

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

# Oregon County

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2024**



**Oregon County Courthouse  
First Floor, Room 7  
PO Box 97  
Alton, MO 65606  
417-778-7490**



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

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## Faculty and staff

**Haley Schwantz**  
Agronomy Specialist

**Harly Bettis**  
4H Youth Program  
Associate

**Jan Beazley**  
Nutrition Program  
Associates

**Barbara Simpson**  
Administrative Assistant



## Council members

**Frank Alford, Chairman**  
**Charles Trantham, Vice-chairman**  
**Dana Cox, Secretary**  
**Anna Fernow, Treasurer**  
**Tamala Ary**  
**Shelby Cooper**  
**John Walters, Jr.-Appointed**  
**Sharon Brewer**  
**Randy Williams**  
**David Stubblefield-Appointed**  
**Kevin Grooms**  
**Blake Orr**  
**Jan Melton**  
**Doug Melton**

The Oregon County MU Extension Council is a council of elected and appointed citizens who guide local educational programming. County council members are partners in the entire educational process, from needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes. Council members work with regional specialists to provide the county educational programs, manage finances of local extension operations, provide personnel to carry out Extension activities, and elect and organize the local Extension council.

## County commissioners

**David Stubblefield, Presiding**  
**Terry Cline, Northern**  
**Jason Kemper, Southern**

# Who we are

Using university research and science-based knowledge, University of Missouri Extension works with people to understand change, solve problems and make informed decisions. MU Extension addresses a wide range of needs that fall into three grand challenges for the state of Missouri; Economic Opportunity, Educational Access and Excellence, Health and Well-being. We offer in person and online programming, publications and information in these major interest areas: Agriculture and Environment, Business and Community, Health and Safety, Youth and Family.

MU Extension is a partnership of the University of Missouri campuses, Lincoln University, the people of Missouri through county extension councils, and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

MU is a land-grant university, meaning it is a part of a federally mandated mission to carry the benefits of university research beyond campus. Federal legislation in the 1800s provided for the donation of public land to individual states. Missourians chose to apply their land grants to the existing Columbia campus. This created two universities in one — a land-grant institution leading in research for all citizens of the state, across the nation and around the world, and an intellectual center to advance liberal arts scholarship. Today, through statewide offices, publications and web-based services, extension faculty in every county of Missouri continue to carry the benefits of MU research throughout the entire state.

Every Missouri county, by Missouri State Statutes, has a University of Missouri Extension Council comprised of elected and appointed citizens. State law confers the right for councils to work with MU Extension faculty to act as educational brokers, putting the interests and concerns of local people together with the resources of our land -grant University so people can obtain their goals. The MU Extension Council strives to support our three impact areas of Economy, Education, and Health, and represent the diverse sectors of Oregon County by its membership.

Through a network of county offices, the University of Missouri solves problems and engages with communities across all 114 counties and the City of St. Louis.

MU faculty, staff and elected council members, who live in your community, work with you to identify local interests and issues and then offer relevant programming and resources to meet the unique needs of you and your community. Our job is to partner with communities to find solutions with credible, science-based information that will help you:

- Grow safe and healthy food
- Build and grow profitable businesses
- Improve your health and relationships
- Increase agricultural production
- Update professional training in business, health and safety
- Engage youth as valued, contributing citizens

# Budget and more

## Appropriations budget

### Income

County Appropriation 61,742.25

County Contract 5,000.00

**Total Income 66,742.25**

### Expenses

Salaries/Benefits 47,056.07

Travel 6842.00

Telephone 1459.93

Supplies/Service 3562.86

Insurance 1598.20

Postage 331.35

Advertising 99.17

**Total Expenses 60,949.58**

## 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 cost, computers and communication equipment. County funds support the local office, secretarial and youth assistant salaries, staff mileage and council expenses.

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



Your one-stop source  
for **PRACTICAL EDUCATION**  
on almost anything.



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
**M** Extension  
Oregon County



## County highlights

# 2024 OREGON COUNTY FARM FAMILY



Blake & Michelle Martin and family of Couch, MO were among the families honored during the 66th annual Missouri Farm Family Day, Aug. 14 at the Missouri State Fair.

The Martin family was selected as the Oregon County Missouri Farm Family by University of Missouri Extension in Oregon County and the local Farm Bureau. The family includes Cylee, Wyatt, Sydnee, and Tanner.

Each year, the fair sets aside a day to recognize farm families from across the state that are active in their communities, involved in agriculture, and/or participate in local outreach and extension programs such as 4-H or FFA.

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

The event showcases the impact that Missouri farm families have on the economy and heritage of the state, said Missouri State Fair Director Mark Wolfe. "These families are involved in agriculture activities in their communities and are active participants in local outreach and extension. As the premier showcase for Missouri agriculture, the Missouri State Fair is most certainly the appropriate place to celebrate these families."



## County highlights

### Century Farm



The 2024 recipient is the Glen & Vivian Trantham Farm. Elijah Trantham acquired the farm, located in Koshkonong, in 1917, beginning an agricultural journey that continues today through his grandson Glen and his wife Vivian. It is a remarkable accomplishment when a farm family perseveres through The Great Depression, World War II, and the many ups and downs of farming to continue this legacy 107 years later. This farm now joins the other 40 century farms in Oregon County.

### Leaders Honor Roll

The Leader's Honor Roll program is intended to honor outstanding University of Missouri Extension community leaders who have excelled in supporting, educating, and advancing MU Extension and/or 4-H in their communities and county. In 2024, we recognize Doug & Jan Melton and Terry Smith for their long-term commitment and support of Oregon County Extension.



