



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

# Dallas County 2025



Annual Report

Dallas County Courthouse  
108 S Maple St  
PO Box 1072  
Buffalo, MO 65622  
417-345-7551

**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**

108 Whitten Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211

PHONE 573-882-2394

EMAIL [cchiggins@missouri.edu](mailto:cchiggins@missouri.edu)

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,

*Chadwick C Higgins*

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



# WHO WE ARE

## Faculty and Staff

### Housed in Dallas County:

**Becky Doehring**  
Youth Program  
Associate/4-H

**Katie Stewart**  
Office Support

**Andy McCorkill**  
Field Specialist  
In Livestock

### Specialists Serving Dallas County

**Allison Gunter**  
EXTENSION ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST  
Mu Extension in Hickory County  
417-745-6767

**Kelly McGowan**  
FIELD SPECIALIST IN  
HORTICULTURE  
MU Extension in Green County  
417-874-2955

**Velynda Cameron**  
FIELD SPECIALIST IN  
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
MU Extension in Polk County  
417-326-4916

**Ashley Allen-Brown**  
FIELD SPECIALIST IN  
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
MU Extension in Camden County  
573-346-2644

**Wesley Tucker**  
FIELD SPECIALIST IN  
AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS  
MU Extension in Polk County  
417-326-4916

## Council Members

Brandon Jackson, Chairman  
Sarah Beth Drake, Vice-chairman  
Rachel Badgett, Secretary  
Debbie Dryer, Treasurer  
Teresa Strickland  
Bill Monday  
Mindy Morris  
Dakota Hampton  
Melanie Ryan  
Jen Portis  
Vicki Coons  
Sherry Hillhouse  
Brandi Udelhoven

University of Missouri Extension  
Dallas County  
Dallas County Courthouse  
108 S. Maple St.  
P.O. Box 1072  
Buffalo, MO 65622  
Hours:  
Mon, Tues, Thurs 8-4  
dallascountyco@missouri.edu  
417-345-7551

FACEBOOK: UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
EXTENSION  
DALLAS COUNTY

## County executives

John Crawford, Presiding Commissioner  
Roger Bradley, Associate, North  
Kirby Vest, Associate, South

### State legislators:

Sandy Crawford  
SENATOR

Jeff Knight  
REPRESENTATIVE

# BUDGET AND MORE

## Appropriations budget

Income	
County Appropriations	41,400.00
Total Income	41,400.00
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	32,810.00
Travel	3,202.00
Telephone	360.00
Office Supplies/Service	1000.00
Postage	200.00
Insurance	1196.00
Software/Misc	1560.00
Advertising	100.00
Furnishings/Equipment	672.00
Total Expenses	41,400.00

## Office Activity:

<b>Social Media:</b>	Phone Calls: 268
Views 46393	Walk Ins: 201
Interactions 1059	Hay/Soil Tests: 68
Followers 1202	

## Dallas County partners:

Dallas County YMCA  
Dallas County Health Department  
Dallas County R-1 School district  
Grace Community Church  
First Christian Church  
Joe's Hardware  
Buffalo City Hall  
Buffalo Area Chamber of Commerce  
O'Bannon Bank  
Dallas County Courthouse  
Dallas County Alumni Association  
BTC Bank

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

## Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to Dallas 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 Dallas Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts Dallas 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.

<https://community.umsystem.edu/impact-report/?geoid=05000US29059#impact-data-sheet-container>



# 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 (your county) 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 (your county name) is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

<https://allthingsmissouri.org/grand-challenges/?geoid=29059>



# UM System County Impacts

# Dallas County

2026 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Dallas County



University of Missouri System

## UM System Footprint in the county in 2025



### FY25 county students

#### 22 students

- 16 Undergraduates
- 6 Graduate and professional students
- 15 Full-time students
- 7 Part-time students



### County employees and retirees

#### 8 people employed by UM

- 7 Campuses
- 1 MU Health Care (includes additional employees gained via the recent integration of Capital Region Medical Center)

2 UM retirees and beneficiaries  
UM salary and retirement income: \$561,150  
UM state tax revenue: \$19,440  
UM federal tax revenue: \$88,883



### County alumni

#### Selected school alumni

- 5 Medicine
- 6 Nursing
- 9 Health Professions
- 5 Dentistry
- 5 Pharmacy
- 7 Veterinary Medicine
- 22 Agriculture
- 19 Engineering
- 10 Law

