

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION  
**Buchanan County**

**2024** Annual Report

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**SERVE  
 MISSOURI.  
 DELIVER  
 MIZZOU.**

**MU** Extension  
 University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution





December 2024

Dear county commissioners, elected leaders and friends of MU Extension and Engagement,

As we reflect on the past year, I want to express my deep gratitude for your support of MU Extension and for your partnership in enhancing the lives of Missourians.

Your support for MU Extension fuels Missouri's agriculture, strengthens families, prepares our youth and promotes the health, well-being and vitality of our communities. Over the past year, our programs have focused on addressing key needs throughout the state:

- **Expanding access to 4-H:** To make 4-H more accessible, we've introduced more in-school and after-school clubs, reducing barriers and creating opportunities for young Missourians to develop essential skills and leadership abilities.
- **Supporting agriculture and land stewardship:** We're addressing critical issues such as succession planning for family farms, rural mental health, agricultural business management and land stewardship. These initiatives are helping Missouri's farmers plan for the future and preserve the health of our land for future generations.
- **Advancing health initiatives:** Our team of community health field specialists, covering every region of the state, works directly with local leaders to assess health needs and bring UM System resources and expertise to these communities, supporting healthier lives and stronger communities.
- **Promoting economic development:** MU Extension is helping to create economic opportunities by working with individuals, supporting businesses in their growth and collaborating with communities to enhance local vibrancy. Through these efforts, we help bring new jobs, skills and possibilities to Missourians across the state.
- **Providing essential training:** Our continuing education programs prepare Missouri's firefighters and health care workers to meet the demands of their roles with the latest skills and knowledge, ensuring they are well-prepared to serve our communities.

As you read through this annual report, I hope you feel as proud as I do of the accomplishments we've achieved together. The dedication and professionalism of MU Extension's faculty and staff are inspiring, and I am grateful to work alongside them—and each of you—as we make Missouri a stronger, healthier and more vibrant place. Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we are serving Missouri by delivering the University *for* Missouri.

Warm regards,

Chad Higgins, PhD  
Vice Chancellor, MU Extension and Engagement  
Chief Engagement Officer, UM System

# Who we are

## Faculty and staff



**Randa Doty**  
Extension Engagement Specialist

**Charissa Dodge**  
County Office Support

**Danielle Ferguson**  
County Office Support

**Denice Ferguson**  
Field Specialist in Agricultural Business

**Wayne Flanary**  
Field Specialist in Agronomy

**Rawne Pierce**  
Youth Program Associate

**Andrea Walsh**  
Nutrition Program Associate

**Jim Crawford**  
Field Specialist in Agri Systems Technology

**Laura Evans**  
Field Specialist in 4-H Youth Development

**Connie Griffith**  
Nutrition Program Manager

**Todd Higgins**  
Field Specialist in Horticulture

**Jim Humphrey**  
Field Specialist in Livestock

**Rachel Livesay**  
Field Specialist in Nutrition and Health

**Katie Pemberton**  
Field Specialist in Human Development

**Stacey Steffens**  
Northwest Regional Director

## Council members

Tona Williams, Chairman  
Libby Owens, Vice-chairman  
Emily Lindsay, Secretary  
David Calloway, Co-Treasurer  
Rhanda Shreve, Co-Treasurer  
Jim Barnett  
Susan Barton  
Pam Dexter  
Travis Dodge  
Chris Grable  
Joe Hamera  
Karen Hauser  
Ron Hitchings  
Ron Hook  
Joannie Jordan  
Mark Jordan  
Debbie Krumme  
Lanny Krumme  
Nancy Nichols-Tyler  
Trey Pendleton  
Kate Viestenz



## County commissioners

Scott Nelson, Presiding Commissioner  
Ron Hook, Western District Commissioner  
Scott Burnham, Eastern District Commissioner





# Budget and more

## Appropriations budget

### Income

County Appropriations	91,200.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$91,200.00</b>

### Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	63,985.40
Programming	3,400.00
Travel	3,757.40
Telephone	2,218.92
Advertising	2,110.00
Meeting Space	200.00
Copy Services	2,400.00
Supplies	2,946.55
Hospitality	364.94
Utilities	2,400.00
Other Contract Services	456.00
Insurance	515.00
Election Expense	665.20
Dues & Subscriptions	505.93
Repairs/Maintenance	914.80
Service Fees	448.83
Furniture/Equipment	341.49
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$88,490.88</b>



MU Extension Faculty, Master Gardeners, Pony Express Therapy Dogs and Buchanan County Extension Council members represented MU Extension at the Agency Picnic



## MU Extension is a unique funding partnership.

Extension funding is a three-way partnership of federal, state and county government. Federal and state money, through the University of Missouri system, pay professional staff salaries, training costs, computers and communication equipment. County funds support the local office, secretarial and youth assistant salaries, staff mileage and council expenses.

The Buchanan County Extension Council, faculty and staff would like to express our appreciation to the Buchanan County Commissioners for their continued support of extension programs.