## County highlights

### Kokedama Workshop



Ten participants, along with a master gardener volunteer and staff, enjoyed learning about an ancient art form of Japanese gardening that was created over 1000 years ago. Each participant created a kokedama (Ko-ke-da-ma).







## County highlights

### Food Preservation Workshop



A food preservation workshop, featuring meat pressure canning, was held in December.

The class focused on some canning basics and **demonstrated** how to can meats safely using a pressure canner. There were 16 in attendance.

### Farm Trade Show



Oregon County Extension took part in the Farm Trade Show held in Thayer, MO, hosted by Oregon County Soil & Water Conservation District. Members of the extension council and staff members were there to provide information to those who attended.



# MU EXTENSION **Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU**

through credible statewide programs

## Missouri 4-H for ages 8 – 18



"Here in the heart of the Ozarks, 4-H is shaping the next generation to carry on our traditions while equipping them for a bright future."

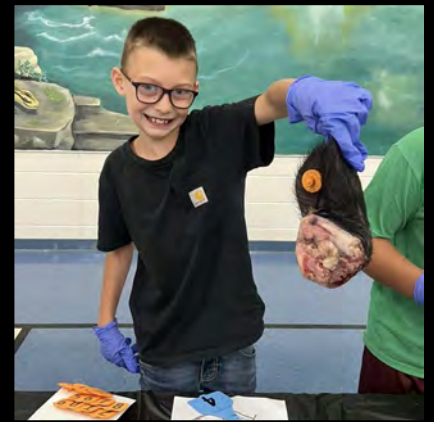
Emily Doosing  
4-H Specialist  
edoosing@missouri.edu  
573-226-3268

"As a 4-H Educator, I get to see firsthand the positive impact our programs have on Oregon County youth. It is inspiring to watch them grow and thrive."

Cara Carswell  
4-H Youth Educator  
Oregon County



"4-H has given me opportunities I never imagined. It's taught me how to lead, how to give back to my community, and how to be proud of my accomplishments. It's not just about the projects. It's about the people and the difference we can make together." - Caseon, 4-H member from Oregon County



### 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

**484**  
served by 4-H in Oregon County  
- Traditional Clubs  
- SPIN Clubs  
- School Enrichment  
- After School Programs



**\$9,645.12**

12 volunteers served 4-H youth in Oregon County. Valuing their time at \$33.49 (Independent Sector, 2024), the contribution of 4-H volunteers was worth more than \$9,645.12 in 2024. More importantly, these individuals role models and mentors for youth.



Educational Access & Excellence



# County highlights



## Heart of the Ozarks Fair- Market





# County highlights



## Texas County Fair



Oregon County 4-H members and Clover Kids had an excellent time at the Texas County Fair! They won many ribbons, banners, trophies and even belt buckles!





# County highlights



*I pledge ...*

*head*

*heart*



*hands*

*health*

18 U.S.C. 707

*... to my club, my community,  
my country, and the world.*

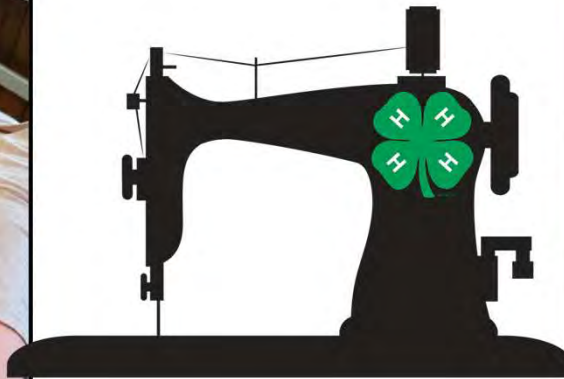




# County highlights



## Sewing Project





# County highlights



## Shooting Sports



Some of our Shooting Sports members participated in the Rover Volunteer Fire Department Turkey Shoot.





## County highlights



# Kids In the Kitchen

Kids in the Kitchen was held with 4-H children ages 6 to 12 years old which uses USDA's MyPlate. Youth participants learn to prepare simple, healthy foods they can make for themselves and others. Each lesson includes kid-friendly handouts such as recipes and tips on how to use kitchen equipment safely. The hands-on cooking experience encourages them to eat healthier meals and snacks.

The 2024 Kids in the Kitchen used some of their experiences to serve the community. In February 2024, they made valentine cookies and gave them out to residents of the Shady Oaks nursing home in Thayer, MO. In March 2024, they made homemade zucchini bread for Shepherd's View assisted living residents to enjoy.

Each participant received a certificate and a cooking pin, along with service time for working in the community. It was a great experience for all participants.



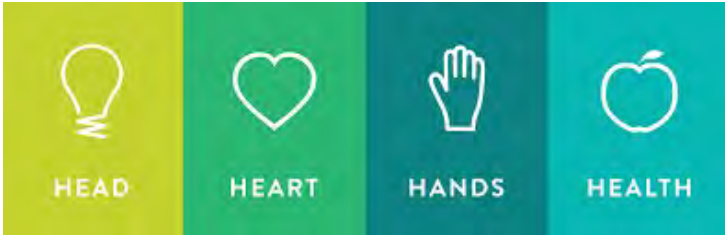




# County highlights



## Cloverkids





# County highlights



## Other 4-H Events

### SMQA Training

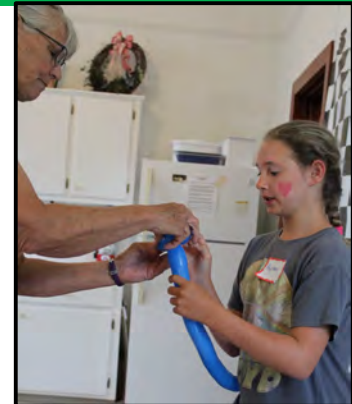


### Alton Christmas Parade 1st Place



Discover Yourself  
in 4-H

### Clown College



### Stock Show Stars Livestock Camp & Show



FCS Financial awarded our Oregon County 4-H Chapter with a Shaping Rural Missouri Grant. This grant will be used in helping the community gardens.