#### Alumni teaching K-12

- 3 teachers
- 1.7% of all district teachers



### County breakdown

#### MU

- 14 students
- 81 alumni
- 5 employees

#### UMKC

- 2 students
- 28 alumni
- 1 employee

#### Missouri S&T

- 6 students
- 23 alumni
- 1 employee

#### UMSL

- 0 students
- 9 alumni
- 0 employees



### County properties and offices

MU Extension in: Dallas County



County population: 17,344



### County services provided

#### Health care (FY25)

- 189 in-state patients seen at MU Health Care, with \$187,806 of uncompensated care
- 1 in-state patient seen at UMKC School of Dentistry with a statewide average of \$50.53 per patient in uncompensated care
- MU Health Care's Missouri Telehealth Network recorded 573 visits to 368 patients having ZIP codes associated with the county

#### Extension (2024)

- 1,711 Total educational contacts from MU Extension to residents of the county, including:
  - 1,011 contacts related to productive farming, better gardening, and managing natural resources
  - 435 contacts related to healthy eating and aging, strengthening families, personal finance, or youth development
  - 171 contacts related to starting businesses, developing community leaders, or renewing the local economy





# UM System County Impacts

# Dallas County

2026 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Dallas County



University of Missouri System

## UM System Statewide Footprint

### Economic and Community Development Highlights

- In FY24, Business Development Specialists worked with small businesses and entrepreneurs statewide to create or retain 71,140 jobs.



For every dollar invested from 2019 to 2021, the MU Extension Business Development Program has returned \$133 in economic impact for its clients by increasing sales more than \$1.6 billion. For a total impact of \$3.1 billion, the program has generated more than 37,000 jobs and attracted nearly \$451 million in capital investments and \$1.5 billion in government contracts.

- Between FY19 and FY24, UM System brought Missouri more than \$1.75 billion in federal and private research funds, funded primarily from outside the state, but spent within the state.



In FY25, UM System was issued 26 patents and filed 76 new U.S. patent applications, and earned \$6.5 million in licensing income.

- In FY25, the UM System awarded 550 design and construction project contracts throughout Missouri, for a total investment of \$729.9 million in the state.



In FY25, to improve access to medical and health related services, MU Health Care's Missouri Telehealth Network's Show-Me ECHO program provided 17,336 hrs of case-based instruction to 3,146 learners located in 102 of 114 Missouri counties and the city of St. Louis.

### Education and Training Provided



41,523 police, fire fighters, and medical professionals attending continuing education (2024)



Agriculture and natural resource programs served 297,919 farmers and related businesses (2024)

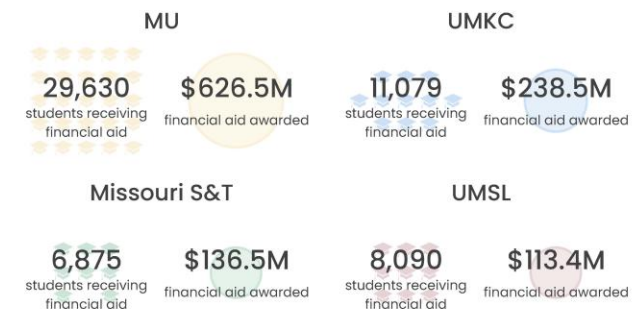


254,220 youth and stakeholder educational contacts in 4-H clubs, schools, camps and other programs (2024)

### Education Highlights

#### FY25 Financial Aid Awards

In FY25, 70.6% of the UM System's 78,839 students received financial aid totaling \$1.115 billion



UM System's MOREnet (Missouri Research and Education Network) provides internet connectivity, access, support and training to 58 higher education institutions (231,000 students), 478 K-12 school districts (830,000 students) and 134 public libraries (serving nearly 5.6 million Missourians) in FY24.

- UM System awarded 50.5% of the 31,889 Bachelor's or higher degrees awarded by Missouri four-year public institutions in 2023-24.
- UM System awarded 35.0% of the 1,776 research doctorates and 26.8% of the 3,796 professional doctorates awarded by Missouri public and not-for-profit private institutions in 2023-24.
- In FY24, UM System's \$30.7 million in National Science Foundation (NSF) grants represented 96.9% of all NSF grants made to Missouri public colleges and universities.
- A \$25 million USDA-funded Missouri Climate-Resilient Crop & Livestock (CRCL) project has had the following impact 2.5 years into the 5-year project: Over 1,200 Missouri farmers implemented conservation practices such as cover crops, regenerative grazing, and improved nutrient management practices on approximately 300,000 acres across the state.

Supporting the University of Missouri is an investment in the future of Missouri.

