



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Daviess County 2025 Annual Report

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**SERVE MISSOURI.
DELIVER MIZZOU.**

MU Extension
University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution

**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 sunsetting 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chadwick C Higgins'.

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

WHO WE ARE

Faculty and Staff



Jennifer Osborn
Extension Engagement Specialist

Julie Cox
Office Manager

Becky Simpson
Field Specialist in 4-H Youth Development

Jessica Trussell
Field specialist in Human Development

Jim Crawford
Field Specialist in Agri Systems Technology

Denise Ferguson
Field Specialist in Agricultural Business

Todd Higgins
Field Specialist in Horticulture

Shawn Deering
Field specialist in Livestock

Jackie Spainhower
Field Specialist in Community Development

Council Members

Jayla Smith, Chairman
Wayne Uthe, Vice-chairman
Kaley Cox, Secretary
Alicia Chrisman, Treasurer
Cody Bird
Kelsey Bird
Mandi Bird
Darlene Cullen
Will Grady
Terry Jarboe
Chretta Mastin
Lori McLaughlin
Wayne McNeely



County executives

Jim Ruse-Presiding Commissioner
David Cox-North District Commissioner
Wayne Uthe-South District Commissioner

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations budget

Income	
County Appropriations	28,000
Total Income	28,000
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	16,000
Payroll Expenses	2,500
Travel	3,408
Office Supplies/Service	1,580
Rent/Lease Equipment	3,800
Rent/Lease Space	200
Insurance	320
Ext Council Expense	192
Total Expenses	28,000

MU Extension's Unique Funding

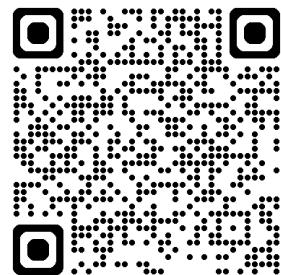
Extension funding is a three-way partnership of federal, state and county government. Federal and state money, through the University of Missouri system, pay professional staff salaries, training costs, computers and communication equipment. County funds support the local office, secretarial and youth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

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



Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to Daviess 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.



How to donate...



Invest in MU Extension in Daviess County

In the designation box, find Extension and click the down arrow, then the County Funds down arrow, then scroll down to **“The University of Missouri Extension Council (MCES) Daviess County Endowment Distribution”**

UM SYSTEM COUNTY IMPACTS

MU Extension in Daviess Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts Daviess 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 Daviess 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 Daviess 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 Daviess County is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

[**Access Daviess County's Grand Challenges Report.**](#)





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.



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.



Missouri 4-H Natural Resources programs engage youth in hands-on learning across climate science, environmental sustainability, renewable energy, sportfishing, and wildlife conservation. Programs like the **4-H Sportfishing Contest** and **Sportfishing SLAM** give young people practical experience while building teamwork, problem-solving skills, and a love of the outdoors.

The **4-H Shooting Sports** program teaches marksmanship, safe firearm use, hunting, and archery principles, demonstrating how 4-H encourages holistic youth development and responsible citizenship. Supported by caring adult leaders, these programs help youth cultivate life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics while exploring the natural world around them.

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Local Impact

4-H Camp at Crowder State Park

The best gift we can offer to our youth is the chance to grow into capable, resilient, and independent individuals, equipped with skills that last a lifetime.

That's exactly what kids found this summer at 4-H camp at Crowder State Park. Held over three sessions—June 2–5, June 6–7, and June 9–12—camp gave over 235 youth the opportunity to unplug from devices and connect with nature, peers, and themselves. More than just a fun summer experience, 4-H camp is a unique environment where kids learn resilience, independence, problem-solving, and leadership. These are the very traits that help young people navigate stress, challenges, and setbacks—not just now, but for the rest of their lives.

The benefits of 4-H camp don't end when the bags are unpacked, and the bug spray is put away. What kids take home—self-confidence, resilience, lasting friendships, and a sense of achievement—are tools they'll carry with them for years to come.