4-H is a **community** of **young people** across America who are learning **leadership, citizenship** and **life skills.**



# AGRONOMY IMPACT



Soil testing is a tool that many producers in Oregon County use to monitor fertility and pH levels for forage and crop production. There were 447 interpretations of soil test reports by the Agronomy Field Specialist for 2024.

Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings certify crop producers for restricted use pesticides. MU Extension provides classes for these certification needs. There were a total of 26 private applicator trainings in Oregon County in 2024.



## Oregon County 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Farm Trade Show

Oregon County Soil and Water Conservation District held the annual farm trade show on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> in Thayer. There were 45 vendors and 400 people who attended the event. The door prize was a Tarter Portable Squeeze Chute valued at \$6,600 sponsored by Newberry Sales, LLC.

Haley Schwantz attended providing a booth for producers to chat about any forage or soil related questions. She also provided guides on forage establishment, soil sampling, and other resources.

### WARM SEASON GRASS PASTURE WALK

Join MU Specialists Haley Schwantz and Elizabeth Picking with Casey & Dana Cox

We will be touring local Caucasian and Spar bluestem fields while answering questions about management

**FREE Event**

Please RSVP by September 3rd, 2024

Thursday, Sept 5th, 2024  
At 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
Highway P Alton, MO

We will first meet at the Harps in Alton, MO at 2:45PM then drive to field

[Registration Link:](https://extension.missouri.edu/events/warm-season-grass-pasture-walk)  
<https://extension.missouri.edu/events/warm-season-grass-pasture-walk>

Registration Help: Oregon County Extension 417-778-7490



Native and warm season grass establishment and production has become more popular with cost share programs and research funding opportunities.

Two pasture walks were offered in 2024. There were two attendees at the Warm Season Grass Pasture Walk in September. This program was followed up by a farm visit of one producer who attended the event. Total farm visits and phone calls direct to the Agronomy Field Specialist in Oregon County were over 220.

# Oregon County

## Agriculture and Environment

Jason Morris  
Field Specialist in Ag Business  
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### Local Impact

#### Annie's Project

A new program was delivered in the Southeast Region which involved women in agriculture. More than nine On My Own programs were scheduled throughout the 18 county Southeast Region.

#### Grazing School

In conjunction with other Extension disciplines and outside stake holders, Agriculture Business and policy was involved in numerous Grazing School programs offered in varying counties.

#### Ag Lenders Seminar

The Ag Lenders Seminar is a multi county programming effort to educate those who work in the field of agriculture finance and those who desire knowledge. This program consists of marketing outlooks, weather forecasts as well as past and current trends related to farming.

#### Soil and Water Boards

Through state law, Extension serves on each county Soil and Water Board. Through this service Ag Business is heavily involved in farm and field days as well as conferences.

#### Farm Lease Classes

Many questions related to farm leases from producers and landlords are addressed yearly by MU Extension agricultural business specialists. As a relatively new program, several throughout Southeast Missouri participated in this program on-line and in-person. The two primary topics covered were items in a lease and terminating a farm lease. Estimates have 33 percent of farm leases in Missouri are still oral and oral lease termination is complicated and somewhat unique to the state. This program continues to draw participants, and elderly landowners appreciate the in-person option greatly.

#### Farm Tax Workshops

MU Extension hosted and taught Farm Tax Workshops for farm businesses and farm and ranch families. The content included Corporate Transparency Act, TCJA, estate & gift tax sunset, conservation tax issues, managing high/low-income years, Section 179 and depreciation, sales & exchanges and retirement and social security planning.

The online participants planned to take some action before the end of the year. The planned actions included: reviewing farm records (70%), meeting with tax preparer before the end of the year (67%), communicate with family members (50%) and fifty percent plan to review resources before purchasing begins in 2025.

#### Other Highlights

Regional 4-H Ranch Sorting and Team Penning clinics and summer long participation.

#### Beef Producers

One of the greatest impacts for 2024 was addressing issues and needs which faced Southeast Missouri beef producers. Extension and Ag Business hosted several meetings throughout the year to educate producers regarding weather conditions, marketing options, financial directives and more. MU Extension was involved in or participated in no less than eight cattle related meetings.

#### 2024 Program Highlight

**Bee Producers at risk:** For the second year in a row, I invited Dr. Tim Evans, Assoc. Prof. & State Ext. Specialist, Veterinary Medicine from MU, to help find solutions facing local beef producers. In addition, Dr. Evans presented at two cattlemen's association meetings. This year, we traversed five counties and met with numerous producers. We have secured future endeavors to host farm and field days. Originating from a one county visit, this small project has grown into a program encompassing many counties.