The university advances Missouri citizens and communities through its mission of teaching, research, public service, and economic development across our four campuses and University of Missouri Extension.

Prepared in December 2025, based on the best available and most recent data. Data Sources include: Missouri Office of Administration • UM IR • MU Institute for Public Policy • Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems (CARES) • MU • UMKC • Missouri S&T • UMSL • UM System • UM Health Care • MU Extension • US Census Bureau • US Dept. of Health and Human Services • National Science Foundation



## Missouri Grand Challenges: Local Solutions

DALLAS COUNTY



### Knowing Missouri's Needs

MU Extension asked Missourians to share the greatest challenges they and their communities face.

We heard that feedback and made big changes in the way we work with council and local partners to improve lives. Locally, a network of county engagement and subject matter specialists now share MU's knowledge, research and engagement, targeting programs, information and assistance in:

- agriculture and environment
- youth and family
- business and community
- health and safety

**For each grand challenge, MU Extension and Engagement targets a specific gain by 2023:**



#### Economic opportunity

Increase MU Extension and Engagement's economic impact to the State of Missouri from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion overall, and from \$88 billion to \$100 billion in agriculture, the top economic sector



#### Educational access and excellence

Increase participation in postsecondary education from 66% to 70%



#### Health and well-being

Improve Missouri's health ranking from 40th to 35th in the nation

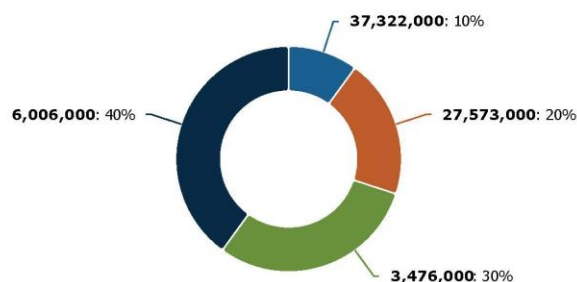
### Knowing Local Challenges



#### CHALLENGE 1: Economic Opportunity: Agricultural Economics

#### Leading Agricultural Products

Total Rank (Sales): \$10



Data Source: US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, [Census of Agriculture](#), 2022.

#### Net Farm Income

Net farm income (total sales, government payments, and other farm-related income minus total farm expenses) reflects the strength of the local agricultural community and can be an important measure for lenders and policy makers. The report area had a combined net farm income of \$15,943,000 in 2017, an average of \$15,785 per farm. This is below the statewide average farm income of \$56,606.

Report Area	Total Farms	Average Farm Income
Dallas	1,010	\$15,785
Missouri	87,887	\$56,606

Data Source: US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, [Census of Agriculture](#), 2022.

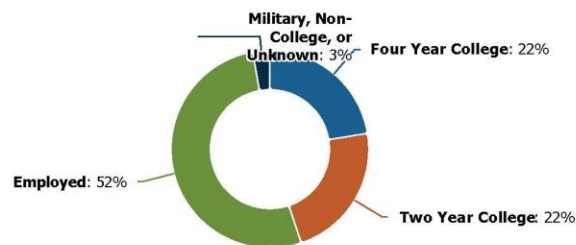




## CHALLENGE 2: Educational Access and Excellence: *College and Career Readiness*

### Post High School Report

The 12-month post-graduation activity of recent high school graduates can inform communities about postsecondary education, career readiness, and characteristics of the future workforce. In 2022, of 107 graduates surveyed in the report area, 24 went to a four-year college, 24 to a two-year college, 56 directly entered the job market. The remaining 3 are reported as in the military, not in college, or unknown.



Data Source: [Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education](#). 2022.



## CHALLENGE 3: Healthy Futures: *Healthy Weight*

### Obesity (Adult)

This indicator reports the number and percentage of adults aged 20 and older self-report having a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 30.0 (obese). Respondents were considered obese if their Body Mass Index (BMI) was 30 or greater. Body mass index (weight [kg]/height [m]<sup>2</sup>) was derived from self-report of height and weight. Excess weight may indicate an unhealthy lifestyle and puts individuals at risk for further health issues.

*Note: In 2021, the CDC updated the methodology used to produce estimates for this indicator. Estimated values for prior years (2004 - 2017) have been updated in this platform to allow comparison across years. Use caution when comparing with saved assessments generated prior to November 10, 2021.*



Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#). 2021.

### Physical Inactivity

Within the report area, 2,238 or 16.0% of adults aged 20 and older self-report no active leisure time, based on the question: "During the past month, other than your regular job, did you participate in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise?" This indicator is relevant because current behaviors are determinants of future health and this indicator may illustrate a cause of significant health issues, such as obesity and poor cardiovascular health.

