

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

# Hickory County



# 2024 Annual Report

18715 Cedar Street  
Hermitage, MO 65668  
417-745-6767

**SERVE  
MISSOURI.**

**DELIVER  
MIZZOU.**



**Extension**

*University of Missouri*

an equal opportunity/ADA institution



Office of Extension  
and Engagement  
*University of Missouri*

**Vice Chancellor's Office**  
108 Whitten Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211  
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EMAIL [cchiggins@missouri.edu](mailto:cchiggins@missouri.edu)

December 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Warm regards,

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

# Who we are

## Faculty and staff

### Housed in Hickory County:

**Terry Halleran**

Field Specialist in Agronomy

**Sarah Boyer**

Nutrition Program Associate/Youth Program Associate

**Jocelyn Wheeler**

Office Manager

### Serving Hickory County:

**Allison Gunter**

Extension & Engagement Specialist

**Ashley Allen-Brown**

Field Specialist in Regional Economic Development

**Ramon Arancibia**

Field Specialist in Horticulture

**David Brown**

Field Specialist in Livestock-Small Ruminant

**Velynda Cameron**

Field Specialist in 4-H Youth Development

**Joni Harper**

Field Specialist in Natural Resources

**Della Miller**

Field Specialist in Human Development

**Mitchell Moon**

Field Specialist in Labor & Workforce Development

**Gene Schmitz**

Field Specialist in Livestock

**Wesley Tucker**

Field Specialist in Agricultural Business

**Hannah Whittaker**

Field Specialist in Nutrition & Health

**Kelly Asbury**

**Emily Westermier**

(Missouri Small Business Development Center at State Fair Community College)

Business Development

## Council members

Victoria Hurt-Grosen, Chairman

Kurtis Brown, Vice-Chairman

Neili Hammer, Secretary

Don Koenig, Treasurer

Alana Brauch, Member

Lori Gist, Member

Abby Gordon, Member

Kimberly Lake, Member

Kathy Rains, Member

Michelle Turner, Member

Rick Pearson, Commission Rep.

Jason Daggett, Farm Bureau Rep.

Colton Whitney, ECYL

Vacant, City Rep.

Vacant, MFA Rep.

## County commissioners

Robert Sawyer, Presiding Commissioner

Rick Pearson, West-Side Commissioner

Robert Breshears, East-Side Commissioner

# Budget and more

## Appropriations budget

### Income

County Appropriations	\$42,935.05
To Balance Budget	\$1,347.95
Excess to Carryover	<u>-\$580.94</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$43,702.06</b>

### Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	\$37,822.72
Travel	\$2,886.12
Postage	\$248.73
Telephone	\$298.50
Office Supplies/Service	\$705.99
Insurance	<u>\$1,740.00</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$43,702.06</b>

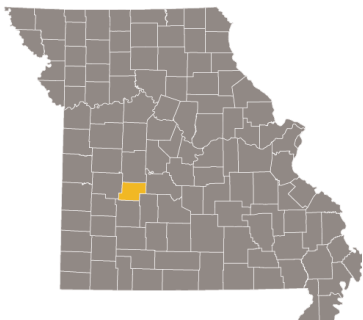
## Hickory County partners

Hickory County Commission  
Hickory County Health Department  
Hickory County Farmers Market  
Hickory County Soil & Water Conservation District  
Farm Service Agency  
McCarty Senior Center  
Hickory County Library  
City of Hermitage  
City of Weaubleau  
Hickory Estates  
Hermitage School District  
Skyline School District  
Weaubleau School District  
Wheatland School District

## MU Extension is a unique funding partnership.

Extension funding is a three-way partnership between federal, state, and county governments. The University of Missouri system uses federal and state money to 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 Hickory County Extension Council, faculty, and staff would like to thank the Hickory County Commissioners for their continued support of extension programs.



## Local Support

Did you know you can donate directly to Hickory 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, and the county office benefits each year. You can also donate to a specific program such as 4-H or Master Gardeners.

# UM System County Impacts

2025 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Hickory County



University of Missouri System  
COLUMBIA | KANSAS CITY | ROLLA | ST. LOUIS

### UM System Footprint in the county in 2024



#### FY24 county students

##### 12 students

- 7 Undergraduates
- 5 Graduate and professional students
- 7 Full-time students
- 5 Part-time students



#### County employees and retirees

##### 5 people employed by UM

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



#### County alumni

##### Selected school alumni

- 5 Nursing
- 4 Health Professions
- 1 Pharmacy
- 2 Veterinary Medicine
- 9 Agriculture
- 8 Engineering
- 7 Law

##### Alumni teaching K-12

- 3 teachers
- 3.7% of all district teachers
- 1 principal or administrator
- 14.3% of all district principals and administrators



#### County breakdown

##### MU

- 7 students
- 46 alumni
- 3 employees

##### UMKC

- 0 students
- 25 alumni
- 0 employees

##### Missouri S&T

- 4 students
- 10 alumni
- 0 employees

##### UMSL

- 1 student
- 3 alumni
- 0 employees



#### County properties and offices

MU Extension in: Hickory County



County population: 8,501



#### County services provided

##### Health care (FY24)

- 155 in-state patients seen at MU Health Care, with \$60,072 of uncompensated care
- 3 in-state patients seen at UMKC School of Dentistry with a statewide average of \$52.57 per patient in uncompensated care
- MU Health Care's Missouri Telehealth Network recorded 217 visits to 119 patients having ZIP codes associated with the county

##### Extension (2023)

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

# UM System County Impacts

2025 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Hickory County



University of Missouri System  
COLUMBIA | KANSAS CITY | ROLLA | ST. LOUIS

### UM System Statewide Footprint

#### Economic and Community Development Highlights

- In FY23, Business Development Specialists worked with small businesses and entrepreneurs statewide to create or retain 98,527 jobs.