Key Successes

175 Campers during 2 separate weeks of camp
25 Teen counselors during 2 weeks of camp
34 Clover Kids and their families at Clover Kid-Family Camp June 6–7. An increase of 7 youth and their families over 2024.

Nine youth presented 25 projects at the May 17th Achievement Day in Worth County. That is an improvement over the 3 youth who participated in 2024.



Profiles and stories



On My Own

One hundred eight middle and high school students in Buchanan, Daviess, Dekalb, Harrison and Gentry Counties participated in *On My Own* in 2025.

The *On My Own* program is an interactive financial simulation designed for youth ages 13-18. The program is delivered in Missouri by MU Extension through a partnership with University of Tennessee Extension. Over the 2024-2025 4-H program year, University of Missouri Extension 4-H implemented 27 simulations and lesson series serving 815 youth in the Northwest(18), West Central(2), Northeast(1), Southwest(6) Regions of Missouri. During the simulation, students become the major income provider for their household which may include a spouse and/or children. Using a hypothetical occupation and income, students work through a month of expenses including housing, utilities, transportation, insurance, food, childcare, clothing, entertainment, and other expenses resulting from unexpected events.

Buchanan County Home School-15 youth
Gallatin Middle School-15 youth
Union Star Jr. High-11 youth
Stanberry Middle School-28 youth
South Harrison High School-39 youth
Community Volunteers-70 adults

The program is sponsored by BTC Bank.

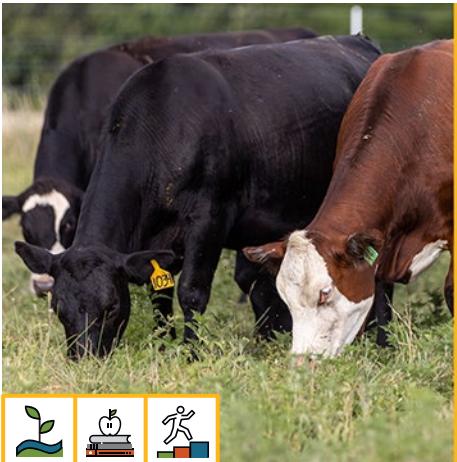


MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
through credible statewide programs

Agriculture and Environment



MU Extension Specialists quickly respond to **emergencies and disasters** across the state. If a disease outbreak occurs in livestock, specialists are there. If a natural disaster such as flooding occurs, specialists are there. Missouri farmers can count on MU Extension to guide them through emerging issues with knowledge and expertise.



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 Master Gardener** program enables people of all ages to get in-depth horticultural training and apply what they've learned to improve their communities and educate others about gardening.



University of Missouri Extension

In 2023, almost 4,000 Missouri Extension Master Gardeners completed over 149,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS throughout the state.

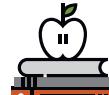
Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Agriculture and Environment

Profiles and stories



Three-State Beef Conference

Held on January 14, 2025, in Maryville at the Northwest Missouri State University Agricultural Learning Center
37 producers (including 3 area veterinarians) from Missouri and Iowa attended
Topics covered included:
The Genetics of Calving
Yearling Bull Development and Management
An Update on Recent Bovine Pinkeye Research and
Implications for Management



Private Pesticide Training in February

Daviess County had 13 participants. Participants were able to obtain their Private Pesticide Applicators Licenses which allow them to purchase and use restricted-use pesticides on their farming operations. Shawn Deering presented information that helped producers understand the new USDA Animal Traceability rules. This was a team effort including extension office staff and extension agriculture field specialists.

Utilizing Drones in Missouri Agriculture Workshop - Eighteen people attended workshop held at the Graves-Chapple Extension and Education Center to learn more about drones in Missouri agriculture. The workshop featured a classroom session covering the rules, regulations and license requirements to operate a drone as well as calibration steps, tips on spraying herbicides, and fungicides and also seeding cover crops with a drone. The afternoon provided hands on training in the operation of drones. Attendees are better equipped to make the decision on purchasing and/or utilizing drones in their operations.

