



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Taney County 2025

Annual Report

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**SERVE MISSOURI.
DELIVER MIZZOU.®**



Extension
University of Missouri

an equal opportunity/ADA institution



Office of Extension
and Engagement
University of Missouri

VICE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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

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

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

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

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

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

With appreciation,

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

WHO WE ARE

Faculty and Staff



From left to right:
Lauren Mendel, Nutrition Program Associate
Melissa Widger, Office Support Staff
Jake Hefley, Agricultural Business Specialist
Kyle Whittaker, Extension Engagement Specialist



Council Members

Aaron Crosby, Chairman
Rusty Berry, Vice-chairman
Brooke Kramer, Secretary
Susan Bearden, Treasurer
Devin Sonnenfelt
Steve Lane
Forrest Bolles
Richard Cook



Nick Plummer, Presiding Commissioner
Brandon Williams, Western District Commissioner
Shane Keys, Eastern District Commissioner

BUDGET AND MORE

Appropriations budget

County Appropriations	\$44,575.80
Total Income	\$44,575.80

Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	\$ 33,621.61
Travel	\$ 3,659.80
Telephone	\$ 980.29
Office Supplies	\$ 891.64
Equipment/Copies	\$ 630.39
Postage	\$ 179.00
VITA Tax Program	\$ 868.89
4-H Program	\$ 3,000.00
<u>Ag. Business Program</u>	<u>\$ 3,000.00</u>
Total_Expenses	\$46,831.62

Funda Class Balances:

Center Operations	\$ 7,175.47
Education & Services	\$29,223.11
Savings	\$ 9,668.06
Grants & Contracts	\$ 6,272.90
<u>Council Held Funds</u>	<u>\$ 6,969.41</u>



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.

UM SYSTEM COUNTY IMPACTS

MU Extension in (your county name) Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts [Your County] County, showcasing the meaningful ways local engagement supports residents. It includes data on the number of students, employees, retirees and alumni affiliated with the University of Missouri System, along with the healthcare and extension services provided over the past year.

In addition, the report highlights the broader contributions of the UM System across Missouri in key areas such as education, research, healthcare, economic development and public service. It features metrics like job creation, financial aid distribution, research investment, healthcare access and broadband expansion.

This report is a valuable resource for understanding the measurable benefits the UM System brings to Missouri communities. It supports informed decision-making, advocacy efforts and strategic planning by illustrating the tangible impact of university-driven initiatives at both the local and statewide levels.

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



GRAND CHALLENGES

Grand Challenges

The Grand Challenges — Economic Opportunity, Educational Access, Health and Well-being, and Agricultural Stewardship — represent the most pressing issues facing Missouri communities. They are important because:

By focusing on these challenges, MU Extension in (your county) can better leverage university resources, data and partnerships to empower people to improve their lives, businesses and communities.

This report presents localized data and insights in how MU Extension in (your county name) is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

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





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

Missouri 4-H for Ages 8 – 18



Missouri 4-H Natural Resources programs engage youth in hands-on learning across climate science, environmental sustainability, renewable energy, sportfishing, and wildlife conservation. Programs like the **4-H Sportfishing Contest** and **Sportfishing SLAM** give young people practical experience while building teamwork, problem-solving skills, and a love of the outdoors.

The **4-H Shooting Sports** program teaches marksmanship, safe firearm use, hunting, and archery principles, demonstrating how 4-H encourages holistic youth development and responsible citizenship. Supported by caring adult leaders, these programs help youth cultivate life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics while exploring the natural world around them.



4-H's Healthy Living programming teaches skills for healthy choices and lifestyles, enhancing overall well-being and equipping youth to tackle life's challenges. Emphasizing social-emotional health, 4-H fitness, health, nutrition, and safety programs cultivate confident, caring young leaders who prioritize mental and physical well-being.

4-H Feeding Missouri has helped provide over 2 million meals to neighbors in need across the state in the last seven years.



4-H brings hands-on learning directly into schools through in-school and afterschool programs that extend classroom lessons. **Teachers, 4-H professionals, and volunteers** guide students through 4-H projects in areas such as science, agriculture, health, and leadership, helping youth connect learning to the real world.

Programs like **Show Me Embryology** give students a front-row seat to science in action as they watch chicks hatch and explore the life cycle of a chicken. These experiences help students grow curiosity, confidence, and critical thinking skills, preparing them to be Beyond Ready for whatever comes next.

Legend



Agricultural Growth
& Stewardship



Economic
Opportunity



Educational
Access &
Excellence



Health
& Well-Being

Taney County

Missouri 4-H



What is 4-H?

4-H is where Missouri's young people find their spark and learn by doing. Whether raising animals, coding robots, growing gardens, or giving back to their neighbors, 4-H members gain real-world skills with the help of caring mentors.

Rooted in University of Missouri Extension, 4-H connects classrooms, communities, and families to create learning that sticks—building confident, capable leaders who are Beyond Ready for life. In 4-H, youth discover their strengths, practice resilience, and learn to lead with heart—preparing them not just for what's next, but for anything that comes their way.



Taney County 4-H Members participating in a food drive as a community service project in 4-H



The **4-H Shooting Sports** program teaches marksmanship, safe firearm use, hunting, and archery principles, demonstrating how 4-H encourages holistic youth development and responsible citizenship. Supported by caring adult leaders, these programs help youth cultivate life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics while exploring the natural world around them.