**\$3.1**  
billion

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

- Between FY18 and FY23, UM System brought Missouri more than \$1.58 billion in federal and private research funds, funded primarily from outside the state, but spent within the state.



In FY24, UM System was issued 29 patents and filed 69 new U.S. patent applications.

- In FY24, the UM System awarded 707 design and construction project contracts throughout Missouri, for a total investment of \$287.3 million in the state.



In FY24, to improve access to medical and health related services, MU Health Care's Missouri Telehealth Network's Show-Me ECHO program provided 16,687 hrs of case-based instruction to 3,113 learners located in 105 of 114 Missouri counties and the city of St. Louis.

#### Education and Training Provided



40,542 police, fire fighters, and medical professionals attending continuing education (2023)



Agriculture and natural resource programs served 369,077 farmers and related businesses (2023)

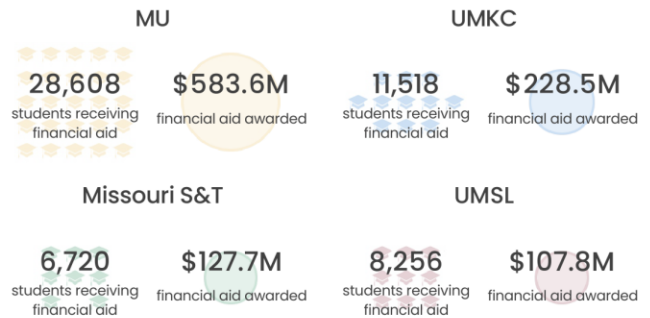


210,577 youth and stakeholder educational contacts in 4-H clubs, schools, camps and other programs (2023)

#### Education Highlights

##### FY24 Financial Aid Awards

In FY24, 69.7% of the UM System's 79,014 students received financial aid totaling \$1.048 billion



UM System's MOREnet (Missouri Research and Education Network) provides internet connectivity, access, support and training to 58 higher education institutions (230,000 students), 484 K-12 school districts (830,000 students) and 134 public libraries (serving nearly 3 million Missourians) in 2023.

- UM System awarded 50.5% of the 31,689 Bachelor's or higher degrees awarded by Missouri four-year public institutions in 2023-24.
- UM System awarded 35.0% of the 1,776 research doctorates and 26.8% of the 3,796 professional doctorates awarded by Missouri public and not-for-profit private institutions in 2023-24.
- In FY24, UM System's \$30.7 million in National Science Foundation (NSF) grants represented 96.9% of all NSF grants made to Missouri public colleges and universities.
- In 2024, over 12,400 Missourians accessed mobroadband.org, part of the UM System Broadband Initiative which helped the statewide build-out of high-speed internet infrastructure.

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

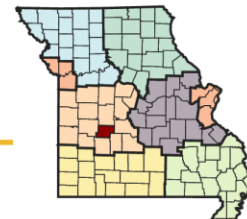
The university advances Missouri citizens and communities through its mission of teaching, research, public service, and economic development across our four campuses and University of Missouri Extension.

Prepared in December 2024, based on the best available and most recent data. Data Sources include: Missouri Office of Administration • UM IR • MU Institute for Public Policy • Center for Applied Research and Engagement Systems (CARES) • MU • UMKC • Missouri S&T • UMSL • UM System • UM Health Care • MU Extension • US Census Bureau • US Dept. of Health and Human Services • National Science Foundation



## Missouri Grand Challenges: Local Solutions

HICKORY COUNTY



### Knowing Missouri's Needs

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

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

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

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



#### Economic opportunity

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



#### Educational access and excellence

Increase participation in postsecondary education from 66% to 70%



#### Health and well-being

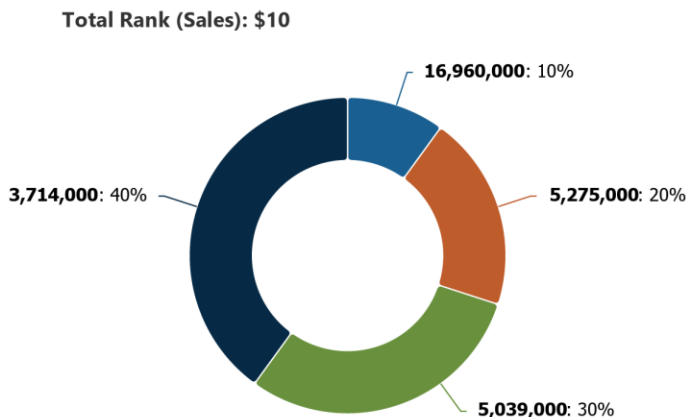
Improve Missouri's health ranking from 40th to 35th in the nation

### Knowing Local Challenges



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

#### Leading Agricultural Products



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

#### Net Farm Income

Net farm income (total sales, government payments, and other farm-related income minus total farm expenses) reflects the strength of the local agricultural community and can be an important measure for lenders and policy makers. The report area had a combined net farm income of \$8,438,000 in 2017, an average of \$18,108 per farm. This is below the statewide average farm income of \$56,606.

Report Area	Total Farms	Average Farm Income
Hickory	466	\$18,108
Missouri	87,887	\$56,606

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

# Grand Challenges



## CHALLENGE 2: Educational Access and Excellence: *Early Childhood Education*

### Access to Early Childhood Education

Head Start is an early childhood education program for at-risk children through age 5. Families utilizing Head Start have better success meeting developmental goals and achieving economic stability. In 2018, there were 2 Head Start programs in the report area, or 59.88 per 10,000 population. Access to head start is higher in this area than in the state.

