UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Greene County

2025 Annual Report

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SERVE MISSOURI.
DELIVER MIZZOU.®

Extension
University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution

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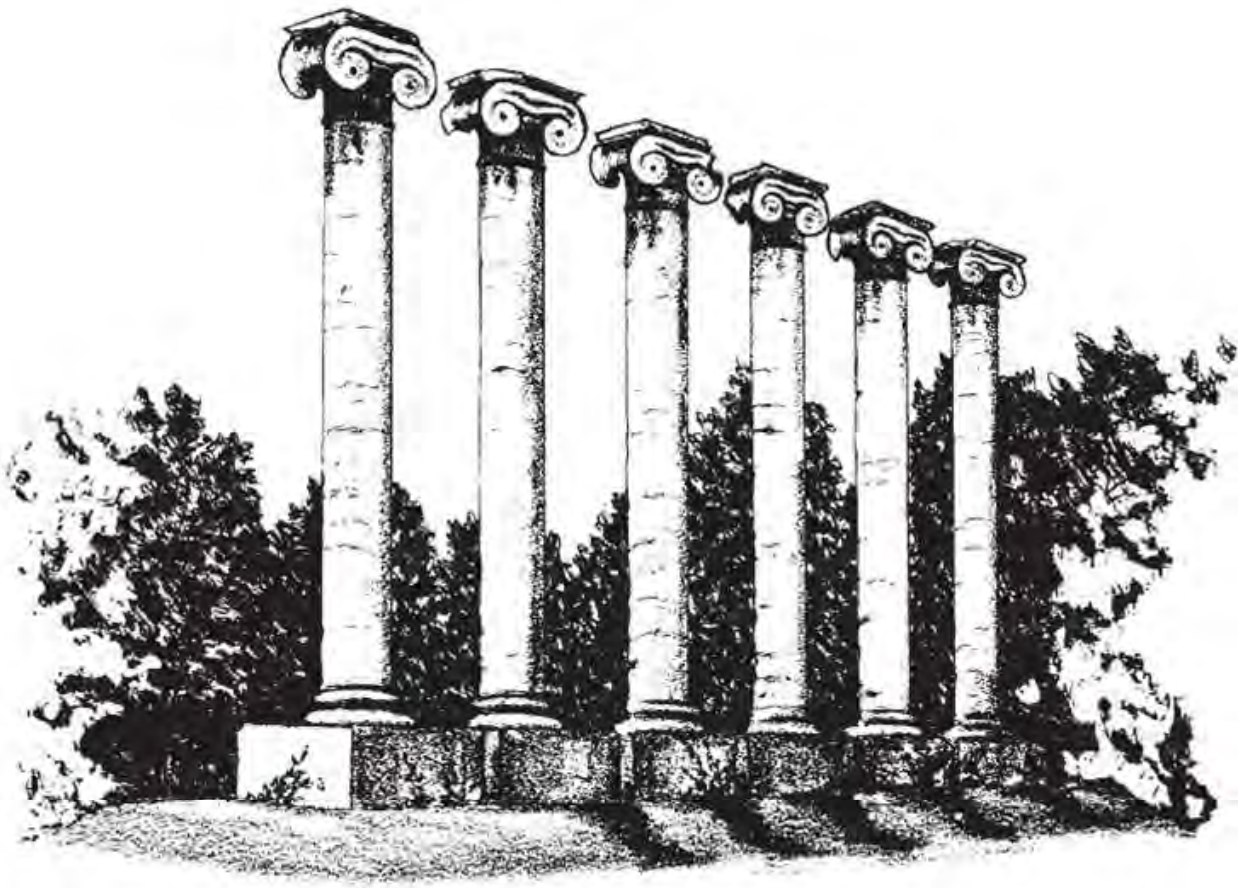

Extension

University of Missouri

Vision Statement
MU Extension is a valued and trusted educational solution to improve the quality of life in Missouri, the nation and the world

Mission Statement
Our distinct land-grant mission is to improve lives, communities and economies by producing relevant, reliable and responsive educational strategies that enhance access to the resources and research of the University of Missouri.

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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

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,

Chadwick C Higgins

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

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Extension
University of Missouri

2400 S. Scenic Ave,
Springfield, MO 65807
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Email: Greeneco@missouri.edu

January 2026

Dear Greene County Commissioners and Residents:

Greene County MU Extension expanded its reach and impact in the county during 2025. We are proud of those efforts, but the real benefit is felt by the residents of Greene County. In 2025, we focused on new and existing partnerships and ways to deliver impactful education and resources taking advantage of the Council's established mini-grant program.

Here are some of the most noteworthy impacts for the year:

MU Extension specialists and associates in Greene County brought *direct* education programs (82.8% face to face, 15.5% virtual) to 31,395 residents this year. Through other *indirect* sources (TV and Radio interviews, articles, blogs, newsletters, social media, videos, community events, public service announcements, various hardcopy and promo materials) over an estimated ***1.7 million*** people were touched***!***

And, to strengthen even further the partnerships and relationships with tenants housed within the Botanical Center, the Extension Council hosted a "Longer Table" event during Good Neighbor Week. Council also approved mini-grant funding that was used for programming focusing on alleviating loneliness in communities in Greene County.

Greene County Extension Specialists were recognized as being some of the best in the nation in their areas of programming. Awards included:

- Neighborhood Leadership Academy — Neighborhood Program of the Year (Government) Awarded at the *Neighborhoods USA* National Conference.
- Distinguished Career Award Missouri Association of Community and Economic Development Extension Professionals.
- Outstanding Team Award For *Show-Me Neighborhood Art Week* Missouri Association of Community and Economic Development Extension Professionals.
- State winner at the National Association of County Agricultural Agents 2025 conference for the poster session in applied research.
- Member of team that received first place for the University of Missouri Extension Association's Outstanding Program Award in 2025.

Greene County Extension Council

Judy Stainback
Chair

Mary Chalender
Vice-chair

Morgan Ash
Secretary
MFA

Lisa Bakerink
Treasurer

John Russell
County Commission

Tammy Lowrey
Farm Bureau

Chad Courtney
City of Springfield

Vacant
City of Republic

Vacant
4-H Youth member

Members at large
Cara Harris
Sandi Haustein
Elaine Montgomery
Bill Nguyen
Merri Sutherland
Eric Sutton
Shelia Taylor

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- Reaching Diverse Audiences" Award at the 2025 Health and Human Sciences Conference
- Ambassador's *Award for Poster Excellence*- National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences Ambassador.
- *Community Excellence Award-Individual*, University of Missouri Extension.
- *Outstanding Programming Award, 2nd Place*, University of Missouri Extension Association

On behalf of the Greene County Extension Council, we thank the County Commissioners for their support in 2025.