## Local Support

Did you know you can donate directly to Buchanan County Extension with a gift to be used immediately or as an endowment contribution for long term efforts. Monies put into the endowment are left forever to earn interest with the county office benefiting each year. You can also direct your donation to a specific program such as 4-H or Master Gardeners.



# Health & Human Sciences

## FOCUS ON KIDS

According to the Missouri State Statute 452.600, when parents of children eighteen years and younger split up, they are required to attend a parenting class. Focus on Kids satisfies that requirement. This class is a supportive educational program designed to help individuals navigate the challenges of co-parenting after a separation or divorce. It provides valuable information on how to minimize the emotional impact of divorce on children, encourage healthy communication between parents, and promote effective conflict resolution. The goal is to ensure that both parents are equipped with the tools they need to create a stable, supportive environment for their children, even as they adjust to the changes in their family dynamics. It is estimated that divorce education classes like FOK have a societal return on investment over \$3 for every \$1 invested (Alcaniz et al., 2022; see also Herman et al., 2015; Taskforce on Divorce and Divorce Reform, 1973).

Focus on Kids was offered in Buchanan County every month.

- Buchanan: 12 participants with an income of \$420
- Online numbers by county: Buchanan: 118
- Katie Pemberton, Field Specialist in Human Development teaches this course

“I learned how to respect the other parent and how to coparent better. The class was very helpful and had a lot of good information.  
-Focus on Kids Participant

## PONY EXPRESS THERAPY DOGS

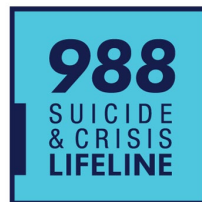
Pony Express Therapy Dogs are going on their seventh year in existence. The group has 25 members and 26 dogs, and they visit many locations within multiple counties. These locations range from nursing homes, libraries, special events and even local universities. Therapy dogs provide numerous emotional and psychological benefits to individuals of all ages. Their presence can significantly reduce stress, anxiety, and depression by promoting a sense of calm and comfort. Interacting with therapy dogs has been shown to lower blood pressure, release feel-good hormones like oxytocin, and create a soothing environment for people facing challenging situations. These dogs can also help improve social interaction, particularly for individuals with autism or social anxiety, by acting as a bridge for communication.



Members of the organization along with their service dogs.

## FARM AND RANCH STRESS GRANT

Missouri’s mental health crisis is more challenging for the agricultural community, fueled by growing economic and mental health challenges that are severely affecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of rural families. To address Missouri’s mental health crisis, the University of Missouri Extension provides free mental health workshops, suicide prevention programs, and mental health awareness resources. The program collaborates with the University of Missouri College of Arts & Sciences Psychological Services Clinic to offer free telehealth counseling services.



Therapy dogs, Mr. Rossi and Miss Priss, provide services to residents of northwest Missouri.



# Health & Human Sciences

## SNAP-Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought \$11,145,237 in federal funds to Missouri. The funds support engagement with 74,864 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients and eligible citizens of Missouri who learned about being active and healthy eating on a budget. This year we had 1,164,143 indirect educational contacts through newsletters, health fairs, food pantries, and the Show Me Nutrition helpline.

A total of 2,564 participants were from Buchanan County.

Participants in SNAP-Ed learn the importance of making healthier meals and snack choices, eating breakfast more often, are more willing to try new foods, increase their physical activity, and make healthier food choices. Those who practice healthy eating and are physically active are more likely to contribute to a healthy labor force and enjoy a high quality of life throughout the lifespan

This vital programming effort also reduces healthcare costs over the participant's lifetime, saving taxpayer money in reduced public healthcare benefits and insurance premiums.



MU Extension Nutrition Program Associate, Andrea Walsh, teaching children about healthy eating.

## EFNEP

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) brought \$1,624,777 federal funds to Missouri. These funds were used to enroll 589 limited-resource families in nutrition education and meal preparation classes, representing 2,068 family members. Additionally, 2,864 youth were enrolled in EFNEP classes.

Fifty-eight of these youth participants reside in Buchanan County.

Participants in EFNEP learn the importance of making healthier meals and snack choices, eating breakfast more often, trying new foods, increasing their physical activity, and making healthier food choices. Those who practice healthy eating and are physically active are more likely to contribute to a healthy labor force and enjoy a high quality of life throughout the lifespan.

This vital programming effort also reduces healthcare costs over the participant's lifetime, saving taxpayer money in reduced public healthcare benefits and insurance premiums.