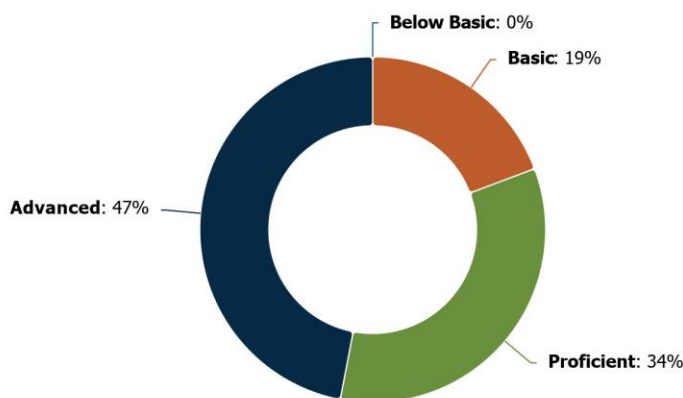
#### Head Start Programs, Rate (Per 10,000 Children Under Age 5)

**59.88** | Missouri 13.13  
Hickory

Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, [HRSA - Administration for Children and Families](#). 2024.

### English Language Arts Proficiency

Starting in the 4th grade, public schools emphasize proficiency in reading and reading comprehension. The ability to comprehend becomes the foundation to find and process information in later years and it is important to prevent children from falling behind. Of the 113.00 fourth graders tested in 2018, the known total number of students who had a basic level of English Language Arts was 16.00. The number tested as below basic was 0.00, basic was 16.00, proficient was 28.00, and advanced was 39.00.



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



## CHALLENGE 3: Healthy Futures: *Access to Care*

### Mental Health Care Providers

Mental health is a critical public health issue worldwide. Access to mental health services is a challenge across Missouri, which ranks 46 out of 51 states in provider access. In the trio there are approximately 8 credentialed professionals providing mental health care to serve the area's 8,279 residents. The patient-provider ratio in the report area is 1,035 to 1, which means there is 1 provider for every 1,035 persons. The ratio of persons to providers in the report area is higher than the state average of 346:1, which means there are fewer providers per person in this area.

#### Ratio (Population to Providers)

**1,035:1** | Missouri 346:1  
Hickory

Data Source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, [CMS - National Plan and Provider Enumeration System \(NPPES\)](#). December 2024.

### Primary Care Providers

Older adults make up a historically large percentage of the U.S. population and meeting the healthcare needs of an aging population can be challenging. In the report area, there are approximately 1 primary care physicians (MDs and DOs) to serve the area's 2,841 residents over the age of 65. The patient-provider ratio in the report area is 2,841:1, which means there is 1 provider for every 2,841 older adults. The ratio of adults to providers in the report area is higher than the state average of 250:1, which means there are fewer providers per person in this area.

#### Rate per 100,000 Seniors

**35.20** | Missouri 399.40  
Hickory

Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, [HRSA - Area Health Resource File](#). 2021.



# Grand Challenges



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

### Jobs Derived

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

#### Percent of Jobs Derived from Agriculture

25.6%

Hickory

Missouri 23.55%

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

### Value Added

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

#### Percent of Total Value Added from Agriculture

17.7%

Hickory

Missouri 21.98%

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



MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**  
 through credible statewide programs  
**Missouri 4-H for ages 8 – 18**



**Afterschool clubs**

These clubs meet after school for periods ranging from a few weeks to a full 4-H program year. These clubs typically focus on a single project at a time but can rotate through more than 100 different project topic areas. Members can elect officers and plan learning activities with options of public speaking, community service and links to career readiness.



**4-H's Leadership and Civic Engagement programs**

foster understanding, confidence and decision-making skills to empower youths to become informed and active young citizens. 4-H civic engagement initiatives prepare young people to become future leaders by engaging them in programs where they have voice and influence.



**4-H Natural Resources programs**

employ hands-on activities in climate science, environmental sustainability, renewable energy, sportfishing and wildlife conservation. The **Shooting Sports program**, which teaches marksmanship, safe firearm use, hunting and archery principles, is a prime illustration of how 4-H programs promote holistic youth development and responsible citizenship. Supported by caring adult leaders, these programs offer opportunities to cultivate life skills, self-worth and conservation ethics.



**Legend**



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

# Hickory County

Missouri 4-H

## Local Impact

*Sarah Boyer, Education Program Associate*

### **4-H Clubs:**

**Hickory County Blazers:** 26 members – 13 adult volunteers – 2 youth leaders

**The Hornets** (Hermitage afterschool club): 16 members

### **Accomplishments:**

**Community Service:** Feeding Missouri Food Drive, assisted with Blackberry Picking Days, donated entertainment items to nursing home, supplied gift bags to elderly tree project, adopted 5 elderly angels, photography members offered free spring photos for the community, and flag presentations at Cross Timbers & Hermitage parades.

**Participation/Events Attended:** officers toured the capitol, 4-H Day with the Cardinals, Teen Conference, State Congress, laying hen workshop, regional & state shooting sports competitions, day camps, recognition, and Missouri State Fair demonstrations.

### **Special Interest Clubs:** 125 youth

Crime & Spy; STEM backpacks with the Hickory County Library; Spa Days; Creative Kids (5–7-year-olds); 2 STEAM classes for 5–7-year-olds.

### **School Enrichment:** 336 youth

Hermitage afterschool program, Skyline afterschool cooking classes & Lego robotics; STEM backpacks at Skyline; butterfly hatching at all four schools; Hermitage summer program; Skyline summer program.

### **Nutrition/SNAC:** 34 youth

Cooking classes in Weaubleau and Hermitage; Soccer for Success in Weaubleau and Hermitage



# Hickory County

Missouri 4-H

## Profiles and Stories



McKenna Mackey did a demonstration at the Missouri State Fair. She educated the audience on hand-made toys for chickens.