*Note: In 2021, the CDC updated the methodology used to produce estimates for this indicator. Estimated values for prior years (2004 - 2017) have been updated in this platform to allow comparison across years. Use caution when comparing with saved assessments generated prior to November 10, 2021.*



Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#). 2021.



## CHALLENGE 4: Agricultural Growth & Stewardship: *Agricultural Economy*

### Jobs Derived

Missouri has a diverse agriculture industry, strong in crops and livestock, as well as food and forestry processing industries. These industries remain a significant part of Missouri's economy, supporting more than 1 in every 10 jobs, on average. In 2021, agriculture, forestry, and related industries in Missouri were estimated to contribute: 456,618 jobs, \$93.7 billion in output and \$31.8 billion in household income. [Learn more about Missouri Agriculture's Economic Impact.](#)

#### Percent of Jobs Derived from Agriculture

40.8%

Dallas

Missouri

23.55%

Data Source: Missouri Department of Agriculture, [Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority](#). 2021.

### Value Added

Value-added agriculture refers to production, manufacturing, marketing or other services that increase the value of primary agricultural commodities. In 2021, the total value-added derived from agriculture, forestry and related economic activity was an estimated \$34.9 billion. Meat processing, food processing, animal and pet food manufacturing, and crop production and related industries are Missouri's top value-added products: \$9.5 billion and 155,425 jobs from livestock production and related industries alone. [Learn more about Missouri Agriculture's Economic Impact.](#)

#### Percent of Total Value Added from Agriculture

17.3%

Dallas

Missouri

21.98%

Data Source: Missouri Department of Agriculture, [Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority](#). 2021.





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

## Missouri 4-H for Ages 8 – 18



### What is 4-H?

4-H is where Missouri's young people find their spark and learn by doing. Whether raising animals, coding robots, growing gardens, or giving back to their neighbors, 4-H members gain real-world skills with the help of caring mentors.

Rooted in University of Missouri Extension, 4-H connects classrooms, communities, and families to create learning that sticks—building confident, capable leaders who are Beyond Ready for life. In 4-H, youth discover their strengths, practice resilience, and learn to lead with heart—preparing them not just for what's next, but for anything that comes their way.

**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 is igniting curiosity and cultivating innovation through 4-H Powered STEM. From robotics and coding to environmental science and engineering, youth engage in hands-on learning that makes science come alive.

**4-H STEM** programs build problem-solving skills, spark discovery, and prepare the next generation of innovators and leaders. Every young person—no matter where they live or learn—has access to high-quality science experiences that open doors to future opportunities and help them become Beyond Ready for the challenges of tomorrow.



### Legend



Agricultural Growth  
& Stewardship



Economic  
Opportunity



Educational  
Access &  
Excellence



Health  
& Well-Being



### Local Impact

#### Recognition and Awards 2025

##### Accomplishments :

Dallas County 4-H members have demonstrated learning through the following activities.

##### County:

- 5 Clover Kids completed the year
- 43 members completed the year
- 11 members participated in 4-H Conference Judging with 27 handmade projects.
- 19 members earned the Dallas County Super 4-H'er award
- 23 projects registered by 43 members- Beef and Swine projects had the highest enrollments
- Members completed project reports
- 4-Hers also participated in many local events such as Handmade Exhibit Night, Dallas County Fair, the recognition celebration, local parades and community service activities.
- 2 members attended 4-H Teen Conference at Mizzou Campus
- 1 member attended 4-H State Congress at Mizzou Campus



**Dallas County 4-H members who received the Super 4-H'er Award**



# Dallas County County

Rebecca Doehring, Youth Program Associate

## Missouri 4-H

### Profiles and stories



Kassidie Eagleburger and Brynlee Cobb  
representing Dallas County at 4-H Teen  
Conference



Hailey Doehring representing Dallas County  
at 4-H State Congress

Family Night for the  
community to learn  
about 4-H!



## Missouri 4-H

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential by working and learning in partnership with caring adults. The mission of 4-H is to provide meaningful opportunities for all youth and adults to work together to create sustainable community change. This is accomplished within three primary content or mission areas- civic engagement and leadership, healthy living and science. These mission areas reiterate the founding purposes of Extension through agriculture (e.g., community leadership, quality of life, and technology transfer) in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and opportunities.