Judy Stainback, *Council Chair*

Greene County Extension Council

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Vacant
4-H Youth member

Members at large
Cara Harris
Sandi Haustein
Elaine Montgomery
Bill Nguyen
Merri Sutherland
Eric Sutton
Shelia Taylor

WHO WE ARE

Faculty and Staff

David Burton,
Community Development Specialist

Amy Patillo,
Workforce Development Specialist

Kelly McGowan,
Horticulture Specialist

Amber, Allen,
Human Development Specialist

Bailey Andrews,
4-H Youth Program Associate

Kenlyn Pence,
Nutrition Program Associate

Robin Clay,
Administrative Assistant

Regional Office - SW Region

Sarah Havens,
Regional Director

Kyle Whittaker,
Extension Engagement Specialist

Randi Williams,
Business Support

Greene County Extension Council

Judy Stainback, Chair
Mary Chalender, Vice-chair
Morgan Ash, Secretary
Lisa Bakerink, Treasurer
John Russell,
Greene County Commissioner
Tammy Lowery, Farm Bureau
Chad Courtney, City of Springfield

Members at Large

Cara Harris
Sandi Haustein
Elaine Montgomery
Bill Nguyen
Merri Sutherland
Eric Sutton
Shelia Taylor

Greene County Commissioners

Bob Dixon
Presiding Commissioner

Rusty MacLachlan
Commissioner 1st District

John C. Russell
Commissioner 2nd District

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations budget

Income	
County Appropriations	65,000.00
Total Income	65,000.00
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	17,786.61
Travel	7,503.29
Advertising/Publishing	9,568.33
Services/Office Supplies	20,076.39
Postage	767.95
Mini-Grant Programs	5,912.05
Insurance	2,483.00
Repairs/Maintenance	902.38
Total Expenses	65,000.00

Greene County Endowment Report

Funds maintained by University of Missouri
Report Ending Fiscal Year June 30, 2025

Endowment Principal Account
Beginning Value 07/01/2024: $24,401.97
Ending Balance 06/30/2025: $26,503.78

Endowment Distribution Account
Beginning Value 07/01/2024: $23,483.12
Ending Balance 06/30/2025: $24,529.60

Greene County partners – Thank you!

Alzheimer's Association
ARC of the Ozarks
Arvest Bank
City of Republic
City of Springfield
City of Springfield Workforce Development and Economic Vitality
Community Partnership of the Ozarks
Crosslines Community Outreach
Depart. of Elementary and Secondary Education, Vocational Rehab.
Department of Social Services, Workforce and Community Initiatives
Down Syndrome Group of the Ozarks
Drew Lewis Foundation
Empower: Abilities
Flourish Food Pantry
Greene County 4-H Foundation
Greene County Commission
Greene County Commonwealth
Greene County Juvenile Center
Harmony House
Interfaith Council of Greater Springfield
iPour Life
KOLR TV
KY3 TV
Leadership Springfield
Lincoln University Cooperative Extension
Master Gardeners of Greene County
Missouri Job Centers
Missouri State University and MSU Bear POWER
Northview Senior Center
Ozark Empire Fairgrounds
Ozark Regional YMCA
SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging
Springfield-Greene County Park/Botanical Center
Springfield Community Gardens
Springfield Daily Citizen
Springfield Dream Center
Springfield-Greene County Library
Springfield Neighborhood Alliance Council
Springfield Plateau Master Naturalists
The GLO Center
The Hopeful Neighborhood Project

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

Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to *Greene* 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 Greene Community Impact Report

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

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

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

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Greene County

Missouri 4-H

Local Impact

Greene County 4-H members actively give back to the community through meaningful service projects that address local needs. One major initiative this year was our participation in 4-H Feeding Missouri, where members donated food to families in need across our community. This effort helped support food security while teaching youth the importance of compassion, generosity, and civic responsibility. In addition to food drives, members volunteered their time supporting community events, clean-up efforts, and local organizations. These hands-on service opportunities allow youth to develop leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while making a positive difference in Greene County.

Greene County 4-H clubs demonstrated outstanding commitment to service and leadership this year. The Greene County 4-H Teen Council earned a Purple Seal with the Service to Communities Award, contributing an impressive 710.5 hours of community service. The Jot-Em-Down 4-H Club also received a Purple Seal, completing 132 hours of community service. These accomplishments reflect the dedication of our members, families, volunteers, and community partners who support youth in becoming responsible leaders and engaged citizens. Through service learning and leadership development, Greene County 4-H continues to strengthen our local community while preparing youth for future success.

Greene County

Missouri 4-H

Profiles and stories

Alana Kimmons represented Greene County 4-H as a State Representative, serving as a youth voice at the state level. Through this role, she helped connect local members with statewide programming, strengthened leadership skills, and represented 4-H values through communication and service. Alana's dedication reflects the strong leadership development opportunities available through Greene County 4-H.

Aubrey Suter served as a Regional Representative, working with youth across multiple counties to support leadership development and collaboration. In this role, Aubrey strengthened communication skills, built partnerships, and helped promote 4-H programs throughout the region. Her involvement highlights the impact 4-H has in preparing youth to lead and serve beyond their local community.

Greene County 4-H members participated in a variety of educational and leadership opportunities throughout the year. Youth attended Southwest Missouri 4-H Camp and Dairy Cow Camp, gaining hands-on experience, building friendships, and developing life skills. Members also took part in Missouri 4-H events including leadership conferences, project workshops, and competitive events, allowing them to explore interests, grow confidence, and strengthen leadership skills.

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

Agriculture and Environment

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.

Missouri Master Gardener
University of Missouri Extension

In 2025 - in Greene County, Missouri alone - 345 Extension Master Gardeners completed over 10, 504 VOLUNTEER HOURS!

The Missouri Master Naturalist program is a community-based imitative for adults, supported by the Missouri Depart a group ment of Conservation and MU Extension. It aims to create of knowledgeable volunteers who can offer education, outreach and service for the responsible management of natural resources in Missouri communities.

Additionally, the **Missouri Woodland Steward program** offers a short course that equips private landowners with knowledge of woodland management, helping them identify wildlife habitats, develop plans and connect with local natural resource experts.