Hermitage Summer School students participating in a walking classroom activity. Students walked while listening to an audiobook. After the walk, the students discussed the story they listened to.

Soccer for Success youth.





MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**  
 through credible statewide programs  
**Agriculture and Environment**

**“A lot of veterans come right out of the service and may feel disconnected and may be struggling with finding job opportunities. The Heroes to Hives program offers a diversion as well as opportunities.”**

**Eric Work, Heroes to Hives participant**



**Heroes to Hives** offers free professional training in beekeeping to veterans, promoting financial and personal wellness through community development. Missouri’s Heroes to Hives group has trained more than 1,200 veterans since 2021. It is the nation’s largest agriculture training program for U.S. military service members.



**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 then apply what they’ve learned to improve their communities and educate others about gardening.



**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

# Hickory County

## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

*Terry Halleran, Agronomy Specialist*

This year, the Hickory County Bus Tour included 30 traveling members from the surrounding area as we traveled through Southwestern Missouri, Northern Arkansas, Eastern Oklahoma, and Southwestern Kansas.

Our first stop was at the College of the Ozarks as we toured the campus and looked at their Registered Herefords and Registered Dairy operation. The other two stops on the first day were Circle S Farms in Elkins and the Savery Research Complex in Fayetteville, AR.

On Tuesday, we traveled to Morris, OK to view a Registered Red Angus operation, then on to the Oklahoma National Stockyards in OK City. This is the oldest National Stockyard in the US, founded in 1910. Our third day started with a 1500-acre Cattle, Sheep, and Goat operation in the Flint Hills of

Oklahoma. One family ran this entire operation. 600 Cows, 600 Sheep, and 600 Goats. We also toured the Southern Kansas Cotton Growers Cotton Gin and the Tallgrass Land and Cattle Company.

On our final day of the trip, we toured Dalebanks Angus, a fifth-generation ranch operating 500 Registered Angus females, producing 200 yearling and two-year-old bulls for the market. We also stopped at MM Ranch Polled Herefords in Kansas. This was a 20-year-old operation of 1500 Registered females before loading on the bus for the trip home.



# Hickory County

## Agriculture and Environment

### Profiles and Stories

*David Brown, Livestock Specialist (Sheep & Goats)*



Working with the local Amish community on receiving special training in the Private Pesticide Applicator Training program.



Promoting our newest local small ruminant specialist, Dr. David Brown. The Multi- Species Grazing Workshop was well received, with over 30 people attending.

The Heroes to Hives program is well worth the time spent supporting our servicemen and women. This swarm box-building exercise is one of their favorite parts of this year-round program offered throughout the state.



# Hickory County

Agriculture and Environment

## Local Impact

### Multispecies Grazing Workshop Hickory County

David Brown, Terry Halleran, Andy McCorkill,  
Bob Salmon & Mark Kennedy presented.

#### Event Sponsor

Southwest Electric Cooperative – Bolivar,  
OakStar Bank, SWCD - Hickory County,  
Dallas County Farmer's Exchange (MFA  
Farm & Home)

Over 35 participants attended the  
workshop.

“I received practical  
tips on pasture use  
& improving  
livestock health  
through diverse  
grazing strategies”!







# MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU** through credible statewide programs **Business and Community**



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

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



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

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



## **DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DATA TRAINING**

**MU Exceed** offers customized data training. Participants learn how to use public data through hands-on exercises and demonstrations.

**In 2022, Exceed provided data training to MORE THAN 200 MISSOURIANS. 95% of the attendees said that the information they learned was useful to their work.**

## Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being



# Economic Opportunity

Serving: Hickory County

## Missouri Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Missouri SBDC at State Fair Community College provides support to your county's entrepreneurs and small business owners through 1:1 assistance and training. Over the course of 2024, our office met with clients to discuss a wide range of topics including:

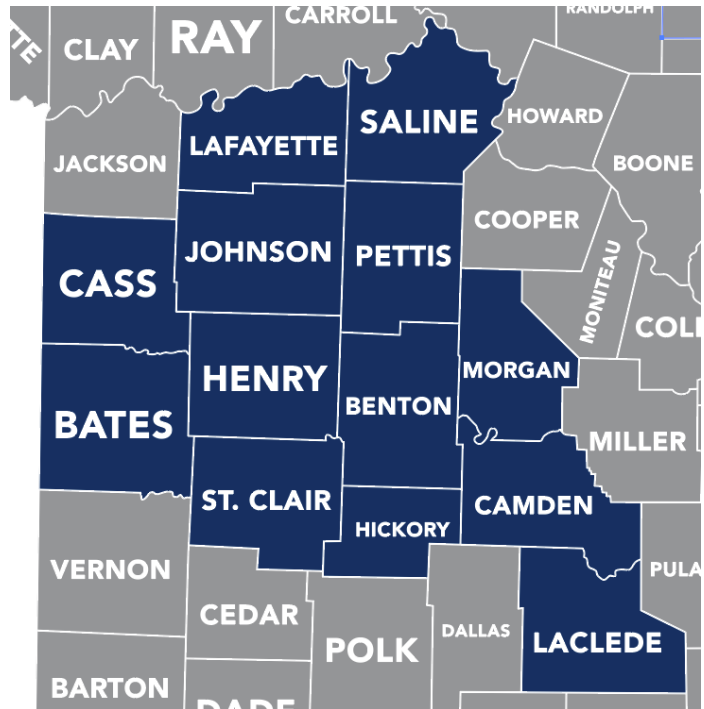
- Starting a business
- Business financing
- Business expansion and relocation
- Financial planning & cash flow management
- Marketing strategy & strategic growth
- Purchasing a business
- International expansion opportunities
- Technology commercialization

In 2024 the Missouri SBDC at State Fair Community College offered training events all throughout our 13 counties. The Center offered trainings such as:

- LaunchU
- Introduction to QuickBooks Online
- Advanced QuickBooks Online
- Boots to Business
- Give Yourself Credit
- Starting and Managing a Small Business
- Facebook Post Scheduling & Using AI for Creative Ideas
- Building Your Presence Online
- Understanding Financial Statements
- & many more!



