



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Dade County 2025

Annual Report

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**SERVE MISSOURI.
DELIVER MIZZOU.®**

 **Extension**
University of Missouri
an equal opportunity/ADA institution



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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Dear County Commissioners, Elected Leaders, and Friends of MU Extension and Engagement,

As I reflect on the past year, I am struck by the remarkable progress we have made together. MU Extension continues to deliver on its mission of linking the University of Missouri with every community across our state, ensuring that Missourians have access to the knowledge, resources, and partnerships they need to thrive.

Through the dedication of our faculty, staff, councils, partners, and advocates, MU Extension continues to make a measurable difference across Missouri. Last year, we had more than 1.5 million educational contacts and generated more than \$1 billion in economic impact. Building on that momentum, your support also helped secure a \$5 million recurring increase in state funding. This important milestone is already being invested in people, programs, and facilities to strengthen agriculture, improve health and well-being, support local economic development, and prepare youth for leadership through 4-H.

We have also adapted to new realities. Even as the sunset of federal SNAP-Ed funding forced hard choices, our commitment to delivering nutrition and health programs to families in need has not wavered. We are expanding investments in rural health, civic leadership and community development to address the priorities Missourians tell us matter most. We are also aligning our work with university, state, and federal priorities to maximize impact, whether in rural healthcare, agricultural innovation or workforce development.

Our strengths remain clear: people, programs, and partnerships. From nearly 6,000 4-H volunteers to county council members, master gardeners, and master naturalists, Extension thrives because of the dedication of those who serve. Our trusted, research-based content was accessed nearly 2 million times and downloaded more than 76,000 times last year, and innovative programs, from soil testing to urban revitalization initiatives, continue to meet Missouri's evolving needs.

Thank you for your continued partnership. MU Extension belongs to all Missourians, and together we will keep building resilient communities, fostering innovation, and preparing our state for the future.

With appreciation,

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

WHO WE ARE

Faculty and Staff

Tina Brownsberger
Administrative Assistant

Robert "Bob" McNary
4-H Youth Development Specialist

Heather Scharbach
Nutrition Program Associate

Allen Brandes
Extension Engagement Specialist

Sarah Havens
Southwest Regional Director

Amber Allen
Human Development Specialist

Reagan Bluel
Dairy Specialist

Patrick Davis
Livestock Specialist

Micah Doubledee
Agronomy Specialist

Jamie Eggerman
Nutrition and Health Specialist

Matthew Huchteman
Horticulture Specialist

Katie Kelly
Business Development Specialist

Jennifer Lutes
Agricultural Business Specialist

Amy Patillo
Labor and Workforce Development

Lisa Robinson
Regional Economic Development

Abi Rogers
Business Development Specialist

Allen Waldo
Missouri APEX Accelerator Specialist

Council Members

Bruce Roseman
Chairman

Jake Douglas
Vice-Chairman

Linda Crane
Secretary

Theresa Johnson
Treasurer

Kenneth Ball
Member

Gregg Burns
Western Commissioner

Courtney Harrison
Member

Tanya Haubein
Member

Chance Kleeman
Farm Bureau

Sarah McGehee,
Member

Nancy Rasmussen
City of Lockwood

County executives



Kim Kinder, Presiding Commissioner

Brian White, Eastern Commissioner

Gregg Burns, Western Commissioner

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations budget

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Income | |
| County Appropriations | 25,458 |
| Refund/Rebate | 106 |
| Total Income | 25,564 |
| Expenses | |
| Salaries/Benefits | 19,412 |
| Travel | 2,077 |
| Postage | 468 |
| Telephone | 555 |
| Office Supplies/Service | 586 |
| Insurance | 1,710 |
| Council Election | 128 |
| Annual Meeting | 209 |
| Capital Repairs | 352 |
| Total Expenses | 25,497 |

Return on investment

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| University System | 2,116 |
| Donations | 5,927 |
| Program Revenue | 3,189 |

We continue to hold certain funds in restricted accounts like 4-H. These funds either cannot be utilized by the Dade County Extension Council or have restricted use.

Dade County partners

AQ Properties
Arvest Bank
Dade County Health Department
Dade County Commission
Dade County Senior Center
Dade County Soil & Water Conservation District
FCS Financial
Great Southern Bank
Greenfield Ready Mix
Missouri Department of Conservation
Missouri Farm Bureau
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Ozark Area Community Action Corporation
Pennington Seed
Simmons Bank
Southwest Ag
Warren Agri Products

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

Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to *Dade* 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.

UM SYSTEM COUNTY IMPACTS

MU Extension in Dade Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts Dade County, showcasing the meaningful ways local engagement supports residents. It includes data on the number of students, employees, retirees and alumni affiliated with the University of Missouri System, along with the healthcare and extension services provided over the past year.