The Missouri Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifer Program strives to enhance beef herd reproductive efficiency, boost farm income and establish dependable sources of quality replacement cows in Missouri. The program brings in the power of animal genomics through an enhanced DNA-option, Show-Me-PLUS.

Missouri Show-Me-Select Replacement Heifers

Since its inception more than 900 FARMS have enrolled, with an estimated statewide impact of $200 MILLION.

Legend

Agricultural Growth & Stewardship

Economic Opportunity

Educational Access & Excellence

Health & Well-Being

Archived - 3/3/2026

Profiles and stories

2025 – Horticulture Annual Report

ENGAGEMENT WORK
New Podcast in 2025

The "Growing the Ozarks" podcast began in March 2025 on KSMU, the NPR affiliate in Springfield, Missouri. The monthly podcast, hosted by Kelly McGowan, features nature and gardening topics with guests from the Master Gardeners of Greene County, Christian County Master Gardeners and the Springfield Plateau Master Naturalists.

KEY OUTCOMES

- ✓ Educational presentations direct contacts - 1608
- ✓ Led core training classes for new Master Gardeners (27 students; 12 classroom sessions)
- ✓ Coordinated and oversaw day-to-day operations of 466 volunteers.
- ✓ Leadership Positions — Secretary of two professional organizations — Epsilon Sigma Phi and University of Missouri Extension Association; Secretary of Greene County Soil and Water Board
- ✓ 19 one-on-one consultations with small farmers and those interested in starting an operation.

MEDIA

KOLR 10 TV Segments — 21
KY3 Interviews — 7
Radio Interviews — 7
Growing the Ozarks podcast — 10

VOLUNTEERS

Coordinator of Master Gardeners of Greene County (345 members),
Christian County Master Gardeners (48 Members),
Springfield Plateau Master Naturalists (73 Members)

Actions Planned for 2026

- Host 2026 Missouri Blueberry School in Springfield
- Growing Lavender in Missouri Guidesheet
- Enterprise Budgets for Blueberry and Lavender
- Commercial Horticulture Support
- Elderberry Curriculum
- State Master Gardener Conference

Master Gardeners of Greene County

Local Impact

2025

Number of Volunteers — 345
Number of Volunteer Hours — 10,504
Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours - $365,434.16*
(*Independent Sector at $34.79/hour)

Number of New Volunteers — 37
Number of Continuing Education Hours — 1338
Number of Advanced Training Hours — 112.5

Pounds of Produce Donated — 2500
Value of Pounds of Produce Donated - $4825.00*
(*Feeding America at $1.93/pound)
Number of Chapter-led Education Events — 29
Number of Participants in Education Events — 1088
Social Media Analytics — Facebook-5767 followers; Instagram-193 followers
Speakers Bureau — 22 events with 1200 attendees

Agriculture and Environment

Agriculture Business & Policy

Practical Economic Insights for Agricultural Lenders helped **7 Greene County** lenders interpret commodity trends, analyze farm financial stress indicators, and assess credit risk in agricultural loan portfolios. Attendees strengthened their ability to support producer financial resilience in a volatile economy.

Tri-County Livestock & Forage Conference provided **8 Greene 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.

SW-REEC Poultry Processing Demonstration trained **27 Greene 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.

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

There were 62 producers who attended the 100th Annual Greene County Ag. Production Conference in March. Topics featured Andy McCorkill on the essentials of feeding and storing hay, being a good neighbor from David Burton, the value of native warm-season grasses by Caleb O'Neal, and virtual fence technology from Katelyn Dozier. This conference was organized by Tim Schnakenberg and was tailored to equip attendees with information that could lead to stronger community ties, more profitable livestock operations, and more resilient forage systems in the livestock production operations of the attendees.

In collaboration with the Missouri Forage and Grassland Council a Grassfed Beef Production Workshop was offered by Caleb O'Neal in March. There were 51 attendees including 3 Greene County residents who attended this event. Grassfed beef is a specialty product that can be higher than conventionally raised beef in nutrient density and thus can command a higher price for the product. This program was designed to educate and equip farmers to produce, market, and successfully sell grassfed beef direct-to-consumer, which has greater profit margins than simply taking animals to the stockyards.

A new program was developed by Extension personnel in 2025 focused on Utilizing Drones in Missouri Agriculture. The first drone school attracted 35 attendees including 2 Greene County residents and was coordinated by Caleb O'Neal. In the first year of this program, O'Neal delivered in-person drone education programming in 15 different counties, to more than 1,600 Missouri residents. The intent of these programmatic efforts is to demonstrate the current potential uses for drone technologies in agricultural production, with a strong emphasis in introducing young farmers to alternative business models that enable them to remain in agriculture and carry on their family legacy of farming in Missouri.

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

There were 75 producers who attended the 2nd Annual Organics in the Ozarks Field day including 8 Greene County residents in July. This event was organized by Caleb O'Neal in collaboration with the Missouri Organic Association. This program is designed to provide network opportunities and practical education for producers who are interested in organic crop and fruit/vegetable production methods. There is currently more demand than supply for commodities like organic soybeans in the U.S. and the price for such goods are often multiple times as valuable as conventional commodities. This program is tailored to support organic commodity production in the state and strengthen local markets.

There were 6 teachers who attended a Private Pesticide Applicator Training delivered by Caleb O'Neal and Matthew Huchteman in Greene County. The Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association sponsors teachers who are interested to receive the PPAT training that is offered through Extension. These trainings equip individuals with practical knowledge in safe chemical handling and use of restricted use pesticides, which can have detrimental impact on the health of the environment and humans if handled improperly.

Farm Fest at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in Springfield is the largest gathering of the farm community in Southwest Missouri. MU Extension ag specialists staff a booth at this event throughout the entire weekend in October. Thousands of visitors from dozens of counties stream by the booth and hundreds stopped in to visit with regional specialists.

Agriculture and Environment

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AG TOUR 2025

The 10th Annual Greene County Commissioners Agriculture Tour, held Friday, September 5, 2025, showcased the diversity and creativity of western Greene County's agricultural community. Traveling through Republic, Bois D'Arc, and Ash Grove, commissioners, elected officials, and community leaders saw firsthand how local farmers and entrepreneurs are strengthening the county through innovation, food access, and education.

Since its beginning in 2017, the Greene County Commissioners Agriculture Tour has provided more than a day of farm visits—it has created a platform for dialogue, innovation, and the future of Greene County agriculture. Special appreciation to those who agreed to host this special event!