The LearningForce  
KNOWLEDGE + SKILLS + ENRICHMENT



The Missouri SBDC at State Fair Community College covers 13 Counties in West Central Missouri.

### STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHTS:

**\$648,286,781**

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

**\$496,469,946**

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

**\$108,789,957**

Capitalization secured through the assistance of the SBDC

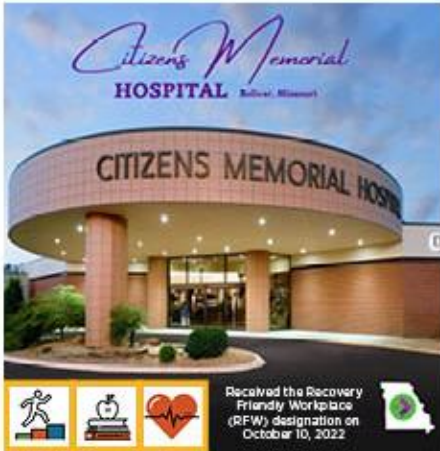
### Learn more about our latest programs and training

Missouri Small Business Development Center  
State Fair Community College  
Fielding Tech Center, Room 255  
Sedalia, MO 65301  
[thelearningforce@sfccmo.edu](mailto:thelearningforce@sfccmo.edu)  
(660) 530-5822

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.

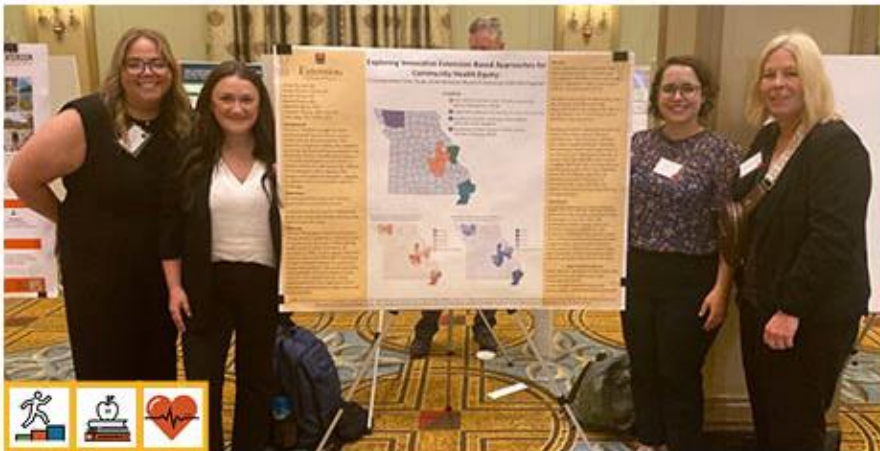


# MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU** through credible statewide programs **Community and Professional Health Education**

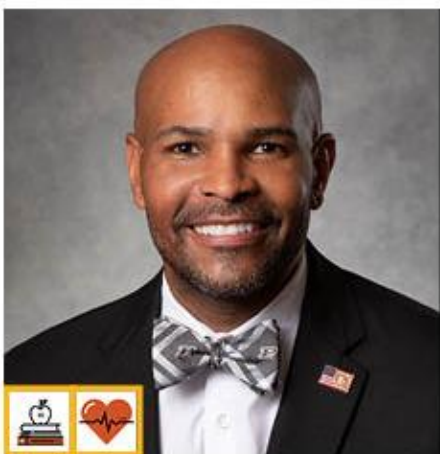


**Recovery Friendly Workplaces** (RFWs) foster a workplace culture that promotes employee safety, health and well-being through strategies that support managers and employees, including reducing stigma and providing recovery resources related to the challenges surrounding substance use disorders. The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

**As of 2024, 41 Missouri businesses have been designated recovery friendly workplaces, and 2,651 EMPLOYEES have been trained on addiction, stigma and naloxone distribution.**



The **Missouri Research-Extension** (MO-RE) Protocol emphasizes the role of Community Health Field Specialists in transforming health and well-being across the state. Following a comprehensive county health needs assessment, each specialist is sharing their findings with partners, stakeholders and organizations in their regions to address the identified priorities.



The **Show-Me Resilience** project focuses on strengthening resilience across Missouri. As part of this initiative, the Community Health Engagement and Outreach program hosted the Rural Resilience Lecture Series in 2024, highlighting how building resilience can reduce substance misuse and substance use disorders. The series concluded with a keynote from Dr. Jerome Adams, former U.S. Surgeon General, on fostering resilience in rural communities.

**In the past two years, 274 people attended the lecture series. Among participants, 93% reported that the information was applicable to their daily work and useful.**

## Legend



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Health & Well-Being



# MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU** through credible statewide programs **Continuing Education**



Established in 2002, the **Fire Officer Certificate Program** is designed for those who wish to further their professional development without the time and expense of traditional college classes. This program has been developed and evaluated to ensure it provides structured curriculum delivery and academic rigor. The program requires completion of 288 hours of instruction within three years.



The **Fire Service Leadership Enhancement Program** (FSLEP) prepares fire and emergency service leaders for the opportunities and challenges they will face. For 22 years, the MU Fire and Rescue Training Institute has partnered with the Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs and the Missouri Association of Fire Protection Districts on this program.