In addition, the report highlights the broader contributions of the UM System across Missouri in key areas such as education, research, healthcare, economic development and public service. It features metrics like job creation, financial aid distribution, research investment, healthcare access and broadband expansion.

This report is a valuable resource for understanding the measurable benefits the UM System brings to Missouri communities. It supports informed decision-making, advocacy efforts and strategic planning by illustrating the tangible impact of university-driven initiatives at both the local and statewide levels.

[Access your county's Impact Report.](#)



GRAND CHALLENGES

Grand Challenges

The Grand Challenges — Economic Opportunity, Educational Access, Health and Well-being, and Agricultural Stewardship — represent the most pressing issues facing Missouri communities. They are important because:

By focusing on these challenges, MU Extension in Dade can better leverage university resources, data and partnerships to empower people to improve their lives, businesses and communities.

This report presents localized data and insights in how MU Extension in Dade is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

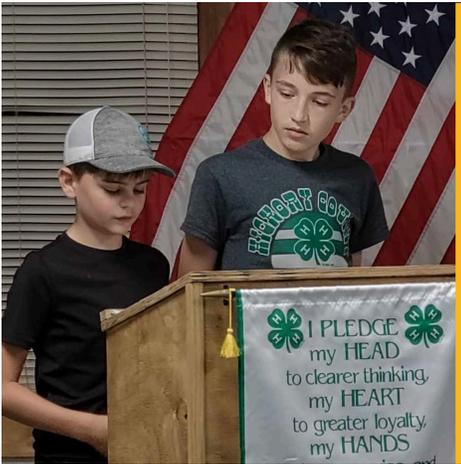
[Access your county's Grand Challenges Report.](#)





MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
through credible statewide programs

Missouri 4-H for Ages 8 – 18



Community clubs are at the heart of 4-H. Led by trained volunteers, members come together regularly to learn, lead, and serve. Youth elect officers, enroll in projects, and plan hands-on activities that build leadership, teamwork, and responsibility. Some clubs focus on a single project—like photography or livestock—while others explore a variety of topics throughout the year.

SPIN (Special Interest) **clubs** provide a short-term way to dive deep into a specific topic with expert guidance. These clubs meet for several weeks to a few months, giving youth flexibility while developing skills to be Beyond Ready for life.



Missouri 4-H Agriculture programs give youth hands-on experiences in areas such as animal science, veterinary science, plant science, and agronomy. Members explore the biology, care, and management of animals and crops while developing problem-solving, critical thinking, and leadership skills.

Youth can also put their knowledge into practice through statewide competitions, including **Livestock Judging, Meat Judging, Hippology**, the **Missouri 4-H Equine Tour** and more. These experiences help participants apply what they've learned, gain confidence, and prepare for future careers in agriculture and related fields.



4-H brings hands-on learning directly into schools through in-school and afterschool programs that extend classroom lessons. **Teachers, 4-H professionals, and volunteers** guide students through 4-H projects in areas such as science, agriculture, health, and leadership, helping youth connect learning to the real world.

Programs like **Show Me Embryology** give students a front-row seat to science in action as they watch chicks hatch and explore the life cycle of a chicken. These experiences help students grow curiosity, confidence, and critical thinking skills, preparing them to be Beyond Ready for whatever comes next.

Legend



Agricultural Growth
& Stewardship



Economic
Opportunity



Educational
Access &
Excellence



Health
& Well-Being

Local Impact

2025 Annual Report 4-H Youth Development in Dade County

4-H Youth Development Program

- 4-H programs are built on the belief that youth learn best by doing. With the support and guidance of adult volunteers serving as mentors, youth engage in hands-on learning experiences through projects in areas including engineering and technology, environmental science and natural resources, plant and animal science, leadership and personal development, expressive arts, and healthy living, in addition to taking on leadership positions which help to mold them into the caring, competent, and confident citizens who know the value of contributing to their communities.

During the 2024-2025 4-H Year 194 County youth were reached through 4-H programming through MU Extension.

- 4-H programming reaches youth through a variety of delivery modes in Dade County, including Community Clubs, SPIN Clubs or short-term 4-H programming, and in-school or afterschool membership or school enrichment programming. These varied delivery modes allow participants to participate in the format that best meets their needs and interests, while focusing on multiple skills including public speaking, leadership, exploring sparks (or interests), developing life skills, responsibility, group decision making, and exploring college and career pathways.

4-H Community Club Members

- 71 youth reached through the two community clubs in Dade County during the 2024-2025 4-H Year.
- Those 4-H members were engaged in 32 science related projects and experiences.
- Collectively, youth participated in over 1000 hours of documented community club work and 500 hours of community service in Dade County.

4-H School Enrichment, In-school and Afterschool Clubs

- 123 youth were reached by school enrichment programs in Dade County in 2024-2025.
- 143 youth were reached through 4-H youth development programming through in-school and afternoon school program focusing on Gardening and Floriculture.
- 150 youth were reached through 4-H youth development programming through in-school and afternoon school program focusing on Electricity.

