



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Taney County

2024 Annual Report



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Extension
University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

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December 2024

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

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

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

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

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

Warm regards,

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

Who we are

Faculty and staff



Taney County Staff

Jake Hefley, Agricultural Business Specialist
Lauren Mendel, Nutrition Program Specialist
Amy Jackson, MSU SBDC Regional Small Business Consultant
Jody LeMaster, VITA Educational PGM Associate
Melissa Widger, Office Support Staff
Kyle Whittaker, Extension Engagement Specialist

Regional MU Extension Staff Serving Taney County

Amber Allen, Human Development Specialist
Chloe Collins, Field Specialist in Dairy
Ashleigh Davidson, 4-H Youth Specialist
Theresa Fossett, Regional Family Nutrition Education Program
Sarah Havens, Southwest Regional Director
Kelly McGowan, Horticulture Field Specialist
Jenni Nevatt, Nutrition and Health
Amy Patillo, Field Specialist in Labor and Workforce Development
Elizabeth Picking, Field Specialist in Livestock
Tim Schnakenberg, Field Specialist in Agronomy
Shelby Yake, Community and Professional Health

Council members

Jeff Matthews, Chair
Susan Martin, Vice-Chair
Myka Braschler, Secretary
Melanie Smith, Treasurer, Farm Bureau Representative
Rusty Berry
Susan Bearden
Anna Morrissey
Devin Sonnenfelt
Jody Stahl
Robert Wyer
Sheila Wyatt, Taney County Commission Representative



County commissioners

Nick Plummer, Presiding Commissioner
Brandon William, Western District Commissioner
Sheila Wyatt, Eastern District Commissioner

Budget and more

Appropriations budget

Income	
County Appropriations	50,473.20
Total Income	50,473.20
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	32,323.20
Travel	4,100.00
Telephone	1,600.00
Office Supplies/Service	2,000.00
Equipment Purchase/Repairs	4,300.00
Postage	650.00
Council Expenses	500.00
VITA Tax Program	2,000.00
4-H	3,000.00
Total Expenses	50,473.20

Key Outcomes and Numbers

- VITA Volunteers prepared 1,183 federal and state tax returns for taxpayers in Taney County.
- The economic impact of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to Taney county in 2024 was estimated at \$1,435,903.50.
- FNEP had a total of 654 direct contacts and 1,867 indirect contacts made in Taney County.
- Missouri SBDC provided 102 business owners with multiple 1:1 consulting sessions regarding their businesses.

Return on investment

Funds Class Balances	
Center Operations	7,396.70
Education and Services	31,724.79
Savings	9,558.98
Grants & Contracts	7,072.74
Council Held Funds Other Agencies	6,657.94
Total	62,411.15

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

Local Support

Did you know you can donate directly to Taney 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.

Taney County



University of Missouri System

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UM System Footprint in the county in 2024



FY24 county students

144 students

- 127 Undergraduates
- 17 Graduate and professional students
- 107 Full-time students
- 37 Part-time students
- 44 Pell grant recipients (aid year 2024)



County employees and retirees

20 people employed by UM

- 20 Campuses
- 19 UM retirees and beneficiaries
 UM salary and retirement income: \$808,347
 UM state tax revenue: \$24,199
 UM federal tax revenue: \$95,212



County alumni

Selected school alumni

- 34 Medicine
- 25 Nursing
- 21 Health Professions
- 22 Dentistry
- 17 Pharmacy
- 3 Optometry
- 9 Veterinary Medicine
- 64 Agriculture
- 118 Engineering
- 34 Law

Alumni teaching K-12

- 14 teachers
- 2.3% of all district teachers
- 3 principals and administrators
- 7.3% of all district principals and administrators



County breakdown

MU

- 77 students
- 371 alumni
- 19 employees

UMKC

- 21 students
- 118 alumni
- 1 employee

Missouri S&T

- 33 students
- 108 alumni
- 0 employees

UMSL

- 13 students
- 47 alumni
- 0 employees



County properties and offices

MU Extension in: Taney County



County population: 56,382



County services provided

Health care (FY24)

- 238 in-state patients seen at MU Health Care, with \$224,164 of uncompensated care
- 13 in-state patients seen at UMKC School of Dentistry with a statewide average of \$52.57 per patient in uncompensated care
- MU Health Care's Missouri Telehealth Network recorded 130 visits to 68 patients having ZIP codes associated with the county

Extension (2023)

- 2,510 Total educational contacts from MU Extension to residents of the county, including:
 - 494 contacts related to productive farming, better gardening, and managing natural resources
 - 1,743 contacts related to healthy eating and aging, strengthening families, personal finance, or youth development
- 215 contacts related to starting businesses, developing community leaders, or renewing the local economy

Taney County



University of Missouri System
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UM System Statewide Footprint

Economic and Community Development Highlights

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

\$3.1
billion

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

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



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

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



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

Education and Training Provided



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



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

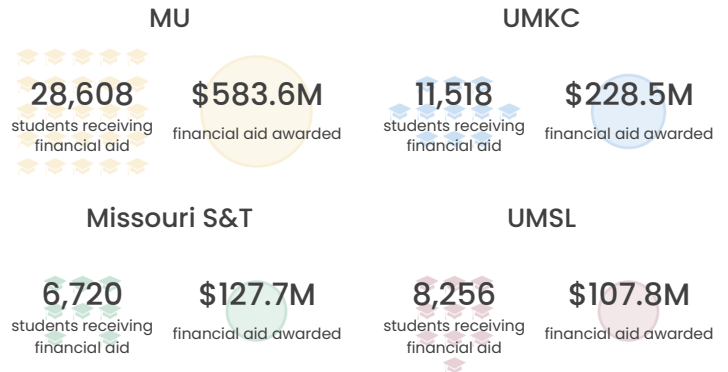


210,577 youth and stakeholder educational contacts in 4-H clubs, schools, camps and other programs (2023)

Education Highlights

FY24 Financial Aid Awards

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



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

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

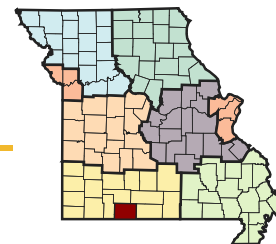
Supporting the University of Missouri is an investment in the future of Missouri.