### Participating schools and agencies include:

- ✓ East Buchanan Elementary
- ✓ Hyde Elementary
- ✓ Lindbergh Elementary
- ✓ Mid-Buchanan Elementary
- ✓ East Ridge Manor Apartments
- ✓ Gower Community Food Pantry
- ✓ Interserv
- ✓ Joyce Raye Paterson Senior Center
- ✓ King Hill Apartments
- ✓ Mitchell Woods Preschool & Childcare
- ✓ Museum Hill Apartments
- ✓ Second Harvest Community Food Bank
- ✓ St. Charles Place
- ✓ St. Francis Apartments
- ✓ St. Joseph Health Department
- ✓ Village East Towers
- ✓ Whittington Estates
- ✓ Woodbine Meadows

## Success Story

The students at Hyde Elementary learned new ways to prepare healthy snacks while they were preparing healthy recipes. Students were able to use many of the same ingredients in different ways to create different snacks. Students were thrilled to learn that an ingredient, such as yogurt, could be used in many, different ways. Several students shared that they really enjoyed these new recipes after they were unsure of the results in the beginning. It is so exciting that Missouri students can be so impacted by the Family Nutrition Education Program provided by the University of Missouri Extension!





# Health & Human Sciences

## Stay Strong, Stay Healthy



Stay Strong Stay Healthy Level 1 at Joyce Raye Patterson

Rachel Livesay, MU Extension Field Specialist in Nutrition and Health, offered Stay Strong, Stay Healthy classes in Buchanan County in 2024. This is an evidence-based strength training program designed for older adults. Over the 8-week program, participants learn exercises to improve strength, balance, and flexibility

### Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Level 1

- Offered 3 programs at Joyce Raye Patterson 50+ Activity Center
- Total of 32 participants, Total of 14 completed at least 75% of the class, Total of 14 first time participants

### Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Level 2

- Offered 1 program at Joyce Raye Patterson 50+ Activity Center
- Total of 4 first time participants

Quotes from Stay Strong, Stay Healthy Participants:

“The exercises do improve my strength and flexibility... and my confidence to continue building ways to exercise and have fun!” “This Stay Strong, Stay Healthy program has made me stronger, healthier, happier, and more aware of confidence and balance when I move.”

## Dining with Diabetes



Dining with Diabetes at Gower Christian Church

Dining with Diabetes was offered at the Gower Christian Church

- Six participants, 5 out of 5 participants surveyed reported feeling confident that they can keep their diabetes under control or help the people they care for control their diabetes

“I have discovered how to better read and **understand** carbs and labels on foods. Also, the **portions** on the diabetic plate and the number of carbs I should consume were all new info for me.”

- Dining with Diabetes Participant

## Cooking Matters



Cooking Matters at the St Joseph Public Library



Cooking Matters at Evolution United Methodist Church

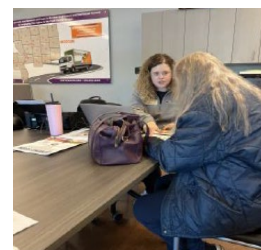
MU Extension Field Specialist in Nutrition and Health, Rachel Livesay offered 6 programs at the St Joseph Public Library – Downtown Branch & Evolution United Methodist Church. At the two locations, 117 people participated and learned basic cooking skills

## Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

MU Extension offered 13 locations in Buchanan county for seniors to sign-up for Senior Farmers Market benefits.

- 213 seniors were enrolled
- \$10,650 in funds to spend on fresh food at farmers markets was issued to seniors in Buchanan County
  - \$9,080 benefits were redeemed with an 85% redemption rate

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Sign-Ups provides \$50 in benefits annually to low-income seniors to spend at local farmers' markets.





# 4-H and Positive Youth Development

## In 2024, Buchanan County 4-H Overview

- ✓ Buchanan County youth enrollment increased to 1,358 from 805 previous year (59%)
- ✓ Established partnership and 4-H Club with Noyes Home.
- ✓ 4-H SNAC program at East Buchanan Middle School, 8th grade.
- ✓ Facilitated the Missouri 4-H/Bangladesh Work Together program.
- ✓ Four Buchanan County youth participated in 4-H Camp at Crowder State park.
- ✓ 854 youth and 41 adult educators participated in 4-H Embryology in Buchanan County.
- ✓ Eleven youth participated in Garden 'N Grow, a youth gardening program for children ages 8 to 13. This program was a partnership with 4-H, Extension Master Gardeners.
- ✓ Best Summer Ever Grant, partnership with Noyes Home (\$10K) and Cameron Public Library (\$6K) to implement 4-H programming during summer months

### Buchanan County Livestock Show



Over adults 283 / children 304 participated in the Children's Fair in St. Joseph on April 23. The MU Extension booth was designed sensory integration of the book "We are Going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen



Campers at 4-H Camp at Crowder State Park put the 4-H pledge into practice by assembling close to 300 nutrition kits to be given to the homeless or less fortunate.

### Garden N Grow

Missouri Garden 'n Grow program is a summer volunteer gardening program for 8 to 13-year-olds. 11 participating youths not only learn vegetable gardening, but also "cultivate" other



social and language arts skills — and have fun! The goals of Garden 'n Grow are to experience the fun of gardening, enjoy a feeling of success, and have the satisfaction of sharing harvested food with others in need. Vegetables harvested from the youth participants and various Master Gardener instructors from Buchanan County and surrounding counties. Gardens are for home use and donations to local food agencies.