Graves-Chapple Extension and Education Center Field Day – approximately 150 people attended the annual field day. There were 4 field tours providing education on a variety of topic. Topics covered included updates on weed management, Missouri row crop diseases, current and future insect issues, innovative inlets for field terraces and economic insights producers should consider as harvest approaches. One tour covered drones in agriculture with stops covering the rules and regulations, considerations for



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

Business and Community



Missourians from all walks of life celebrated the **2025 Missouri Good Neighbor Week** by completing and reporting neighboring acts and nominating others as the most engaged neighbors in their counties.



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.



"I highly recommend this incredible program to any community looking for focus and direction."



Strategic Doing participant

Strategic Doing is a one-day workshop that guides community stakeholders through an inclusive, problem-solving approach to developing high-impact projects to address local development issues.

The city of Risco, Mo., lacked retail options for food. Risco's Strategic Doing workshop and follow-up activities resulted in a GROCERY STORE OPENING in the community.

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Business and Community

Local Impact

Extension Tax Schools

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.

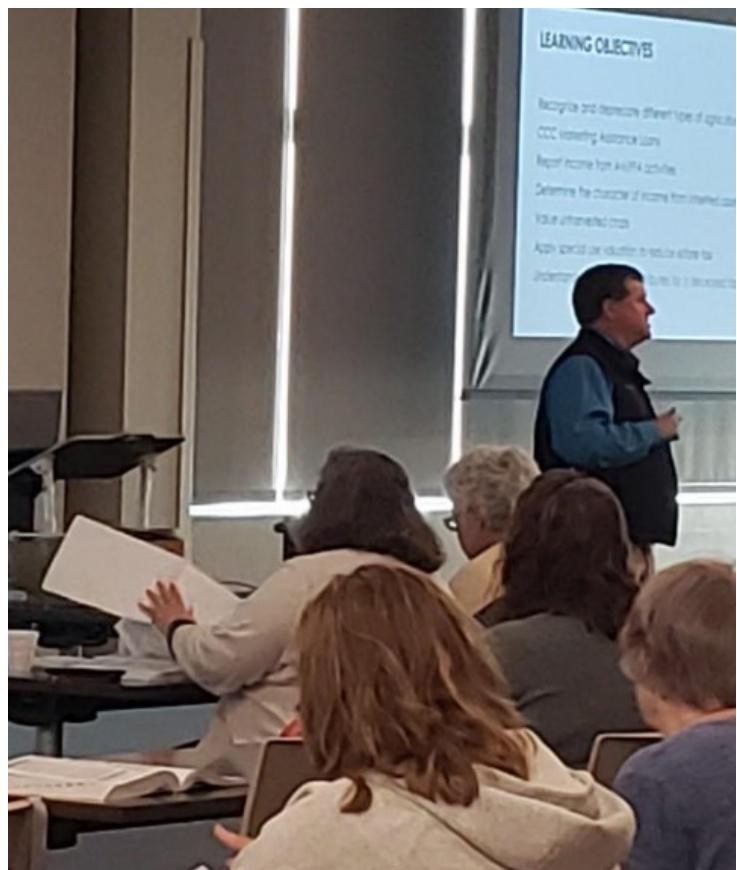
The evaluations had many positive comments and helpful suggestions. One comment from an online participant was "The video was outstanding — best I've seen on any CPE I've done live.". Planning is underway to offer trainings in 2026. Local county residents benefit when local tax preparers have the opportunity 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.

There were 3 participants from Daviess County in 2025.



Business and Community

On August 29, Morgan Jeffers was honored with the Northwest Region Award for the 2025 *Show Me Neighborhood Art Week*. The award presentation recognized Jeffers' mural not only as a striking work of art, but also as a meaningful contribution to community pride and cultural vitality in Northwest Missouri. *Show Me Neighborhood Art Week* highlights artists across the state who use their creativity to transform public spaces and strengthen community connections through artwork.