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

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



Missouri Grand Challenges: Local Solutions



TANEY COUNTY

Knowing Missouri's Needs

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

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

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

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



Economic opportunity

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



Educational access and excellence

Increase participation in postsecondary education from 66% to 70%



Health and well-being

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

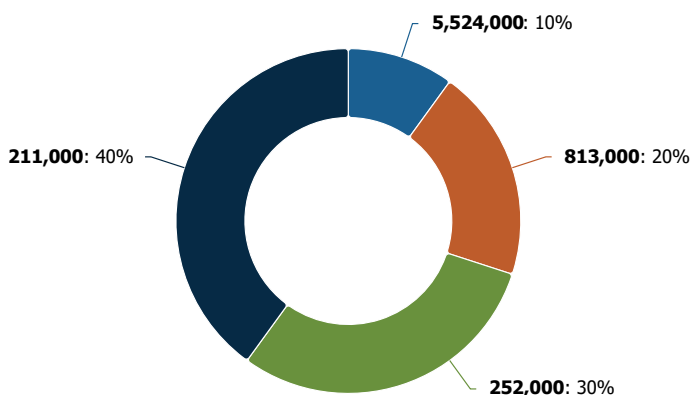
Knowing Local Challenges



CHALLENGE 1: Economic Opportunity: Agricultural Economics

Leading Agricultural Products

Total Rank (Sales): \$10



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

Net Farm Income

Net farm income (total sales, government payments, and other farm-related income minus total farm expenses) reflects the strength of the local agricultural community and can be an important measure for lenders and policy makers. The report area had a combined net farm income of \$8,162,000 in 2017, an average of \$18,636 per farm. This is below the statewide average farm income of \$56,606.

Report Area	Total Farms	Average Farm Income
Taney	438	\$18,636
Missouri	87,887	\$56,606

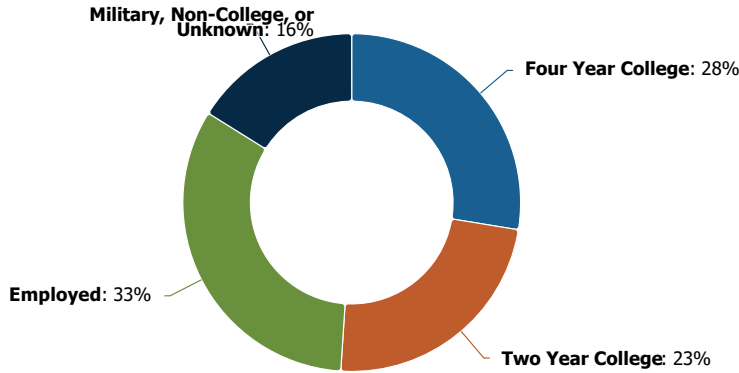
Data Source: US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, [Census of Agriculture](#). 2022.



CHALLENGE 2: Educational Access and Excellence: *College and Career Readiness*

Post High School Report

The 12-month post-graduation activity of recent high school graduates can inform communities about postsecondary education, career readiness, and characteristics of the future workforce. In 2022, of 533 graduates surveyed in the report area, 147 went to a four-year college, 125 to a two-year college, 175 directly entered the job market. The remaining 86 are reported as in the military, not in college, or unknown.



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

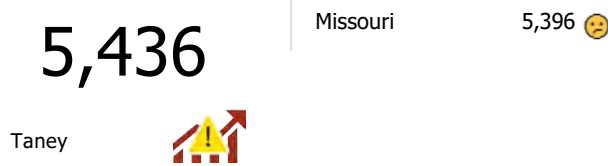


CHALLENGE 3: Healthy Futures: *Healthy Aging*

Fall Injuries

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related fatality and hospitalization among older adults in the United States. Between 2013 and 2015, adults over age 65 in the report area had 2,067 hospital or emergency room admissions for fall and jump-related injuries. The rate of these injuries was 5,436 per 100,000 population, which is higher than the state rate of 5,396. Falls hospitalizations have increased since the 2001-03 time period when the rate was 4,626.

Rate per 100,000, 2019-2021

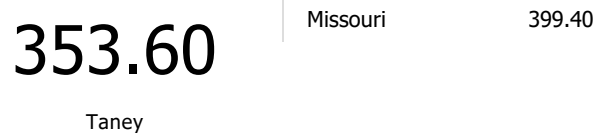


Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, [Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services](#). 2019-2021.

Primary Care Providers

Older adults make up a historically large percentage of the U.S. population, and meeting the healthcare needs of an aging population can be challenging. In the report area, there are approximately 45 primary care physicians (MDs and DOs) to serve the area's 12,728 residents over the age of 65. The patient-provider ratio in the report area is 283:1, which means there is 1 provider for every 283 older adults. The ratio of adults to providers in the report area is higher than the state average of 250:1, which means there are fewer providers per person in this area.

Rate per 100,000 Seniors



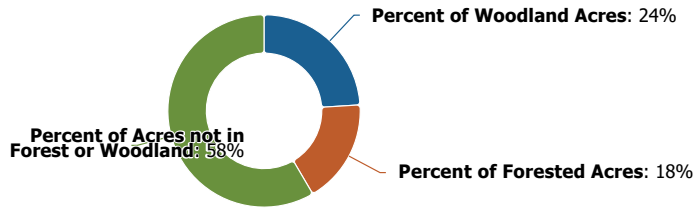
Data Source: US Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, [HRSA - Area Health Resource File](#). 2021.



CHALLENGE 4: Agricultural Growth & Stewardship: Resource Management

Forested, Woodland & Non-forested Acres

Sustainable management of forests and woodlands and harvesting of mature trees support the state's \$10.3 billion forest products industries. Forests have a closed canopy (>80% cover) permitting little light to penetrate to the ground below. They consist of several overlapping layers of trees, with a mid-story and understory comprising a variety of shade-tolerant shrubs and a sparse layer of soft-stemmed plants. Woodlands have a more open canopy (30-80% cover), and their sparse, woody mid-story allows more sunlight to reach the ground. This light permits the growth of a dense ground cover containing a variety of wildflowers, grasses and sedges. Fire plays a large role in maintaining woodland habitats.



Data Source: Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium, [National Land Cover Database](#).

Rotational Grazing

A planned rotational grazing system allows time for vegetation to rest and recover before being grazed again. In 2017, nearly 16,000 Missouri farms reported practicing rotational or management-intensive grazing. With 11 million acres of row crops and nearly 2 million grazing livestock animals (mainly cattle), Missouri is well suited to capitalize on the grazing potential of cover crops. In addition to generating more income, grazing cover crops can have a positive impact on soil health. Manure, hoof action and the root responses that grazing elicits stimulate soil biological activity and lead to healthier soil and healthier crops.