Backyard Pantry: The Mounteer Family Homestead

First stop was the Republic home of Cassi and Bill Mounteer, whose "Backyard Pantry" is a thriving model of self-sufficiency and community education Each part of their operation supports the others: bees pollinate the plants and provide honey, rabbits supply manure for fertilizer along with meat and pets, while chickens contribute eggs, meat, and weed control.

Missouri Berries: Agritourism in Action

Next, tour participants visited Missouri Berries, where owner Randy Little described how strawberries and blueberries have become a bridge between farming and community engagement. The U-pick model strengthens rural economies while inviting families to experience agriculture directly.

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AG TOUR 2025

NuVenture Farms: Veterans Leading in Agriculture

On the beautiful backroads near Bois D' Arc, Mo., Veterans Jesse and Jessica Thurman own and operate NuVenture Farms, where they emphasize humane care, small-scale pork production, and strong connections to local markets.

Ash Grove: Roots & Harvest

Two stops in Ash Grove centered on food access and education. The Community Free-dge, and the Roots & Harvest Community Market—Missouri's first "Farm Stop"—offered tour participants a look at how local farmers can connect directly with consumers year-round.

Ash Grove High School FFA

At Ash Grove High School, students showed off their greenhouse and welding programs. The FFA program equips students with skills in both agriculture and industry while inspiring future leaders.

Patchwork Farms:

The tour concluded at Patchwork Flower Farm in Springfield, where over 30 varieties of daffodils and seasonal blooms demonstrate the potential of niche crops.

GREENE COUNTY FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR - 2025

GREG & LAURA SWEETON FAMILY
2025 GREENE COUNTY FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

Greene County MU Extension and partner organizations, Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Department of Agriculture and Missouri State Fair Commissioners honored the Sweeton Family for their outstanding contributions to Missouri and Missouri agriculture! They are truly an outstanding example of a dedicated, hardworking farm family.

GREENE COUNTY CENTURY FARMERS - 2025

Dodd Family Farm
Established 1920

Valvalia Thater is the Great Granddaughter of L.A. & Genelia Dodd.

Clarity Farms
Established 1876

Tanya Barnett is the great-great granddaughter of Alphonso Andrews.

King Family Farm
Established 1918

Stephen King is the grandson of Charlie and Bernice King.

Extension Engagement Specialist
Greene County

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Greene County

Extension Engagement Specialist Kyle Whittaker, MU Extension Workforce Development Specialist Amy Patillo, MU Extension Horticulture Specialist Kelly McGowen and Youth Program Associate Bailey Andrews conducted a Career Development Event workshops at the Springfield Lawn and Garden Show on February 21st . The workshops were held in conjunction with the lawn and garden show hosted by the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds. The team provided the workshops for FFA students preparing for district and state competitions. Three workshops were conducted in the areas of Floriculture, Nursery/Landscaping and Entomology.

The Floriculture Career Development Event includes identifying 60 plants from a list of 143 plants. A plant diagnosis and disorders practicum, greenhouse and floral item identification practicum and a written exam.

The Nursery/Landscaping Career Development Event includes 50 plants specimens from a list of 91 shade trees, flowering trees, perennials, evergreen shrubs, vines and ground covers, turf and flowering shrubs. The event also includes a plant disorder and diagnosis practicum, a landscape design practicum and a written exam.

The Entomology Career Development Event includes identifying 40 insects specimens from a list of 114. The event also includes an insect/plant diagnosis practicum, pesticide formulation problem and a written exam.

Extension Engagement Specialist
Greene County

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Greene County

Extension Engagement Specialist — Kyle Whittaker conducted the Southwest District Poultry and Meats Evaluation Career Development Events (CDE) held on the campus of Missouri State University. The meats CDE involved 27 teams from schools throughout southwest Missouri and the poultry CDE involved 30 teams, 204 students participated in the events. The District CDE was held April 3rd and 4th and is a qualifying event for FFA teams competing for the state FFA CDE.

Extension Engagement Specialist
Greene County

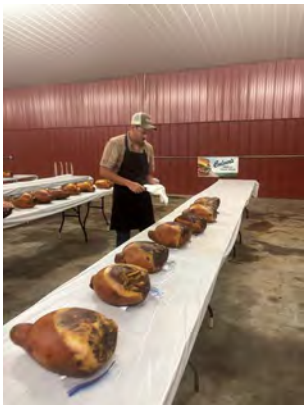
Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Greene County

Area youth have success at the 2025 Gold Buckle Gala Ham Show. Kyle Whittaker Extension Engagement Specialist serves at the ham show superintendent and hosted several ham curing workshops throughout southwest Missouri. The Gold Buckle Gala is held at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in mid-July



Extension Engagement Specialist — Kyle Whittaker conducted a country cured ham judging clinic in conjunction the Gold Buckle Gala ham show. The clinic was for ag teachers and 4-H project leaders.

Kyle Whittaker Extension Engagement Specialist serving Greene County conducted a poultry processing workshop at the Ag Academy- Springfield Public Schools. The 4th — 6th grade students raised some birds and the workshop was to harvest the birds. Approximately 75 students and parents attended the workshop held at the DARR

Extension Engagement Specialist
Greene County

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Greene County

Greene County MU Extension faculty and staff participated n the annual Home School Fair held at the Springfield Botanical Center in October. The event was attended by over 400 home school students and their parents. The all-day event provides several different opportunities for students and parents to learn about new things and enhances student learning by providing hand-on experiences. Several different organizations were represented at the event providing a wide variety of learning experiences for students and parents in attendance.

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Missouri Grazing Schools — A grazing school was held in October at Fair Grove with 25 participants. These schools provide the most in-depth training on how to be successful with Management-intensive Grazing (MiG) practices. These three-day schools are unique to Missouri and have set a standard for teaching and demonstrating the newest grazing concepts. Other schools offered in 2025 occurred in Lawrence, Christian, Newton, Wright, Dade and Ozark counties. The schools allowed farmers to think differently about how they manage their pastures and have become a very effective program. There were over 150 livestock producers who attended the sessions from Southwest Missouri counties this year. Numerous presentations were offered along with on-farm field trips to evaluate pasture grazing systems.

100th Greene County Ag Production Workshop - There were around 65 participants who attended this momentous occasion in March. This was the 100th documented annual farm educational event in the county. This event was called "Soils and Crops Conference" until 2016. Prior to this term, it is believed the first events were called "Clover and Prosperity" meetings. This year, families who had century farms in the county were invited and were recognized. Topics covered included how to integrate virtual fencing on your farm, exploring the value of native warm-season grasses, essentials of feeding and storing hay and being a good neighbor in rural Missouri. In the survey at the end of the meeting, 100 percent of the participants ranked the program as either meeting or exceeding their expectations. Greene County farm producers are an economic generator for the local economy. This program addressed ways this sector in the county economy can remain viable.