# 4-H and Positive Youth Development

## 4-H Clubs

4-H programs are grounded in the belief that youth learn best by doing. Through hands-on projects in areas like science, health, agriculture, and civic engagement in a positive environment youth receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Youth have the opportunity to concentrate on one focus area, or they can try a variety of programs throughout their 4-H experience.

Regardless of how youth participate, all 4-H programs include mentoring and career readiness as core elements.

4-H participants = 1358

*\*Duplicates not removed.*

4-H Community Clubs: offer in-depth educational experiences in which members learn life skills such as decision making, public speaking, and working with others. Members learn by doing this under the guidance of adult volunteers, who lead a wide variety of projects that support 4-H members in finding their SPARK.

4-H offers Community clubs, SPIN (special interest) clubs, In school and Afterschool Clubs, and school enrichment. Families and communities can choose what fits their needs.

4-H Community Club consist of Buchanan County Heart 4 Horses, Kountry Kids, \*Noyes Home, Number 5, Trailblazers, and Willing Workers. \*New Club for 2024

4-H Afterschool Clubs- Interserv 4-H Club, in partnership with the Interserv, was created to extend the reach of 4-H programs into non-traditional settings. This collaboration provides engaging, hands-on learning opportunities for youth, focusing on personal growth, leadership, and practical life skills. By meeting at the library, the program makes 4-H more accessible to a broader audience, fostering a love of learning and community involvement in a welcoming environment outside the typical classroom or club setting. Reaching over 200 youth annually.

## Volunteers

- 4-H members are supported by 101 youth and adult volunteers
- Time valued at \$33,825
- Volunteers are the core of the 4-H Program. They help to create, support, and deliver educational programs and experiences. Missouri 4-H volunteers report contributing an average of 100 hours per year to the program. Valuing their time at \$33.49 per hour (Independent Sector, 2024), the contribution of Buchanan 4-H volunteers was worth more than \$33,825 in 2024. More importantly, these individuals serve as role models and mentors for youth.

## Reference

Independent Sector (2024). Independent sector releases new value of volunteer time of \$33.49 per hour. Retrieved from <https://independentsector.org/blog/independent-sector-releases-new-value-of-volunteer-time-of-33-49-per-hour/>



# 4-H and Positive Youth Development

## 4-H SNAC Clubs

The Student Nutrition Advisory Council (SNAC) clubs are available in various settings, including before school, during school, after school, and within community programs. These clubs empower youth to enhance their knowledge of nutrition and fitness. Participants take on leadership roles, becoming ambassadors of Healthy Living by designing and executing projects that promote nutrition education and improve fitness in their communities. In 2024, Missouri saw the establishment of 121 SNAC Clubs, engaging 2,543 youth and reaching over 7,330 others through their leadership initiatives.

In collaboration with East Buchanan Middle School, 73 students participated in Kids in the Kitchen. It encourages young people to eat healthier meals and snacks as a result of hands-on cooking experiences. Youth participants learn to prepare simple, healthy foods they can make for themselves and their family members. Each lesson includes kid-friendly handouts such as recipes and tips for how to use kitchen equipment safely.

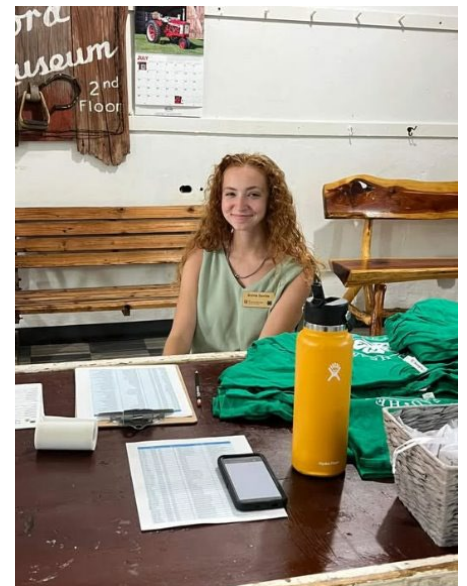


## 4-H Embryology

Connecting embryology with Missouri Learning Standards is a win win for educators in Buchanan County. 4-H Embryology Program gives students the opportunity to learn the life cycle of chicks by hatching eggs in the classroom. Students care for pre-incubated eggs by monitoring an incubator, maintaining optimal incubation stages and caring for the chicks after incubation— all during a two-week period. During the Spring 2024 program, majority of the participants identified core subject area were the most used was science, communication arts and math. This program reached over 854 youth in Buchanan County with 41 teachers.

## Youth Program Assistant Intern

Sidnie led our Garden 'n Grow programming with enthusiasm and dedication, bringing hands-on gardening activities to life at the MU Extension Buchanan County Office. Her efforts not only taught kids about vegetable gardening but also helped them explore science, math, and language arts in a fun and interactive way. She may also be spotted occasionally leading some hands-on activities at St. Joe Public Library. Her commitment and passion have made a lasting impact on our young gardeners and the community. A big thank you to Sidnie for all her hard work and for making this summer truly special. We couldn't have done it without you!