Jeffers is deeply passionate about her community and actively involved in local improvement efforts, including the development of "Monarch Park" on the square in Gallatin. Inspired by the park's theme, she began creating a vibrant, large-scale mural depicting pollinators and butterflies. The mural, painted entirely freehand with spray paint, now adorns the southern exterior of a historic downtown building along Highway 13.

Ms. Jeffers envisioned the mural as a visual landmark. "I thought it would work well with the Highway 13 Butterfly Trail," said Jeffers. The mural indeed celebrates the natural beauty of pollinators while enhancing the character of Gallatin's town square. She shared that this project, including the mural itself, is just the beginning, with additional work planned for the park.

Jeffers was awarded by Jackie Spainhower, MU Extension Community Development Specialist and Jennifer Osborn, MU Extension Engagement Specialist.





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

Continuing Education



The programming from the **MU Fire and Rescue Training Institute** (MU FRTI) is available to all qualified fire and emergency first responders. Seventy percent of courses are held at the local departments or agencies. With most of the state's fire service personnel considered volunteer or part-time, this local access and flexibility assures training opportunities for all firefighter and emergency responders.



The **Missouri Extension Disaster Education Network** provides education and technical assistance to individuals and families, local governments, schools and organizations so they can prepare for and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Because of the unique relationship it maintains with each community, MU Extension is a key resource for the public, emergency services and public officials.



MU Continuing Education for Health Professions (CEHP) provides evidenced-based, relevant and responsive learning activities designed to narrow professional practice gaps with respect to knowledge, competence, and performance of the healthcare team. A commitment to lifelong learning, in partnership with those we serve, contributes to excellence in practice and improved health outcomes.

**CEHP provided 169 LEARNING ACTIVITIES
which reached over 53,000 PROFESSIONAL
across all Missouri counties.**

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Council Development

COUNCIL STRATEGY FOCUSED COLLABORATION

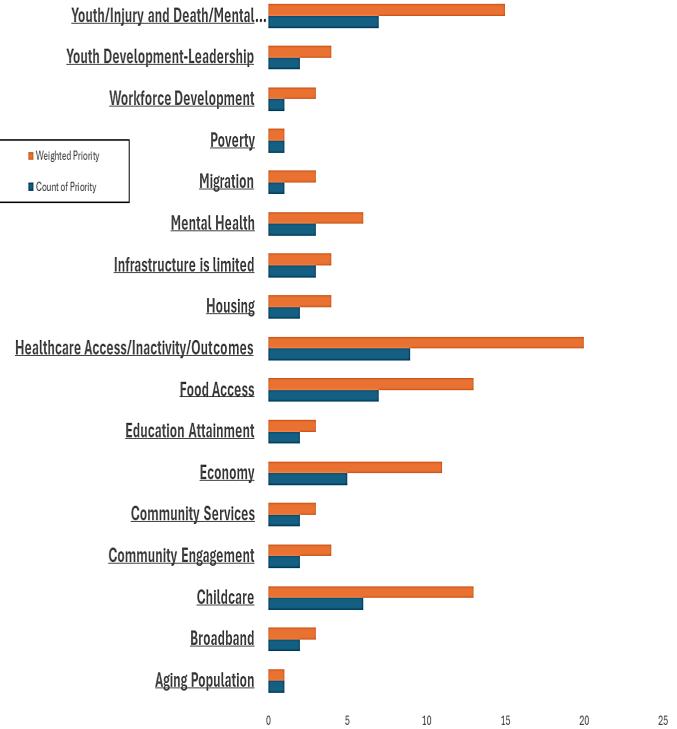
MU Extension Councils guide local programs, manage resources, and support community needs. For their work to be effective, decisions must draw on both data and local knowledge. MU Extension's statewide mission focuses on Missouri's grand challenges in Agriculture, Health, Economy, and Education – issues that are especially varied and complex in Northwest Missouri. Councils in Northwest Missouri reviewed a significant amount of local data from All-Things Missouri, a data platform through CARES at the University of Missouri.

This initiative helps councils use data more strategically to strengthen decision-making and increase local impact. By blending statewide data with community insight, councils can identify top needs, set clear priorities, and deliver programs that directly address local concerns. In Daviess County, the council identified and prioritized education and stabilization of migration out of the county as areas of focus.