### Number of Dallas County residents served

- 44 - 4-H Members
- 282 School/Community Reach
- 11 Trained Adult Volunteers
- 6 Youth Volunteers

### 4-H Clubs

4-H programs are grounded in the belief that youth learn best by doing. Through hands-on projects in 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.

- Community 4-H Clubs
  - 4 Community Clubs- The Eagles (Long Lane), The Beef Kids (Buffalo), Corn & Tomatas (Buffalo), Grits and Grace (Long Lane)
- 4-H school programs
  - Dallas County 4-H school programs are educational experiences that supplement learning in the classroom. Teachers, 4-H volunteers, or 4-H staff lead these activities.
    - \* Embryology – Buffalo Preschool (30 participants)
    - \* Buffalo After School – Nutrition Program (20 participants)
    - \* Buffalo After Summer School- Beef Cattle (56 participants)
    - \* Buffalo After School- STEM programming (70 participants)
    - \* Buffalo High School- On My Own Simulation (115 participants)
- 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.



## Agriculture and Environment

“In June 2025, a tour to explore the organic hot-spot around Wheatland and Buffalo MO attracted 10 educators from Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri with a focus on exploring an organic direct market vegetable farm, hearing from organic egg producers, hearing from the organic feed mill in Buffalo, and exploring an organic input supplier.” Dallas County has 39 Certified Organic Farms. Click here for more information:

<https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/Search?sta=3+7>



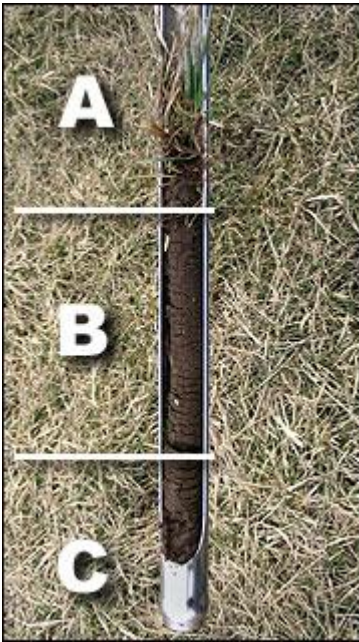
“I really enjoyed learning about this organic "hotspot" in Buffalo, MO and seeing the ecosystem of agriculture businesses that support organic poultry production in this region. I really appreciated the cross-industry ecosystem approach so that we could see the relationships between different agriculture sectors in this region.”



‘On March 26, 2025 Kelly McGowan, Field Specialist in Horticulture with MU Extension, taught a class for the DIVAS ladies’ group in Buffalo with 19 in attendance. The class was on container gardening and covered the following: container choices, soil mixes, watering, plant selection, and maintenance.’



## Agriculture and Environment



Caleb O'Neal, Field Specialist in Plant Science, has been covering Dallas County since the retirement of Terry Halleran in early 2025. O'Neal has handled all soil samples submitted by Dallas County and has also answered numerous plant science and agronomy questions. We appreciate his assistance.

STANDARD METHOD 3050-PC  
USE OF THIS FLIP FIRST

**Extension**  
Soil and Water Testing Laboratory  
1000 University Avenue  
Columbia, MO 65211  
Phone: (314) 542-5100  
Fax: (314) 542-5101  
E-mail: [extension@missouri.edu](mailto:extension@missouri.edu)  
Web: [www.extension.missouri.edu](http://www.extension.missouri.edu)

Order form for testing materials:  
1. Extension Form 3050-PC  
2. Extension Form 3050-PC-1  
3. Extension Form 3050-PC-2  
4. Extension Form 3050-PC-3  
5. Extension Form 3050-PC-4  
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O'Neal will be offering two programs in Dallas County this spring. February 16, a Private Pesticide Applicator training will be offered in Buffalo. On March 14, an Agriculture Drone class will be offered in Buffalo. Contact our office for more details.





## Regional Economic Development (RED) 2025 SUMMARY

2025 marked a year of strong momentum for economic development efforts in Dallas County. Through meaningful engagement, data-informed programming, and deep collaboration with local partners, Extension efforts supported a community that is growing, resilient, and increasingly aligned around shared priorities. Programming focused on entrepreneurship, workforce development, agribusiness, and professional education responded directly to the needs of Dallas County's businesses, employers, and residents.

This work reinforced the power of relationship-driven, accessible, and practical approaches that meet communities where they are and translate insight into action. As a result, Dallas County enters 2026 well-positioned for even more targeted and responsive programming—building on its positive trajectory to strengthen economic vitality, workforce readiness, and long-term community capacity.