# 4-H and Positive Youth Development

## Missouri 4-H Summer Enrichment 2024

Missouri 4-H engaged in expanded and enhanced programming throughout the summer of 2024. 4-H team members across Missouri provided diverse educational opportunities to 5,349 young people. Program offerings included career and college awareness and exploration through simulations, program series, and day camps. In partnership with community libraries and community centers, youth unfamiliar and familiar with 4 H had the opportunity to engage in hands-on STEM programs, including coding, aerospace, robotics, embryology, and gardening.



On Friday, July 19, 2024, University of Missouri Extension in Buchanan County partnered with The Farmer's House and Weston Red Barn Farm to provide youth from the Noyes Home with an enriching farm-to-table experience. The day emphasized gardening as therapy, meal preparation with fresh produce, composting, and basic gardening skills. Thirteen participants explored The Farmer's House gardens, prepared lunch using harvested vegetables, and learned about sustainable practices. At Weston Red Barn Farm, they interacted with .

barnyard animals and learned about local agriculture. MU Extension specialists capped off the day with hands-on activities in nutrition, mental health, and youth entrepreneurship. Special thanks to The Farmer's House and Weston Red Barn Farm for their collaboration and hospitality.

Responses to the family survey showed that 60% of youth developed better work habits, 70% of youth had an increased interest in learning, 84% felt that 4-H showed respect for their family's culture, and 70% felt that the 4-H program helped prepare their child for the future. Of the families that participated in the program, 41% had a parent who participated in 4-H as a child, and 48% were not 4-H participants. Funding for the ARPA Summer Enrichment grant was made possible through a contract with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to distribute a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) 1% Set-aside for Summer Enrichment to youth serving programs across the state.



# Business & Community

## Overview of MU Extension’s Community Development Programming

Under the guidance of the University of Missouri - St. Louis, MU Extension’s Community Development faculty help to build Civic Muscle, which is defined as the collective strength of people in a place (neighborhood, town, region) to respond to challenges and proactively pursue thriving communities. Community Development specialists coach communities to build four key “muscle groups”: **Belonging, Contribution, Leadership, and Vitality** by providing educational programs and technical assistance. Jackie Spainhower, MU Extension Field Specialist in Community Development has offered the following opportunities to the Northwest Region.

### Belonging

*Place-based communities building social capital and inclusivity through neighboring, civil dialogue, placemaking, etc.*

## Extension Express Newsletter Distributed in 2024



Faculty and staff in the Northwest Region came together in late 2024 to create and distribute the monthly Extension Express newsletter, intended to highlight programming, events, and activities happening in the region’s 20 counties. Knowing about Extension programs and class offerings helps create a stronger sense of belonging and connection between faculty, staff, council



members, elected officials, and program participants within the Region. The Extension Express newsletter is currently distributed to over 350 people each month.

MU Extension faculty involved in this program are: Jackie Spainhower, Field Specialist in Community Development; Randa Doty, Northwest Region Extension Engagement Specialist; Jen Osborn, Northwest Region Extension Engagement Specialist; Chelsea Corkins, Northwest Region Extension Engagement Specialist; Gwen Funk, Field Specialist in Horticulture; and Kathy Mecham, Field Specialist in Horticulture.

### Contribution

*Residents (particularly those at the margins) participating in civic life and engaged in decision making (volunteering, attending public meetings, voting)*

## NOVA Program and Entrepreneurial Mindset Profile Certification

During the summer, Jackie Spainhower, MU Extension Field Specialist in Community Development, assisted with the facilitation of the first statewide NOVA (Nurturing Original Ventures & Ambitions) Program, which was a virtual entrepreneurial mindset summer camp for neurodivergent high school students. In early August 2024, four students graduated from the course that was designed to help students understand the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs, identify and leverage natural talents, create a strategy to develop entrepreneurial skills, and prepare to lead in environments that value creativity.

Following the course, Spainhower completed the training to become a Certified Practitioner of the Entrepreneurial Mindset Profile (EMP), the program used to develop the NOVA Program. The EMP is a short assessment that measures seven characteristics that distinguish entrepreneurs and seven skills critical to entrepreneurial success. The assessment can be administered to individuals or groups looking to work more cohesively together in creative and innovative settings. As a coach, she can administer the assessment, as well as coach individuals and teams to better individual and group outcomes.

### What participants said about NOVA:

*“This class has really opened my eyes to how much I can contribute, and it’s changed the way I think about my own abilities.”*

*“I feel like I can turn my passions into something real, something I can build a future with.”*





# Business & Community

## Leadership

Diverse community leaders (including those who typically have less power and influence) collaborating for action and bridge-building

## Neighborhood Leadership Academy

Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA) is a 10-week community development leadership program that provides participants with the skills, confidence, and strategies to plan and implement projects in their own communities. Participants come from across the entire state and meet virtually using Zoom. The program provides participants with 30 hours of educational instruction, group and individual coaching that will assist them with completing their project. Participants that complete the program are eligible to apply for mini-grants to support their projects. This year, one person in the region participated in NLA.