Some of the questions and comments were:

*"How can I get Dr. Evans to my farm?"*

*"Will and can he come back next year?"*

*"Why have we not done this before?"*

# Oregon County

Elizabeth Picking  
Field Specialist in Livestock  
417-256-2391  
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## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

#### Show Me Quality Assurance Trainings

The Show Me Quality Assurance (SMQA) program is a youth-focused training emphasizing good livestock management practices in the handling and use of animal health products. This program encourages youth involved in livestock projects to take an active role in the health of their livestock. By completing this program, youth demonstrate their commitment to animal production and producing safe and wholesome food. Completion of this program serves to benefit both the livestock and food industries, by reducing the risk of management-based incidents that could destroy consumer confidence in the food supply. Youth learn through hands-on activities and group learning. 13 youth from Oregon County participated.



#### Sheep & Goat Producers Workshop

This workshop was held on December 10<sup>th</sup> in Alton, MO. Haley Schwantz presented on forages for sheep and goats and Elizabeth Picking presented on reproductive management for the flock. 8 producers attended the event.



#### Backyard Poultry Workshop

MU Extension Livestock Specialist, Elizabeth Picking and MU Extension Agronomy Specialist, Haley Schwantz discussed how to incubate, hatch, and raise chicks to adulthood. They also demonstrated how to candle eggs to identify if eggs are fertilized. Attendees learned how to identify if eggs are fresh and safe to eat or if they are spoiled and about bird housing such as space requirements, materials, and needs. Predator control to avoid bird loss and forage selection and diversity for pasture raised and free-range flocks was also discussed. 7 attended for the workshop in Oregon county on August 16th.



#### Oregon county Warm Season Grass Pasture Walk

September 5<sup>th</sup> – A small group came out to see WW Spar and Caucasian Bluestem fields at Cox Cattle Company near Alton, MO. Haley Schwantz and Elizabeth Picking discussed these forage varieties and their uses for livestock.



# Oregon County

Elizabeth Picking  
Field Specialist in Livestock  
417-256-2391  
[pickinge@missouri.edu](mailto:pickinge@missouri.edu)

## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

#### Career Exploration Day

SW Research, Education, and Extension Center – Mt. Vernon - September 19th  
1600 area youth attended to learn about careers in agriculture  
Elizabeth Picking spoke to students about careers in the equine industry and how to determine body condition scores on horses. Students got to interact with horses River and Lily.

#### Ask the SW Ag Experts – Zoom Discussion

Agronomy, horticulture, dairy, livestock, and ag business specialists introduced themselves and spoke about their area of expertise and what programs might be of interest to producers. Then time was given for attendees to ask questions from the specialists.

#### Missouri AgrAbility Project

AgrAbility helps farmers with disabilities and their families succeed. The program links MU and Lincoln University extension services with a nonprofit disability organization to provide practical education and on -the-farm assistance that promotes agricultural and rural independence.

Missouri AgrAbility can...

- help determine if you're eligible for agency services
- perform a customized, on -site assessment of your farm or ranch
- recommend effective and safe solutions to help you overcome limitations
- provide educational resources to support your goals
- connect you with a peer support network

Elizabeth Picking is part of the Missouri AgrAbility Project team and discusses the program with perspective clients, completes on-farm assessments, and helps connect livestock producers to resources.



#### Spring Forage Conference

The 40th Annual conference is a collaboration between University of Missouri Extension regional ag specialists, Natural Resource Conservation Service employees, and Soil & Water Districts. This conference brought in nationally recognized speakers to create a high -quality conference. This conference had approximately 450 producers and industry stakeholders attend. The Spring Forage Conference planning committee is made up of NRCS, Soil & Water, and MU Extension personnel including: Elizabeth Picking, Patrick Davis, Andy McCorkill, Tim Schnakenberg, Micah Doubledee, Terry Halleran, Reagan Bluel, Chloe Collins, David Brown, Wesley Tucker, Jake Hefley, and Jennifer Lutes.

#### Artificial Insemination Schools

Elizabeth Picking Livestock Specialist, Reagan Bluel Dairy Specialist, and Chloe Collins Dairy Specialist taught artificial insemination schools in April and October of 2024 in partnership with Kent Daniels from Select Sires, FCS Financial in Joplin, American Foods Group, and Joplin Regional Stockyards. This multi -day school combined classroom learning about estrous synchronization, reproductive anatomy, and management strategies to increase AI success with hands -on learning. Attendees were able to get hands on practice artificially inseminating cows and handling and thawing semen. These 24 attendees became certified to artificially inseminate cattle.

#### Managing Nuisance Wildlife Workshops

This is a partnership with Missouri Department of Conservation. Scott McWilliams taught attendees how to manage wildlife that were becoming a nuisance on their farms or at their homes.

# Oregon County

Elizabeth Picking  
Field Specialist in Livestock  
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## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

#### 4th Annual Howell County Equine Conference

Elizabeth Picking Livestock Specialist developed and held this conference for horse owners. Christin Byrd, Soil Conservationist with Natural Resources Conservation Service spoke about NRCS programs available for horse owners to take advantage of such as the conservation stewardship program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Haley Schwantz spoke about soil fertility and manure as fertilizer and Elizabeth Picking spoke about horse selection and evaluation. This conference brought together 8 horse owners from multiple counties in southern Missouri.

#### Cattle Health Management Workshop

Joseph Meggison and Jody Wade, DVM spoke about cattle health management to approximately 30 attendees in West Plains, MO.