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

Agriculture and Environment



The **Missouri Agriculture, Food and Forestry Innovation Center** (MAFFIC) provides dedicated technical assistance to help value-added agricultural producers launch or expand their businesses. Through personalized support in marketing, product development, business planning and financial analysis, MAFFIC business counselors equip producers with the knowledge and tools needed for success. Each year, these free services reach more than 150 producers, driving innovation and growth in Missouri agriculture.



The **Missouri Master Gardener** program enables people of all ages to get in-depth horticultural training and apply what they've learned to improve their communities and educate others about gardening.



In 2023, almost 4,000 Missouri Extension Master Gardeners completed over 149,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS throughout the state.



Missouri Grazing Schools teach management-intensive grazing by dividing large fields into smaller paddocks and systematically rotating livestock among them. Producers who attend the grazing schools learn how to reduce costs through Improved livestock grazing and pasture management while getting insights into fencing, watering systems and grazing system design.

The annual impact of management-intensive grazing is estimated to be \$125 MILLION per year in Missouri

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



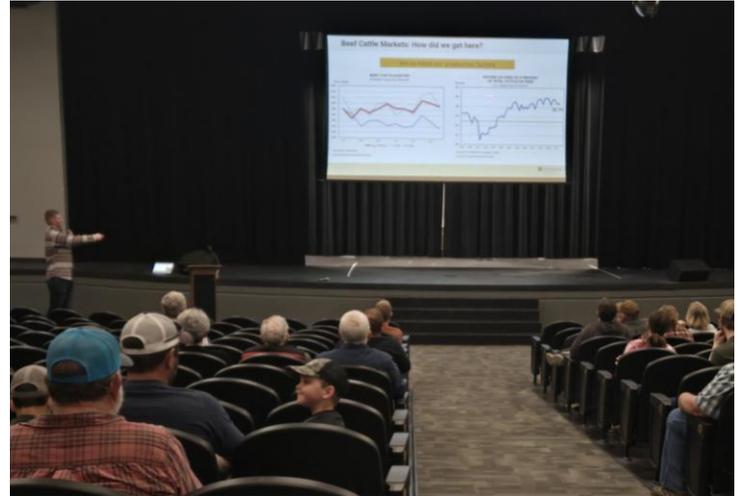
Health & Well-Being

Agriculture and Environment

Agriculture Business & Policy



Baled Late, Fed Smart provided 24 Taney County producers with practical, research-based guidance on how subpar hay affects herd performance, cost evaluation of hay production, and effective supplementation strategies.



The 2025 Taney County Livestock and Forage Conference provided 49 Taney County producers with practical, research-based guidance on forage management, herd nutrition, and market conditions to support stronger forage systems and improved livestock performance.

The SW-REEC Poultry Processing Demonstration

trained 11 Taney County students and teachers in small-scale poultry processing, including safe handling, sanitation, workflow design, and regulatory compliance. Participants gained skills to support on-farm or direct-market poultry enterprises.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment



I started the year in Taney County by partnering with Ag Business Specialist, Jake Hefley, to host a **Land Lease Workshop**. We covered basic leasing topics, structure basics, and even touched on leasing cattle themselves.

Another great program was **Baled Late, Fed Smart**. This was a collaborative effort between specialists to address the effects of mature forage due to late harvest this past spring. There were also mitigation talks and strategies shared on how we make the best of what we have.



My final program in Taney County was **Beef Quality Assurance Training**. Even as a dairy specialist, BQA is a very important training program that teaches all cattle producers proper handling, vaccination, and husbandry techniques to have the healthiest herd possible and progress the industry.

Chloe Collins, MS | Dairy Field Specialist



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

41st Annual Southwest Missouri Spring Forage Conference

- There were around 375 farm producers who participated in the 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.



Ozark Empire Fair Hay Contest - This year's contest had outstanding participation with 49 entries submitted (36% increase from the previous year) from ten counties. Several ag specialists traveled to 30 southern Missouri farms to collect samples of the entries. This was a great opportunity to help producers better educate themselves on hay quality. Counties represented this year included Greene, Lawrence, Christian, Stone, Newton, Howell, Ozark, Iron, Webster and Barry counties. The highest-testing entry and champion dry hay came from Glenn and Toni Obermann of Monett. It was a first cutting alfalfa hay entry that was harvested on May 15. It produced a 231 Relative Forage Quality (RFQ). The champion haylage was alfalfa entered by Maple Pass Farm of Billings. It's cutting date was June 1 and the RFQ was 212. The show has occurred since 1985. Tim Schnakenberg and Reagan Bluel served as Superintendents for this contest.

Private Pesticide Applicator Training - There were 76 participants who attended trainings offered by Tim Schnakenberg. Trainings occurred in Cassville, Springfield, Ozark, Mt. Vernon, Ava and Hollister. 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.

Farm Fest - Farm Fest is held each year at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in Springfield and 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.

Noncertified Restricted-Use Pesticide (NRUP) Applicator Training - There were 32 participants who attended NRUP trainings offered by Rusty Lee, Micah Doubledee and Tim Schnakenberg. Trainings occurred in Springfield, Nixa and Carthage. There were participants from Taney County at Springfield. This newly required training certifies pesticide users to work under supervisors who have commercial licenses. This often applies to employees of pest control operators, farm chemical applicators, government workers and municipalities.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Taney County Cattlemens Association Presentation

– In December, Tim Schnakenberg met with the Taney County Cattlemens Association during their meeting in Taneyville. He presented to about 25 livestock producers on how to unleash the power of clover on their farms.