### What participants said about NLA:

*"I enjoyed the breakout sessions. Although we are from all different backgrounds, communities, we all want the same things in our communities."*

## Vitality

Residents, organizations, governments, co-creating conditions for equitable, thriving, resourceful places

## Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities – Conference and Webinars

The Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC) Conference took place in Fulton on September 17-19, and we welcomed 122 people for the event. In 2024, the conference focused on youth entrepreneurship, networking and relationship building, removing barriers, and technology and innovation. Attendees had 30 educational breakout sessions to choose from, along with keynote sessions featuring local and national speakers as well as representatives from the University. Next year's conference will take place a little closer to home in Excelsior Springs. As a supplement to the Conference, this year we created a twice monthly webinar to share information about sessions at the upcoming conference and other relevant information about rural economic development and innovation. These webinars will continue in 2025, and the focus will be on stories of collaboration in rural communities across Missouri.

In 2024, eight people from the Northwest Region attended the CEC Conference in Fulton, and 16 people from the region participated in the monthly CEC webinars.



## CEC MONTHLY Exchange



### What attendees said about the 2024 CEC Conference:

*"So empowering to be surrounded by growth minded, problem solving, collaborative individuals for three days. I can't wait to see what we can do with the knowledge we gained over the last three days. Due to the dedication of a few community leaders and advocates our little town was recognized this week in a room of leaders, scholars and advocates from all over Missouri for being an example of positive small town growth and commitment."*

Katie Bowles, Director, Savannah Chamber of Commerce



Top: State CEC Planning Team at the Fulton Conference

Bottom: CEC webinar Jackie Spainhower, MU Extension Field Specialist, hosted with the Plattsburg R-3 administration, teachers, and students that work on the Tigers on Main project, a student owned store in downtown Plattsburg



# Agriculture & Environment

## Impact of using Production Records in a Commercial Cow/Calf Operation

MU Extension Field Specialist in Livestock, Jim Humphrey, continued to gathering data on over 270 breeding age females and their calves, in 2024. This data is compiled by University of Missouri State Beef Geneticist for analyzation. Additionally, the group is getting several questions from producers regarding the data and trends seen over the past four years of data collection.

### MU Feedlot Schools

One hundred forty-nine people attended at the four MU Feedlot Schools held in the state in 2024. We are very encouraged by the number of younger beef producers that have attended these schools. In 2025, we are planning to hold another three MU Feedlot Schools in Missouri and start holding MU Beef Stocker/Backgrounding Schools.



Beef Cow Size Project-Andrew County



Skidloader with telehandler at MU Beef Feedlot School

### Northwest Missouri Grazing School

In late June 2024, we had twenty-five forage and livestock producers attend the three-day Northwest Missouri Management Intensive Grazing School. The evaluation results from this year's school were excellent and we had multiple producers who attended based on recommendations from previous attendees.

### Native warm season grass plots

Taught over 600 area vo-ag students about the positive impacts Native Warm Season Grass can have on our soils, livestock, water and wildlife. Additionally, we burned all the nwsg plots at MU Hundley-Whaley. Sampled four different species of native warm season grasses (nwsg) regarding "Livestock taking a First Bite vs. Second Bite on Forages", three times at the MU Hundley-Whaley Extension and Education Center.



Jim Humphrey, MU Extension Field Specialist in Livestock, teaching Show Me Quality Assurance to 4-H food animal project members.



Eastern Gamagrass Plots at HW May 30, 2024.





# Agriculture & Environment

## Weatherization and renewable Energy

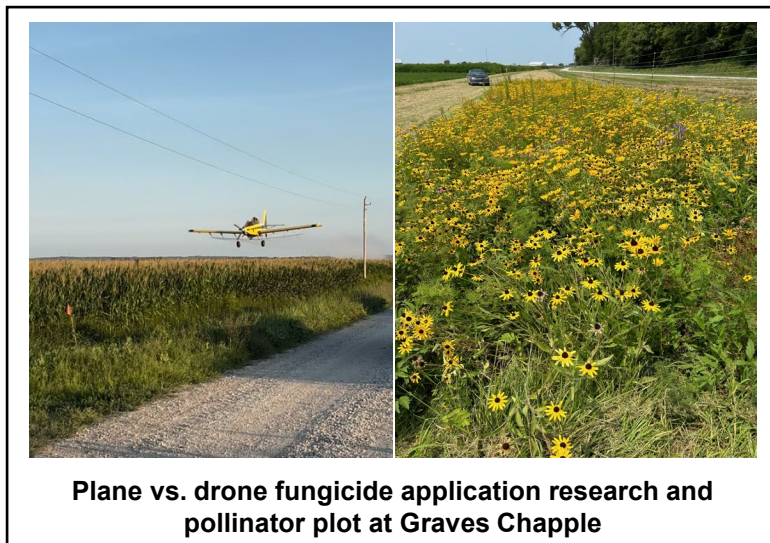
Jim Crawford, MU Extension Field Specialist in Agri Systems Technology works directly with northwest Missourians inquiries regarding:

- Energy conservation /weatherization – Steps and processes people can use to reduce their energy costs at home.
- Renewable energy – home and commercial scale wind and solar energy production systems. People want to know about these systems, can they reduce their electric bills, estimated paybacks and how does a large, commercial scale solar or wind farm being constructed near me affect my property values, my family and my lifestyle.