4-H Programming Participation

- 12 youth served in a leadership role within their club or council. Five youth from the County also held leadership roles beyond the county serving as (Regional Representative, Missouri State Council, Missouri Civic Engagement Ambassadors, Shooting Sports Ambassadors, National Congress Delegates, National Conference Delegates, Ignite Delegates)
- 11 youth demonstrated their skills by participating in the Achievement Day held in Dade County this year.
- Youth showcased what they learned in their projects this year with 36 exhibits by 17 youth shown at the Dade County Youth Fair.
- Dade County was represented by 17 youth exhibiting Building Exhibits at the Ozark Empire Fair. 4 youths had their exhibit selected as a Grand or Reserve ribbon.

Local Impact

- Dade County was represented by 16 youth exhibiting in the 4-H Building and Livestock Shows at the Missouri State Fair in 2025.
- Youth also took their 4-H experience beyond the county lines participating in the following events:
 - Four members participated in Regional 4-H Camp at Roaring River.
 - Five members participated in the State 4-H Teen Conference
 - Four members won the State 4-H Meats Contest
 - Four members participated in the National 4-H Meats Contest
- 183 County members enrolled in a combined total of 50 projects during the 2024-2025 4-H Year. The top project areas included:
 - Beef
 - Dog
 - Veterinary Science
 - Arts and Crafts
 - Clothing/Sewing
 - Foods/Cooking
 - Outdoor Recreation/Shooting Sports
 - Floriculture
 - Gardening
 - Electricity

4-H Programming Impact

- 4-H members are twice as likely to go to college compared to their non 4-H peers and they tend to pursue careers in STEM fields (Lerner & Lerner, 2011).
- 4-H also prepares youth for the workplace. Youth must be prepared to live and work in a world we cannot completely envision- competing for jobs that do not yet exist, using technologies that have yet to be identified. 4-H is the only youth development program with direct access to technological advances in agriculture, life sciences, and social sciences from the university system. This brings relevant science content and hands-on learning that helps youth thrive (Arnold, Bourdeau, & Nott, 2013).
- Youth who earn a bachelor's degree increase their annual earnings by \$2 million over their lifetime. (U.S. News and World report, 2011) If 50% of the Dade County youth participating in 4-H events on a college campus receive a Bachelor's degree, 4-H would help young people acquire \$183 million more in lifetime earnings.

4-H Volunteers

- 4-H Volunteers are the true muscle of the 4-H program, extending the reach of 4-H professionals and making a difference in the lives of youth by connecting them with a caring adult to support them in their development.
- Dade County 4-H members were supported by 32 enrolled, screened and oriented adult volunteers supporting the development of youth in the 2024-2025 4-H Year.
- Volunteers contributed 320 hours to the Dade County 4-H program.
- Adult volunteers serve as mentors for our youth, helping them transition into caring, healthy adults who contribute back to their communities, which is priceless.

Resources

Arnold, M., Bourdeau, V., & Nott, B. (2013). Measuring science inquiry skills in youth development programs: The Science Process Skills Inventory. *Journal of Youth Development*, 8(1).

Arnold, M. E. (2018). From Context to Outcomes: A Thriving Model for 4-H Youth Development Programs. *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension*, 6(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.54718/NBNL5438>

Independent Sector. (2023). *Value of Volunteer Time Report | Independent Sector Resources*. Independent Sector. <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>

Lerner, R.M., Lerner, J.V. (2011). The positive development of youth: Report of the findings from the first seven years of the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. Retrieved from <http://www.4-h.org/about/youth-development-research/>.

U.S. News and World Report (2011). How Higher Education Affects Lifetime Salary. Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/2011/08/05/how-higher-education-affects-lifetime-salary>

Local Impact



2024 Frank Graham 4-H Volunteer Leadership Award recipient Vicky Taylor. The Frank Graham 4-H Volunteer Leadership award recognizes exemplary volunteers for their hard work and dedication to helping Missouri youth grow. The 2024 recipient for Dade County is Vicky Taylor. Vicky was one of 60 volunteers recognized statewide for her commitment and leadership to the University of Missouri Extension 4-H Youth Development program, for over 30 years.



2025 4-H Hall of Fame inductee Mary VanAcker. The Missouri 4-H Hall of Fame recognizes individuals whose service and commitment to 4-H have had a lasting impact on local communities and across the state. This year's honoree for Dade County is Mary VanAcker. Mary joins a distinguished group of more than 690 individuals and organizations who have been inducted into the Hall of Fame since its inception.



Harvest Homecoming Fest in Lockwood - Bob McNary, 4-H Youth Specialist helped judge the Ag Expo FFA stations, providing encouraging feedback and growth. Over 200 youth visited each station with a paper passports; to get it stamped and then collect a prize for completing the whole book.