Percent of Operations Utilizing Rotational Grazing

20.55%

Missouri 16.46%

Taney

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



Economic Opportunity

Serving: Taney County

Missouri Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The Missouri SBDC at Missouri State University (MSU) provided support to Taney County entrepreneurs and small business owners through 1:1 assistance and training. One Taney County entrepreneur during our Early-Stage Business Boot Camp shared the following, "Great program. Loving this class so far, it's been helping me build needed confidence to take the next step forward."

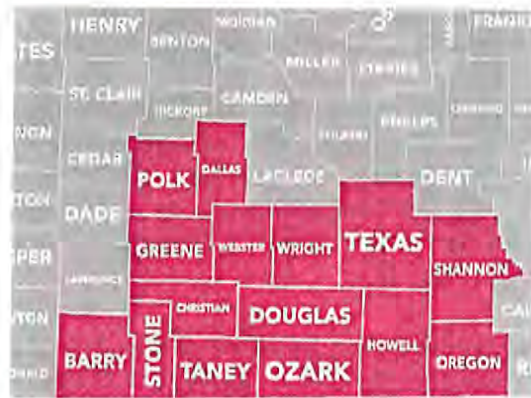
Over the course of 2024, our office met with clients in Taney County to discuss a wide range of topics including:

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

Through leveraging regional partnerships, several programs geared toward small businesses and enhancing the local workforce were offered through an initiative called Innovate SOMO. In 2024 this initiative brought 2 Early-Stage Business Boot Camps to Taney County through partnerships with Taney County Partnership and Elevate Branson. The Early-Stage Business Boot Camp helped 45 entrepreneurs look at all aspects of their business including, feasibility, business planning and understanding business financials.

KEY OUTCOMES IN TANEY COUNTY

- 102** Business owners in the County received multiple 1:1 consulting sessions regarding their small businesses.
- \$529k** Approved capital funding
- \$4.1 million** Increase in sales
- 4** New businesses started
- 894** Attendees from Taney County joined our business and professional development training programs.



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

Learn more about our latest programs and training

sbdc@missouristate.edu

417-837-2617

sbdc.missouristate.edu

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

\$158,348,440

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

\$96,781,627

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

\$20,468,645

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.

Taney County

Business and Community

Local Impact

In 2024, the VITA volunteers assisted over 1,183 low- and moderate-income families with free tax preparation at two locations in Taney County: The Grove Church in Branson and the University of Missouri Taney County Extension office in Forsyth.

VITA volunteers prepared federal and state returns for taxpayers in Taney County. The economic impact of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to the economy of Taney county is estimated at \$1,435,903 in Federal Tax Refunds including \$269,186 in Earned Income Credits.

When you support MU Extension's MoTax Initiative program, participants save an average of \$220 in tax preparation fees. Clients learn what credits they are eligible for, how to determine what they should have withheld from their income sources, and future tax planning.

In 2024, the Taney County volunteers included: Kenny Carr, Robert Davis, Shannon Eby, Jorge Cortez, John Gillespie, Lynda LaRocque, Kim Brewer and Jody LeMaster, VITA coordinator for both sites.

All volunteers must pass the Standards of Conduct, Intake/Interview/Quality Review and Advance Certification tests required by the Internal Revenue Service.





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



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

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



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

Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people (ages 12-17) facing mental health or addiction challenges while the adult version focuses on adults aged 18 and older. Participants learn how to offer initial assistance and guide individuals toward the care they need.

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

*Missouri Department of Mental Health 2020 Status Report



A Matter of Balance helps older adults overcome their fear of falling, increase their activity levels and reduce their risk of falls. In eight classes, participants learn fall-prevention strategies, develop personal prevention plans, acquire balance-improving exercises and make lifestyle changes to minimize their fear of falling.

“I have cleaned my house of clutter for safety, put non-slip stickers on my tub floor, I’m getting much more regular exercise and I’m feeling stronger.”

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Human Development and Family Science programming has focused on 6 distinct areas: aging well, families/parenting, childcare provider professional development, sense of belonging, mental health & well-being, emerging program: Sowing and Growing Hope. In 2024, 80 programs (123 sessions) were taught and reached 3,337 educational contacts in 73 counties and City of Saint Louis through direct Extension education teaching.

Aging Well in Missouri

The aging demographic in Missouri is large with a population statewide being 1,062,483 over the age of 65 with a population of 167,828 (18.31%) in the Southwest Region of Missouri (US Census Bureau). Given the significant number of those over 65, it is crucial to address their specific needs and challenges. Therefore, the University of Missouri Extension plays a vital role in this effort by providing education programs focused on healthy aging. These programs help to improve the quality of life for Missouri's aging population through the promotion of social engagement and overall well-being.

To enhance the quality of life for Missouri's aging population through education programs collaborations and various learning modalities were necessary. A total of 28 aging well programs (62 sessions) were conducted with 537 educational contacts.

The programs focused on promoting aging well, fall prevention, brain health, and aging in place. The programs used were Boost Your Brain and Memory, Chronic Disease Self-Management, Keep Your Keys, A Matter of Balance, and Alzheimer's programming. The programs implemented created connections which are illustrated below:

This program made me trade in my flip flops for better shoes. I will get a grab bar for my shower. I learned to slow down and take my time before getting up and turning."- Matter of Balance Participant 2024

"The Alzheimer's Association greatly values the partnership with MU Extension. I know that when Amber Allen is presenting one of our programs, that it's going to be great and impactful to the community. Amber recently presented for Adult Protective Services and the feedback I received was that it was "phenomenal". That says a lot! When we are asked to present in any community, I think of MU Extension first because I know it will be a high-quality presentation." - Program Manager, Alzheimer's Association, Greater Missouri Chapter

"I learned more about the brains activities, and how it effects me in daily life. Loved the trainer!"-Boost Your Brain and Memory Participant 2024

"It's just good to know that what I'm doing since surgery and diagnosis has been helping and working. I'm definitely encouraged to continue and improve." – Boost Your Brain and Memory Participant 2024

Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Profiles and Stories

Mental Health and Well-being

Programs focused on mental health and well-being are needed in Missouri. Data shows that in a month in Southwest Missouri, the average number of poor mental health days is 5.8, and 5.3 days per month for Missouri statewide, both higher than the national average of 4.9 days per month of poor mental health days.

Programs I taught this year to promote mental health and well-being include Adult Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, QPR, and various mental health awareness presentations. Through these 14 educational programs and events related to mental health and well-being, 1,923 Missourians have been impacted. Through MU Extension, we empower community members to prioritize their mental health and well-being and extend that care to their family, friends, and community.