Frost Seeding Legumes Workshop - There were 61 attendees that attended this workshop offered by Caleb O’Neal, Tim Schnakenberg, and Terry Halleran at Mt. Vernon in February. Taney County producers were a part of this program. This program thoroughly covered the practice of improving fescue pastures with frost-seeded legumes. Diversifying the cool-season forage base with legumes extends the grazing season of the land resource and creates higher quality forage when compared to cool-season grass monocultures alone. These legumes also fix nitrogen into the soil, which can increase the yield of the surrounding grasses as well, while also diluting the toxicity of species like K31 tall fescue. Increasing the yield and quality of forage of livestock operations, while also reducing the toxic effects of the cool-season grasses can result in increased carrying capacity, better animal performance, and greater net profitability.

Missouri Grazing Schools – These 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 2025 occurred in Lawrence, Greene, Christian, Newton, Wright, Dade and Ozark counties. The schools allowed farmers to think differently about how they manage their pastures and have become a very effective program. There were over 150 livestock producers who attended the sessions from Southwest Missouri counties this year. Numerous presentations were offered along with on-farm field trips to evaluate pasture grazing systems.



Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Applied Forage Research – Agronomists Josh Dunn and Tim Schnakenberg worked under the direction of Caleb O’Neal to conduct forage research at the Southwest Research, Extension and Education Center. At least two studies have developed including a replicated research trial evaluating various establishment methods for crabgrass and teff. Results were shared at the field day in September. Another study that was initiated in December evaluates the best time and practice for establishing Eastern gamagrass. Both dormant seeding and spring seeding is being evaluated. Also included is a biological seed treatment.

Insect Pest Monitoring – This 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. In addition, there was an extensive evaluation in Christian and Stone counties this year of soybean stinkbug levels. This was conducted by Dr Ivair Valmordia, state extension entomologist, on four farms.



Stone & Taney County

Master Gardener Program

Local Impact

Number of Volunteers — 109
Number of Volunteer Hours — 4,521
Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours - \$157,285*
(*[Independent Sector](#) at \$34.79/hour)

Number of New Volunteers — 14
Number of Continuing Education Hours — 890

Number of Chapter-led Education Events — 29
Number of Participants in Education Events — 865



2025 Overview - The impact of the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks based in Stone and Taney Counties was significant. For 2025, the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks fulfilled their commitment to take on high-impact and ambitious projects. A total of 4,521 hours were reported in 2025 by sixty-three 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 72 hours of service! Continuing education is an important part of volunteer service. The master gardeners reported 890 hours of continued education this year. This averages to 14 hours per person. They are expected to submit a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education each year.



Grounds at the Corps of Engineers Project Office maintained by the Master Gardeners.

Internal Grants - The internal grant program funded eight special projects. The grant committee in 2025 allocated \$5,020 for the Ozark Lake Country Senior Center, Kimberling Area Library Children's Garden, Bonniebrook, Pregnancy Life Line, Faith Lutheran Church, Library Center of the Ozarks Gardens, Veterans Memorial Garden and the Veterans Garden entrance project. The committee was chaired by Mary O'Brien. Funds for projects originated from local educational program activities and fundraisers.

As of year-end, there were 109 master gardeners in the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks chapter. Of these, there are 67 who reside in Stone County, 35 in Taney County, two in Christian County, three in Barry 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 Chris Witherington, treasurer. Tim Schnakenberg served as advisor for the master gardener activities. 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 39 Emeritus members who have served at least ten years and are active in the program. Three of these members have at least twenty years of active service. Eight members were honored this year for ten years of service.

Stone & Taney County

Master Gardener Program

Profiles and Stories



Kimberling Area Library reading program where kids learned about gardening.

Education and Improved Landscapes — These concepts are at the core of our program efforts in our communities. There are many ongoing projects that made a significant impact in local communities including the Veteran's Memorial Garden, Pollinator Event at the Table Rock dam, 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 numerous to cover but combined they make a startling impact throughout our region...all by MU Extension volunteers who care about their communities.

New Trainees and Transfers Fourteen new master gardeners were trained mostly through the statewide on-line master gardener courses. We also had three Master Gardeners transfer in from other states. A graduation ceremony was conducted at a Master Gardener meeting in December.



A few of our special new Emeritus members recognized in 2025.

Spring Garden Workshop — This workshop in Branson brought in 216 participants in March from 21 counties. "Get Your Green On" was the theme. Eighty-eight percent of participants reported that they plan to make changes in their gardening as a result of attending. A fundraiser and plant sale fetched \$4,189, providing funds for grant projects and scholarships. Mary O'Brien served as chair. *"This was absolutely the most informative session! Great speakers, subjects we don't normally learn. Kudos to those who lined this up"; "Everything was first class and really wonderful. One of the best ever"*

Fall Gardening Workshop — This workshop in Reeds Spring attracted 155 participants in September from 12 counties. The gardening public enjoys participating in the fall workshop for reliable advice on gardening in the Ozarks. "Fall in Love" was the theme. In the survey, 95 percent of participants indicated they plan to make changes in their gardening practices after attending. \$2,699 was raised for grant and scholarship projects through the fundraisers and sales. Joanne Anderson served as chair of this project. *"One of the best"; "Fantastic seminar. Well put together"; "Wonderful team effort"*

Stone & Taney County

Master Gardener Program

Profiles and Stories

Monthly Garden Programs - Twenty 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; Marina Hanson; Shanna Sullivan — Co-Chairs), 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 Library Center of the Ozarks, 142 people participated from the community during the season. At the Kimberling Area Library, there were 180 participants. There were 67 participants this year at Forsyth. Some of the topics covered this year included planting in clay soil, salvia, seed saving, raised bed gardening, growing roses, vegetable gardening, preserving herbs, the life of a beehive, seed starting and right plant right place.