Local Impact



2025 Missouri State Fair Farm Family for Dade County is the Ryan and Casey Groose Family. Each year, MU Extension in Dade County and the Dade County Farm Bureau select a local farm family, who are active in their communities, in agriculture, and/or participate in local outreach and extension programs such as 4-H or FFA. Ryan, Casey, Noah, Benjamin, and Henry are outstanding examples of the dedicated, hardworking farm families in our county.



Missouri youth compete at **National 4-H Meats Judging Contest**. With a win at the state level, they advanced to represent Missouri at the 2025 National Meats Contest. Testing in two retail classes, two beef carcass classes, two pork carcass classes, two sets of reasons and 30 identification retail cuts. We are very proud of Luke Baugh, Miles Neely, Annie Neely, and Austin Pope for placing 13th and representing Dade County.



The 4-H summer was busy starting with **4-H Camp at Camp Smokey**, 17 youth exhibiting 36 projects at the **Dade County 4-H Achievement Day** and several livestock projects at the Dade County Youth Fair in June. The **Ozark Empire Fair** in July had 17 youths exhibiting their projects, and 4 of those youths having received a Grand or Reserve ribbon. The **Missouri State Fair** in August had 16 youths exhibiting projects at the 4-H building or the Livestock Show.

Profiles and stories

Busy Bee 4-H Club

Our activities included a kickoff meeting and hayride in October, STEM night in November, Christmas caroling at the nursing home in December, roller skating in March and numerous project meeting. We helped at the first and second annual ag expo at harvest homecoming fest.



4-H Kickoff campfire cook-up



Climbing haybales at hayride



STEM project with food items



Caroling at the Nursing Home



Glow Fun Run/Walk



Tour Dairy Barn and equipment



Glow Run participants



Roller Skating Night



Prayers and Potatoes

Profiles and stories

Dadeville 4-H Club

Our club activities included a bowling party, Christmas party, and several 4-H project meeting. We also installed American flags throughout our community as a community service project, which was sponsored by MFA Oil.



Foods project



Fun night of bowling



Sewing project



Arts & Crafts project



Christmas Party



Welding project



Installing American Flags



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through credible statewide programs

Agriculture and Environment



Missouri Grazing Schools teach management-intensive grazing by dividing large fields into smaller paddocks and systematically rotating livestock among them. Producers who attend the grazing schools learn how to reduce costs through Improved livestock grazing and pasture management while getting insights into fencing, watering systems and grazing system design.

The annual impact of management-intensive grazing is estimated to be \$125 MILLION per year in Missouri



The Missouri AgrAbility Project provides practical education, on-the-farm assistance and agency referrals to farmers and ranchers with disabilities and their families to promote agricultural and rural independence. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), administers the AgrAbility project.



The Missouri Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), funded by USDA grants, has been an important extension program for more than 30 years. Mizzou IPM distributes articles, pest monitoring data and publications on how to improve the application of integrated pest management strategies and systems in crops. In addition, the new Soybean Growth Monitoring Report is released through IPM every two weeks during the growing season.

The MU Soil Testing Program delivers research-based nutrient and lime recommendations to more than 32,500 customers annually.



Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Farm Visits and County Office Interactions - University of Missouri Field Specialists in Agronomy, Dairy, Livestock, Horticulture, and Ag Business offers local farmers and producers individualized education via in person interaction, phone calls, email, and farm visits to answer agricultural related questions. This education helps farmers and producers make important management decisions for their farms and businesses and helps improve the overall management of Missouri's important natural resources and agriculture production.

100th Dade County Soils and Crops Conference - Agronomist Micah Doubledee hosted the Dade County Soils and Crops Conference in Lockwood, MO for local Dade County farmers as well as people of the community. Agronomist Rusty Lee spoke on Strip-Grazing Milo: Alternative Winter Feeding, Agronomist Travis Harper spoke on Winter Grazing Options and State Forage Specialist Dr. Harley Naumann spoke on Using Sunn Hemp in Cool-Season Grass Pastures. Participants received a free dinner from Hillbilly Express BQ, Dadeville. A total of 51 people attend the Conference with, and 11 sponsors contributed money.



Soil Testing and Plant Testing - University of Missouri County Extension offices offer soil testing and plant testing via the soil testing lab and plant disease diagnostic lab in Columbia, MO for Missouri landowners, farmers, gardeners, commercial and agricultural producers. The results from soil tests give producer insight into the pH level, available phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium; organic matter; acidity and cation exchange of their soil. Soil reports also offer educational advice and recommendations from the soil lab and local extension specialists to help producers make important agricultural decisions regarding soil fertilization for intended crop fields, pastures, lawns and gardens. In 2025, around 34 soil test were submitted through the Dade County office.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - University of Missouri Extension provides initial pesticide applicator training and recertification of Missouri's agricultural producers that desired a private pesticide applicator license. This training is for producers wanting to purchase and apply restricted-use pesticides. Private Pesticide Applicator Training program is a vital educational program that focuses on providing knowledge of the safe and proper use of agricultural pesticides as well as the legal requirements associated with application. During 2025, Agronomist Micah Doubledee and Caleb O'Neal along with other agronomists provided in-person and online classes. A total of 10 people from Dade County participated in the Private Pesticide Applicator Training program.



Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Intensive Management Grazing School - Arcola - University of Missouri Agricultural Field Specialists collaborate with MO SWCD, MO Forage and Grassland Council and NRCS to provide education on Management Intensive Grazing to livestock producers. Grazing school is three days of intense education to encourages effective management of both forage and livestock to help optimize profitability and better management of resources. Participants listen to numerous presentations by multiple different speakers and visited local farms to practices pasture evaluation. Ten people were educated at the Management Intensive Grazing school held in Arcola, MO in Dade County.



Crop Scouting Program - Agronomist Micah Doubledee continued the weekly crop scouting program which informs producers of pest and disease threats during the growing season by scouting fields in Barton, Jasper and Dade Counties. Participants pay \$40 dollars a year to join the program to have their fields scouted. A 3-page report is emailed to participants discussing scouting observations, environmental issues, weed issues, nutrient deficiencies, plant diseases, and pests, along with links to resource and upcoming Ag events. This report is also sent to other MU specialists and the Lamar Democrat paper for other local farmers and residents to read. In 2025, 18 producers actively participated in the program. Participants for Dade (2).

Show Me Youth Ag Academy-This group takes in students from Dade County Schools. These students get hands on education in cattle production management from conception to consumption. Students and teachers make all the decisions in this cattle operation and bring in groups like MU Extension to help in consultation and provide education to the students. During the year I was involved in the education of approximately 6 students that are part of the farm on bull selection and management prior to and during the breeding season. These students used this knowledge in determining the bulls that they will use on replacement heifers they plan to retain as they build a herd or sell through replacement heifer sales.

MU Extension Livestock Bus Tour - This bus tour educates livestock producers on various aspects of livestock production and university research in livestock in Kansas and Nebraska. Also, there were stops that educated producers on cattle breed associations. The 4-day tour had stops in NW Missouri, NE Kansas and SE Nebraska. Participants gained knowledge that they can use on their livestock and forage operations to help make them successful. There were 3 Dade County tour participants.



Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

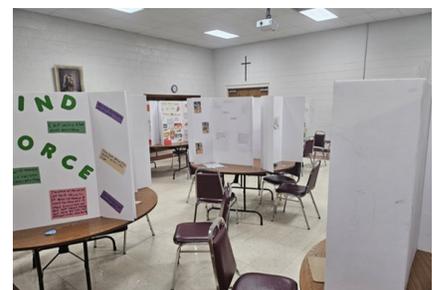
Heroes to Hives - A group of veterans in Southwest Missouri participated in the Heroes to Hives monthly field days held in Lawrence County. Attendance at each field day was typically between 6 and 12 attendees. Caleb O'Neal and Matthew Huchteman are the coordinators for the Southwest Missouri region of this program. The Heroes to Hives program is designed to bring high-level education to local veterans on all aspects of beekeeping, apitherapy, honey production, value-added beekeeping goods marketing, and business model development. The project also provides valuable networking opportunities for attendees and continued educational opportunities for those enrolled in the program.



2025 Spring Forage Conference provided 8 Dade County producers with research-based training on soil fertility, forage species, grazing systems, native grasses, and managing fescue toxicosis across beef, dairy, and small-ruminant operations. Participants gained practical, production-focused strategies to improve pasture resilience and livestock performance.

Missouri Steer Feedout - This was a program collaboration between the Show Me Youth Ag Academy, MU Extension, Missouri State University and local cattle producers to educate themselves as well as youth in feedlot cattle management. Furthermore, the cattle producers were educated on how their cattle performed in feedlot as well as how they performed at slaughter. These producers can use this information to better understand how their cattle genetics and management will influence their cattle in the feedyard and at slaughter and make management and genetics decisions so that their cattle will perform better in these areas and hopefully be more profitable. Producers also use information from this program to help better market their cattle and improve their profit potential. There were 6 cattle producers that collaborated with this program, and they fed a total of 42 steers. These steers began the program in November of 2024 and were slaughtered in June and July of 2025. The Show Me Youth Ag Academy is based out of Lamar Schools and takes in students in agricultural education classes in the Lamar School District and surrounding schools. During the program two meetings were held in conjunction with the Barton County MO Cattlemen's Association Meetings in December of 2024 and September of 2025 to educate the public on the program, potential for how the steers would perform in the program and finally the steer results from the program. Three cattle operations from Dade County were educated in the effort.