The Law Enforcement Training Institute (LETI) has provided basic and advanced training for law enforcement since 1948. LETI's **Basic Peace Officer Academy** exceeds the 600 hours of training required for licensure in Missouri. From 2019 through 2023, the basic academy has licensed almost 300 peace officers, more than any other academy in the state. During that time, all but one graduate became employed by a law enforcement agency. LETI graduates come from around the state and return to their communities to serve and protect.

## Legend



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MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**  
 through credible statewide programs  
**Health and Human Sciences**



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.”**



**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 addiction challenges while the adult version focuses on adults aged 18 and older. Participants learn how to offer initial assistance and guide individuals toward the care they need.

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

\*Missouri Department of Mental Health 2020 Status Report



**Chronic Disease Self-Management** programs offer evidence-based information for individuals and their caregivers to boost self-confidence in managing symptoms, enhancing quality of life and even reducing health care expenses.

These programs have undergone rigorous evaluation and are proven to be effective tools for individuals dealing with chronic conditions like arthritis, fibromyalgia, depression and diabetes.

**Legend**



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Health & Well-Being



**Della Miller**  
**Field Specialist in**  
**Human Development**

# Hickory County

Serving Laclede, Camden, Dallas, Polk,  
 Benton, Hickory, Wright and Webster Counties

## Health and Human Sciences

### Local Impact

#### What is the Role of Field Specialist in Human Development in the Community?

Field Specialists in Human Development deliver evidence-based programming to communities across Missouri. These initiatives are designed to meet the unique needs of each community by providing education on topics such as parenting, family strengthening, mental health awareness, adolescent development, aging well, early childhood care and education, and other related areas.

### Families & Parenting Programs

#### **Building Strong Families**

The Human Development and Family Science team partnered with the Missouri Department of Social Services Children’s Division to provide parenting classes for parents who are trying to bring their children home from foster care. We offered five 6-session parenting classes online throughout the year. These classes covered topics such as communication, stress management, discipline and more.

#### **Impact**

- The team taught 81 parents who earned 800 hours of parenting information.
- Positively impacted the 167 children of these parents.
- Parents joined the classes from 32 different counties across the state of Missouri.

#### **What Participants Are Saying About Our Programs:**

*“The stories and scenarios to help in how to best approach youth in crisis. Especially for very difficult conversations that we ourselves may feel anxious bringing up.” – Youth Mental Health First Aid Participant*

*“Not only does this course teach new things. It also helps affirm strategies already being used and helped make me free good about myself as a parent. It really helped me grow. Thank You.” - Building Strong Families Participant*

*“This was one of the most useful programs I’ve ever heard. Growing older is not easy, but I like all the tips to try to keep us safe” – Keep Your Keys Participant*

*“Everyone should be taught this information. Thank you for coming to talk to us!” – Alzheimer’s Association Program Participant*

### Professional Development Programs

Childcare Provider Training Virtual (Collaborative) and In-Person Childcare programming by Human Development and Family Science Field Specialists in-person and virtually was completed statewide. The childcare programming provides statewide clock hours for professional development for childcare providers who are required to obtain 12 hours each year.

#### **Impact**

- Provided 422 childcare providers across the state of Missouri through 41 sessions.
- 844 clock hours provided for professional development
- In-person trainings were provided to childcare providers in Laclede, Miller, and Camden Counties.

### Well-Being Programs

#### **Taking Care of You**

This multi-session program provides practical strategies and hands-on experiences designed to help you effectively manage stress in your daily life.

#### **Chronic Disease Self-Management (CDSMP)**

A six-week program that equips participants with essential tools to better manage chronic conditions. Topics include self-management techniques, action planning, healthy eating, and effective communication with healthcare providers.

#### **Mental Health First Aid (Adult and Youth)**

This program teaches individuals to identify the signs of mental health and substance use challenges in both adults and youth, promoting early intervention and support.

#### **Impact**

- Well-being programs positively impacted 80 participants across 20 counties, including Camden, Laclede, Dallas, and Miller Counties.

### Aging Well Programs

#### **Alzheimer’s Association Programs**

This program offers informative presentations on a range of Alzheimer’s and dementia-related topics, including the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer’s, effective communication strategies, and how to understand and respond to dementia-related behaviors.

#### **Keep Your Keys**

Focused on driving safety, this program covers how to maintain the physical and medical fitness necessary for safe driving, when and how to plan for driving retirement, and provides valuable tools and resources to enhance road safety.

#### **Impact**

- The Aging Well programs reached 48 individuals across several counties, including Hickory, Miller, Dallas, and Laclede, making a significant impact on their well-being.





# MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU** through credible statewide programs **Health and Human Sciences**



**Policy, systems, and environmental** (PSE) changes encourage residents to improve community health by making healthy choices easier and more accessible. Residents design strategies around local needs, assets, and interests.

**HELPING HANDS FOOD PANTRY** leaders decided pantry clients needed access to healthier foods. Review of food procurement and display practices led to a new policy allocating **\$1,000** of pantry discretionary spending for **LOW-FAT DAIRY OR FRESH PRODUCE.**



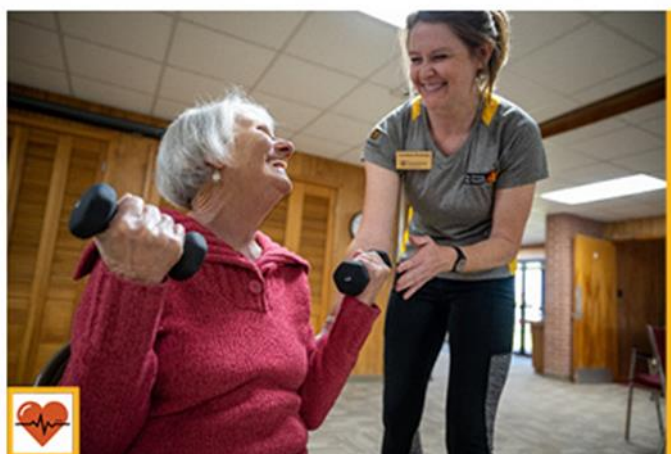
### **Cooking Matters**

*Make quick, tasty, and affordable meals everyone will enjoy.*

Learn valuable tips for stretching your food dollars and how to prepare a recipe and sample easy, low-cost, nutritious and delicious dishes.