#### Howell County Freezer Beef School

16 attendees  
Presentations, Producer panel, Processor panel, & Tour of Kimbrough Livestock, LLC beef finishing operation

#### Native Warm Season Grass Workshop – Partnership with Quail Forever

Quail Forever and NRCS employees discussed establishment and benefits of native warm season grasses for wildlife and livestock for 10 producers. The workshop concluded with a field tour of Teresa and Doug Uminn's native warm season grass pasture in West Plains, MO



#### Missouri Grazing Schools

This program teaches management -intensive grazing (MiG), which subdivides large fields into smaller paddocks then rotates livestock across paddocks. The program is delivered in 2 - and 3-day schools that are held during the growing season (April to October) throughout Missouri, including at MU outlying centers. School instructors in MU Extension are regional specialists in Agronomy, Livestock, and Ag Business. They pair up with colleagues in NRCS, who teach fencing and watering systems as well as design of grazing systems. In 2018, impact of the grazing school program was \$125 million annual to the state economy.

#### Show Me Select Heifer Program

This program gives cattle producers an opportunity to market high quality replacement heifers through 12 sales a year. This also offers producers a source of bred replacement heifers which have gone through a reproductive tract score and pelvic measurement as well as being bred to low birth weight bulls to reduce the risk of calving difficulties. MU Extension livestock specialists work with producers enrolling heifers to collect data and run sales.



# Oregon County

## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

#### 2024 Programs:

- Two educational classes were held for the Juvenile Justice Center in Butler County. The life skills class topics included an introduction to gardening, seed starting, and propagation. There were 18 youths present.



Traven Crocker  
Field Specialist in Horticulture  
573-686-8046

[Travencrocker@missouri.edu](mailto:Travencrocker@missouri.edu)

Butler, Carter, Ripely, Shannon, Oregon,  
Stoddard, Pemiscot, New Madrid, Dunklin.

Hello, everyone. I am Traven Crocker, the new Field Specialist in Horticulture. I am based in Butler County and serve nine counties in the southeast region. I started this position in October 2024. My focus has been to meet with council members from all nine counties to assess their programming needs. I have also collaborated with the Poplar Bluff Area Extension Master Gardeners to implement more educational programs for the upcoming year.

#### Programming for 2025:

- Extension Master Gardener in-person course is scheduled for January 16th – April 17th at the Butler County Extension office, Thursdays from 6-9 pm.
- Home Gardening Webinar Series February 6- March 27, Thursdays at 12:00 pm-1:30. Zoom, Registration costs \$80.
- Pruning Workshop February 7, 2025, 1:00 - 4:00 pm. Rover, MO, Registration cost \$10
- Private applicators license training TBA.
- Workshops for commercial and consumer horticulture throughout the year.

#### Upcoming Outreach events:

- Biscuits Gravy and Dirt. Held at Greenway Equipment in Poplar Bluff. January 9th, 9-11 am.
- Garden Hour
- Garden Spade Newsletters



# Extension Master Gardeners



The Poplar Bluff Area Extension Master Gardeners chapter includes Butler, Carter, Stoddard, Ripley, and Wayne counties.

The chapter president is Laura Thompson, the secretary is Rebecca Tindall, and the treasurer is Kathy Pucci.

There are fourteen active Extension Master Gardener Members. Three members have Emeritus status, seven are certified, and three are trainees.

The chapter reported 566.95 volunteer hours and 119.75 education hours for the year.

The value of the chapter's volunteer time is over \$8,987.15, while the educational hours are \$4,010.42.

The values are based on the Independent Sector Value of Volunteer Time of \$33.49 Per Hour. (WASHINGTON, April 23, 2024).

## Service and Teaching Activities:

- **Ag Day in Carter County:** Members hosted a hands-on learning experience for students, who rotated through various learning stations.
- **Sierra Girls Program:** Members organized a summer program for girls at the Sierra Osage Treatment Center.
- **Demonstration Garden:** Members provided exceptional landscaping and maintenance for the Popeye's Garden at the Westwood Blvd. and Kanell Blvd. intersection.
- **Exhibits and More:** Members displayed flowers, plants, and canned goods at the Butler County event and played key roles in planning.
- **Mums Sale:** Members successfully hosted a fundraiser selling over 50 plants.
- **Veterans Hospital:** Members assisted with planning and implementing improvements to the grounds.
- **Women's Day Event:** Members hosted a full-day event to help women veterans learn about gardening and supported fundraising through sales.
- **Facebook:** Members maintained an informative presence for members and the public.

The Poplar Bluff Area Extension Master Gardeners meet regularly at 5:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the VA Educational Building, 1500 N. Westwood Blvd. For more information, contact 573-686-8064.



# 2024 Summary



Serving Butler, Stoddard, Wayne, Carter, Ripley, Oregon, and Howell Counties

## 2024 Update:

It has been a busy year for the Missouri Feral Hog Elimination Partnership!

New equipment was offered to two of my counties (Wayne, and Butler) affected by feral hogs and Wayne has received a payout for the purchase of a lime buggy already. Equipment that was placed before 2024 in Carter, Ripley, Reynolds, Oregon, Howell, and Wayne counties is still available for use. The equipment is in place for use free of charge to those with feral hog damage, the others are going to be placed this coming spring. The equipment can also be rented for those wishing to utilize the equipment for other projects and is managed by the local SWCD offices.

Firm numbers are not yet available for 2024, however, there is a ballpark estimate of around 5,000 feral hogs taken off the landscape in 2024, as numbers were around 4,500 before the end of the year when aerial operations began. Comparatively, elimination specialists removed 7,780 feral hogs in 2023.

Aerial operations began again in December and the MFHEP staff are busy locating feral hogs and sending the coordinates to the helicopter for daytime aerial removal. Aerial operations are planned through March with the USDA helicopter, as we have done for the last few years.

