UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Pulaski County

2020 Annual Report

Extension
University of Missouri
an equal opportunity/AADA institution
December 1, 2020

Dear county commissioners and friends of MU Extension,

Few of us have experienced a year quite like 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought each of us so many unforeseen professional and personal challenges. Yet, as difficult as the last months have been, they have also called us at University of Missouri Extension and Engagement to think about our work differently and find new ways to serve and respond to Missouri’s needs.

We are working harder and more innovatively to develop local and statewide partnerships and collaborations that help us improve lives, communities and businesses across the state. Through our four UM System universities, we are working to expand our state’s broadband access and support statewide efforts to prepare our workforce for 21st century opportunities. This work is key to keeping Missouri’s economy competitive and helping people and communities in every part of our state thrive.

We continue to expand and develop tools like the All Things Missouri web portal (https://allthingsmissouri.org) that provide a wealth of data local leaders can use to pinpoint county and community needs and plan for coordinated solutions. New COVID-19 tracking tools, for instance, help county health departments accurately assess the local impact of the virus and coordinate targeted responses. A new Missouri Food Finder tool (https://mofoodfinder.org) matches consumers with growers and producers to create a market for locally grown foods. The UM System Community Connect web portal (https://community.umsystem.edu) showcases the many resources, services and faculty programs available to the community through each of the four universities in the UM System. Please explore and use these tools. Tell us how we can improve them to better serve you.

Whether online or in person, we are committed to working with you to deliver knowledge, resources and programs that best meet your communities’ interests and needs. I hope you see the impact of that work in this year’s county annual report — just as you see your own hand, as key stakeholders, in making this work possible.

We greatly appreciate your support of MU Extension as partners within your community. As always, I welcome your input on how the University of Missouri can better serve you as we look forward to a brighter year ahead.

Sincerely,

Marshall Stewart, Ed.D.
Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement
Who we are

**Faculty and staff**

Cathy Galland
   County Engagement Specialist in 4-H Youth Development

Jodie Leifer
   Youth Program Associate

Rachel Watson
   County Administrative Assistant

**Other Faculty Members who serve Pulaski County**

Patricia Barrett
   County Engagement Specialist in Agriculture and Environment

Jean Day
   Nutrition Program Associate

Kelsie Lineback
   County Engagement Specialist in Nutrition & Health Education

Charles Ellis
   Field Specialist in Agricultural Engineering

Sarah Massengale
   County Engagement Specialist in Community Economic Engagement

John Langdon
   Field Specialist in Livestock

Gatlin Bunton
   Field Specialist in Agronomy

Sarah Havens
   Field Specialist in Natural Resources

**Council members**

Keith Knight, Chairman

Kathi Sasfy, Vice-chairman

Crystal Lorah, Secretary

Alata Cude, Treasurer

Richard Cook

Katie Olmstead

Anne Premont

Cassie Schultz

**Appointed Member**

Larry Helms, Missouri Farm Bureau

**County Commissioner**

Len Sharp
### Appropriations budget

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**MU Extension is a unique funding partnership.**

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

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

**Local Support**

Did you know you can donate directly to Pulaski 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.
Agriculture and Environment

Engagement Work

Miller, Camden, Pulaski and Maries County residents participated in education and enrichment through Leadership Miller County, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Industrial Hemp, Neighborhood Leadership Academy, The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader, Cole and Miller County Long Term Recovery Committee (serving tornado victims) Alzheimer’s Education in Eldon, MoEats, nitrate tests, farm visits, soil quality sampling and education, and County Council meetings.

New programs were presented virtually, including Composting, Asian Hornets and Season extending cold frames. Master Naturalist, paused during March and April, was completed virtually using a Canvas online platform. ZOOM meetings helped Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Miller County Extension Council, Industrial Hemp, and Leadership programs reach out to more people than ever.

Miler County added new technology equipment through the CARES Act to improve outreach and engagement. In a challenging year, we have developed and improved our reach by extending the University of Missouri to our local customers through Extension.

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Master Gardener Activities and Projects

In 2020, Pulaski County Master Gardeners completed approximately 1,298 cumulative hours of volunteer work which converts to $35,305.60 ($27.20/hr. for 2020*). Those hours came from a variety of different projects that allowed us to build onto last year. We have been able to maintain the same number of volunteers throughout the 2020 calendar year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were not able to host a Core Class or do many community events during the year of 2020.