Community Engagement - University of Missouri extension employees interact with the public to help support local community events. Agronomist Micah Doubledee helped judge the science fair at the Immanuel Lutheran School on February 26, 2025. She provided encouraging feedback to the students in hopes to encourage more future scientists.



Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

The **MOEATS project** in Dade County kicked off in September of 2025. This effort is funded through the Healthy Food Financing Initiative grant and focuses on creating a local food system to enhance community health and economic well-being. The project is being led by Jasmin LeBlanc, a community member and owner of Roots and Harvest Farm Stop in Ash Grove, MO. A local leadership team of 9 members began meeting in fall of 2025 to plan a community wide event in spring of 2026. At this event, community members will have an opportunity to provide input, which will result in actionable goals for improving Dade County's food system. Matthew Huchteman is serving as the local MU Extension contact for the MOEATS project in Dade County.

Watermelon Workshop in July of 2025, producers from across the southwest region gathered at the Southwest Research, Extension, and Education Center in Mt. Vernon for the inaugural SWMO Watermelon Workshop. 20 attendees enjoyed a one-hour presentation by Matthew Huchteman on commercial watermelon production, a tour of watermelon demonstration plots, and a taste test of 4 early varieties. Plots demonstrated differences in growth, yield and pest pressure for watermelon and cantaloupe grown with and without low tunnels.



Tri-County Livestock & Forage Conference provided 2 Dade County producers with research-based strategies to rebuild drought-stressed forage systems, evaluate the economic return of lime applications, and incorporate cover crop grazing. Participants gained practical tools to strengthen forage resilience and improve long-term grazing management.

Career Exploration Day – Ag Topics Students at the CDE workshop had the opportunity to practice contests (i.e. agronomy, soils, entomology) organized by extension specialists in the region. Specialists provided students with practical instruction relevant to their chosen contest. Extension specialists and ag professionals around the state connected with over 1,500 high school ag students at career exploration day. Students learned about a great diversity of careers and current agricultural topics through engaging presentations.



Career Exploration Day – Poultry trained 19 Dade County producers in small-scale poultry processing, including safe handling, sanitation, workflow design, and regulatory compliance. Participants gained skills to support on-farm or direct-market poultry enterprises.

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Missouri Century Farm - Century farms and ranches have shaped our nation and state. In every kitchen, behind every barn door, and in every soiled and calloused hand lie stories of those who feed our nation. The Missouri Century Farm program celebrates the lasting contributions farmers and ranchers have made to our country and state's heritage.

In 1976, the Centennial Farm project was initiated in Missouri, awarding certificates to persons owning farms that had been in the same family for 100 years or more. Ten years later, the University of Missouri Extension and the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources created the annual Century Farm program and recognition. The Missouri Farm Bureau joined as a co-sponsor in 2008. Since the program began in 1976, more than 8,000 Missouri farms have received the Century Farm designation.

Landowners with farms that have been in the same family for 100 years can be recognized with signs, a certificate and a booklet. Application period will be open February 1 through May 1 each year.

Bull Breeding Soundness Exam Days - This is a collaborative effort between MU Extension, local veterinarians, and pharmaceutical companies to provide education to cattle producers on bull management in preparation for the upcoming breeding season. During these events the cattle producers' bulls are tested by a veterinarian, vaccinations are provided at a reduced rate due to pharmaceutical company cooperation and MU Extension collects data as well as provides education on bull management prior to and during the breeding season. This event helps cattle producers determine if bulls will be satisfactory breeders during the breeding season and if bulls are not, they can be replaced which helps lead to a successful breeding season. Using a sub fertile bull can reduce pregnancy rates which reduces calving percentage and cattle operation profit potential. During March and April, I worked with one veterinarian and 3 Dade County cattle operations to evaluate 19 bulls. 3 of the bulls failed and 1 was deferred for retest in 60 days. Replacing the 3 and the 1 if he fails his retest will help ensure optimum pregnancy rates for these cattle producers. In October I worked with 2 veterinarians, and 4 Dade County cattle operations to test 23 bulls. 2 bulls failed and therefore need to be replaced to ensure optimum pregnancy rates in the upcoming breeding season. Also vaccinating bulls helps promote optimum health.

Commercial Horticulture Team: Horticulture specialists from across the state collaborate to provide educational resources available to all Missouri residents. One of which is the Commercial Horticulture Newsletter. This free monthly subscription features videos and short articles focused on timely topics and directed towards Missouri's fruit and vegetables farmers. Other educational resources include webinar series. In April of 2025, the commercial horticulture team offered the "Summer Crop Success Series", a four-class series focused on commercial production of several types of vegetables.





MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
through credible statewide programs

Business and Community



Missourians from all walks of life celebrated the **2023 Missouri Good Neighbor Week** Sept. 28 to Oct. 4 by completing and reporting neighboring acts and nominating others as the most engaged neighbors in their counties.