Farm Fest - Farm Fest is held each year at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in Springfield and is the largest gathering of the farm community in Southwest Missouri. MU Extension ag specialists staff a booth at this event throughout the entire weekend in October. Thousands of visitors streamed by the booth and hundreds stopped in to visit with regional specialists.

Greene County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - There were 76 participants who attended trainings offered by Tim Schnakenberg. Trainings occurred in Cassville, Springfield, Ozark, Mt. Vernon, Ava and Hollister. This training has direct impact on environmental safety, human safety and the safety of the American food supply. Farmers are retrained every five years in order to maintain a private pesticide license to purchase and use Restricted-Use pesticides.

Noncertified Restricted-Use Pesticide (NRUP) Applicator Training - There were 32 participants who attended NRUP trainings offered by Rusty Lee, Micah Doubledee and Tim Schnakenberg. Trainings occurred in Springfield, Nixa and Carthage. This newly required training certifies pesticide users to work under supervisors who have commercial licenses. This often applies to employees of pest control operators, farm chemical applicators, government workers and municipalities.

Warm Season Grass Workshop - There were around 45 farm producers from many counties who participated in the warm season grass workshop at Mt. Vernon in February. With recent droughts, warm season grasses are growing in popularity and this workshop gave recommendations on species selection, establishment methods and management tactics. One respondent to the survey mentioned, "Very helpul. Completely new to this so I need to hear and re-hear. With each presentation, I learn more, or it sticks with me better."

Ozark Empire Fair Hay Contest - This year's contest had outstanding participation with 49 entries submitted (36% increase from the previous year) from ten counties. Several ag specialists traveled to 30 southern Missouri farms to collect samples of the entries. This was a great opportunity to help producers better educate themselves on hay quality. Counties represented this year included Greene, Lawrence, Christian, Stone, Newton, Howell, Ozark, Iron, Webster and Barry counties. The highest-testing entry and champion dry hay came from Glenn and Toni Obermann of Monett. It was a first cutting alfalfa hay entry that was harvested on May 15. It produced a 231 Relative Forage Quality (RFQ). The champion haylage was alfalfa entered by Maple Pass Farm of Billings. It's cutting date was June 1 and the RFQ was 212. The show has occurred since 1985. Tim Schnakenberg and Reagan Bluel served as Superintendents for this show.

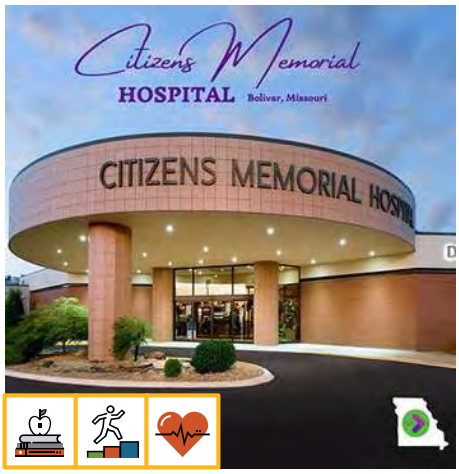
41st Annual Southwest Missouri Spring Forage Conference - There were around 375 farm producers who participated in the conference in Springfield in February. There were fourteen key presentations and a trade show. This is one of Missouri's largest gatherings of farmers and ranchers and is hosted by a committee made up of extension field specialists and professionals from Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Missouri Department of Conservation.

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** Sept. 28 to Oct. 4 by completing and reporting neighboring acts and nominating others as the most engaged neighbors in their counties.

In 2025, the goal was to document 35,000 acts of neighboring. That goal was surpassed with 42,134 Missourians being positively affected during MISSOURI GOOD NEIGHBOR WEEK!



Recovery Friendly Workplaces (RFWs)foster a workplace culture that promotes employee safety, health and well-being through strategies that support managers and employees, including reducing stigma and providing recovery resources related to the challenges surrounding substance use disorders. The framework was developed in partnership with MU Extension's Labor and Workforce Development Program.

As of 2025, 50 Missouri businesses have been designated recovery friendly workplaces, and 3,179 EMPLOYEES have been trained on addiction, stigma and naloxone distribution.

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.

Key Outcomes - FY2025 Greene County SBDC ASSISTED 49 STARTUPS, 439 Business Owners with multiple 1:1 CONSULTING SESSIONS & 17 NEW businesses were started!

Legend

- Agricultural Growth & Stewardship
- Economic Opportunity
- Educational Access & Excellence
- Health & Well-Being

Archived - 3/3/2026

Business and Community

Civic Muscle

University of Missouri Extension Community Development Specialists build Civic Muscle, which is the collective strength of people in a place (neighborhood, town, region) to respond to challenges and proactively pursue thriving communities. Community development specialists coach communities and individuals to build Civic Muscle in four key "Muscle Groups."

Belonging

- Neighboring 101 continued to grow nationally, reaching 1,032 participants from 36 states through monthly Zoom sessions featuring thought leaders such as Peter Block, Brenna Duffy, and Ian Campbell.
- The Republic Neighborhood Engagement Team launched with 15 block captains, most under age 30, demonstrating the next generation's interest in local connection.
- Show-Me Neighborhood Art Week drew 73 public art displays and 468 votes for People's Choice, encouraging creative expression and neighborhood pride.

Contribution

- The Out & About movement expanded, with 3 families in Republic hosting front-yard gatherings attended by over 30 neighbors.
- Missouri Good Neighbor Week (Sept. 28—Oct. 4) inspired statewide participation, with 12 cities issuing proclamations and local events ranging from film screenings (Leap of Faith and A Man Named Ove) to a "long-table" community meal.
- Faith-based initiatives linked community engagement with programs at the Council of Churches, Festival of Faiths, and the Springfield Interfaith Network.
- KY3 television supported the week with four public service announcements, amplifying the message of everyday kindness.

The Out & About movement expanded and involved members of the Republic Engagement Team.

Missouri Good Neighbor Week (Sept. 28—Oct. 4) activities included the Overlay Festival in Springfield and the public art that resulted from that event.