Ashley Allen-Brown, Ed.D.  
Regional Economic Development Specialist  
allen-browna@missouri.edu

**Total Direct Contacts**  
**1726**

**Total Program Participants**  
**2809**

**Total Indirect Reach**  
**157,413**

## Regional Economic Development (RED) Programming Impact: Depth and Reach (2025) Dallas County



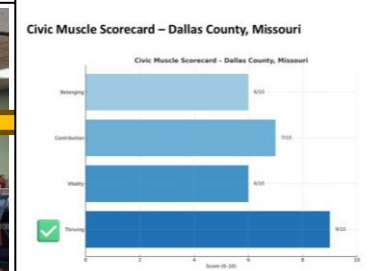
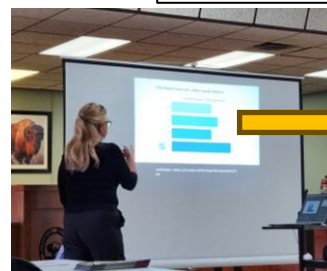
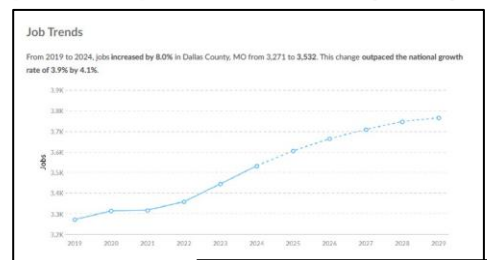
**Direct Contacts:** 29 Dallas County residents interacted or contacted MU Extension B&C RED for assistance.



**Program Participants:** 24 Dallas County residents participated in B&C RED programming in 2025.



**Indirect Reach:** 2400 Dallas County residents reached through articles, hard copy educational materials, community events, and social media engagement

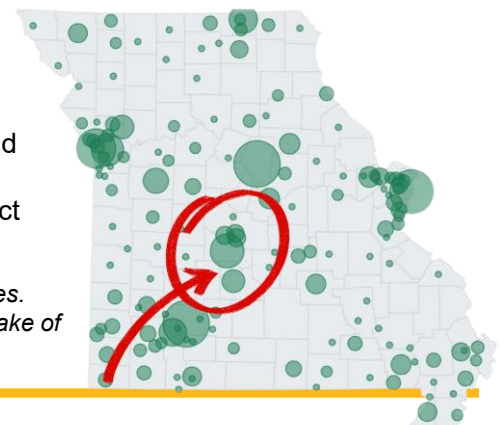


Sharing the story behind the data—In July 2025, Dr. Ashley Allen-Brown highlighted Dallas County's upward job growth and strong civic muscle with members of the Buffalo Chamber.

## Did You Know?

MU Extension Business and Communities' Economic and community development programming for the Lake of the Ozarks region including Dallas and Hickory Counties is led by one Regional Economic Development Specialist, yet the region continues to exceed engagement goals and deliver measurable impact across multiple counties.

*\*The image to the right demonstrates B&C-specific activity heatmap across all Missouri counties. The red circle with arrow denotes heavy concentration of activity in Camden County and the Lake of the Ozarks Region.*





## Business and Community Other Regional Economic and Community Development Programs of Significance

# Dallas County

### Turning Data Into Civic Muscle

Led by MU Extension's Regional Economic Development Specialist, Dr. Ashley Allen-Brown, this session will show you how to identify meaningful data, ask the right questions, and use what you discover to guide community conversations and drive impact. Whether you're a civic leader, nonprofit changemaker, or just passionate about your hometown's future, you'll walk away with tools to build civic muscle and make informed, inclusive decisions—one data point at a time. Two sessions were held in 2025 for Chambers of Commerce in both Dallas and Laclede Counties. **A total of 42 people attended both programs.**



Laclede County Program Attendees= 22

### Build Your Board Online Training

Hosted a Build Your Board live Zoom to help nonprofit professionals gain essential board leadership skills, covering topics like board operations, fundraising, conflict resolution, and marketing—all in engaging, one-hour sessions. **There were 24 in attendance from across the state.**

Camden County attendees = 2

Laclede County attendees = 1

Miller County attendees = 1

Morgan County attendees = 1

**BUILD YOUR BOARD**  
Training for nonprofit board members

**Tuesday, April 29 - Session 9: Promoting Your Organization**

Our ninth session of Build Your Board will cover the topic of promoting your organization, including developing a marketing plan, using social media and traditional media.