In 2024 I attended numerous events & meetings in my counties, updating extension councils, SWCDs, Farm Bureau, and others about the Partnership's activities and progress throughout the year. Highlights include several Ag conferences, Ecology Days, other natural resource events, and landowner meetings that I hosted.

I also contributed to many written publications for the Partnership throughout the year and have been working with USDA by creating lesson plans that can be used to meet state requirements for learning while educating high school students about the importance of removing feral hogs from the landscape.



MFHEP Outreach Educators Jerry Richards, Sarah Cope, and Kevin Crider attend Vienna Beef Forage Conference.



MFHEP Outreach Educator Sarah Cope was a featured speaker at the Ripley County Annual Farm Bureau Dinner.



MFHEP display at O'Neal Elementary's Ecology Day in Butler County.

## Looking at 2025

My goals for the new year include:

- Continuing to work closely with Farm Bureau and Missouri Cattlemen's Association and building those relationships.
- Focusing on leads for absentee landowners in hot spots of feral hog activity.
- Continue to make more connections with landowners using targeted outreach strategies.
- Creating more written materials for publication to inform Missourians about feral hogs and the MFHEP.

I am worked diligently in the month of January with my fellow educators to ensure that the 2024 MFHEP Report is ready to be distributed. Both of which I will be distributing to Partners over the next coming months and attending extension council meetings to update the councils on operations statewide and local to their respective counties.

Please contact me for any details related to the program.



## County highlights

### Extension Tax Schools

University of Missouri Extension ag economics department and ag business specialists worked together to coordinate one summer and three fall tax schools. The summer school was in person and live online. Fall schools were in Columbia and Springfield and one 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, related party issues, real estate rental activity issues, limited liability company issues, and international tax issues. The schools were approved for 8 and 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 3,776 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 and extension ag business specialists.

The evaluations had many positive comments and helpful suggestions. Planning is underway to offer trainings in 2025. 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, the National Income Tax Workbook from the Land Grant University Tax Education Foundation, and materials written by the instructors.

The 2024 school attendance totaled three hundred fifty people. The participants were from throughout Missouri, including **one from Oregon County**.



# 2024 Impact Report Show-Me Strong Farm Families



An equal opportunity/access/affirmative action/pro-  
disabled and veteran employer

## PROJECT GOALS

- Develop and disseminate mental health and prevention of suicide resources for farmers, ranchers, farm families, rural individuals and all professionals.
- Heighten awareness about mental health resources, free telehealth counseling services, and trainings.
- Increase access and use of free telehealth counseling services.
- Provide free trainings for all community members who work with rural youth, adults, and senior populations.

Missouri's mental health crisis is more challenging for the agricultural community, fueled by growing economic and mental health challenges that are severely affecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of rural families. These stressors have contributed to substantial and critical mental health issues among rural Missourians, especially farmers, ranchers, and farmworkers.

To address Missouri's mental health crisis, the University of Missouri Extension provides free mental health workshops, suicide prevention programs, and mental health awareness resources. The program collaborates with the University of Missouri College of Arts & Sciences Psychological Services Clinic to offer free telehealth counseling services.

In 2022, MU Extension was awarded a gift from the MFA Foundation which helps to cover the cost of free confidential telehealth counseling sessions by a trained professional who understands ag. Funding also supports developing, printing and disseminating of toolkits, vetted mental health awareness resources, tailored awareness media campaigns, and other resources for 641,348 individuals. Since 2024, 21 clients participated in 375 hours of telehealth counseling sessions. The services are provided at no cost to farmers and ranchers.

## QUOTES

- "This has been well worth my time. She is a very good listener. She respects my Christian faith because that is an important part of who I am. I encourage other farmers to not be too proud. This process will inwardly change your life."
- "I found the information helpful to add to my toolbox, and it gave me a better vocabulary to discuss mental health with my peers."
- "I feel I have a better understanding and empathy for others I may encounter in the future."
- "I think this was very beneficial. It will help me in my career and working with youth."



Scan to check out the Show-Me Farm Strong Families' mental health awareness promotional plan.

# Protecting Our Farmers

Agriculture remains the backbone of Missouri's strong economy, supporting both rural and urban communities. It is critical to help Missouri farmers, ranchers, and their families remain safe, healthy, and productive.