Pulaski County Master Gardeners work with the City of Waynesville’s Park Board to maintain two different garden spaces. We continue to maintain the raised flower boxes that were installed in 2019 around the Welcome to Waynesville sign near exit 156 on 44. This past summer we were able to install a self watering system behind the sign to aid in watering the garden during the hot summer months.

We also continue to maintain the demonstration garden in the Roubidoux RV Park in Waynesville, MO. This past summer, we installed a sign in the same fashion as the existing signage in the park to identify our garden. The Park Board originally requested a multi-year plan for this garden’s establishment. 2020 was supposed to be year two of this plan, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the community and military support has been stopped until further notice.

During the warmer months of the year, and when the Waynesville Farmers Market is open for business on Saturday mornings, many different families use the garden as a spot to rest and enjoy a frozen treat. There is a regular flow through the garden as kids and adults take photos in the garden or just look around to see what is new. As the garden grows and fills in over time, it will be used to demonstrate to the community different types of gardening techniques and styles, as well as ways that an individual can grow things in their own yards.

Even with the pandemic slowing us down this year, we still managed to volunteer approximately 400 hours maintaining the grounds and planting new plants for both gardens in Waynesville.

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners have also worked to maintain the Black Veterans Chimney Memorial in Saint Robert, MO. We volunteered a total of 70 hours assisting with the maintenance and additional planning of this garden for the community to enjoy.

Approximately 470 hours during this year were spent trying to further educate ourselves so that we are better able to assist the community after the pandemic passes. The majority of the training was done through webinars and online meetings and classes.

Some Master Gardeners also participate in citizen science projects. These projects work with the general public to collect and analyze data relating to particular topics. These topics are collaborative projects that have been started by professional scientists. An example of one such project is CoCoRaHS. This particular project assists scientist with measuring and reporting precipitation. A total of 18 hours was reported as participating with citizen science projects.

The remaining 410 hours for 2020 were reported as administrative hours. The majority of these hours for 2020 were comprised of event/booth/parade planning in case an event did happen; planning, coordinating, and hosting chapter meetings both in person and via Zoom, and research required for new projects that the Pulaski County Master Gardeners may take on in the future.
Pasture and Beef Workshop

27 farmers from Pulaski and surrounding counties participated in a pasture renovation and beef nutrition workshop. Participants gained knowledge of pasture renovation options for damaged and thin pastures, soil fertility recommendations as well as, beef nutritional requirements and how to make the most of supplements and hay. Participants were able to make informed management decisions for current issues in pastures and cattle management after attending the workshop.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training

Farmers who wish to purchase or apply restricted use pesticides must go through training to obtain or renew a private pesticide applicator license. Approximately 7 farmers participated in private pesticide applicator training in Pulaski County in 2020. Farmers who participate in the training learn about pesticide labeling, personal protective equipment, environmental concerns, pesticide mixing and application, principals of pest control and pesticide formulations. The Missouri Department of Agriculture issues private pesticide applicator licenses.

Integrated Pest Management:

Each year farmers, gardeners and homeowners find that they need information and education on pest management. Weeds, insects and diseases are the primary pest problems. People who have questions about pest management will call or bring in pests to the Extension Center for identification and management options. Pest identification is the first step in developing a management plan. Pest management options are presented for the person to use to make decisions. For farmers and commercial vegetable growers, pest management can be important to profitability. For homeowners, pests may cause aesthetic concerns.

Soil Testing

Soil testing provides farmers, gardeners and homeowners information about the fertility of their soil and recommendations on how to fertilize and lime to improve plant growth. In 2020, over one hundred forty soil samples were tested in Pulaski County. Farmers who use soil testing have reported that yields have improved because of using their soil test results. Other farmers have reduced fertilizer inputs due to soil tests showing that fertility levels are already high. Gardeners and homeowners use soil testing to improve fruit and vegetable production or to make their lawn grow better. Soil testing is the first step in making the most of fertilizer application. Extension guides and personal consultations help people understand their soil test reports and how to use the information in the report.
Woodland Steward

Woodland Steward: Management and Mushrooms was held in Pulaski County on October 16th. This program covers forest management practices that result in log waste and how landowners can use those logs to cultivate mushrooms. The Pulaski county program had 4 participants from Greene, Laclede and Pulaski counties.