Unbiased, research-based information is provided to them on both of these, sometimes very complex, topics.



Attendees learn easy, low-cost ways to reduce their energy consumption and thus their energy bills during a workshop on weatherization.



Plane vs. drone fungicide application research and pollinator plot at Graves Chapple

## GRAVES CHAPPLE FIELD DAY



More than 170 commercial producers toured plots and listened to MU speakers at the Graves Chapple Field Day.

## EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

MU Extension Field Specialists in Horticulture, Todd Higgins and Gwen Funk managed and collaborated on three Extension Master Gardener courses in northwest Missouri. This “train the trainer” program supports horticulture in many ways and can often be focused to meet the need of the local community. It supports the benefits of horticulture mentioned above and benefits the community with volunteer activity. Two 30-hour training sessions were held in the region.

As a result of these activities, northwest Missouri has approximately 30 new Extension Master Gardener trainees that will help problem-solve and teach horticulture-related topics. These volunteers help facilitate other horticulture programs such as the youth Garden-n-Grow program.



Youth Garden-n-Grow participants working in the garden during the Buchanan County course coordinated by the Northwest Missouri Master Gardeners



# Agriculture & Environment

## PRIVATE PESTICIDE APPLICATOR TRAINING

This training educated crop producers for safe handling and application of restricted use pesticides. Participants learned about pest identification, economic thresholds and injury levels, emergency planning procedure and the environmental ramification of improper pesticide application with 113 participants. Participants initiated or renewed their license certification. Participants were 19 in Andrew County, 13 in Holt County, 9 in Atchison County, 24 in Buchanan, 6 in Nodaway County, 6 in DeKalb, 6 in Clinton County, 14 in Caldwell County, 7 in Daviess County, 7 in Platte and Clay Counties,

Ag staff then followed Private Applicator Training with “hot topics” in fields of ag in Horticulture, Ag Engineering, Agronomy, Livestock and Ag Business. Further regional Private pesticide applicator training was held monthly in Buchanan County reaching an additional 72 producers.



## GRASSLAND PARTNERSHIP

In 2024, seven cooperators from northwest Missouri to enroll in the Grasslands Partnership with University of Tennessee. Through this partnership we are bringing over \$140,000 to support these seven operations in enhancing their grazing operations over the next four years.

## SAFETY ACRES

- Safety Acres events held in Maryville and St. Joseph
- Five hundred ninety-two 3-5 grade students from 19 area schools attended 2, 2-day workshops on Rural safety for youth.
- There were 8 learning stations with 3 taught by MU Extension field specialists:
  - Tractor/PTO Safety
  - ATV Safety
  - Grain Bin Safety
- Evaluations conducted before and after the event to test students learning during the program showed a 65.9% increase in knowledge after the Tractor/PTO Safety sessions and 51.3% increase after the ATV Safety sessions.
- Partners included: St. Joseph Safety Council, St. Joseph Fire Department, Missouri Highway Patrol, Associated Electric and Nodaway County Cattleman's Association.



Students learning about tractor and PTO safety at Safety Acres day camp.



Students learn about ATV safety during the 2024 Safety Acres day camp.







# Agriculture & Environment

## Pixels & Pearls of Production

*Objective: “To provide a leadership and hands-on training opportunity for women in Missouri involved in livestock production.”*

Women in agriculture have long played a pivotal role, particularly in the management and care of livestock. Their contributions are often undervalued, yet their expertise and knowledge are indispensable to the sustainability and productivity of agricultural systems worldwide.

Women in agriculture not only tend to the daily needs of livestock, ensuring their health and well-being, but also bring innovation and resilience to farming practices. Their involvement is crucial in advancing food security, enhancing biodiversity, and fostering sustainable development.

By empowering women through access to resources, education, and equal opportunities, we can bolster the agricultural sector, leading to a more equitable and prosperous future for all.



## Program Outcomes & Impacts

Participants increased their knowledge on the following topics with the percent increase following:

- Beef genetics on the farm: **107%**
- Backyard laying hen management: **55%**
- Forages and pasture management: **73%**
- Farm headaches: **52%**

## Genetic Lockbox

*Objectives: “Obtain a basic understanding of genetics. Distinguish genotype and phenotype. Define dominant and recessive alleles and how they are represented.”*

Genetic Lockboxes are an innovative and interactive means to educate the public about genetics. Participants exercise communication techniques as they work together to solve the puzzles. The puzzles are designed to make participants think through and apply problem-solving skills to genetic concepts. Participants will struggle, make mistakes, and rely on teammates.

