



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

New Madrid County 2025

Annual Report



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**SERVE MISSOURI.
DELIVER MIZZOU.®**

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



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

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

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

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

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

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

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

With appreciation,

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

WHO WE ARE

Faculty and Staff Resources



Amber Childers
Extension Engagement Specialist



Jennifer Hall
4-H Youth Development



Taylor Clark
Community Development



Audrey Johnson
Human Development



Susan Norship-Haney
Community Health & Outreach



Richard Rickman
Labor & Workforce Development

Betty Roston
Nutrition Program Associate



Randall Stephens
Ag Business



Alexis Stumpe
Livestock



Traven Crocker
Horticulture

Council Members

Tom Alsobrook, Chair
Wesley Hodges, Vice Chair
Byron McVay, Treasurer
Jami Geske, Secretary
Scott Lawrence, Member
Danny Hayes, Member
Ryan Harris, Member
Tonya Vanasdall, Member
Sharon Bahr, Member
Sarah Ezell, Member

County Commission

Mark Baker
Presiding Commissioner
Bobby Aycock
Commissioner District 1
Michael Kellams
Commissioner District 2

OUR MAIN PROGRAM AREAS

- › Agriculture
- › Business & Workforce Development
- › Community Development
- › Health and Human Science Initiatives
- › Nutrition & Health Education
- › 4-H Youth Development

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations budget

Income

County Appropriations	15,000
Retained funds	18,000
Total Income	33,000

Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	20,152
Travel	4092
Telephone	1200
Office Supplies/Service	1109
Postage	80
Insurance	2707
Professional Services	900
Repairs & maintenance	2760
Total Expenses	33000

Return on investment

For every dollar invested by the county, MU invests \$4.344.

Reach

Review the [Reach report](#) for a snapshot of contacts within the county.

Key Outcomes

221 Business & Community Contacts

- 5 Business Development Contacts
- 47 Community Leadership Development Contacts
- 50 Labor & Workforce Development Contacts
- 165 Missouri After School Network (MASN)
- 119 Continuing Education for Health Professions

56 4-H Youth Development Participants

- 2 Community Club Membership
- 55 In-School Participation

15,707 Health & Human Service Contacts

- 46 Nutrition & Health Contacts
- 15,646 SNAP-ED Contacts
- 15 Community Health Engagement and Outreach

163 Agriculture Contacts

- 70 Plant Production & Technology Contacts
- 93 Soil Testing

Fire Rescue Training Institute (FRTI)

- 31 Number of Students (FRTI)



Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to Madison 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 IMPACT REPORT

This report offers a detailed overview of MU Extension's impacts, including data on those 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 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 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

The Grand Challenges Report reviews the most pressing issues facing Missouri communities. By focusing on these challenges, MU Extension 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 is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

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



PARTNERSHIPS

Extension programming would not be possible without the following partnerships. We are grateful for the support we get from these associates.

NEW MADRID COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

NEW MADRID COUNTY SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NEW MADRID COUNTY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

CITY OF NEW MADRID





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

Business and Community



Richard Rickman
Field Specialist in Workforce Development

New Madrid County, 2025

New Madrid Extension Council adds new members and office secretary.
New Madrid Commissioners and City of New Madrid continue MU Extension support.
SEMO Health Network opens New Madrid facility. Childers/Rickman on the Board.
Working with Sarah Ezell, MU Extension brings Rural Immersion to New Madrid.
MU Extension represented on Soil Water Conservation Board (Rickman).
MU Extension/Delta Center REEC collaborate to bring programs to NM, Portageville.
ZOU to You meeting in Kennett draws participants from New Madrid county.
Career Day meetings with students in Portageville and New Madrid high schools.
Students from across the region attend the FDREEC Career Day.
Rural Immersion to New Madrid for a day June 24, 2025.
Delta Center hosts annual Field Day for regional representatives.
Southeast Labor and Workforce Summit in Sikeston (Bootheel Collaboration).
Rob Russell, MU Business and Communities has New Madrid County tour.





MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
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Health and Human Sciences



Audrey Johnson

Field Specialist in Health and Human Sciences

Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Scott, and Stoddard counties

Extension Health & Human Sciences is dedicated to helping Missourians improve their lives. Using research-based education and proven strategies, Extension professionals work in partnership with communities to improve conditions that help Missourians live better where they live, learn, play and work. Our programs help individuals and families, rural and urban, reaching Missourians of all ages in every county and the city of St. Louis.

Senior Technology Classes

Five Senior Technology classes were taught, with a total of 41 participants, in the following counties: Mississippi(1), Scott(2), and Stoddard(3). The classes included:

- **AI All Round**
- **All Things Zoom**
- **Finding Information Online**
- **Protecting Your Personal Information Online**
- **Digital Coupon Tools**

Surveys taken after sessions showed that of the 41 participants,

- 15 reported being interested in trying something new because of the program
- 11 reported wanting to learn more about the topic that was covered
- 11 stated it is extremely likely they would attend another Senior Planet program



Participants stated the classes were “Very informative”, “Good to get new knowledge”, “Need to keep up with increasing technology”, “This program (AI All Around) is informative and helpful to the generation we live in”, “Great opportunity to receive information.”



MU Extension **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**
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Health and Human Sciences cont.

Keep Your Keys

Keep Your Keys is a driver-safety program to help seniors stay on the road for as long and as safely as possible. Three Keep Your Keys programs were provided in Cape County (2) and Stoddard County (1) with a total of 19 participants. Surveys conducted after class showed:

- 95% of participants reported the class was informative
- 74% of participants reported if they could not drive (either short or long term) they would feel more prepared to approach driving retirement



WITS Workout is a program for seniors with fun, interactive puzzles and games that not only challenge your mind but also help you learn easy ways to keep your brain sharp every day. One two-hour session was taught once weekly for four weeks in Perry County. Six participants attended and completed the class. Participants communicated that the class was very helpful and stated, "I remembered five addresses I lived at from the past", "I remembered the ten commandments", "I enjoyed the comradery."

Additional HHS Programming:
Alzheimer's Awareness — Cape County
Building Strong Families — virtual
Mental Health First Aid — Madison County
Taking Care of You — Mississippi County



Audrey Johnson

Field Specialist in Health and Human Sciences

Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Scott, and Stoddard counties

New Madrid County

Missouri 4-H - Activities

Local Impact

New Madrid County 4-H is pleased to share our successes for the 2025 calendar year. With one regularly meeting county club and other county activities, we have reached over 100 New Madrid County children this year with 4-H programming.

4-H also hosted its annual 4-H Youth Farm Animal Art show with over 75 entries from local students from three area schools Kindergarten through 12th grade. The pieces were judged at the local level, and the children and parents were treated to a cookies and punch reception. The top three of each grade level were taken to the Margaret Harwell Museum in Poplar Bluff for the regional show where they hosted an Ice Cream Sundae reception. This show gives local budding artists the opportunity to display their work and proudly represent their school and New Madrid County!



New Madrid County

Missouri 4-H

Profiles and stories



Many New Madrid County kids participate in our 4-H activities at Malone Park Center for the Arts in Sikeston, MO. We have been working with Scott County to increase programming opportunities for both counties. Mason is a New Madrid county resident that took our Sewing Boot camp at Malone Park Center for the Arts.



4-H is all about hands on learning and creating. Allowing the creativity and innovation of the youth gives them greater experiences than everyone following the same pattern. Mary designed and made her own reindeer ornament at a holiday sewing class.

4-H'ers are...

4X

more likely to
give back to their
communities

2X

more likely to
make healthier
choices

2X

more likely to
participate in
STEM activities

New Madrid County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Traven Crocker, Horticulture Field Specialists

MU Extension's horticulture programming in the county focused on providing individual consultation, support for regional outreach events and delivering virtual horticulture education.

Impact

There were 521 students who gained exposure to real-world agricultural career paths, helping them to make inform future education and job decisions. Another goal was to encourage interest in agriculture-related fields, supporting long-term workforce needs in rural Missouri.