Business and Community

Civic Muscle

Leadership

- The Neighborhood Leadership Academy celebrated 56 statewide graduates, six from southwest Missouri, with local projects addressing local neighborhood needs.
- Delivered 20+ presentations to civic, educational, and faith groups, including Leadership Springfield and Give 5.
- Co-led a pre-conference session on neighboring at the Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities Conference with 144 registered participants.
- Maintained a consistent media presence: weekly and monthly newspaper columns appeared in the Springfield Daily Citizen, Greene County Commonwealth, and West Plains Daily Quill.
- Our neighboring work was featured in 203 national news stories and 16 podcasts.
- The We-Are-Neighbors blog recorded 303,145 annual page views, while the MUExtension417 YouTube channel saw 34,401 views.
- 18 Missouri newspapers printed your column on being an engaged neighbor, demonstrating your statewide communication reach.
- Formed the Missouri Neighboring Conference Workgroup with 22 members, planning the state's first Neighboring Conference for 2026.

Vitality

- The Engaged Neighbor Newsletter grew to 8,259 subscribers, maintaining its streak as the nation's best digital neighboring publication.
- Relaunched Missouri Historic Schools Alliance to preserve rural heritage and pride of place.
- Developed new senior adult program, "A History of Me," addressing loneliness and "intentional isolation," encouraging residents to reflect on choices that impact connection.
- The Greene County Agriculture Tour (Sept. 5) brought 28 participants together to explore local food systems and rural innovation.
- Partnered with Flourish on an asset mapping initiative in Springfield's Heart of the Westside neighborhood (6-person team).

Led a 2-hour workshop on neighboring for 144 attendees at the Creating Entrepreneurial Communities Conference in Excelsior Springs.

Spoke at Community Foundation of the Ozarks grant event for southwest Missouri projects focused on creating a sense of belonging.

Business and Community

Profiles and Stories

Reimagining Your Workforce Conference 2025

The ***Reimagining Your Workforce*** **Conference** convened 93 statewide participants representing **employers, educators, service providers, and community leaders**. Attendees gained evidence-based tools, built partnerships, and strengthened alignment around Missouri's short-, medium-, and long-term workforce needs—resulting in measurable increases in knowledge, collaboration readiness, and actionable next steps.

The *Reimagining Your Workforce* Conference highlighted **the impact of strong partnerships—MU Extension, Arvest Bank, Ozark Region Nexus, Missouri Recovery Friendly Workplace, and Springfield Workforce Development & Economic Vitality.** Through shared risk, shared learning, and shared commitment, partners deepened trust, aligned their priorities, and launched coordinated strategies to expand talent pipelines, support recovery-informed workplaces, and strengthen Missouri's economic vitality.

Strong Partnerships at Reimagining Your Workforce Conference 2025

Featured speakers delivered powerful insights on employer engagement, talent pipeline development, recovery-informed workplaces, and regional workforce alignment. Their expertise helped deepen collaboration, spark new partnership commitments, and equip communities with actionable strategies to strengthen Missouri's workforce and economic vitality.

The University of Missouri's Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) program provided education to 23 participants, highlighting how Missouri high school students with disabilities, ages 14—21 are equipped with the skills and confidence needed to navigate work, education, and independent living. Early engagement strengthens transition planning, improves collaboration among educators and families, and leads to higher rates of successful post-school outcomes.

Business and Community

Profiles and Stories

Recovery Friendly Workplace Designation 2025
Arvest Bank Speakers and Partner sponsor

Recovery Friendly Workplace Employer Designation Training

In addition to presenting to approximately 50 leaders at the Ozark Region Nexus statewide meeting, the Recovery Friendly Workplace Employer Designation Training engaged 28 employers and community partners who gained practical tools to support employees in recovery, reduce stigma, and strengthen workplace culture. Participants reported increased understanding of recovery-informed practices and greater confidence in implementing policies that promote safety, stability, and employee retention across their organizations.

Second-chance hiring Engagements

Across three speaking engagements with Rotary clubs and regional Recovery Coalitions, *Reimagining Your Workforce: Breaking Barriers Together* reached 167 community leaders, employers, and service partners. These presentations strengthened understanding of second-chance hiring, highlighted effective workforce strategies, and equipped attendees with practical tools to support justice-involved individuals in reentering employment. Participants reported increased awareness, stronger cross-sector collaboration, and a renewed commitment to expanding opportunity for workers across southwest Missouri.

Second-Chance Hiring Speaking Engagements

Second-chance hiring and Recovery Friendly Workplace strategies expand talent pipelines, improve retention, and strengthen community stability. MU Extension plays a critical intermediary role by connecting employers with trusted partners, providing evidence-based training, and coordinating cross-sector efforts that help justice-involved and recovery-involved individuals successfully return to work.

Profiles and Stories

National Association of Building Trades Union Sexual Harassment Training

Through targeted education and real-world scenarios, the National Association of Building Trades Union Sexual Harassment Training helped participants build safer work environments, improve communication, and reinforce expectations for professional conduct on job sites. This program has provided training for more than 80 Missouri apprentices entering the skilled trades.

Missouri Apprentice Ready, Springfield, MO

Steelworkers Summer Leadership Institute 2025

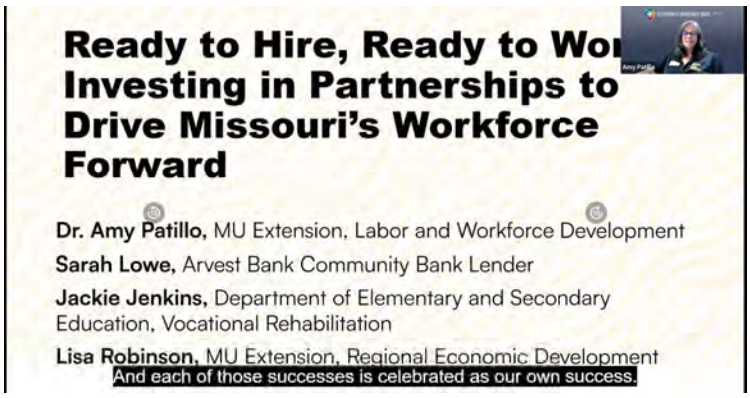
Steelworkers Summer Leadership Institute 2025

140 Steelworkers from the Four States region participated in a series of training sessions covering USW labor history, grievance handling, rapid response, communication and public speaking, safety and health, civil and human rights, FMLA, local union officer responsibilities, legal and NLRB updates, and research methods. These sessions strengthened members' knowledge, leadership capacity, and ability to advocate effectively for safe, fair, and well-supported workplaces.

Dr. Amy Patillo contributed to **the United Steelworkers Leadership Institute 2025** by teaching communications and research methods, helping steelworkers build stronger leadership abilities, improve workplace communication, and use data-driven approaches to support their coworkers and strengthen the regional workforce.

