create a display at the County library for the month of Oct. Twelve 4-H youth wrote and recorded Public Service Announcements which were played throughout National 4-H Week on the local radio station.

Polk County 4-H Council- Teen 4-H members serve as officers, and members and leaders serve on committees, charged with the mission to guide and lead the Polk County 4-H Program.
The purpose of agriculture and environmental programming is to provide information and recommendations that will help individuals, groups and agribusiness firms apply research based knowledge. Along with educational programming, University of Missouri Extension personnel provide one-on-one farm visits. Area specialists work closely with small producers that are moving into the county or existing residents that have decided to start new enterprises. Services the Polk County office provides include: soil-testing, fertilizer and pesticide recommendations, weed-, insect- and disease-identification and control, forage-testing information, pesticide-use training, nitrate tests for forages, and crop variety selection.

Impact in 2009

**Beef Quality Assurance Seminar:** 170 local producers got to view a live demonstration on the importance of proper administration of medications. A calf had been prepared 14 days earlier by giving it common medicines producers use each day. During the seminar the calf was humanely euthanized and dissected to show producers the effects of injections administered incorrectly compared to when it was done the right way. Seeing is believing and this demonstration made a believer out of many.

**Ag Lenders Seminar:** 24 representatives of the banks in Bolivar and surrounding areas attended the 4th Annual Ag Lenders Seminar. Extension’s goal is to provide local agricultural lenders with the most current information they need to work with their ag clients. Topics included land, livestock, and crop price forecasts, agriculture under attack from animal rights activists, loan guarantee programs, and what really drives profit for beef operations.

**Cattlemen’s Tour** — This year’s Polk County Extension cattlemen’s tour visited a wide variety of cattle operations spread throughout Missouri. Stops focused on forage production, rotational grazing, backgrounding, seedstock production, custom grazing, fencing, and cattle feeding.

**SW MO Beef Conference:** 150 producers attended this great event. Since our county is the #1 beef county in Missouri, Polk County Extension sponsors this regional educational event to update producers on key management practices to help them be more profitable. 15 ag businesses offered a trade show as well.

**Livestock & Forage Conference (aka Soils & Crops):** 115 local producers attended this annual conference. Topics included:

1.) The Good & Bad of the Beef Price Outlook
2.) Management & Supplement Options for Calves
3.) Successfully Interseeding Legumes in Pasture
Master Gardener Program: An intensive 10-month class graduated another group of Polk County Master Gardeners. Each of these participants received 30 hours of horticulture training and now must give a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer time back to the community in the form of gardening education. This local group conducts a wide variety of community activities such as landscaping the Habitat for Humanity home, working with the John Playter Park project, teaching many different gardening seminars in the county, and much more.

Spring & Fall Gardening Workshops: 47 local residents attended a workshop in the spring and 42 attended one last fall. Polk County Extension provided these educational workshops on a variety of topics to help residents learn how to do a better job producing their own fruits and vegetables as well as landscaping projects around their home.

Vegetable Gardening: As a result of the current condition of the economy, there has been an increased level of interest in learning about gardening and how to grow your own food. Whether it’s through answering questions or one of the many gardening presentations presented throughout the county this year, Extension is meeting this educational need.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training: 100 producers attended this year’s training to learn how to properly handle and apply pesticides to their property. Polk County Extension offers this service to the community to ensure that our natural resources are being protected for future generations.

Farm Management Counseling: It’s hard to make a profit in farming. With rising fuel, feed, and fertilizer prices many producers are barely holding on. One of the most important programs that Polk County Extension provides is one-on-one counseling for local producers. Extension works closely with many producers throughout the county helping them find ways to cut costs, improve their marketing, make better management decisions, and improve the overall profitability of their operation.

Junior Livestock Show & Auction: Extension continues to put a lot of effort into growing the Polk County Fair and supporting our youth by building the market sale. In spite of the recession, in this year’s sale we raised over $16,000 that went directly to the youth to help offset the costs of their livestock project. In addition, several new events brought in many new people from the community that had never been to the Polk County Fair before.
Individuals and families can find information through the educational programming of MU Extension Human Environmental Sciences program. Areas addressed include family resource management, good health through nutrition, leadership development and effective decision making to enhance the quality of life. A variety of educational programs and information is provided through several regional specialists.

**Impact in 2009**

**Leadership Bolivar:** This highly successful local program is based on University of Missouri’s EXCEL program. University of Missouri Extension speakers teach several of the leadership classes that contribute to the future of the Bolivar area.

**School Food Service Training:** 56 individuals representing six Polk County school districts participated in training by Tammy Roberts on “Food Allergies.” This training will help schools protect students with food allergies while ensuring they still get adequate nutrition.

Participants of Leadership Bolivar are learning how to be more active in their community

Tammy Roberts is seen conducting a canning class for local citizens of Polk County. The training was held at St. Albans Church in Bolivar and offered a wide variety of information on storing produce. Extension has received more requests for canning and gardening information this year as a result of the recession.
University of Missouri Extension (UME) Family Nutrition Education Programs (FNEP) reached 2258 low-income participants with nutrition education in Polk County during 2009. FNEP provides information on nutrition, food safety, and physical activity for lifelong health and fitness.