**Session 9 Facilitator**

**Ashley Allen-Brown**  
Regional Economic Development Specialist  
University of Missouri Extension

**BYB Zoom Link**

Meeting ID: 917 2901 5294  
Passcode: 610981

### NONPROFIT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

INFORMATION, REFERRALS, AND SUPPORT FOR MISSOURI'S  
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Our regional economic and community development team will answer introductory-level questions and make referrals to other programs, services, and organizations, when applicable. Ashley Allen-Brown, West Central Region, provides expertise in fundraising, marketing, membership development and communication, legislative and grassroots advocacy training.

Counties and number of individuals  
assisted through NPTA:

Camden County = 5

**Dallas County = 3**

Hickory County = 1

Laclede County = 1

Miller County = 1

Morgan County = 2

### REACH is Opportunity to Grow Dallas County's Workforce From Within

Communities throughout West Central Missouri, including **Dallas County**, are facing ongoing workforce shortages and increasing concern about youth outmigration.

The MU Extension Business & Communities **Resilient Economies and Community Health (REACH) Youth Mentoring and Workforce Development Program** offers a proven, school-based approach to strengthening local workforce pipelines by connecting students ages 14–18 directly to local businesses, employers, and career pathways—reinforcing that meaningful opportunities exist right here at home, even for students not pursuing a four-year degree.

REACH builds career awareness, essential 21st-century workforce skills, and confidence while aligning youth readiness with regional labor needs and supporting long-term economic vitality. In its initial implementation, **100% of participants reported increased awareness of local career opportunities and reasons to remain in their community after graduation, and 95% reported stronger understanding of essential workforce skills**, demonstrating strong potential for REACH to deliver similar impact in Dallas County as interest in youth workforce development continues to grow.



Dallas County youth are invited to participate in REACH.  
Email: [allen-browna@missouri.edu](mailto:allen-browna@missouri.edu) to learn more.

## Extension Tax Schools - Business and Community

### Profiles and Stories



University of Missouri Extension coordinated and offered tax education through one summer and three fall tax schools. The summer school was in person and live online. Fall schools were in Columbia and Springfield and an online school. The schools were designed for those who prepare taxes including enrolled agents, tax preparers, CPAs, individuals, and attorneys.

The training included updates on legislation, rulings and cases, individual taxpayer issues, agricultural and natural resources topics, ethics, trusts and estates, agriculture and natural resource tax issues, business tax issues, business entity tax issues, IRS issues, installment sales, tax benefits of home ownership, retirement tax issues, and individual tax issues. The schools were approved for up to 16 hours of continuing education credit by the IRS, Missouri Bar and for CFP continuing education. Total continuing education hours reported to IRS for the schools was 4,024 hours.

The teaching teams included CPAs, a former IRS stakeholder liaison, an IRS certified retired ag economics professor, an attorney, a certified financial planner, Missouri Department of Revenue, MU faculty and extension ag business specialists.

The evaluations had many positive comments and helpful suggestions. One comment from an online participant was "The video was outstanding — best I've seen on any CPE I've done live.". Planning is underway to offer trainings in 2026. Local county residents benefit when local tax preparers have the opportunity to gain knowledge, which benefits their clients and communities. The tax schools are a program of the ag business and policy program of MU Extension, coordinated by Mary Sobba with help from a team of ag business specialists throughout the state.

The resources for the schools included the IRS, 2025 National Income Tax Workbook from the Land Grant University Tax Education Foundation, and materials written by the instructors.

The 2025 school attendance totaled three hundred eighty-nine people, which was an 11% increase from 2024. The participants were from throughout Missouri and two from out of state. **Dallas County had 3 participants.**



## Local Activities and Impacts



MU Extension Dallas County participated in Missouri Good Neighbor Week by collecting hygiene items for Community Hug: “A ministry finding ways for the community to send a ‘HUG’ of help and love to families with children struggling in our area.”



### Expanding Water Access for Buffalo High School Students: A Community Collaboration

Students at Buffalo High School are benefiting from a new water access initiative made possible through a partnership between Dallas County MU Extension and Buffalo High School. The effort aims to encourage healthy hydration habits by making water more accessible throughout the school day.

The project began when Hannah Whittaker, Health and Nutrition Specialist with MU Extension, developed a water access initiative focused on promoting healthy beverage choices among students. As part of the collaboration, Dallas County MU Extension purchased new drinking water stations for the school, and Whittaker provided reusable water bottles for students to use throughout the year.