Steelworkers are essential to the manufacturing strength of the region, providing the skilled workforce that keeps production moving and local industries competitive. By championing safe working conditions and supporting pathways for workers to build stable, long-term careers, they help sustain local families, maintain steady employment, and strengthen the overall regional economy. Their commitment to quality, safety, and professional development ensures that businesses can thrive and communities remain strong. Programs such as Women of Steel further extend this impact by promoting safety, leadership, mentorship, and well-being across the community—helping develop the next generation of leaders and reinforcing the vital role steelworkers play in the region's economic and community health.

Profiles and Stories



Strong Workforce Partnership Drive Missouri's Workforce

Ready to Hire, Ready to Work: Investing in Partnerships to Drive Missouri's Workforce Forward

Strong workforce partnerships are driving Missouri's workforce forward, as demonstrated through Extension and Engagement presentations held October 14—16, 2025. The session Ready to Hire, Ready to Work: Investing in Partnerships to Drive Missouri's Workforce Forward engaged 51 participants in strategies that align employers, educators, and community partners to meet workforce needs. Additionally, Powering Missouri's Workforce and Regional Economic Growth, presented by Amy Patillo and Lisa Robinson, reached 65 participants and highlighted the importance of coordinated regional efforts, data-driven decision-making, and cross-sector collaboration. Together, these sessions strengthened understanding of Missouri's workforce challenges and advanced practical approaches to building a stronger, more resilient talent pipeline.

Springfield Botanical Gardens Home School Fair

More than 500 homeschoolers and their families participated in the Springfield Botanical Gardens Home School Fair, where MU Extension provided engaging activities and educational support. The event strengthened family learning, encouraged curiosity, and expanded community connections.

4-H Ice Cream Social and Greene County 4-H Youth demonstration activities: Air gun, archery, STEM, Bottle rockets, robots, 4-H Exhibits, and Dutch Oven Cooking

The **Greene County 4-H Ice Cream Social** engaged 127 participants in interactive youth demonstrations ranging from air gun and archery to STEM, bottle rockets, robotics, Dutch oven cooking, and 4-H exhibits. These activities provided meaningful opportunities for young people to showcase their skills, practice leadership, and inspire peers and families through hands-on learning.

Business and Community

Profiles and Stories

North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center, Impact Collaborative, Minneapolis, MN

Missouri Farm Stress team members Amy Patillo, Jendel Wolfe, and Director Karen Funkenbusch participated in the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center Impact Collaborative to identify opportunities and barriers to expanding telehealth services for veterans, farmers, and ranchers in Missouri. Through this work, the team helped strengthen access to no-cost telehealth therapy provided by licensed clinicians to Missourians working in agriculture. Since its launch in 2023, the program has more than doubled its telehealth services and counseling hours, demonstrating growing need and significant progress in supporting the mental health and well-being of Missouri's agricultural community.

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.

KOLR- 10 AgrAbility Arthritis and Gardening

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.

Business and Community

Profiles and Stories

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.

GREENE COUNTY

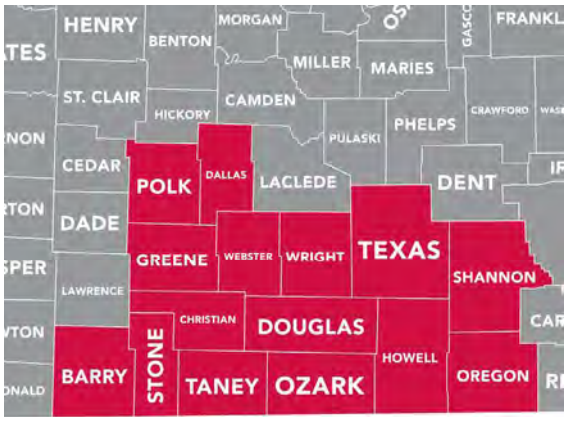
Serving: Greene County

Missouri Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Missouri SBDC at Missouri State University (MO State) provided support to Greene County entrepreneurs and small business owners through 1:1 assistance and training. Over the course of 2025, our office met with clients in Greene County to discuss a wide range of topics including:

- Starting a business
- Business financing
- Business expansion and relocation
- Financial planning & cash flow management
- Marketing strategy
- Course projects with MSU students
- Purchasing a business
- International expansion opportunities
- Technology commercialization

Through leveraging regional partnerships, several programs geared toward small businesses and enhancing the local workforce were offered through an initiative called Show-Me Network. In 2025 this initiative brought two virtual and one in-person Early-Stage Business Boot Camps to Greene County citizens. The Early-Stage Business Boot Camp entrepreneurs in Greene County look at all aspects of their business including, feasibility, business planning and understanding business financials.



The Missouri SBDC at Missouri State University serves 15 counties in southwest Missouri (highlighted).

Learn more about our latest programs and training

sbdc@missouristate.edu

417-837-2617

sbdc.missouristate.edu

KEY OUTCOMES IN GREENE COUNTY

437 Business owners in the County received multiple 1:1 consulting sessions regarding their small businesses.
$20.5 million Approved capital funding
$36.5 million Increase in sales
17 New businesses started
1,360 Attendees from Greene County joined our business and professional development training programs.
$47.6 million Government contracts won through the assistance from our partners at the Missouri APEX Accelerator.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

49

New businesses started through the assistance of the SBDC

$97,043,687

Increase in sales for client companies through the assistance of the SBDC

$114,320,774

Government contracts secured through the assistance of Missouri APEX (formerly MO PTAC)

Impact data is client verified and obtained by approximately 30% of clients annually for the statewide network.
The Missouri SBDC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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

Health and Human Sciences

Building Strong Families

Studies show that people with strong family bonds tend to have lower stress levels. Building Strong Families helps families deal with disagreements, manage stress and show their love for one another.

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

Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people (ages 12-17) facing mental health or addition 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

Divorcing or separating parents encounter distinct challenges when living apart. **Focus on Kids** guides parents in fostering effective co-parenting strategies to support their children through this process.

"Understanding that divorce doesn't ruin children, but parents can significantly influence positive outcomes through good communication, was invaluable."

Legend

Agricultural Growth & Stewardship

Economic Opportunity

Educational Access & Excellence

Health & Well-Being

Archived - 3/3/2026

Greene County

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Mental Well-Being

During the past year, I delivered evidence-based programs to strengthen mental health awareness, knowledge, and response skills across the Southwest Region. Programs taught included **Adult Mental Health First Aid**, **Youth Mental Health First Aid**, and a variety of **mental health awareness presentations** tailored to community needs.