In addition to these face-to-face programs, virtual Woodland Steward: Tree Talk Tuesdays were held in April and May using Zoom. These programs included participants from Jefferson, Phelps, Pulaski, St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve, Boone, Crawford and Cape Girardeau Counties. The topics included invasive plant species, chainsaw safety, common forestry measurements, forest stand improvement, forest soils, forest management plans and wildlife habitat. There were 34 participants that attended these virtual talks.

Women Owning Woodlands

This program is part of a national initiative that provides resources and learning opportunities for women landowners. This year nearly all the WOW programming was held virtually as “lunch and learns”. WOW Lunch and Learns were held once a week in the months of April, May, June, July, October, November and December. The programs included topics such as invasive species identification and management, forest management practices such as forest stand improvement, tree identification, cost share, wild edibles and prescribed fire to name a few. This program did a great job with connecting women landowners with each other and helping them find additional information and resources to help them learn about their property and ways they can improve their property for the future. Below the months are listed with which counties participants were from.

April: Clinton, Boone, Cole, Gasconade, Franklin, Phelps, Pulaski, Morgan, Benton, Barry, Douglas, Stone, Taney, and Oregon County
Total April Participants: 91

June: Clinton, St. Louis, Jefferson, Phelps, Pulaski, and Greene County
Total June Participants: 36

July: DeKalb, Clay, Camden, Miller, Pulaski, Phelps, Greene, Stone and Newton
Total July Participants: 27
A community of 348 youth building life skills, contributing to their community and becoming college and career ready.

**Findings from a 2019-20 evaluation study reveals that Missouri 4-H:**

**Missouri 4-H Inspires Kids to Do**
95% said they are willing to work hard on something difficult. 96% said they try to learn from their mistakes.
97% said they treat others the way they want to be treated.

**Missouri 4-H Grows True Leaders**
91% said they like to learn about people who are different from them. 91% said they think about other’s feelings before they say something. 76% reported feeling comfortable being a leader.

**4-H Builds Leadership and Communication Skills**
98% said they show respect for other’s ideas.
86% Can work with someone who made them upset. 93% Look for ways to involve all members of a group.

**4-H Builds Social and Emotional Skills**
92% said they keep trying until they reach their goals.
85% Stop to think about their choices, when making a decision. 98% reported that they like to learn new things.

**Top Skills Developed because of 4-H:**  
Leadership  
Building Relationships/Meeting new people  
Project Skills  
Willing to try new things  
Public Speaking/Presentation Skills  
Sportsmanship/Handle Competition

**What youth enjoy most about 4-H:**  
Exhibiting at fairs  
Participating in projects  
Going to Camp  
Community Service  
Participating in Contests

**College and Career Readiness**
75% said 4-H Helped me decide what I will do after high school.
96% said 4-H has given me skills that will be helpful after high school.
86% said I know what I want to do after high school.
4-H also prepares youth for the workplace. Youth must be prepared to live and work in a world we cannot completely envision – competing for jobs that do not yet exist, using technologies that have not yet been invented to solve problems that have yet to be identified. 4-H is the only youth development program with direct access to technological advances in agriculture, life sciences, engineering, learning technologies and social sciences from the university system. This brings relevant science content and hands-on learning that helps youth thrive (Arnold, Bourdeau, & Nott, 2013).

4-H’ers are twice as likely to go to college compared to their non 4-H peers and they tend to pursue careers in STEM fields (Lerner & Lerner, 2011).

In Pulaski County, 116 were engaged in science related projects and experiences.
Community Clubs

Pulaski County 4-H clubs offer long-term educational experiences in which members learn life skills such as decision making, public speaking and working with others. Members learn by doing under the guidance of adult volunteers, who teach projects ranging from computers science and arts to animal science and healthy living. Clubs also involve youth in community service, camping and educational trips. There is a total of 82 youth in 4-H clubs.

4-H SPIN (Special Interest) Club

Pulaski County 4-H SPIN and special-interest clubs and programs include community partnerships and events, day camps and other educational activities. Pulaski County had a total of 14 youth participating in the Pulaski County 4-H Shooting Sports SPIN Club.