Counties Served through Mental Health

Programming: Audrain, Barry, Boone, Bollinger, Buchanan, Butler, Callaway, Cape Girardeau, Cole, Cooper, Daviess, DeKalb, Douglas, Franklin, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Lawrence, Lincoln, Livingston, Macon, Marion, Mercer, McDonald, Moniteau, Newton, Perry, Polk, Pulaski, Randolph, Ray, Scott, Ste. Genevieve, St. Charles, St. Louis City, Taney, Texas, Vernon



Building Strong Families

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



Lauren Mendel
 Nutrition Program Associate
 Laurenmendel@Missouri.edu

Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Local Impact

Making A Difference in Taney County, Family & Nutrition Education Program: 2024

Programs: (6 lessons, 1 time per week)

Show Me Nutrition :

- **Objectives:** School curriculum. Using the five-food group model while teaching kids about the importance of nutrition and physical activity.

Show Me Nutrition Educational Displays:

- **Objectives:** Summer or after school teaching curriculum. Guiding students along with easy, tasty recipes they can make themselves. Also includes physical activity component.

Eating Smart, Being Active:

- **Objectives:** Adult curriculum. Helping individuals develop healthier eating habits, creating grocery shopping awareness, and encouraging physical active throughout the lifespan.

Partnerships:

- Forsyth – Christian Action Ministries
- Faith Community Health (FCH)
- Forsyth Elementary
- Bradleyville Elementary
- Cedar Ridge Elementary
- Mark Twain Elementary
- Simmering Recovery Center
- Taney County OACAC

Participant Testimonies:

"I thoroughly enjoyed this class and learning important nutrition facts I never have heard before." *"After trying the Cowboy Caviar recipe, I went home & added my own twist! Loved making it my own!"* *"My mom and I made the recipes in the paper you sent home, and they were great! I have never really liked healthy food, but now I do!"*. *"Cooked onions are my new favorite vegetable thanks to this class!"*.

Total Served:
Direct - 654
Indirect - 1,867



SNAP-Ed Public Value Statement 2024

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.

654 direct and 1867 indirect contacts were made in Taney 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.

Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Collaborative Success: Enhancing Wellness Through Health Education Programs

Skaggs Foundation Helping Hands Grant Award Recipient



Pictured Above: Jenni Nevatt and Skaggs Grant Board member and grant committee member, Linda Sprague.

The University of Missouri Extension and Fordland Clinic of Kimberling City are collaborating to enhance access to a whole-person approach to wellness. ***Beyond Balance: Whole-Person Fitness*** will provide educational opportunities for underserved middle-aged and older adults in the **Stone and Taney County** area. Through series of evidence-based educational programs and patient consultations, MU Extension and Fordland Clinic of Kimberling City will be offering whole-person healthcare that can enhance the physical, mental, emotional, and social health of clients. Programs such as *Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention*, *Wits Workout*, and *Stay Strong, Stay Healthy* will empower individuals to address all

aspects of health, fostering a healthier community with improved quality of life, resilience, and wellbeing. Like the nation, people living and working in Stone and Taney Counties have high rates of chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and depression. Additionally, this area has a higher rate of older adults which is a population that has increased chronic conditions and rate of fall injuries and fall-related deaths. **This collaborative program will provide access to educational wellness opportunities and empower individuals to make healthy choices to positively impact their health and wellbeing.** Efforts to address chronic conditions must focus on preventative measures, improved healthcare access, and education to promote healthier lifestyles. Programs that promote whole-person wellness can play a significant role in **reducing the burden of chronic conditions by fostering healthier habits and increasing awareness about risk factors.** The **\$7,500** in grant funds will cover the cost of participant fees for educational health programs, health tools for participants, certified instructor travel, and teaching materials.



Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

The Impacts of a New Partnership with Library Center of the Ozarks

This year marked the beginning of an exciting new partnership aimed at empowering individuals with essential knowledge and tools to make informed health decisions. Nutrition and Health Specialist, Jenni Nevatt, implemented the following workshops in 2024.

Fall Prevention 101

- May 9, 10:00-11:30 am
- 90-minute presentation on how to reduce fall risk
- 3 participants
- 3 of 3 participated in the balance assessment and have a **better understanding of their fall risk**



Healthy eating for Aging Adults

- November 18, 10:00-11:00 am
- 1-hour workshop
- Objectives: review dietary recommendations and share tools and strategies to help older adults meet their special dietary needs to ensure optimal health.
- 11 participants
- 10 of 11 participants surveyed plan to use healthy eating strategies learned in this workshop



Healthy Eating on a Budget

- June 27, 10:00-11:30 am
- 90-minute workshop with cooking demonstration
- tips for choosing healthy, affordable foods
- 6 participants
- 6 of 6 will use one or more strategies learned in this workshop to **reduce food costs**

"It was informative, and the presenter was fun and engaging!"

"I will cook more at home and meal plan."

Healthy Eating on a Budget: Meal Planning

- July 25, 10:00-11:30 am
- 90-minute workshop with a cooking demonstration
- tips for planning healthy, affordable snacks and meals
- 10 participants
- 8 of 8 surveyed will use one or more strategies learned in this workshop to **reduce food costs**.

"Workshop very informative. Liked all the suggestions for alternatives"

"I will make a menu of meals, grocery list, and double recipes."

New Partnership with Library Center of the Ozarks continued

Tai Chi: Ancient Wisdom for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

- July 11, 10:00 - 11:30 am
- 90-minute workshop with tai chi exercise session
- Shared a brief history and benefits of tai chi as exercise
- 12 participants
- 11 of 11 "agree" or "strongly agree" they now understand the benefits of practicing tai chi
- 9 of 11 plan to make a **health-related changed** based on the knowledge and experiences gained from this workshop



"I am interested in digging deeper to learn the forms!"

"We'll add tai chi to our exercise routine!"

Healthy Twists on Holiday Favorites

- December 11, 1:30-3:00 pm
- 90-minute workshop with cooking demonstration
- Provided strategies to reduce fat, salt, and sugar while increasing fruits and veggies at holiday meals and snacks.
- 9 participants
- 8 of 9 feel more confident about **making healthy twists** on holiday foods.
- 8 of 9 are familiar with MyPlate and feel comfortable using it as a healthy eating tool.
- 7 of 9 are familiar with multiple strategies to support healthy cooking during the holidays.
- 9 of 9 will use one or more strategies learned in this workshop to reduce food costs.

"I love these programs"

"Super fun and informative! I hired a sub for today to come to this class."

Move More Feel Better

- December 12, 10:00-11:00 am
- 1-hour workshop
- Reviewed physical activity recommendations and shared tools and strategies to increase physical activity to ensure optimal health.
- 6 participants
- 6 of 6 participants can explain the difference between physical activity and exercise.
- 6 of 6 participants know the recommended amount of physical activity for adults.
- 6 of 6 participants can explain the different types of physical activity and their benefits.
- 6 of 6 participants can name examples of different types of physical activity.
- 6 of 6 participants know how to **incorporate more physical activity** into my daily routine.



Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention (TCAFP) in partnership with **The Grove Christian Church, Branson**, implemented by Jenni Nevatt

- Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9/24-11/21, 12:30-2:00 pm,
- 15 registrants
- Objectives: improve balance and mobility to reduce arthritis pain and stiffness and fall risk

TCAFP is an evidence-based program designed to improve multiple aspects of health through slow, gentle movements that can be practiced almost anywhere. The degree of exertion can be easily adjusted making this program suitable for adults of all levels and abilities but especially those with arthritic pain or concerned about falls.

Economic Impact:
\$9,999
in estimated annual
healthcare cost savings



Impacts from TCAFP in Stone and Taney Counties:

- 92% improved or stayed the same in the Chair Stand Test, lower-body strength and endurance
- 83% improved or stayed the same in the 10-Foot Up-&-Go Test, agility and balance
- 92% improved or stayed the same in the Balance Assessments which indicates reduced risk of falling and continued independent living
- 100% participants felt they could find a way to reduce falls
- 100% participants reported they **plan to continue to exercise**
- 100% participants reported they feel more comfortable increasing their activity
- 100% participants reported they would recommend this program to a friend or relative

"I learned another form of exercise and relaxation that I can do just about anywhere. Jenni was a fantastic instructor! Very patient, had different ways of teaching the same thing/form. Kept things light and fun!"



Taney County

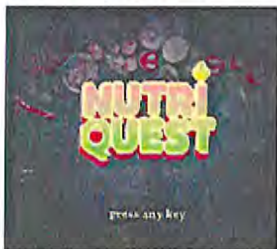
Health and Human Sciences

Walk With Ease Self-Directed Enhanced in partnership with **Branson-Hollister Senior Center, Branson Community Center, Regional Arthritis Center,** and with special thanks to **Faith Lutheran Church**

- **Objectives:** help people with arthritis reduce pain, increase balance, strength and walking pace, and improve overall health
- Walk With Ease (WWE) self-directed combines self-paced walks with information about health-related topics. It is an individual program that allows participants to work on their own at their own pace to increase their physical activity.



NutriQuest: New Nutrition and Health Video Game



Nutrition and Health Specialist, Jenni Nevatt served as the subject matter expert on the development of a new video game, NutriQuest. This is a collaboration between College of Education & Human Development, specifically the School of Information Science and Learning Technologies and MU Extension Health and Human Sciences. The team has received a grant to develop this game geared toward SNAP-eligible middle school age youth and their caregivers to extend SNAP-Ed learning objectives.



Tai Chi in the Garden, Branson

- Nutrition and Health Specialist, Jenni Nevatt, provided a brief explanation of tai chi, its benefits for gardeners, and a demonstration
- Master Gardeners of the Ozarks meeting, 10/14
- Approximately 25 participants



Community Engagement:



2024 Southwest FFA District Food Science Career Development

Darr Agricultural Center of the Missouri State University Nutrition and Health Specialist, Jenni Nevatt, served as judge for the Team Product Development section of the contest for 8 teams

Taney County

Health and Human Sciences

Eating Smart, Being Active in partnership with **Faith Community Health**

RELEVANCE:

- Rising prevalence of chronic diseases including diabetes and heart disease
- Taney County and Missouri have a higher rate of diabetes (9.3%), heart disease (8.6%), and high blood pressure (38.3%) than both the state and nation
- Taney County has an increased rate of adults with fair or poor health (19%) than Missouri or the United States
- Nutrition and health education addresses these challenges by empowering individuals with knowledge and tools needed to make healthier choices and improve health outcomes

• References:



"My doctor noticed that I am stronger."



Economic Impact:

\$5,120

in estimated annual healthcare cost savings

RESPONSE:

- Collaborate with community partners to fund, plan, and implement evidence-based programs to provide nutrition and health education to help community members reach their health goals
- Taney County Nutrition Program Associate, Lauren Mendel, offered an evidence-based, 6-session, hands-on cooking and basic nutrition education program
- Nutrition and Health Specialist, Jenni Nevatt, offered *Stay Strong, Stay Healthy*, an evidence-based strength training program Wednesdays & Fridays, June 10 – August 7



"My attitude is better. Less depressed."



"This class was such a big help to get me out of the house and moving again!"

OUTCOMES of the *Stay Strong, Stay Healthy* program:

- 4 of 5 **improved** or stayed the same in the Chair Stand Test, **lower-body strength and endurance**
- 4 of 5 **improved** or stayed the same in the Chair Sit-and-Reach Test, **lower-body flexibility**
- 5 of 5 **improved** or stayed the same in the Back Scratch Test, **upper-body and shoulder flexibility**
- 5 of 5 **improved** or stayed the same in the 10-Foot Up-&-Go Test, **agility and balance**
- 4 of 5 improved or stayed the same in the Balance Assessments which indicates **reduced risk of falling and continued independent living**

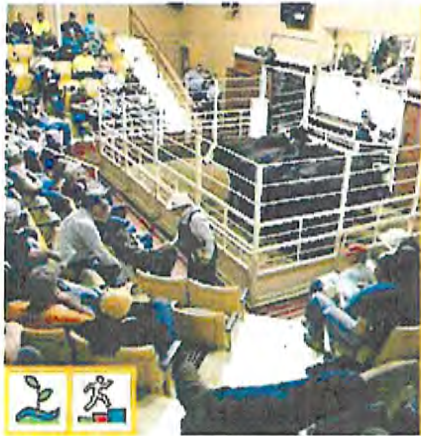
"I can now get up from a seated position without pulling or pushing on something. I have strength to blow dry hair with my arms raised."



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



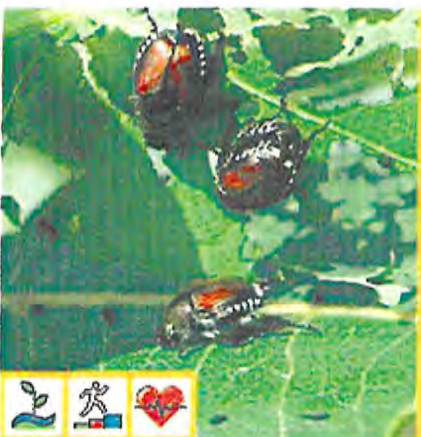
The Agricultural Business and Policy (ABP) program drives the growth of Missouri's agriculture economy by equipping farmers, ranchers, landowners and agribusinesses with the knowledge and tools to make sound farm management decisions. ABP provides interactive programming and tailored resources such as enterprise budgets and farm accounting tools and valuable executive education through its annual Agricultural Lenders School and seminars. These programs deliver key insights, market outlooks, policy updates and practical tools to help lenders and their clientele navigate volatile farm economies. ABP conducts unbiased comprehensive surveys on farmland values, custom farming rates and cash rental rates. These surveys for farm operators, ag lenders, government agencies and industry stakeholders provide valuable insights into trends and indicators of farm financial health.