In 2023, the goal was to document 15,000 acts of neighboring. That goal was surpassed with 19,752 Missourians being positively affected during MISSOURI GOOD NEIGHBOR WEEK.



AMERICA'S SBDC MISSOURI CLIENT HIGHLIGHT



LOCS
— OF —
GLORY

The **Missouri Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)** provide professional training and customized one-on-one counseling to small business across the state. Working with the Missouri SBDC helps business owners make confident decisions.

FY2020-2022, Missouri SBDC ASSISTED 878 STARTUPS and helped Missouri small businesses earn more than \$440 Million.



The **APEX Accelerators** (formerly known as Procurement Technical Assistance Centers) were created in 1984 by the Department of Defense to help businesses navigate the government marketplace. Since 1989, MU Extension has hosted the Missouri APEX accelerator as a business development partner program. The mission of the program helps businesses learn how to expand their market by selling goods and services to local, state and federal government entities.

From Aug. 1, 2022, to July 31, 2023, the Missouri APEX Accelerators reported over 900 NEW CLIENTS, 4,700 COUNSELING HOURS and OVER 10,000 CONTRACTS AWARDED.



Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Business and Community

Local Impact



Leaders for Ozarks Region Evolvement (LORE), is uniting efforts to improve quality of life and attract a skilled workforce in the broader Ozarks region. A group of local business owners representing Barry, Dade, and Lawrence counties met at the Southwest Research, Extension and Education Center by Dr. Amy Patillo and Lisa Robinson.

Workforce development is essential for strengthening the resilience of Missouri's agricultural communities. Farm and Ranch stress programs and AgrAbility services support farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers by addressing the physical, behavioral, and economic challenges that directly affect their ability to work safely and sustainably. By expanding access to training, adaptive tools, mental health resources, and problem-solving support, workforce development helps producers remain healthy, productive, and engaged in their operations. These efforts reduce turnover, prevent injuries, and preserve the long-term viability of family farms and rural economies.

WHAT IS CIVIC MUSCLE?

CIVIC MUSCLE: The collective strength of people in a place (neighborhood, town, region) to respond to challenges and to proactively pursue thriving communities.



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Belonging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place-based communities building social capital and inclusivity through neighboring, civil dialogue, placemaking, etc. |
| Contribution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents (particularly those at the margins) participating in civic life and engaged in decision making (volunteering, attending public meetings, voting) |
| Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse community leaders (including those who typically have less power and influence) collaborating for action and bridge-building. |
| Vitality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents, organizations, governments co-creating conditions for equitable, thriving, resourceful places |

Small Business Development Center

The Missouri Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Missouri Southern State University provides support to Dade County entrepreneurs and small business owners through 1:1 assistance and training.

| Dade County 2025 Data Elements | Value |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Sales Increase | \$599,999 |
| \$ of Government Contract Awards | \$127,700 |
| # of Government Contract Awards | 3 |
| Unique Clients Served | 5 |
| Number of Clients Counseled | 5 |
| Number of Training Event Attendees | 430 |



Missouri AgrAbility

MU Extension's Missouri AgrAbility Program was featured on KOLR-10 to share practical strategies that help individuals with arthritis continue gardening safely and comfortably. The segment highlighted tools, adaptations, and body-mechanics techniques that reduce pain, prevent strain, and support long-term participation in gardening activities. By providing education on pre-planning garden tasks, selecting arthritis-friendly tools, preparing the body for physical activity, and managing discomfort, Missouri AgrAbility is helping Missourians maintain both their health and their quality of life while enjoying a meaningful and beneficial pastime.

Business and Community

Local Impact

2024 Leader's Honor Roll

Chance and Michelle Kleeman are Dade Counties 2024 recipients. Their outstanding community leaders and volunteering support, education and advancing MU extension or 4-H in Dade County. They support the University of Missouri Extension's strategic direction and program priorities to enhance economic viability, build strong individuals, families, and communities, create and sustain healthy environments.



Duties of Council Members

The council is the legally responsible group that oversees all activities of University of Missouri Extension at the county level.

The council is responsible for carrying out four main duties:

- Working with Extension specialists to provide the county educational program.
- Managing the finances of local Extension operations.
- Providing personnel to carry out Extension activities.
- Electing and organizing the local extension council.

The residents of your county look to you to represent their ideas and to make your own contribution.

- Know how University of Missouri Extension operates.
- Talk to people in your county.
- Be a source of information about University of Missouri Extension.
- Get to know the staff.
- Understand the issues.
- Do your homework.
- Attend council and committee meetings.
- Be a decision maker.

Make every meeting productive, be prepared and participate.

- When you get your meeting agenda, study it and see how you can contribute.
- During the meeting, stick to the agenda.
- To ensure your ideas on an issue are heard, keep your short and to the point.
- Comment on suggestions or ideas raised by others but be sure that you do so in a constructive manner.
- Everyone is new to an organization at some time, so don't be afraid to join in the discussion.