Master Gardeners from Shell Knob beautified the senior center in April.



Youth Programming — New for 2025 was the initiation of a Junior Master Gardener group combined with 4-H. Most are home-schooled students. Susan Martin leads this effort with assistance from Kelly McGowan and youth associate, Madison McCord. This group meets every other week in Branson. In addition, Master Gardeners were involved in many of the Kimberling Area Library's reading program for kids. They provided learning opportunities such as decorating flowerpots and planting flowers in them. On another occasion, flower boards were made using real flowers from the gardens.

Flower boards made at the Kimberling Area Library reading program.

Master Gardener Scholarships — Three scholarships were given to high school students in 2025. 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 2025, the recipients received between \$1000 each toward their college education. Recipients were Talon Fronterhouse of Branson who planned to attend College of the Ozarks, Dakota Oster of Hollister who also planned to attend Ozark Technical College, and Isaac Sandrik of Branson who plans to attend the University of Missouri. Tonya Lewis led this effort.

Garden Tour — In June a self-guiding garden tour was offered in Taney County to view seven private gardens. The public would register, receive a map and wristband, then travel to see each garden along the way on the day of the event. Master Gardeners were on hand at each stop to provide educational assistance during the tour. Over 90 people participated. \$1,856 was raised for the benefit of scholarships and grants. Kathryn Kufahl led this effort.



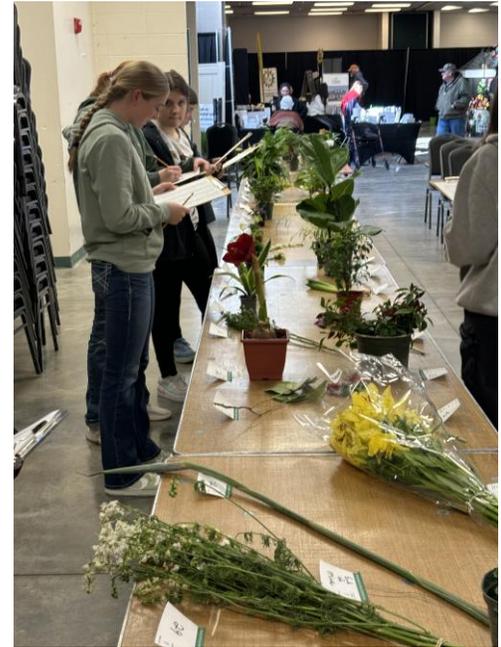
Extension Engagement Specialist
Taney County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Regional Impact

Regional Engagement Activities



Extension Engagement Specialist Kyle Whittaker, MU Extension Workforce Development Specialist Amy Patillo, MU Extension Horticulture Specialist Kelly McGowen and Youth Program Associate Bailey Andrews conducted a Career Development Event workshops at the Springfield Lawn and Garden Show on February 21st. The workshops were held in conjunction with the lawn and garden show hosted by the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds. The team provided the workshops for FFA students preparing for district and state competitions. Three workshops were conducted in the areas of Floriculture, Nursery/Landscaping and Entomology.

The Floriculture Career Development Event includes identifying 60 plants from a list of 143 plants. A plant diagnosis and disorders practicum, greenhouse and floral item identification practicum and a written exam.

The Nursery/Landscaping Career Development Event includes 50 plants specimens from a list of 91 shade trees, flowering trees, perennials, evergreen shrubs, vines and ground covers, turf and flowering shrubs. The event also includes a plant disorder and diagnosis practicum, a landscape design practicum and a written exam.

The Entomology Career Development Event includes identifying 40 insects specimens from a list of 114. The event also includes an insect/plant diagnosis practicum, pesticide formulation problem and a written exam.



Extension Engagement Specialist
Taney County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Regional Impact

Regional Engagement Activities



Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker conducted the Southwest District Poultry and Meats Evaluation Career Development Events (CDE) held on the campus of Missouri State University. The meats CDE involved 27 teams from schools throughout southwest Missouri and the poultry CDE involved 30 teams, 204 students participated in the events. The District CDE was held April 3rd and 4th and is a qualifying event for FFA teams competing for the state FFA CDE.