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



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



The Missouri Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), funded by USDA grants, has been an important extension program for more than 30 years. Mizzou IPM distributes articles, pest monitoring data and publications on how to improve the application of integrated pest management strategies and systems in crops. In addition, the new Soybean Growth Monitoring Report is released through IPM every two weeks during the growing season.



The MU Soil Testing Program delivers research-based nutrient and lime recommendations to more than **32,500** customers annually.

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

2024 Taney County Livestock and Forage Conference

The 2024 Taney County Livestock and Forage Conference took place on February 13 at Forsyth High School, with 65 participants.

The event covered key topics for landowners, including harvesting and selling timber, managing spring forage growth, and using financial and production records for improved decision-making.

100% of responding participants indicated they were likely or very likely to make changes based on the information presented.

**"Great program!"
"All very informative."**



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Profiles and Stories



What Ag Lenders Need to Know in 2025

18 agricultural lenders attended the Southwest Region's "What Ag Lenders Need to Know in 2025" at the University of Missouri's Southwest Research, Extension, and Education Center in Mt. Vernon. The event focused on the economic outlook for livestock, crops, agricultural inputs,

and the broader macroeconomy, with additional discussions on carbon credits, land values, and cash rental rates. Speakers represented MU Extension, the University of Missouri Rural and Farm Finance Policy Analysis Center (RAFF), and the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority (MASBDA).

All participating lenders agreed the information shared would help them better assist their agricultural clients.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Profiles and Stories



Poultry Processing at the Southwest Research, Extension, and Education Center Field Day

The MU Extension Value-Added Meats Team organized and conducted a poultry processing demonstration during SWREEC Field Day. The team guided 379 high school students and teachers through each step of poultry processing, including slaughter, scalding, plucking, evisceration, chilling, and cutting.

The MU Extension Value-Added Meats Team educates producers and consumers on buying and selling local meat.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Profiles and Stories



Freezer Beef School

Attendees took part in a two-day workshop focused on producing and marketing beef directly to consumers. The program was crafted by a cross-disciplinary team of livestock and ag business specialists. During the event, participants engaged in classroom sessions,

toured local feeding operations, and gained insights from producers with successful freezer beef businesses. Additionally, participants had the chance to meet with local meat locker operators to explore potential collaborations in producing and packaging high-quality beef for consumers.

**“Very informative!
Overall great
class!”**

**“Gave useful
insight into
marketing and
changes we could
make to our
operation to
increase
marketability.”**



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



There were 55 participants who attended the **Taney County Livestock and Forage Conference** in February. Topics covered included information on selling and harvesting timber, making informed decisions for the cattle business and managing the spring flush of grass. In the survey at the end of the meeting, 100 percent of the participants ranked the program as either meeting or exceeding their expectations. Taney County farm producers are an economic generator for the local economy. When they suffer economically, their farm product suppliers (feed and fertilizer dealers, hardware stores, fuel suppliers, seed dealers, etc) also suffer. Their economic situation can tie directly to food costs in grocery stores. This program addressed ways this sector in the county economy can remain viable.

Missouri Grazing Schools provide the most in-depth training on how to be successful with Management-intensive Grazing (MiG) practices. These three-day schools are unique to Missouri and have set a standard for teaching and demonstrating the newest grazing concepts. Schools were offered in 2024 in Ozark, Texas, Lawrence, Stone, Webster, Newton, Barton and Polk counties. The schools allowed farmers to think differently about how they manage their pastures and have become a very effective tool. There were around 150 livestock producers who attended the sessions from many counties. Numerous presentations were offered along with on-farm field trips to evaluate pasture grazing systems.



*"We hope to apply this information to leave a better place for future generations." "Start to finish, teachers and students were impressive and full of practical information and support." "You **can** teach an old dog new tricks!"*

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

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



There were 115 participants who attended the **Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings** offered by Tim Schnakenberg. Trainings occurred in Cassville, Springfield, Galena, Ozark, Mt. Vernon (2X) and Branson. Pesticide applicators also benefited from a 1.5-hour prerecorded Zoom session that was used for training statewide. Several other classes were offered virtually across the state. This training has direct impact on environmental safety, human safety and the safety of the American food supply. Farmers are retrained every five years in order to maintain a private pesticide license to purchase and use Restricted-Use pesticides.

"Very knowledgeable class instruction." "Very good job! Rubber met the road." "Tim always does a great job!" "Very happy with the whole class and experience." "I like these classes and I always learn new methods and knowledge about chemicals and applying chemicals."



Regional Drought Assessments were conducted by Tim Schnakenberg and Micah Doubledee in fourteen counties. These extensive reviews of the 2024 drought helped the state FSA office and county committees to determine financial assistance for landowners who had signed up for drought insurance programs.

There were around 400 farm producers who participated in the **40th Annual Southwest Missouri Spring Forage Conference** in Springfield in February. There were fourteen key presentations and a trade show. This is one of Missouri's largest gatherings of farmers and ranchers and is hosted by a committee made up of extension field specialists and professionals from Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Missouri Department of Conservation.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Insect Pest Monitoring is an ongoing effort by extension agronomists to monitor insect pest movement in Missouri. Counts from traps based in Christian and Barton Counties are recorded weekly on the MU IPM website and alerts are provided for farmers who sign up for the service. The service provides a heads-up for insect invasions in both crops and forages. Insects are monitored including fall armyworm, true armyworm, stinkbug, Japanese beetle, corn leafhopper and black cutworm.



Native Grass Planting Support has become an important extension programming effort considering the challenges of planting, the expense make these plantings and the increased interest in native forages. Drought resilience is on the minds of many producers and federal and state funding has increased, making this more feasible for livestock producers. Agronomist support has come in the form of factsheets, tours, workshops and on-farm visits. Some of these on-farm visits may involve assistance in properly calibrating and setting native grass drills, such as in the adjoining picture from a farm at Brown Branch last spring (LEFT). Extension staff were involved in finding funding through the Feral Hog MU project to pay for Taney County's first available rentable no-till drill capable of drilling native grass seed. The Taney County Soil and Water Conservation District received the drill in the summer at no cost to serve the farmers of the county.