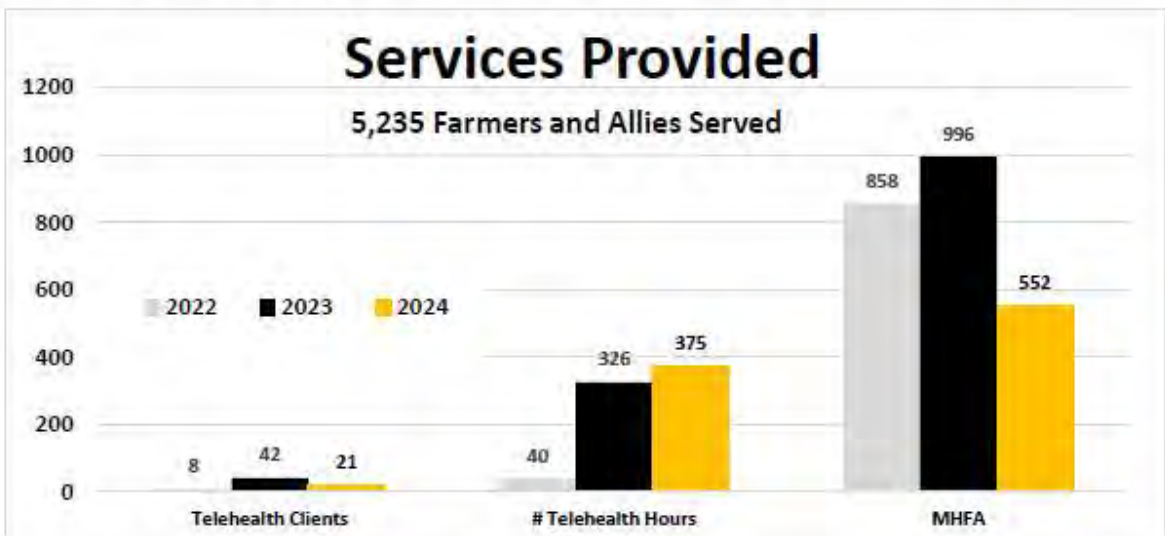
## Impacts

**5,235** Total Number of Farmers and Allies Served, since 2022

**\$844,384** Total Value of Services Provided, since 2022

### Total Number of People Served in 2024

<b>21</b> Farmer Clients Served via Telehealth	<b>375</b> # of Counseling Sessions	<b>641,348</b> Received Resources	<b>43</b> Mental Health Workshops	<b>552</b> People Completed Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training	<b>98</b> People Completed Question Persuade Refer (Q.P.R.) Training
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Check out the Show-Me Farm Strong Families



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding provided by a gift from the MFA Foundation





## SNAP Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought \$11,145,237 in federal funds to Missouri. 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.

1,207 direct and 1,205 indirect contacts were made in Oregon 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.



### Success Story

This 5<sup>th</sup> grade class completed the 6-week Show-Me-Nutrition class about the five food groups with flying colors. They were very attentive, had great answers, and enjoyed the fun In healthy food from each food group.

NPA: Jan Beazley



# Health & Well-being

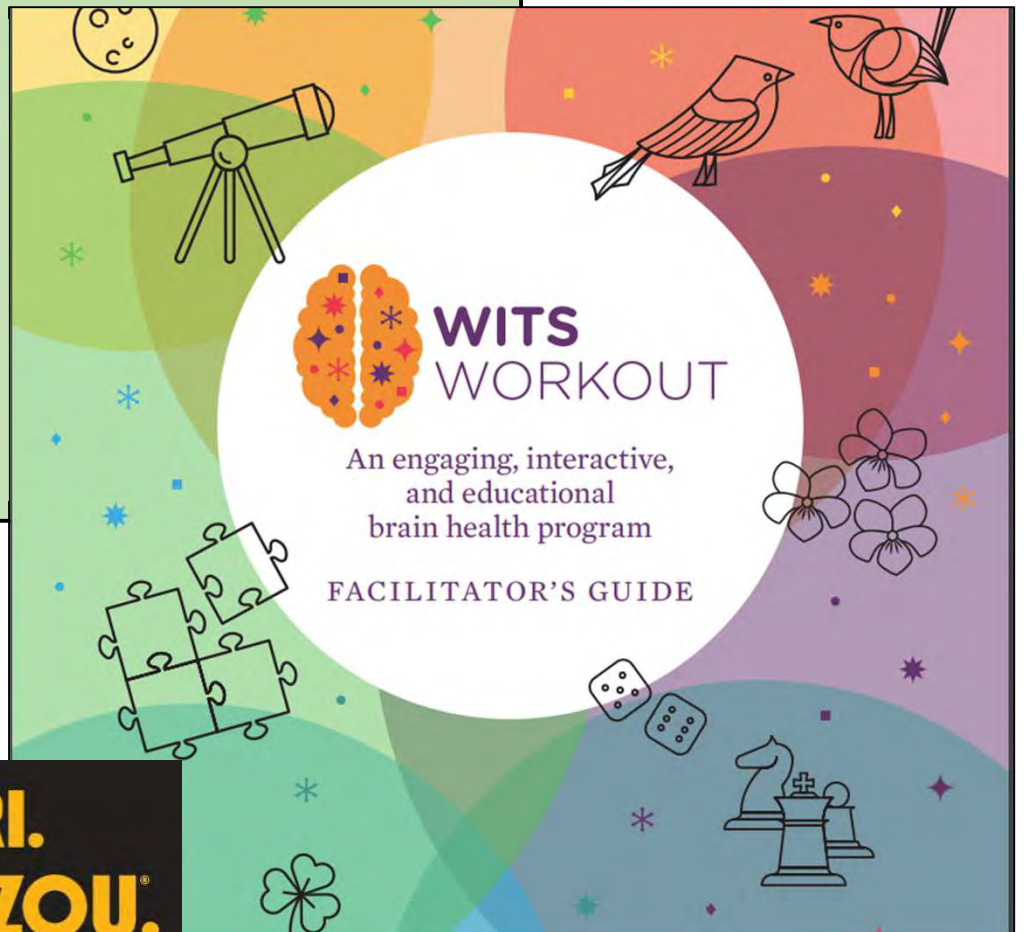
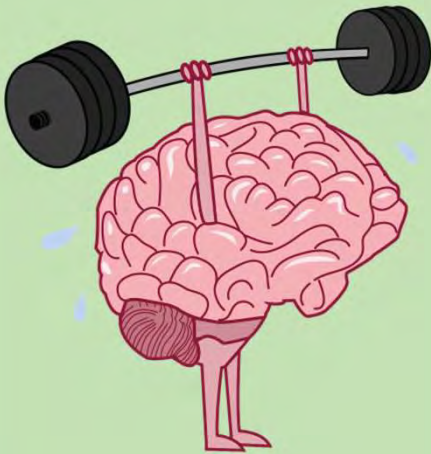
## Human Development and Family Science

### WITS Workout

As we age, the fear of dementia and Alzheimer's becomes more of a worry. **WITS** is a program that helps exercise one's brain through puzzles and other brain health strategy games. Each session has a theme. The last Friday of the month beginning in January and ending in October, one can participate at the senior age centers in Oregon County. The center director reports the size of the group attending continues to increase and folks look forward to it every month.