The Northwest EES team was able to glean information throughout the region that was shared with stakeholders, the university, and legislators as well.

Priorities in the Northwest Region saw similar priorities as seen on the bar graph to the right.

Northwest Region Data Review and Issue Prioritization



Maps

Reports

Resources

Support



All Things Missouri

Your gateway for interactive mapping, reporting, and insights into issues facing Missourians.



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

Health and Human Sciences



Home Food Preservation

Preserve the season's bounty in a safe and delicious way.

Learn safe techniques for pressure canning, boiling water bath canning, steam canning, dehydration, and freezing.

Understand the importance of using safe food preservation and storage methods to avoid cross-contamination and food-borne illnesses.

"This course made me more self-sufficient and improved my family's access to quality food."



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.



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

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



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Health & Well-Being

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Back to School Fairs

August was packed with Back-to-School events aimed at providing resources and education for students preparing for the new school year. Kaylie Walker, Nutrition and Health Specialist attended the Back-to-School Safety Fair in Bethany and the Back-to-School Bazaar in Gallatin, where we connected with approximately 277 students and their families. Our team shared educational materials on managing screen time, including parent-child screen time contracts, as well as information on nutrition and healthy habits.



Truth or Trend Podcast

Podcasts reach new audiences by offering easily accessible, on-demand content that fits into people's busy lives. With the flexibility to listen anywhere – during commutes, workouts, or downtime – podcasts attract listeners who might not engage in our traditional programming. Truth or Trend by Nutrition and Health Specialist, Kaylie Walker, is on trend and is being accessed in the northwest region and beyond.

Truth or Trend was downloaded 625 times in 2025.

Topics included:

- Truths Behind Gentle Parenting
- Seed Oil Scandal
- Food Dye Dilemma: Should You Worry?
- Eggflation Explained
- Are Everyday Chemicals Impacting Our Hormones?
- Are High Protein Diets Worth the Hype?
- Beyond the Label: GMO and Organic Made Simple
- How to Start Working Out (When You Don't Know Where to Start)



State Fair Farm Family

Daviess County



Austin and Courtney Story and family of Altamont were among the families honored during the 68th annual Missouri Farm Family Day, Aug. 11 at the Missouri State Fair.

The Story family was selected as the Daviess County Missouri Farm Family by University of Missouri Extension in Daviess County and the local Farm Bureau. The family includes Austin, Courtney, Xander, Axton, Aubrey, and Axle. Each year, the fair sets aside a day to recognize farm families from across the state that are active in their communities, involved in agriculture, and/or participate in local outreach and extension programs such as 4-H or FFA.

The Story family raises breeding stock and sells butcher beef from their registered Charolais cattle herd. Annually they run around 150 cow/calf pairs near Altamont. They host an annual production sale in Gallatin on the 4th Saturday of March selling Charolais bull and heifers. They have been in the Daviess County area for about 40 years.

The annual event is sponsored by five partner agencies: the Missouri Farm Bureau; the Missouri Department of Agriculture; the Missouri State Fair Commissioners; the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; and MU Extension.



LOCAL IMPACTS

Daviess County



Daviess County Century Farm

The Century Farm Program, co-sponsored by the University of Missouri Extension and Missouri Farm Bureau recognizes Missouri farms that have been owned by the same family for 100 consecutive years or more.

Jason and Abbey Wilson and Family (pictured left) were honored as a Missouri Century Farm Family, at the Daviess County Annual Meeting celebrating their longstanding dedication to agriculture and stewardship of family land.

Daviess County Leader's Honor Roll

The MU Extension's Leaders Honor Roll recognizes leaders and volunteers who have helped to advance MU Extension's work in their communities. Those recognized were:

- Courtney Story
- Nicole Chadwick
- Alexis Neeley
- Britney Burke

The Leaders Honor Roll recipients were celebrated at the Daviess County Extension Council's annual meeting.