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



The impact of the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks based in Stone and Taney Counties was significant. For 2024, the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks fulfilled their commitment to take on high-impact and ambitious projects. **A total of 4,336 hours were reported** in 2024 by fifty-six master gardeners who served the entire year and reported. The first-year Master Gardeners are expected to provide 30 hours of service and seasoned master gardeners are only expected to provide 20 hours. This year the master gardeners who submitted hours each averaged 77 hours of service! According to the latest figures from the Independent Sector organization, the hourly wage value for volunteer hours currently is \$33.49. If you put a value on the education and service hours provided to the community, the amount totals over \$145,000 worth of volunteer time! Continuing education is an important part of volunteer service. The master gardeners reported 988 hours of continued education this year. This averages to 18 hours per person. They are expected to submit a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education each year.

As of year-end, **there were 106 master gardeners in the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks chapter**. Of these, there are 64 who reside in Stone County, 33 in Taney County, three in Christian County, three in Barry County, one in Lawrence County and two who reside in Boone County, Arkansas. The master gardeners were led this year by Tonya Lewis, president, Sandy Best, vice-president, Mary Anne Harwick, secretary, and Stacey Fracol, treasurer. Tim Schnakenberg served as advisor for the master gardener activities in the Stone and Taney County area. The chapter met monthly, alternating between locations in Stone and Taney County and the executive committee met monthly between meetings. The chapter is very proud to report 38 Emeritus members who have served at least ten years and are active in the program. Two of these members have at least twenty years of active service. Ten members were honored this year for ten years of service.

Sixteen new master gardeners were trained mostly through the statewide on-line master gardener courses. A graduation ceremony was conducted at a Master Gardener meeting in December. Training was conducted in December for the new master gardeners.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



The **Spring Garden Workshop in Branson** brought in **220 participants** in March from 15 counties. "Swing Into Spring" was the theme. Ninety-seven percent of participants reported that they plan to make changes in their gardening as a result of attending. A raffle, fundraiser and plant sale fetched \$4,322, providing funds for grant projects and scholarships. Mary O'Brien served as chair.

"It's my first workshop but will not be my last" "Speakers extremely knowledgeable, enthusiastic and comfortable presenting" "These are always well done" "Very well organized and run"



The **Fall Gardening Workshop in Reeds Spring** attracted **148 participants** in September from 15 counties. The gardening public enjoys participating in the fall workshop for reliable advice on gardening in the Ozarks. "Fabulous Fall" was the theme. In the survey, 96% of participants indicated they plan to make changes in their gardening practices after attending. \$2,224 was raised for grant and scholarship projects through the silent auction, raffle and sales. Joanne Anderson served as chair of this project.

"A wonderful experience, terrific company, food and instructors" "Very well organized" "All speakers did a great job" "Excellent as always"



The **internal grant program funded nine special projects.** The grant committee in 2024 allocated \$5,305 for Ozark Lake Country Senior Center, Kimberling Area Library Children's Garden, Bonniebrook, Pregnancy Life Line, Faith Lutheran Church, Forsyth Demonstration Garden, Library Center of the Ozarks Gardens, Veterans Memorial Garden and Galena Library Project. The committee was chaired by Sharon Nance. Funds for projects originated from local educational program activities and fund-raisers.

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



Twenty-two garden programs were offered on a regular basis during the growing season in Stone and Taney Counties. These were offered in at Kimberling Area Library in Kimberling City (Kathryn Kufahl – Chair), Library Center of the Ozarks in Branson (Mary O'Brien – Chair), and at the Taney County Extension Center Demonstration Garden in Forsyth (Marie Ewing – Chair). Master gardeners were the presenters at each of these events. We have a lot of talent in our membership. At the Kimberling Area Library, there were 145 participants. Some of the topics covered this year included drip irrigation, hummingbird habits, wild edibles, garden structures, dahlias, monarch butterflies, salsa gardening, hardy perennials, holistic gardening and garden safety



Two Master Gardener Scholarships were given to high school students in 2024. Education is the primary function of master gardeners and many proceeds from educational events go toward scholarships for college students majoring in horticulture or a similar field. For 2024, there were two recipients who received between \$1000 each toward their college education. Recipients were Rajan Raghani of Branson who planned to attend Missouri State University, and Mary Sellers of Branson West who was on her way to the University of Missouri. Tonya Lewis lead this effort.



Education and improved landscape emphasis in our communities is at the core of the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks. There are many ongoing projects that made a significant impact in local communities included the Veteran's Memorial Garden, Speaker's Bureau, Bonniebrook Homestead landscaping, Forsyth Demonstration Garden, Corps of Engineers Project Office Landscaping, Central Crossing Senior Center landscaping, Cape Fair Community Center landscaping, Ozarks Lake Country Senior Center garden, Kimberling Area Library Children's Garden, Harvest Community Garden in Shell Knob, Broiler Festival booth and the Stone County courthouse landscaping. There were many more smaller projects that are too innumerable to cover, but combined they make a startling impact throughout our region.





Kyle Whittaker
Extension Engagement Specialist
Greene County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Taney County



Kyle Whittaker Extension Engagement Specialist serving Taney County conducted a "Dry Cured" Bacon Workshop on August 19th. Participants learned the following: product selection, curing ingredients, curing methods, cold smoking methods and preparation for consumption. Dry Cured bacon is a method of preserving fresh pork bellies by using a combination of salt, sugar and other spices. Prior to refrigeration many Missourians preserved fresh pork using this method. Attendees each left with 4-6 pounds of salted pork to cured and eat at home. The workshop was attended by 16 participants. The Taney County Council would like to thank the Community Presbyterian Church for provided the space for the workshop.



A barn quilt class was held on September 6th at the Community Presbyterian Church in Forsyth. Attendees created a 2' x 2' barn quilt to display on their barns at home.



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



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

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



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



Resilience is the capacity to adapt when faced with adversity. **WeCanPROSPER Resilience Training** is a 2.5 hour training for participants to evaluate their personal resilience, tap into resources and create an action plan to enhance their resilience. Upon completing the training, participants can attend a facilitator session, enabling them to deliver the content within their communities and strengthen resilience within their networks.

100% of participants indicate that the skills and techniques they learned will help them become MORE RESILIENT.