Program Examples:

- Career Exploration Day at the Fisher Delta Research Center, 521 participants

Direct Contact Topics: 1 participant

- High tunnel initiative through EQUIP
- Financial programs available to farmers.
- Commercial production publications.

Collaboration with Labor & Workforce Development and External Partners

The Career Exploration event was made possible through collaboration with MU faculty and staff, along with 32 presenters representing leading organizations such as Missouri S&T, Three Rivers College, Missouri Department of Conservation, NRCS, Baker Implement, and Farm Bureau.



Tractors parked by the Fisher Delta Center sign on Carrer Exploration Day.

Poplar Bluff Extension Master Gardeners

In 2025, the Poplar Bluff Area Master Gardener chapter contributed 375 volunteer hours and 124 continuing education hours. These efforts are valued at \$13,046.25, based on the Independent Sector's 2025 rate of \$34.79 per hour.

Chapter Projects

- Ag Day, 83 participants
- Sierra Girls Garden and Grow, 6 participants
- Popeyes demonstration garden
- Butler County Exhibits and More, 165 participants
- Women's Aware event
- Mums fundraising sale

Extension Master Gardener Training: 2 sessions

- Spring, 1 participant
- Fall, 2 participants

Indirect & Virtual Reach

- Two radio interviews on Show Me Today reached approximately 60,000 listeners statewide.
- The Garden Hour virtual series drew 1488 attendees across 12 sessions through the year and delivered horticulture education.
- Sessions are available through live Zoom and posted on the [MU Extension Integrated Pest Management](#) You Tube channel.



Health and Human Sciences - Strength

Stay Strong Stay Healthy

Strength training sessions in a fun and supportive environment to help improve participant strength and leave you more energized and connected as you increase your overall fitness, flexibility and balance. Participants build muscle and increase bone density to reduce frailty, osteoporosis and the risk of falls.

Participants improved their strength, flexibility, balance, and auxiliary activity to decrease the risk of falls and improve their overall health. Classes in 2025 led to a **regional savings of \$116,760 in annual healthcare costs.**



Eric Johnson
Field Specialist in Nutrition & Health

Increased educational programming, particularly around health, was made possible through the generous support and dedication of the Commissioners in New Madrid County.

We sincerely thank the Commission and the MU Extension New Madrid County Council for their continued support and commitment to our community.

100% of participants who agree or strongly agree they are more knowledgeable of how to safely strength train.

100% of participants who agree or strongly agree their physical fitness has improved.

95% of participants reported fewer falls in the two months during the program.

100% of participants who improved or maintained flexibility and balance.



New Madrid County

Agriculture and Environment - Agronomy

Local Impact

Key Successes:

Monthly Newsletter sent out to 1318 recipients

Presented at 2025 Southeast Missouri Crop Conference and other conferences and grower meetings throughout the year

Worked to develop a canola production budget for Southeast Missouri

Worked with campus to update MU Guide sheets

Co-taught Farm Leasing class

Taught and Facilitated PPAT classes

2025 At A Glance

404 Direct contacts with producers through the nine-state region

60,769 Indirect contacts with the public

Represented MU Extension on Scott County Soil & Water Board

Monthly collaboration with FSA for USDA Crop Progress Report

Interviewed by **Iowa Farmer Today**



New Madrid County

Agriculture and Environment – Ag Business

Profiles and stories



Market Outlooks: As a result of the increased market uncertainty and low commodity prices I presented multiple market outlooks. They included: 2025 Crop Conference, Perry County Farm Bureau Crop Conference, Big River Ag Grower meeting and TRC Beef Market Outlook.

Canola Budget: New to the MU Extension line-up of crop budgets is a winter canola budget. I worked with industry representatives and other MU faculty to develop a winter canola budget that will be available to producers to view and download. Interest in canola production has grown in Southeast Missouri as a result of new markets that are available as well as profitable contacting options for canola.



Southeast Missouri Outlook: I began a newsletter in April that is sent out monthly to 1318 farmers, ag business professionals and ag lenders in the region. The newsletter has been a huge success. Feedback from recipients, as well as data from DotDigital, our email platform, indicates a total open rate of 81%.