Through **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. **Counties Served through Mental Health First Aid Programs in the Southwest Region: Barry (2), Barton (2), Dade (1) Greene (74), Howell (3) Jasper (6), Lawrence (3), McDonald (3), Newton (2), Taney (1) Wright (1) counties.**

Through MU Extension, community members were empowered not only to prioritize their own mental health and well-being, but also to extend that support to family members, friends, and community settings. Mental health awareness outreach also extended beyond traditional classrooms. Programming at the **Greenwood Laboratory School, Greene County Homeschool Fair, and Missouri State University Safety Day** reached families from multiple counties, expanding the regional impact of Extension's mental health education efforts.

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.

Safety Day in partnership with **Greenwood Laboratory School-**Nutrition and Health Field Specialist, Jenni Nevatt, created and implemented an interactive presentation about the importance of teens limiting caffeine and sugar and staying hydrated during 7, 30-minute sessions for **approximately 250 students,** grades 6-12. February 13, 8:30-12:30.

Greene County

Health and Human Science

Profiles and stories

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.

SW-REEC Mental Health Awareness Presentation

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.

MU Extension Summer Internship

This summer, Missouri State University Child and Family Development intern Madison McCord gained hands-on experience with MU Extension across the Southwest Region, exploring a wide range of programs and completing a final project focused on rural mental health resources for youth and families.

"Spending time with the Greene County MU Extension team as an intern has exceeded every expectation I ever had. The support I have received from each staff member has been heartfelt and genuine. Their wisdom, patience, and encouragement makes me feel valued every single day. I have learned so much from their real-world experience and welcoming nature. It's rare to find a group of professionals so dedicated to helping the community and eager to share their knowledge. One of the best parts of this internship has been the opportunity to see the wide variety of programs in action. Being able to engage in such valuable programs that impact community members across southwest Missouri has been extremely eye-opening. Although my time is not over yet, I cherish every connection made and lesson learned thus far. "

Greene County

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Missouri's **Family Nutrition Education Program** oversees two programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (**SNAP-Ed**) and Expanded Family Nutrition Education Program (**EFNEP**). Together, these programs brought over $13 million in federal funds to Missouri in 2025. MU Extension's Family Nutrition Education Program engaged with 970,000+ Missourians with low income. Over 74,000 Missourians participated in nutrition education classes.
Participants in SNAP-Ed and EFNEP 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 **reduces healthcare costs** over the participant's lifetime and **saves taxpayer money** in reduced public healthcare benefits and insurance premiums.

Greene County Impact

Youth Direct Teaching

392

Adult Direct Teaching

103

2,162

SNAP Applications

157

Flourish Food Pantry

"In a continued partnership with Flourish Food Pantry and Crosslines Food Pantry, I assisted over 150 individuals with SNAP Applications. These benefits help families and individuals with the ability to purchase healthy, nutritious food that they cannot always get at a food pantry. I also handed out recipes that use common food pantry ingredients such as canned goods."

Local Profile and Stories

In two years, we have completed two series of EFNEP Classes with Missouri State University's Bear POWER program, which supports students with intellectual disabilities get a college education. After we completed our Fuel for Life series, the students shared their take aways from nutrition classes.

How will you use Kenlyn's Health and Nutrition Classes?

"By having a more balanced diet and making sure I eat enough that fuels me throughout my day at work. Also look back at the notebook she gave for simple healthy food ideas." — Echo

"I will incorporate her lessons into my future by using the different skills she taught us and put them to use. One of the ways is by making some of the recipes that we made in class." - Easton

Fuel for Life at Missouri State University Bear POWER

"Missouri State University's Bear POWER program collaborated with Kenlyn and the EFNEP Program to provide engaging, hands-on wellness and nutrition programming for students. During these sessions, Kenlyn led interactive activities focused on practical food knowledge, budgeting, and healthy decision-making tailored to students' real-life college experiences. Her approachable and interactive teaching style encouraged active participation, thoughtful discussion, and a comfortable space for students to ask questions about topics that can otherwise feel overwhelming.

The programming had a meaningful impact by increasing students' confidence around nutrition choices, overall wellness, and managing new responsibilities as they prepare for greater independence. As a result, students gained valuable skills that reduced stress and supported informed decision-making as they transition into the workforce and independent living, and we are grateful for Kenlyn's partnership and the MU Extension Program's positive impact on student readiness."

-**Sherry Elkins,** Career Resource Specialist MSU Bear POWER

Local Profile and Stories

Kenlyn Shettlesworth Receiving the Reaching Diverse Audiences Award at the 2025 Health and Human Sciences Conference

Reaching Diverse Audiences Award

On April 9th, 2025, Kenlyn Shettlesworth was honored with the Reaching Diverse Audiences award at the Health and Human Sciences Conference. This award highlighted her work with underserved communities in Greene County and Extension overall. Some of the organizations included the GLO Center, Down Syndrome Group of the Ozarks, Empower: Abilities, the Springfield Dream Center, MSU Bear POWER, and Harmony House. Kenlyn remains committed to programming with new and unique audiences.

Schools & Agencies Served

Public Schools:
- Fullbright Early Childhood
- Mallory Early Childhood
- Shady Dell Early Childhood
- Rountree Elementary
- Sunshine Elementary

Food Pantries:
- Crosslines Food Pantry
- MSU Bear Pantry
- Salvation Army Food Pantry
- Schweitzer Flourish Pantry
- Weller Community Church

Other Sites:
- ARC of the Ozarks
- Douglas Head Start
- Down Syndrome Group of the Ozarks
- Drew Lewis Foundation
- Empower: Abilities
- Fair Grove Library
- Greene County OACAC
- Greene County Youth Academy
- Harmony House
- Habitat for Humanity
- iPour Life
- MERS Goodwill Excel Center
- MERS Goodwill Industries
- Messiah Lighthouse Preschool
- MSU Bear POWER
- Northview Senior Center
- OFH Full Circle Garden
- Ozark Area YMCA
- Rare Breed Youth Services Inc.
- Springfield Dream Center
- The GLO Center
- Victory Mission Family Ministries

Local Impact

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.

21,176 direct and indirect contacts were made in Greene 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.

EFNEP Public Value Statement 2025

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) brought $1,624,777 federal funds to Missouri. These funds were used to enroll 424 limited-resource families in nutrition education and meal preparation classes, representing 1,550 family members. Additionally, 2,942 youth were enrolled in EFNEP classes.

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

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

Extension

University of Missouri

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