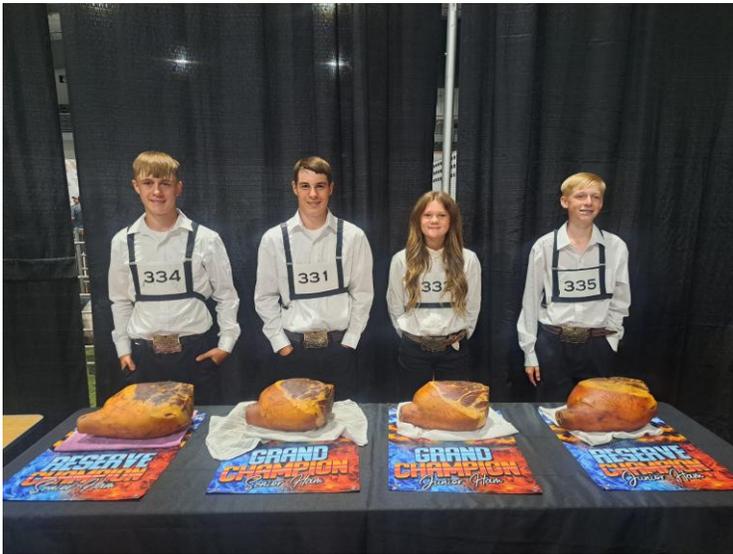
Extension Engagement Specialist
Taney County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Regional Impact

Regional Engagement Activities



Area youth have success at the 2025 Gold Buckle Gala Ham Show. Kyle Whittaker Extension Engagement Specialist serves at the ham show superintendent and hosted several ham curing workshops throughout southwest Missouri. The Gold Buckle Gala is held at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds in mid-July



Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker conducted a country cured ham judging clinic in conjunction the Gold Buckle Gala ham show. The clinic was for ag teachers and 4-H project leaders.



Kyle Whittaker – Extension Engagement Specialist and MU Extension’s Value-Added-Meats Team provided a hands-on training to over 300 are FFA members at the Southwest Research Extension and Education Center Field Day in September.



Extension Engagement Specialist
Taney County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

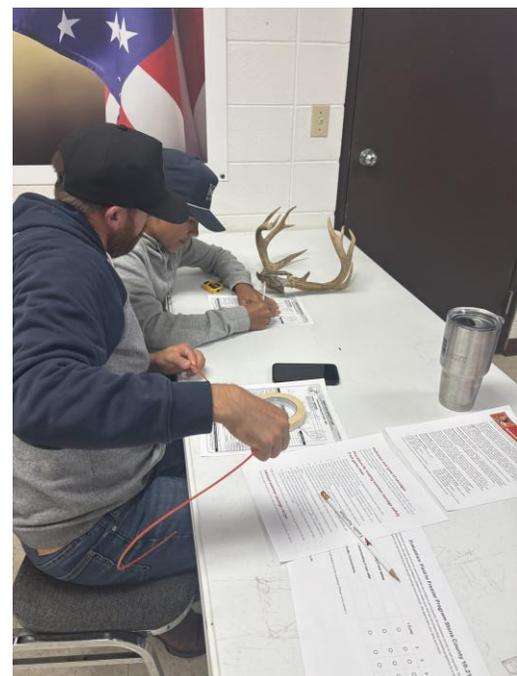
Engagement Activities in Taney County



Over 400 students at Buchanan Elementary learned about agricultural careers. Taney County MU Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker provided the learning activities for the students.



Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker conducted a Field to Freezer Program in Taney County. Attendees learned how to score whitetail deer antlers using the Boone and Crockett scoring system. In addition, they learned how to make summer sausage from their deer harvest.





Extension Engagement Specialist
Taney County

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact

Engagement Activities in Taney County



Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker conducted a tree identification class on the campus of Colle of the Ozarks (pictured above). Attendees learned how to identify common trees of Missouri. In Addition, they learned how to estimate the board feet in a standing tree using a Biltmore stick. The day long class provided hands-on learning that can be applied in the real world.

Pictured to the left – A dry-cured bacon workshop was conducted by Extension Engagement Specialist – Kyle Whittaker. Attendees learned how to dry cure a fresh pork belly to make bacon, several dry cured bacon workshops have been held in Taney County.