**"We prepared barley jambalaya in class and one participant mentioned she had never tried barley before. She tried the jambalaya and really enjoyed it. A few days later she excitedly said she made the recipe at home and her whole family enjoyed it!"**

**Cooking Matters** facilitator about a class participant



**Stay Strong, Stay Healthy** teaches older adults basic exercises to boost strength, balance and overall daily functionality. Participants also gain insights into nutrition and wellness for healthy aging and active living.

**After eight weeks, Stay Strong, Stay Healthy** participants significantly **IMPROVED** their **STRENGTH, BALANCE** and **SLEEP QUALITY.**

## Legend



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Health & Well-Being

# Hickory County

Health and Human Sciences

Profiles and Stories

*Hannah Whittaker, Nutrition & Health Specialist*



Cooking Matters was taught to a group in Hickory County at the Hickory County Health Department. This was a program that was taught once a month for four months. Participants made a variety of different meals while receiving lessons in kitchen and food safety, meal planning, and budgeting. This class was taught in conjunction with Ozarks Community Health Center.

This photo was taken at a training held in Little Rock, Arkansas. The Soy Chef training was directed at Nutrition and Health Specialists on how we could provide more education to local farmers and consumers on the use and health benefits of soybeans in our area.





# 2024 Report

## SNAP-Ed Public Value Statement 2024

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

159 direct and indirect contacts were made in Hickory County.

Participants in SNAP-Ed learn the importance of making healthier meals and snack choices, eating breakfast more often, being more willing to try 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 their 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 2024

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) brought Missouri \$1,624,777 in federal funds. These funds were used to enroll 559 limited-resource families in nutrition education and meal preparation classes, representing 2,068 family members. Additionally, 2,864 youth were enrolled in EFNEP classes.

338 of these youth and adult participants reside in Hickory County.

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

# 2024 Report



Covering West Central Counties of Missouri

## 2024 In Review

This year saw the expansion of natural resources programming to many of my counties. Here are some highlights of 2024:

- Woodland Steward Workshop
- Forest Farming Workshop
- Revival of Missouri Women Owning Woodlands (WOW) program
  - Monthly virtual Zoom meetings connecting with women woodland owners over topics of interest.
- Heroes to Hives Program
- Youth programming: 4-H soil and water experiment and watershed curriculum
- Keep Your Forest in the Family Legacy Workshop

It was great getting to connect with everyone in person and over Zoom. I will continue to offer virtual natural resources programming as it's the best way to reach all my counties. I will also continue to bring in-person programming to more counties as well.

Thank you all for your support in 2024.

## Stay Up-to-Date on Natural Resources Programming

Follow our newsletters to receive information monthly about our upcoming programs & learn more about Missouri's natural resources:

### MU Extension Natural Resources Newsletter



[bit.ly/MU-Ext-Natural-Resources](https://bit.ly/MU-Ext-Natural-Resources)

### Women Owning Woodlands Newsletter



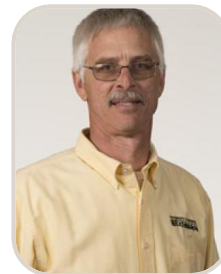
[bit.ly/missouri-wow](https://bit.ly/missouri-wow)

## Looking at 2025

Here are a few programs to keep an eye out for in 2025.

- Women Owning Woodlands Monthly Zoom meetings
- Chainsaw Safety Courses
- Invasive Plant Workshops
- Agroforestry Programming
- Forest Management field days & tours
- Natural Resources youth programming

Let me know what you'd like to see in your county - looking forward to engaging with everyone in conservation next year!



Covering Benton, Cooper, Hickory, Moniteau, Morgan, &amp; Pettis Counties

## 2024 In Review

### PaddockTrac Sensor Yield Estimation Research

Regional specialists continued working with MU faculty to harvest native warm season grass plots with the goal to develop PaddockTrac forage yield estimates for native warm season grass species. Samples were collected from NWSG plots at University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg and Hundley-Whaley Extension & Education Center at Albany, MO. Additionally, forage samples were collected periodically to monitor forage quality of NWSG throughout the growing season.



Figure 1. PaddockTrac sensor calibration harvest on native warm season grass plots at UCM-Warrensburg.

### Feedlot School

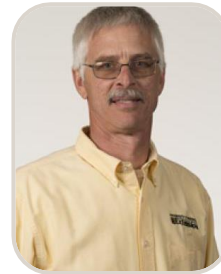
Twenty producers from 10 Missouri counties and 2 states attended the 2-day Feedlot School in Boonville, MO. Participants learned information on the following topics: Why Feed Cattle in Missouri; Feedlot Performance Expectations; Fat Cattle Marketing; MU Extension Feedlot Budgets; Health Management; Beef Handling, Facilities, and Stockmanship; Diet Formulation; Starting Cattle on Feed & Bunk Management; Feeding Technologies; Feed Mixing Demonstration. In addition, two farm tours were held and one industry representative discussed future cattle harvesting facilities in Missouri. Evaluation comments included the following: Very informative class; Best one I've been to - would recommend to everyone; Great tours, very good speakers/material, good info; Lots of great information.