Nutrition education for youths provides information in kid-friendly terms and lessons with hands-on activities. Activities include opportunities for taste-testing healthy foods and practicing skills that lead to good health. Education for adults includes nutrition, food safety, physical activity, and food resource management.

Impact in 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student changes reported by teachers</th>
<th>% of teachers who observed each type of student change</th>
<th>% of teachers whose students talked about this change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More aware of nutrition</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make healthier meal and/or snack choices</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat breakfast more often</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More willing to try new foods</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved hand washing</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved food safety other than hand washing</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased physical activity</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For adults who participated in EFNEP, results summarized for the state revealed the following:

**81% of graduates improved how they managed their food dollars**
- 51% of participants more often planned meals in advance
- 41% of participants more often compared prices when shopping
- 47% of participants more often used a list for grocery shopping
- 34% of participants less often ran out of food before the end of the month

**87% of graduates made healthier food choices**
- 45% of participants more often thought about healthy food choices when deciding what to feed their families
- 35% of participants more often prepared foods without adding salt
- 57% of participants more often used the “Nutrition Facts” on food labels to make food choices
- 32% of participants reported that their children ate breakfast more often

**77% of graduates demonstrated acceptable food safety practices**
- 49% of participants more often followed the recommended practice of not thawing foods at room temperature

**94% of graduates made at least one improvement to their diets to more closely align with the USDA Dietary Guidelines**
“The Place To Go When You Need To Know”

Polk County is home to a diverse, growing population with varied interests. The goal of the Polk County Extension program is to extend the unbiased research-based knowledge and problem-solving resources of the University of Missouri to the community. Whether it is a question about a tree in their yard, growing tomato plants, getting rid of termites, treating for weeds, writing a partnership agreement, balancing a feed ration, or just about anything else you can imagine, the Polk County Extension Center is here to help. With the resources of the entire University of Missouri System behind them, there are experts in practically every field to answer questions. The Polk County Extension Center is a resource to the community and ready and willing to help.

Impact in 2009

The Extension Center is known as “The Place To Go When You Need To Know.”

Call-Ins:
- Agriculture: 675
- 4-H: 447
- Other Areas: 632
- Total Call-Ins: 1,754

Walk-Ins (total): 823

Total Contacts = 2,577

226 Soil Tests were conducted through Polk County Extension Center, 12 people visited the office for individual pesticide applicator training, 22 people brought in canner pressure gauges to be tested, and 24 people requested notaries.

- Pond & Pasture Weed Identification
- Herbicide Recommendations
- Vegetable Gardening
- Soil Testing & Recommendations
- Vegetable & Fruit Planting Guides
- Bug Identification & Control
- Plant Diseases Identification & Control
- Pasture Rental Rates
- Custom Rates for Farming Practices
- Rental Agreements
- Farm Income Taxes
- Cattle Price Forecasts
- Beef Ration Balancing
- Supplements for Cattle On Pasture
- Forage Management
- Nitrate Poisoning in Cattle
- Brand Registration
- Mole Control (sometimes other varmints)
- Fruit Spray Schedules
- Goat Information
- 4-H Club Activities
- Mushroom Edibility
- Canning Food & Pressure Cooker Testing
- Fencing Laws

A field full of broom sedge that is in desperate need of a soil test and some fertility.
State, Federal and County Funding for Extension

University of Missouri Extension programs in Polk County are funded by county, state and federal appropriations. Local funding for support of the Polk County Extension Center is provided by the Polk County Commission. They provide office space, funds for office expenses, clerical salaries and travel expenses of extension specialists who conduct educational programs in Polk County.

A special acknowledgement and appreciation is given to the Polk County Commission for financial assistance.

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### Financial Statement

#### SOURCE OF FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Appropriations</td>
<td>$ 42,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Postage Allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generated Funds (soil test, shortcourse, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delarue Trust Fund</td>
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<td>Univ. Contribution to YPA Salary</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</strong></td>
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#### EXPENSES

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<tr>
<td>Office personnel</td>
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<td>4-H Program Assistant</td>
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<td>Staff Benefits</td>
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<td>Non-Payroll Salaries</td>
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<td>Utilities</td>
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<td>Travel</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Supplies and services</td>
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<td>Internet</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>146</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repair and maintenance</td>
<td>411</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and equipment</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil testing expenses</td>
<td>2,205</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortcourse expenses</td>
<td>689</td>
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<td>Publications</td>
<td>701</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 54,991</strong></td>
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#### Assets as of 12-31-09

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Checking</td>
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<td>Payable to Univ. on YPA salary</td>
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<td>Savings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated Funds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 21,402</strong></td>
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**Unique partnership**

Polk County’s University of Missouri Extension County Council is a full partner with Missouri's land-grant universities to deliver high-quality education and research-based information that helps people solve real-world problems and take advantage of opportunities. Council members:

- Work with extension specialists to provide the county with quality educational programs;
- Manage finances of local extension operations;
- Provide personnel to carry out extension activities; and
- Elect and organize the local extension council.

**POLK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

(2009)

**Denzil Roberts**

Presiding Commissioner

**Kyle Legan**

Northern Commissioner

**Billy Dryer**

Southern Commissioner