Legend

Shelby Yake, Community Health Specialist (CHS)



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being



Taney County

Community and Professional Health Education

Shelby Yake, Community Health Specialist (CHS)

2024 Programs & Events in Taney County

- Taney County Council Meetings: 6
- Ozark Wellness Network (OWN) Meetings: 4
- Taney County Agriculture Day – September
- WeCanPROSPER Resilience Trainings Facilitated – 4 (2 March, 1 April, & 1 May)
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week Article (“Eating Disorders Awareness Week: Feb. 26 to March 3”) published on the MU Extension website – March
- “Saved by Paws” article about the relationship between pets and mental health published in the Community Partnership of the Ozarks monthly newsletter – May



← The CHEO team at MU Extension & Engagement Week (EEW) in October



← The CHEO team at the National Health Outreach & Engagement Conference (NHOC) in Greenville, SC in May 2024

Taney County Agriculture Day in Forsyth, MO on 9-14-24



← CHEO table (my table)

Beef cuts table ↓



Me petting a pig ↓



General MU Extension table →

Missouri Voices Survey

In early 2024, as part of a Community Health Needs Assessment, all Community Health Specialists conducted a “MO Voices Survey” to gain the thoughts of community members about the health of their communities. Some key findings are listed below.

Please note, these results include people who live and/or work in any of the 7 counties I cover (Douglas, Howell, Ozark, Taney, Texas, Webster, & Wright).

- “I trust my healthcare providers.” → 46.4% Somewhat agree, 35% Strongly Agree, 14.2% Disagree
- “I have access to medicines I need.” → 54.1% Strongly Agree, 30.1% Somewhat Agree, 7.7% Disagree
- “I regularly feel anxious, stressed, or hopeless.” → 29.5% Agree, 48.7% Disagree, 21.9% Neither
- “I wish we had ___ in my community.” → Mental Health Care & Resources, More Medical Professionals, Transportation, Community Centers / Resources, Access to Healthy Food, & Emergency Healthcare Services (ER & Urgent Care)
- Biggest Concern for Health & Well-Being → Financial, Access to Healthcare, & Mental Health
- Top 4 Most Pressing Health Concerns for the Community → Substance Use Disorder (SUD), Mental Health, Unhealthy Eating/Overweight/Obesity/ Diabetes, and Poor Access to Healthcare



Taney County

Community and Professional Health Education

Shelby Yake, Community Health Specialist (CHS) – Ongoing Programs

In 2024, I completed the trainings to teach/ facilitate the following programs/courses

**Note: All courses below meet once a week for 6 weeks, for 2.50 hours each session and can be held virtually or in-person.*

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)

The CDSMP is a direct education intervention that helps individuals and caregivers of those with chronic health conditions build a "toolbox" of strategies they can utilize to help achieve their health goals. Workshops are for adults and are highly participatory and build mutual support. Workshop topics include techniques to deal with symptoms of chronic conditions, such as fatigue, pain, sleeplessness, shortness of breath, stress, and emotional problems, such as depression, anger, fear, and frustration. Participants learn appropriate exercises for maintaining and improving strength and endurance, fall prevention, healthy eating, better breathing techniques, appropriate use of medication, working more effectively with health care providers, communication skills, action planning, problem solving, and decision making. Through actively achieving small goals, participants obtain success, which builds confidence in their ability to manage their health & maintain active, fulfilling lives.



Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP)

This course is designed to help people with diabetes live a healthy life. The DSMP focuses on helping people make small changes to their routines, habits, and physical activities to reduce the burden of their condition. Participants learn to make healthy food choices and plan menus, increase physical activity and exercise safely, prevent or delay diabetes complications, communicate effectively with health care providers, and develop action plans to improve their health and wellbeing.



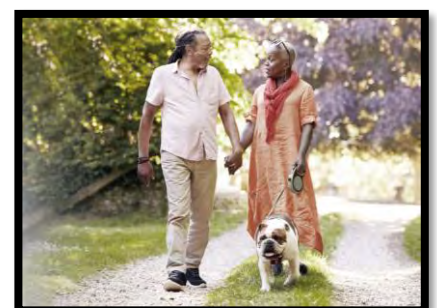
Chronic Pain Self-Management Program (CPSMP)

This course is designed to help people with chronic pain live a healthy life. The CPSMP focuses on helping people make small changes to their routines, habits, and physical activities to reduce the burden of their pain. Participants learn to manage frustration, fatigue, isolation, & poor sleep; make healthy food choices; increase physical activity safely to improve strength, flexibility, and endurance; communicate effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; use medications appropriately and evaluate new treatments; and develop action plans to better manage pain and improve overall health and wellbeing.



Building Better Caregivers (BBC)

The course is designed to help caregivers manage their stress related to caring for another person. Topics covered in the course include caring for their own health, dealing with difficult emotions, managing care partner behaviors, planning for the future, finding resources, improving communication skills, conducting effective family meetings, and others.





Taney County

Community and Professional Health Education

Shelby Yake, Community Health Specialist (CHS) – Ongoing Programs

In 2024, I completed the trainings to teach/ facilitate the following programs/courses

Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory (COMET)

COMET is a two-hour interactive training that teaches participants how to reach out in a meaningful, respectful and supportive way to friends, co-workers or acquaintances who seem to be struggling somewhere between wellness and a mental health crisis. While designed for rural and farming communities, it can also be used in urban and suburban settings. Often, we want to support our friends, neighbors and colleagues in times of need but may not know how. COMET empowers us to be more prepared to support others' mental health needs — especially before a crisis. This training doesn't expect community members to "fix it," but instead trains people to feel comfortable initiating a supportive and potentially emotional conversation by using a simple seven-question guide.



Ambiguous Loss & Farming

Ambiguous loss is an unclear loss without closure. The lack of clarity is based on something or someone being both here and not here at the same time, such as a missing person or someone who has dementia. Others may not recognize the loss, and people may not be able to move forward in solving the original need or problem. Ambiguous loss theory has long been used to support family therapy in cases such as terminal illnesses and children leaving home. However, ambiguous loss also has many applications for families in the farming industry. In the changing farm and rural landscape, loss of land, livestock, changing markets, and even relationships can be ambiguous losses that lead many to feel "stuck."



Community Health Worker Credential (CHW-C)

I took an online course at State Fair Community College (SFCC) during the Fall 2024 semester to become a Community Health Worker (CHW). A CHW is a frontline public health worker who is deeply connected to the community they serve, acting as a bridge between residents and healthcare providers by identifying health needs, providing culturally appropriate health education, navigating social services, and advocating for community wellness, essentially improving access to healthcare for vulnerable populations. CHWs are links between people & healthcare providers, helping individuals navigate the healthcare system & address barriers to care. They also conduct outreach activities to identify individuals in need, educate them about health issues, and promote healthy behaviors. I got this credential to increase my knowledge of public health and increase my skill set.