Taney County

Agriculture and Environment

Taney Co. Livestock & Forage Conference



Baled Late, Fed Smart Workshop



Elizabeth Picking, MS | Field Specialist in Livestock

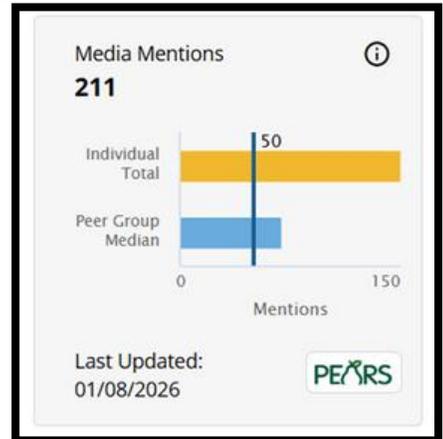
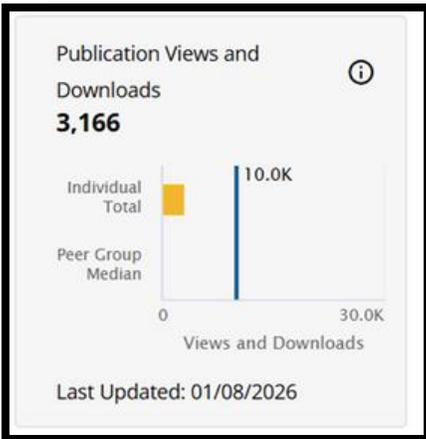
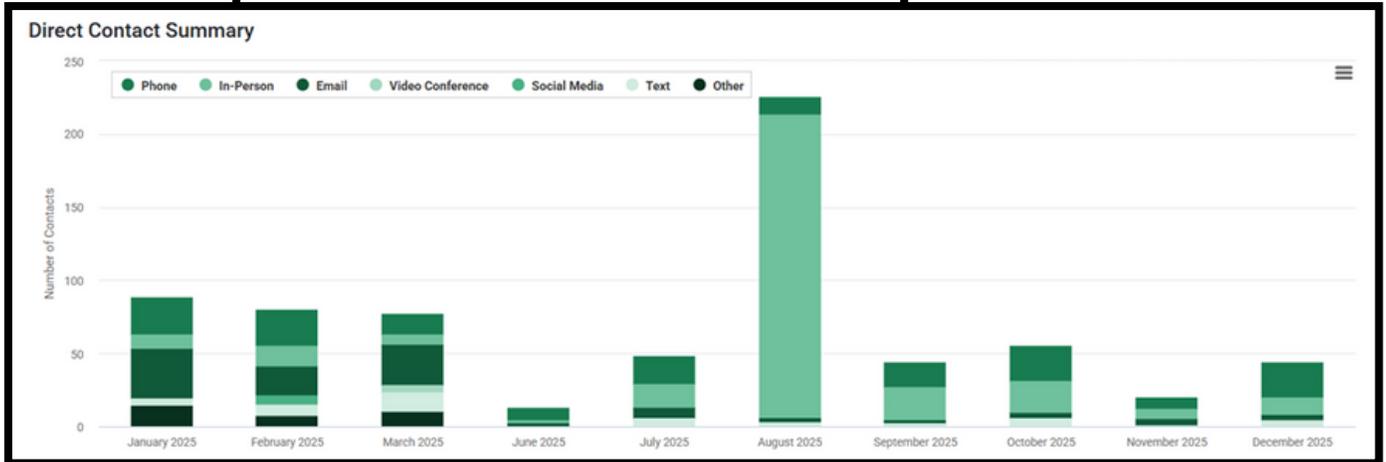
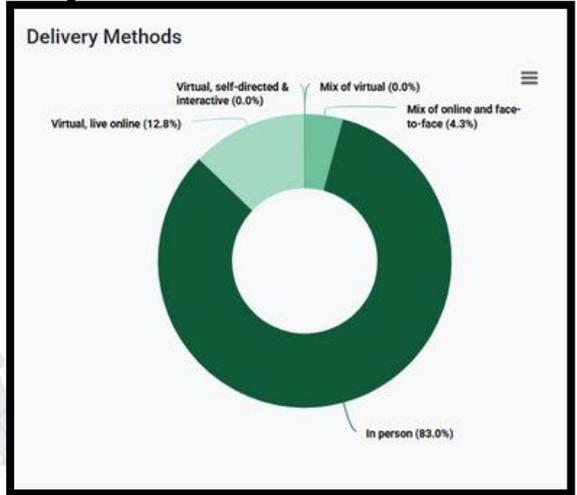
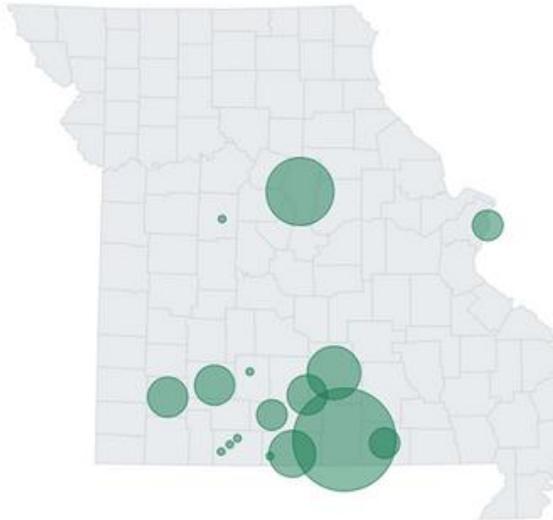
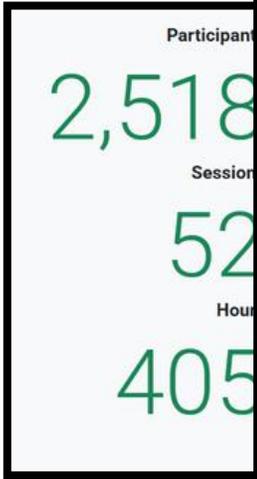


MU Extension

Serves MISSOURI and Delivers MIZZOU

through credible statewide programs

Elizabeth Picking's 2025 Programming metrics



Elizabeth Picking, MS | Field Specialist in Livestock

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence

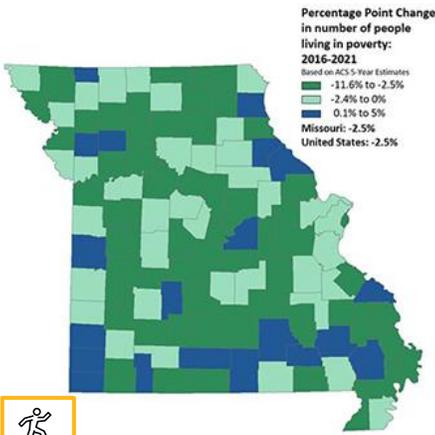


Health & Well-Being



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

Business and Community



The **Missouri Economy Indicators (MEI)** series explores business, industry and workforce topics that affect Missouri's economy. The data is shared through newsletters and on social media. MU Extension faculty and staff receive talking points and collateral to share with local stakeholders.

In 2022, MEI published 15 issues, and MEI online resources were accessed MORE THAN 5,000 TIMES. Two out of five MEI newsletter recipients reported using the information to help guide policy or decision-making in their work.