Figure 2. Day 2 Feedlot School producer tour.

### Show-Me-Quality Assurance Training

Youth participating in 4-H Market animal projects are required to take the SMQA training throughout their show careers. Participants learn livestock management skills related to the production of 4-H market animal projects. Emphasis is placed on animal welfare, proper use of animal health products, food safety, and exhibiting good character traits while showing their livestock projects. A total of 60 youth in Benton, Cooper, Moniteau, Morgan, and Pettis counties received training in 2024. Moniteau County reported "The highlight of the evening was when Gene gave a sick banana a shot with a subcutaneous or intramuscular injection and then dissected the banana to determine if the injection was correctly administered."



Covering Benton, Cooper, Hickory, Moniteau, Morgan, & Pettis Counties

## 2024 In Review, cont.

### Livestock Update During PAT training

At the invitation of regional agronomy field specialists, I presented a livestock update during Pesticide Applicator Training sessions. This year's presentation focused on maintaining proper body condition scores on beef cows, the importance of hay testing, locating hay, and evaluating pasture conditions. 157 producers from Benton, Cooper, Moniteau, Morgan, and Pettis counties attended these sessions.

### General Programming

Over 4,700 direct and indirect contacts have been reported through 10/31/24. These have come from 38 different counties across Missouri. This does not include counties in SW MO that were reached through newsletters and media, nor did other counties throughout the state go through state-wide media commercial publications.

Drought or abnormally dry conditions continued through the 2024 growing season, though not as severe as the previous two growing seasons. Due to ongoing weather challenges, Beef cattle feeding, pasture, and forage management were the focus of many of these contacts and media efforts.

### Other Programming Activities

I have continued work with the Alliance for Grassland Renewal, a "national organization focused on enhancing the appropriate adoption of novel endophyte tall fescue technology through education, incentives, self-regulation, and promotion."

During 2024, I participated in two significant education efforts sponsored by the Alliance. On 3/21/24, approximately 50 producers, Extension agents, and other forage educators attended an in-person workshop at Batesville, AR, in cooperation with the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service and the Livestock and Forestry Research Station at Batesville, AR.

A second educational event was held by Zoom on 11/19/24, specifically for Agriculture Extension agents and other agency personnel. One hundred and three participants from 15 states attended the 3-hour training. Participant affiliation included county and state Extension personnel and NRCS and SWCD personnel. After the training, participants received access to a PowerPoint presentation on toxic tall fescue renovation they can use for local programming. This continues to be a popular training event for this audience throughout the Fescue Belt.



# County highlights

**Heather Conrow**

Livestock Specialist

State 4-H Animal Science Educator

## Backyard Laying Hen Workshops

The number of backyard flocks continues to increase across the state. Over **40** participants attended these workshops, representing **10** counties.

Participants learned basic management practices to ensure a healthy backyard flock, in addition to biosecurity, licensing and labeling requirements, processing, washing, and grading eggs.

Hands-on opportunities included equipment demonstrations and processing, candling, and grading of eggs.

**100%** of participants said they would recommend the workshop to others for the following reasons, "lots of good information, great basis to start," "very informative and fun."



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

- Getting started with chickens: **38%**
- Caring for laying hens: **58%**
- Protecting your flock and family: **68%**
- Washing and storing eggs: **42%**
- Grading eggs: **72%**

## Program Feedback

- "I've personally shown 4-H chickens for 10 years and I didn't know some of this."
  - "Showing equipment that does and doesn't work is very helpful."
  - "Now I know how to actually evaluate a hen rather than just guessing."
  - "Some of the best hands-on info I have been to."
  - "I didn't even think of these things (biosecurity) before."
- Being aware of these procedures is very helpful."
- "I learned a lot about grading eggs. I had no prior knowledge of how it worked."
  - "I previously thought candling was only for crack checking."
  - "Perfect for all ages."
  - "Great workshop! I would love to attend more."
  - "Well worth my time."





# County highlights

**Heather Conrow**  
Livestock Specialist  
State 4-H Animal Science Educator

Ge • net • ics (/jə'nediks/) the science of genes and how traits are passed on from one generation to the next

## Genetic Lockbox

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

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

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

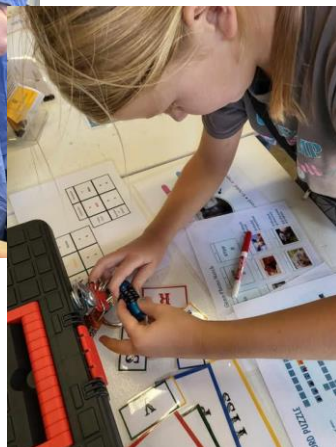


*Crack the codes to open the locks to get the \*prize\* in the box.*

\*Prize not included

## Fun Facts

- ❖ If all DNA strands in all the cells of **ONE** person were stretched out, it would reach to the sun and back more than **600** times
- ❖ Scientists can never clone a dinosaur because DNA has a half-life of **521** years
- ❖ Humans are **80%** genetically similar to cows
- ❖ Bone marrow transplant patients end up with **2** different DNA profiles
- ❖ All humans receive **3** feet of DNA from Dad and **3** feet from Mom
- ❖ Heart, eye, and brain cells never replicate; therefore, they can never be replaced if damaged
- ❖ Less than **2%** of our DNA codes for proteins - the rest is called "junk DNA," but is still useful
- ❖ A mouse uses more DNA from its father than its mother
- ❖ Almost all tortoiseshell cats are female, only **ONE** in **3,000** calico cats is male



**Learn More**