Perhaps the most important qualification for being a council member is the willingness to involve oneself in activities that will benefit others.





MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
through credible statewide programs

Health and Human Sciences



Show-Me Nutrition

Programming for preschool through junior high

An engaging way to demonstrate the benefits of nutrition, health, and physical activity. Meets Missouri's Show-Me Health and Physical Education standards and the state's School Wellness Policy.

"We have struggled with our daughter's picky eating for years and have tried so many techniques to try and get her to eat new foods. Your influence on her has worked magic this year. She has come home so excited about trying new foods and has now become not only willing but excited to try new things."

Parent of a Show-Me Nutrition participant



Stay Strong, Stay Healthy supports older adults in maintaining strength, balance, and mobility to fully engage in the activities that matter most to them. The program combines safe, effective exercises with practical information on nutrition and wellness, helping participants build confidence, connection, and **well-being** for lifelong health.

After eight weeks, participants in the Stay Strong, Stay Healthy program showed significant improvement in their STRENGTH, BALANCE and SLEEP QUALITY.



Mental Health First Aid equips people to recognize and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use challenges.

Your Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people (ages 12-17) facing mental health or addiction challenges while the adult version focuses on adults aged 18 and older. Participants learn how to offer initial assistance and guide individuals toward the care they need.

In Missouri, approximately 1 MILLION ADULTS and 72,000 ADOLESCENTS suffer from MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.*

*Missouri Department of Mental Health 2020 Status Report



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Local Impact

Mental Health Awareness

Through a regional Mental Health Awareness presentation at the Southwest Research, Extension, and Education Center, 113 youth from multiple school districts across the Southwest region were reached. The session increased awareness of mental health and connected youth to critical supports, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, telehealth counseling options, and local and statewide mental health resources, strengthening access to care and support for youth and families in the region.



Mental Well-being

12 Youth or Adult Mental Health First Aids, 175 Missourians were reached with information on recognizing mental health challenges, reducing stigma, and connecting individuals to appropriate resources. Collectively, these efforts generated an estimated \$35,000 economic impact statewide and \$19,600 economic impact for the Southwest Region by increasing mental health literacy, improving early intervention, and strengthening community capacity to respond to mental health needs.



SNAP-Ed Public Value Statement 2025

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought \$11,419,598 in federal funds to Missouri. The funds support engagement with 70,722 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 970,939 indirect educational contacts through newsletters, health fairs, and food pantries.

- 9,246 direct and indirect contacts were made in Dade 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 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 continues to prioritize the health and well-being of Missouri.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (SSSH) program focuses on functional movements that support your everyday life. In hour-long classes held twice a week for eight weeks, you'll experience a workout that includes a warm-up, easy-to-follow strength exercises and a cool-down. With a focus on safety and gradual progression, we help you to improve your strength, balance and flexibility in a supportive group environment.

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Abilities Awareness

The University of Missouri Extension, Missouri AgrAbility and ECHO Autism partner to bring expert advice and a place to connect those caring for or teaching someone with a developmental disability. The goal is to work together to build a support system connecting families and offering expert advice in rural Missouri. This program is free and open to anyone wanting to learn more about any developmental delay and those looking to find or provide support. Dade County had a total of 56 participants.

Missouri EATs

Missouri EATs is a community development process designed to *engage* people to identify local assets and needs; help them develop a plan to *act* on their top priorities; and make lasting changes to *transform* their local food system. Missouri EATs is a creation of the MU Extension Community Economic Development Food Systems Team. It is adapted with permission from the Oregon Food Bank's FEAST program. The broad goal of Missouri EATs is to create healthy, resilient and equitable community-based food systems. The starting point is a community-wide forum for participants to engage in an informed and facilitated discussion about the food system. This event is the first step of a larger community organizing process that engages communities to make positive changes over time. The format allows for broad discussions related to local agriculture, hunger, health and related topics and relies heavily on local input from community members in general and those representing local businesses and agencies.

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy

Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (SSSH) program focuses on functional movements that support your everyday life. In hour-long classes held twice a week for eight weeks, you'll experience a workout that includes a warm-up, easy-to-follow strength exercises and a cool-down. With a focus on safety and gradual progression, we help you to improve your strength, balance and flexibility in a supportive group environment.

Aging Well Programs

With nearly 168,000 age 65+ in Southwest Region addressing social connection and well-being is essential. *Aging Well* programs help reduce loneliness and support healthy aging through meaningful education and community engagement. In 2025, 16 programs were delivered across 48 sessions and reached 156 older adults in 6 counties. Through partnerships with senior centers, libraries, and health organizations, participants explored topics such as brain health, fall prevention, and Alzheimer's education.



Available **Health and Human Sciences** topics are Health and human sciences, Family and home education, Mental wellbeing, Parenting and families Relationships, Divorce and separation, Healthy relationships, Strengthening marriage, and more.