Missourians from all walks of life celebrated the **2025 Missouri Good Neighbor Week** Sept. 28 to Oct. 4 by completing and reporting neighboring acts and nominating others as the most engaged neighbors in their counties.



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

AMERICA'S SBDC MISSOURI CLIENT HIGHLIGHT



LOCS
- OF -
GLORY

The **Missouri Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)** provide professional training and customized one-on-one counseling to small business across the state. Working with the Missouri SBDC helps business owners make confident decisions.

FY2020-2022, Missouri SBDC ASSISTED 878 STARTUPS and helped Missouri small businesses earn more than \$440 Million.



Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence

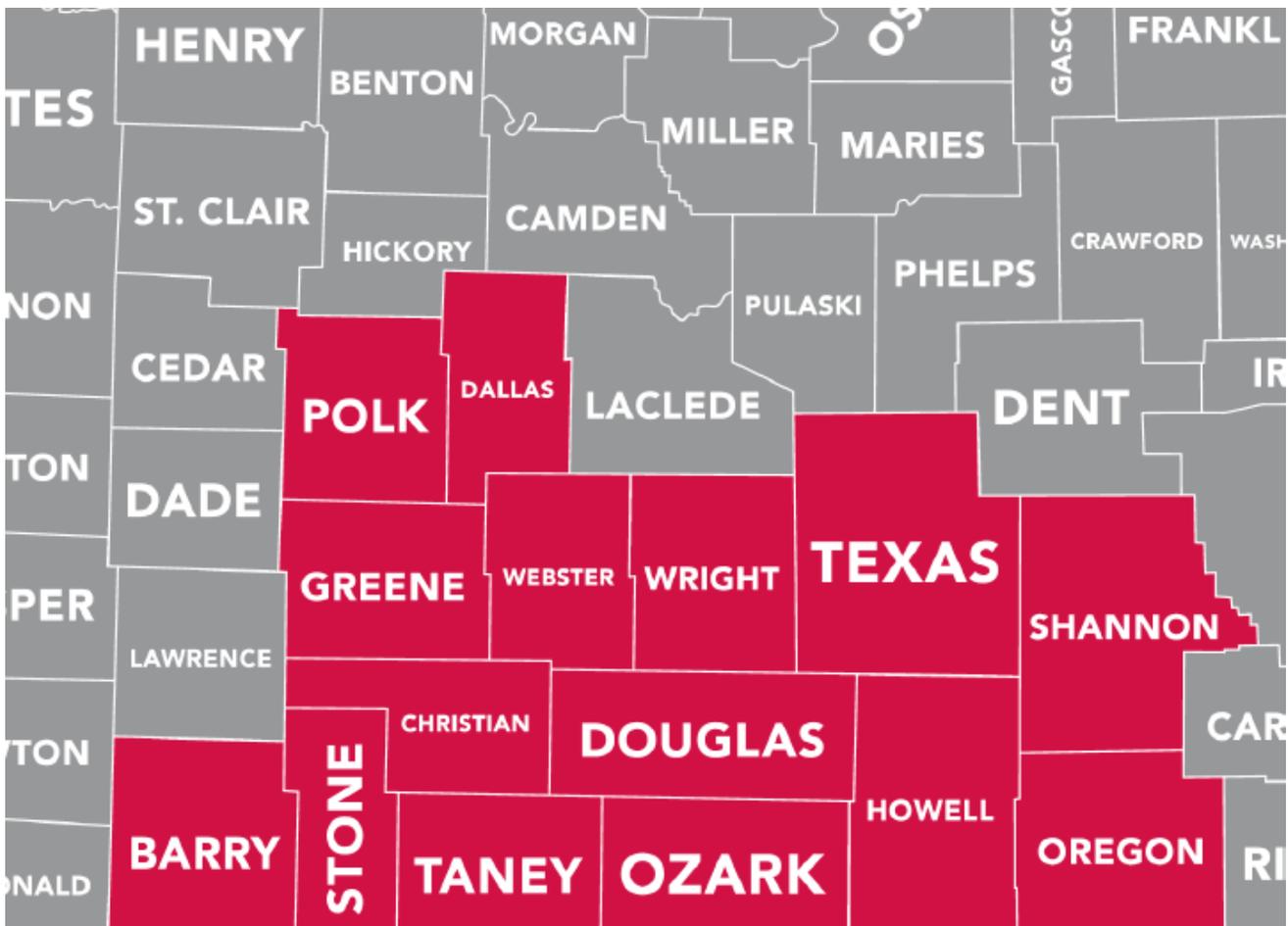


Health & Well-Being

Business and Community

Current Period Start: 01/01/2025
Scorecard End: 12/15/2025
Barry County

Data Elements	Value
\$ of Government Contract Awards	\$272,075.00
# of Government Contract Awards	4
Unique Clients Served	12
Number of Clients Counseled	12
Number of Training Event Attendees	253



Business and Community

Profiles and Stories



Barry-Lawrence County Ag Resource Fair and Disability Expo

The Barry—Lawrence Counties Community Resource Fair & Disability Expo welcomed 105 families, caregivers, community members, and service providers on September 25, 2025, at the Southwest Extension, Engagement, and Education Center in Mt. Vernon. More than 50 organizations participated, offering a wide range of services and support for individuals with disabilities and their families across southwest Missouri. The event was made possible through the partnership of University of Missouri Extension, Missouri AgrAbility, the Lawrence County Board for the Developmentally Disabled, the Coalition of Charities, and local collaborators. Attendees praised the event’s organization, the quality and variety of information provided, the excellent facility, and the inspiring performances by Champion Athletes and the Art Creative Dancers.