4-H School Programs

Pulaski County 4-H school programs are educational experiences that supplement learning in the classroom. Teachers, 4-H volunteers or 4-H staff lead these activities. There were 173 youth that participated in our In-School / afterschool 4-H clubs. The largest 4-H school program in Pulaski County is Richland Elementary after-school program which served 118 youth. Pulaski County was also able to add an In-School robotics club in Swedeborg with 55 youth participants.
Fort Leonard Wood 4-H

4-H Days were held in March for Waynesville Sixth Grade Center youth. Approximately 200 youth participated in sessions including:

• Ocean Voyage
• Ocean Transportation
• Wind Power
• Disappearing Sea Life
• Buoyancy Basics
• Food from the Sea

Volunteers

4-H members in Pulaski County are supported by 38 youth and adult volunteers. Volunteers are the core of the 4-H Program. They help to create, support and deliver educational programs and experiences. Missouri 4-H volunteers report contributing on average 100 hours per year to the program. Valuing their time at $27.20 per hour (Independent Sector, 2019), the contribution of Pulaski County 4-H volunteers was worth more than $103,360 in 2020. More importantly, these individuals serve as role models and mentors for youth.

Special Programming Due to COVID 19

QuaranTIME: To keep youth and volunteers active and engaged during a period of quarantine due to Covid-19, Missouri 4-H implemented a series of online activities from mid-March through the end of May 2020. There was a total of 39 Facebook videos, which resulted in a total reach of 36,686 with 1,627 engagements.

4-H Live: Within 72 hours of the University of Missouri Extension's suspension of in-person programming, Chelsea Corkins and Blake Gazaway developed and implemented 4-H Live: Online Learning, a 9-week virtual 4-H experience. This program crossed disciplinary lines by featuring MU Extension livestock, nutrition/health, horticulture, natural resources, and youth development specialists, as well as multiple 4-H volunteers. With more than 30 adult and youth presenters, this effort resulted in 45 diverse, hands-on Facebook and YouTube videos with over 500,000 reaches and 49,000 views throughout the US and Canada.
Nutrition and Health

More than 20,000 direct contacts were recorded for Health and Nutrition programming in 2020 throughout Pulaski county. The increase in participation is due to our virtual programming efforts to combat COVID-19 restrictions. Pulaski county residents learned how to shop healthy on a limited budget, how to exercise from home, fall prevention techniques to reduce doctors visits and medical expenses, and how to increase overall strength and conditioning to increase independence. One participant noted from the Tai Chi course: “I can feel that my balance has improved and I haven’t fallen since the beginning on this program.”

Below are programs taught in Pulaski county in 2020:

- Tai Chi (Crocker, 6 participants)
- Stay Strong Stay Healthy (Crocker, 5 participants)
- Cooking Matters at the Store (8 participants)
- Stay Strong Stay Healthy (14 participants)
- Taking Care of You virtual (30 participants)
- MOEATS Coalition involvement
- 2 Tai Chi virtual (20 participants)
- MU School of Medicine—Show Me ECHO program, Community Health Worker telehealth calls
- Monthly radio calls to advertise Pulaski County Extension Nutrition programming
- 4-H Fair Exhibit Judging in Waynesville
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought $9,964,840.00 in federal funds to Missouri. The funds support engagement with 723,461 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients and eligible citizens of Missouri. There were 3,209,545 direct educational contacts. This year we had 2,817,878 indirect educational contacts through newsletters, health fairs, food pantries, and the Show Me Nutrition helpline.

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.

Our Nutrition Program Associates (NPAs) are also continuing to provide information about the SNAP benefits program and offer assistance with SNAP benefits applications.

Even with the challenges of COVID, 611 Youth and 1,016 Adult contacts were made, for a total of 1,627 contacts in Pulaski County.

Success stories demonstrating local impact

In addition to the numbers, Jean Day shared these success stories demonstrating local impact:

A third grader at Richland Elementary is enjoying Kids in the Kitchen very much.

The students came to our cooking table one at a time to measure ingredients and complete recipe steps while maintaining appropriate distance and prepare Wheat Combo Snack Mix.

When the snack mix was ready, we all tasted their work. This young lady stated “This is the best thing I’ve eaten all week.” The classroom teacher looked horrified, so the student said “oh, no, it’s just that no one at my house is a very good cook.” She turned to me and said, “So I’m really happy you’re here to teach us.”

She asked for a copy of the recipe, and asked me some questions about steps & ingredients.

The second week – she told us about fixing the snack mix at home! Her family had some different ingredients, but enjoyed her cooking.