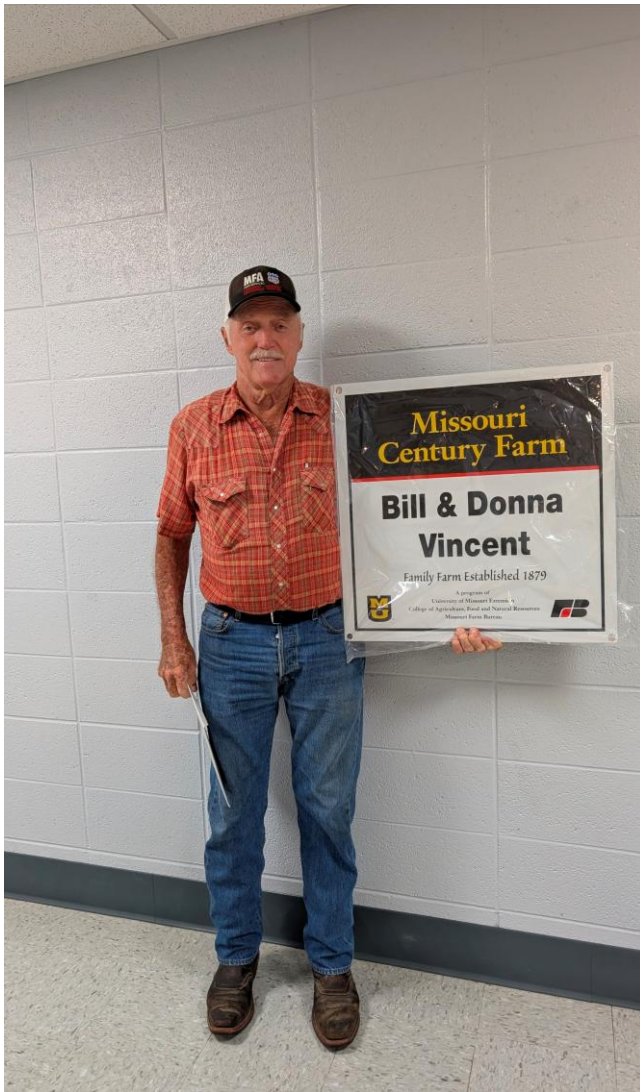
Since the initiative's launch, students have eagerly embraced the refillable stations and bottles, which have made it easier for them to stay hydrated throughout the day. The project has already had a positive impact on student wellness by promoting water as a healthy beverage choice and supporting focus and energy levels during class time.

“This project is a great example of what can happen when schools and community organizations work together,” said Hannah Whittaker. “By improving access to water, we’re helping students build lifelong healthy habits.”

For more information about MU Extension’s health and nutrition programs, contact the Dallas County Extension Office at 417-345-7551



## Local Activities and Impacts



Congratulations to Bill and Donna Vincent for having a Missouri Century Farm. Their farm has been in the family since 1879.

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's 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.

## Local Activities and Impacts - Technology



MU Extension Dallas County has provided a TV in the main hallway of the Dallas County Courthouse. All community organizations are invited to provide information about services and upcoming events by contacting our office 417-345-7551 or [dallasco@missouri.edu](mailto:dallasco@missouri.edu). Special thanks to the Dallas County Records Office for their assistance daily and to the Dallas County Coroners office for providing the USB drives.

MU Extension in Dallas County was awarded a **\$20,618.99 grant** through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Distance Learning & Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program**. This competitive federal program helps rural communities use telecommunications technology to improve access to education, training, and health care services.

The USDA DLT Grant Program provides financial assistance that enables rural communities to connect to high-quality educational opportunities and telemedicine services using advanced telecommunications and information technology. Funds from this program supported the purchase of audio/visual equipment, computer hardware, software, and other technology that expand distance learning and remote health care capabilities in underserved rural areas.

"We are grateful for this investment from the USDA, which will help enhance our local capacity for distance learning and telemedicine as needed," said Allison Gunter, MU Extension Engagement Specialist. "This funding will enable Dallas County to better support educational programs and resources to meet the needs of the community."

The Distance Learning & Telemedicine grant supports the county's efforts to overcome the challenges posed by remoteness and limited infrastructure, ensuring that residents have improved connectivity to critical services and opportunities.

For more information about the USDA DLT Grant Program, visit the USDA Rural Development website.

The technology components were installed in the Dallas County Annex Building in October, 2025 and are available for community use. For more information, contact MU Extension Dallas County 417-345-7551.



## Health and Human Sciences

### Nutrition education

The goal of the Family Nutrition Education Program is to help participants make behavior changes to achieve lifelong health and fitness.

#### **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.

195 direct and indirect contacts were made in Dallas 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.