Through a partnership with Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, the Genetic Lockbox has gone statewide with **64 boxes** located across the state. Teachers, 4-H volunteers, FFA advisors, Boy and Girl Scout leaders, etc. can reserve box(s) free of charge. It comes with all the puzzles, hint cards, answer sheets, and a 25-page Facilitator’s Guide.



*Crack the codes to open the locks to get the \*prize\* in the box.*

**Learn More**





# County highlights

## Partnership with MU Trulaske Business School of Business

In the Fall of 2024, Randa Doty, MU Extension Engagement Specialist submitted a project proposal to the Trulaske School of Business at the University of Missouri. She asked the assigned group of students to look at the demographics of Buchanan County, community needs, and the potential of the county extension center moving to a new location. The students had a site visit to explore the current Buchanan County Extension office and learn about programs. They then visited Easton to explore the site that the Extension Council could have an opportunity to occupy.

After learning more about Buchanan County Extension, the students developed surveys for: Extension Council members; Extension Volunteers (4-H & Master Gardeners); and faculty/staff. They then provide a report and presentation as their final project.



MU Trulaske School of Business Students met with Buchanan County Extension Council Members Ron Hitchings and Tona Williams. Randa Doty, MU Extension Engagement Specialist, worked directly as a cooperator for this project.

## Executive Summary

*Buchanan County-MU Extension*



Created by: Aidan Walters, Savannah Utterback, Logan Clore, Ethan Monks, Zachary Wood, Jack Scott, Andrew Delanty  
11.21.2024  
BA 3500

## Introduction & Project Overview

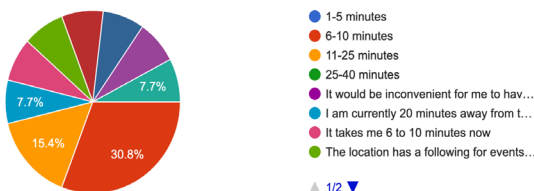
Since 1972, MU Extension has partnered with communities across all 114 counties of Missouri to solve the state’s grand challenges. Extension provides the people of Missouri with greater access to the full breadth of the university and offers solutions with credible, science-based information. As stated by the official MU Extension website, MU Extension has “enabled the university to deliver the practical benefits of education and scientific research to the people to improve their economic prospects and quality of life,”

(Curators of University of Missouri, 2024).

This report will provide an overview of MU Extension’s Buchanan County relocation project. Currently headquartered in the heart of Buchanan County, the goal is to determine if relocating the MU Extension office to a new site is appropriate. Opportunity arose to relocate to the previous site of East Buchanan Middle School which would offer substantial land, more office space, and more room for various activities. There are many factors to weigh in when deciding if a relocation is feasible including budgets, distance to new location, amenities offered, and the impact on the community. This report will outline the research methods, key findings, and anticipated outcomes while addressing critical challenges and suggestions for the future.

How far would you be willing to travel within Buchanan County to access the programs and services of a new location of MU Extension as you've described it being in previous questions?

13 responses







# County highlights



The Loess Hills Chapter of the Missouri Master Naturalists had an amazing year, reaching 2,987 volunteer hours. In this photo, KJ Meyer, assisted a young patron with a bird migration and matching game station.



Casey and Ashley Spencer and family represented Buchanan County at the Missouri State Fair during the 67th annual Missouri Farm Family Day.



Ron Hook and Jim Lower, pictured here with Randa Doty (Extension Engagement Specialist) and Devin Ferguson, (Buchanan County Extension Council Chariman) were recipients of this year's Leader's Honor Roll. Both recipients showed a tremendous amount of dedication to the Extension



Ron Hitchings presented John and Angela Klein with their Missouri Century Farm sign at Farm Bureau's annual meeting. The 78-acre farm was acquired by Angela's family in 1849!

# **EXTENSION WORKER'S CREED**

I believe in people and their hopes, their aspirations, and their faith; in their right to make their own plans and arrive at their own decisions; in their ability and power to enlarge their lives and plan for the happiness of those they love.

I believe that education, of which Extension is an essential part, is basic in stimulating individual initiative, self-determination, and leadership; that these are the keys to democracy and that people when given facts they understand, will act not only in their self-interest, but also in the interest of society.

I believe that education is a lifelong process and the greatest university is the home; that my success as a teacher is proportional to those qualities of mind and spirit that give me welcome entrance to the homes of the families I serve.

I believe in intellectual freedom to search for and present the truth without bias and with courteous tolerance toward the views of others.

I believe that Extension is a link between the people and the ever-changing discoveries in the laboratories.

I believe in the public institutions of which I am a part.

I believe in my own work and in the opportunity I have to make my life useful to humanity.

Because I believe these things, I am an Extension professional