In the second session, we made smoothies. She asked if there were other ways to mix the smoothie, because her family doesn’t have a blender. We talked about mixers and shaker tumblers.

I’m looking forward to hearing more from this young lady as we work through Kids in the Kitchen!

Success stories demonstrating local impact

The following is a list of the locations where participants were served in Pulaski County:

Schools:
- Dixon Elementary
- Pick Alternative
- Waynesville HS
- Richland Elementary
- Waynesville Middle

Agencies:
- Crocker Senior Center
- Dixon Area Caring Center
- Good Samaritan – Waynesville
- Richland Senior Center
- Smitty’s 56
- Town & Country – Richland
- Waynesville Senior Center
Family Nutrition Education Programs

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Upcoming Activities and Events:

- Kids in the Kitchen will continue in Dixon and in Richland. I will begin Adventures in Nutrition with the Kindergarten classes in Richland on January 12, 2021.
- 3 people completed SNAP Benefit applications at the Dixon Caring Center this month.
- January 11, 2021 I will attend the East Central Region NPA meeting.
Focus on Kid Classes

MU Extension collaborates with judges in the 25th Judicial Circuit to provide Focus on Kids classes. These classes provide divorcing and separated parents co-parenting skills and an understanding of how to help the children cope with the big change in their life. Program evaluations indicate that participating in the Focus on Kids can reduce the level of conflict between parents and therefore reduce the level of stress on children. Parents learn how to nurture and support their children during and after separation and divorce, which leads to more children being raised in a healthy, low-conflict environment. This benefits other community members by reducing the need for community health services for children.

One-year follow-up surveys indicate that nearly 75% of former FOK participants report the program as being helpful and worthwhile, still credit the program as increasing their knowledge and usage of positive co-parenting behaviors and reported significant reductions in co-parenting conflict.

In 2020, due to the pandemic, many parents were instructed to take the Focus on Kids online class and 25 Pulaski County parents completed the class online. An additional 14 parents completed an in-person class.

Child Care Provider Classes

The staff who work in licensed childcare centers must obtain 12 clock hours of professional development each year for the site to maintain licensure. MU Extension Field Specialist in Human Development offer local classes to provide convenient opportunities for the childcare providers to obtain the hours needed. Due to the pandemic, classes were offered via zoom in 2020. A total of 16 classes were offered. Each class was repeated twice, once in the afternoon and once in the evening for the convenience of the childcare providers, and each offered two clock hours of professional development. 1 Pulaski County Child Care Provider participated in at least one of the classes.

Childcare provider training impacts communities by meeting the three grand challenges MU Extension seeks to address

- Economic Opportunity: Helping childcare centers maintain the licensure needed to provide quality childcare allows parents with young children to enter and/or stay in the workforce. In addition, it provides employment for the childcare staff.
- Educational access and excellence: Providing quality educational programs to childcare staff, at a convenient time and in a convenient location, increases their knowledge of best practices in procedures and their understanding of child development. This allows for a greater quality of childcare for the children they work with.
- Health and Well-being: Some of the courses offered, such as Taking Care of You and Sleep and Health are designed to help care givers learn to take care of their mental and physical health needs. Other courses are designed to help care givers understand the best way to work with children of different ages, so they can provide a high standard of nurturing and care, and provide an environment that helps children thrive, physically, emotionally, and cognitively.
Missouri EATs brings people together to find ways for local farmers to connect with local buyers and explore other topics like hunger, health and access to food — all with a focus on strengthening the local economy and community.

This Pulaski County Extension program brought together project partners including the Pulaski County Health Department, Meramec Regional Planning Commission, and A Mustard Seed Community Development Corporation. Although the general focus of this program was the Dixon community, the effects could reach throughout Pulaski county and into neighboring counties as well.

“The great thing about this program is that the community gets to decide what is important and which direction to go,” says La’Shundra Connor. “We’ll hear from people throughout the community with different perspectives. After the event, we’ll have a plan for moving forward.” Community Conversations took place on the first three Mondays in November via Zoom.

Approximately 20 participants from Pulaski and surrounding counties heard remarks from a panel of local residents with different perspectives on food-system concerns and needs. They also participated in breakout and brainstorming sessions generating ideas and support for local projects, including expanded farmer’s markets, a community kitchen and a regional food hub. The Pulaski County MO EATs leadership team will continue to support progress towards these projects.