**John Fuller**  
Field Specialist in Human  
Development



**SERVE MISSOURI.**  
**DELIVER MIZZOU.®**



# Estate Planning: What's the Worst That Can Happen???

Jennifer R. Williams, JD  
University of Missouri Extension



**SERVE MISSOURI.  
DELIVER MIZZOU.**



This class uses the fictional family pictured above to demonstrate the consequences of not having an estate plan.

Jennifer R. Williams taught four estate planning classes in Oregon County in 2024 to **74 adults**, educating them on the importance of completing an estate plan.

**“I was unaware of beneficiary deeds in Missouri and will certainly execute such when I update other documents.”**

**“‘What’s the worst thing that could happen’ is way worse than I ever imagined!”**





# County highlights

Serving: Greene, Polk, Dallas, Webster, Wright, Texas, Shannon, Oregon, Howell, Ozark, Douglas, Christian, Taney, Stone, Barry

## Missouri Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Missouri SBDC at Missouri State University 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
- Course projects with MSU students
- Purchasing a business
- International expansion opportunities
- Technology commercialization

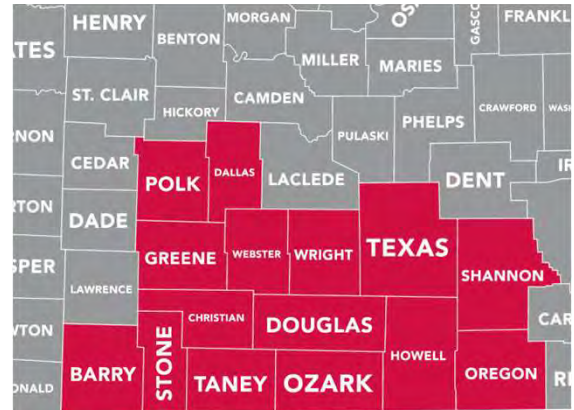
Through leveraging regional partnerships, several programs geared toward small businesses and enhancing the local workforce were offered through an initiative called Innovate SOMO. In 2024 this initiative allowed for our Center to partner with local resources and offer 16 Early-Stage Business Boot Camps across Southwest Missouri. Our Early-Stage Business Boot Camps have helped 311 entrepreneurs look at all aspects of their business including, feasibility, business planning and understanding business financials.

## REGIONAL KEY OUTCOMES

- ✓ **934** Business owners received multiple 1:1 consulting sessions regarding their small businesses.
- ✓ **\$20.4 million** Approved capital funding
- ✓ **\$158.3 million** Increase in sales
- ✓ **30** New businesses started
- ✓ **773** New jobs created
- ✓ **5,189** Jobs retained
- ✓ **4,775** Attendees joined our business and professional development training programs.



Missouri State  
UNIVERSITY



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](mailto:sbdc@missouristate.edu)

417-837-2617

[sbdc.missouristate.edu](http://sbdc.missouristate.edu)

## 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

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.



# County highlights

2025 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Oregon County



# University of Missouri System

COLUMBIA | KANSAS CITY | ROLLA | ST. LOUIS

### UM System Footprint in the county in 2024



#### FY24 county students

##### 15 students

- 11 Undergraduates
- 4 Graduate and professional students
- 15 Full-time students



#### County employees and retirees

##### 7 people employed by UM

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

4 UM retirees and beneficiaries  
 UM salary and retirement income:  
 \$203,216  
 UM state tax revenue: \$3,826  
 UM federal tax revenue: \$22,719



#### County alumni

##### Selected school alumni

- 2 Medicine
- 3 Nursing
- 3 Health Professions
- 1 Dentistry
- 5 Pharmacy
- 5 Veterinary Medicine
- 19 Agriculture
- 7 Engineering
- 2 Law

##### Alumni teaching K-12

- 8 teachers
- 4.6% of all district teachers



#### County breakdown

##### MU

- 4 students
- 61 alumni
- 6 employees

##### UMKC

- 2 students
- 10 alumni
- 0 employees

##### Missouri S&T

- 8 students
- 12 alumni
- 0 employees

##### UMSL

- 1 student
- 4 alumni
- 0 employees



#### County properties and offices

MU Extension in: Oregon County



County population: 8,704



#### County services provided

##### Health care (FY24)

- 46 in-state patients seen at MU Health Care, with \$18,673 of uncompensated care
- 1 in-state patient 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 169 visits to 72 patients having ZIP codes associated with the county

##### Extension (2023)

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



# County highlights

2025 UM Systemwide Impact Data Sheets

## Oregon 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

MU		UMKC	
28,608	\$583.6M	11,518	\$228.5M
students receiving financial aid	financial aid awarded	students receiving financial aid	financial aid awarded

Missouri S&T		UMSL	
6,720	\$127.7M	8,256	\$107.8M
students receiving financial aid	financial aid awarded	students receiving financial aid	financial aid awarded



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