Second-chance hiring Engagements

Across three speaking engagements with Rotary clubs and regional Recovery Coalitions, *Reimagining Your Workforce: Breaking Barriers Together* reached 167 community leaders, employers, and service partners. These presentations strengthened understanding of second-chance hiring, highlighted effective workforce strategies, and equipped attendees with practical tools to support justice-involved individuals in reentering employment. Participants reported increased awareness, stronger cross-sector collaboration, and a renewed commitment to expanding opportunity for workers across southwest Missouri.



Second-chance hiring at the Ozarks Recovery Coalition meeting



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

Continuing Education



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



The **Law Enforcement Training Institute (LETI)** offers advanced training on a wide variety of topics, including defensive tactics, firearms, use of force and de-escalation. LETI offers customized programs for all required continuing education areas of concentration.



The **Missouri Extension Disaster Education Network** provides education and technical assistance to individuals and families, local governments, schools and organizations so they can prepare for and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Because of the unique relationship it maintains with each community, MU Extension is a key resource for the public, emergency services and public officials.



Legend



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Health & Well-Being



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

Health and Human Sciences



Show-Me Nutrition

Programming for preschool through junior high

An engaging way to demonstrate the benefits of nutrition, health, and physical activity. Meets Missouri's Show-Me Health and Physical Education standards and the state's School Wellness Policy.

"We have struggled with our daughter's picky eating for years and have tried so many techniques to try and get her to eat new foods. Your influence on her has worked magic this year. She has come home so excited about trying new foods and has now become not only willing but excited to try new things."

Parent of a Show-Me Nutrition participant



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."



The **Diabetes Prevention Program** is recognized as "Full Plus," the highest status given by the CDC and is provided by licensed lifestyle coaches to prevent type 2 diabetes. Through lifestyle changes participants can achieve sustainable weight loss, increase in physical activity and learn coping skills to manage stress.

**More than 1 IN 3
PARTICIPANTS have
reached the
5-7% WEIGHT LOSS GOAL.**

Legend



Agricultural Growth & Stewardship



Economic Opportunity



Educational Access & Excellence



Health & Well-Being

Local Impact

Senior Resource Fair in partnership with **40zarkSeniors**

- Wednesday, March 12, Branson
- Provided a resource table with recipes and educational materials
- Approximately **59 participants**



Smoothies 101 in partnership with **Library Center of the Ozarks** in **Branson**

Objectives: define and describe benefits of smoothies, learn parts of healthy smoothies, watch demonstration of smoothie making, taste 3 smoothies, and discuss smoothie preferences.

- Monday, June 16, 2:00 pm
- 16 participants

"It was fun and tasty! Thank you!"

"That is the best spinach I have ever tasted!"

Impacts:

- 14 of 14 understand the health benefits of smoothies
- 14 of 14 are familiar with multiple strategies to successfully make smoothies
- 12 of 14 are confident in their ability to find recipes for healthy smoothies
- 13 of 14 are confident they can adjust smoothies to fit their needs and preferences
- 12 of 14 will apply what they learned in this workshop within four weeks



Above: Folks at the Library Center of the Ozarks learn how to prepare 3 nutritious and delicious smoothies.

A Matter of Balance in partnership with **Branson-Hollister Senior Center**

Objectives: reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels among community-dwelling older adults



Impacts:

- 12 participants completed the 8-session program.
- 100% of participants assessed reported an improvement in lower-body muscle strength.
- 100% of participants assessed reported an improvement in their confidence on their feet.
- 100% of participants reported improved balance.

"This class really has helped me. I know I can do more than I was doing."

Local Impact

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention in partnership with **Community Presbyterian Church, Forsyth**, funded by **Skaggs Foundation**

- Weds & Fridays, August 20-October 24
- Objectives: improve balance and mobility to reduce arthritis pain and stiffness and fall risk through slow, gentle movements

Impacts: of the participants assessed/surveyed...

- ✓ 9 of 10 improved their lower body strength
- ✓ 9 of 10 improved agility, ease of walking, and dynamic balance
- ✓ 9 of 10 participants improved or maintained balance
- ✓ 8 of 8 reported reduced arthritis pain
- ✓ 8 of 11 felt a greater sense of connection to others
- ✓ 10 of 11 plan to apply the skills learned to improve their health in the future



\$12,221

in estimated annual
medical cost savings



"I can take a deep breath for the first time in 20 years!"

"I shuffle my feet less."

"I'm more confident on my feet!"

Health and Human Sciences

SNAP-Ed Public Value Statement 2025

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought \$11,419,598 in federal funds to Missouri. The funds support engagement with 70,722 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 970,939 indirect educational contacts through newsletters, health fairs, and food pantries.

11,070 direct and indirect contacts were made in Webster 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.

EFNEP Public Value Statement 2025

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) brought \$1,624,777 federal funds to Missouri. These funds were used to enroll 424 limited-resource families in nutrition education and meal preparation classes, representing 1,550 family members. Additionally, 2,942 youth were enrolled in EFNEP classes.

33 of these youth and adult participants reside in Taney County.

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

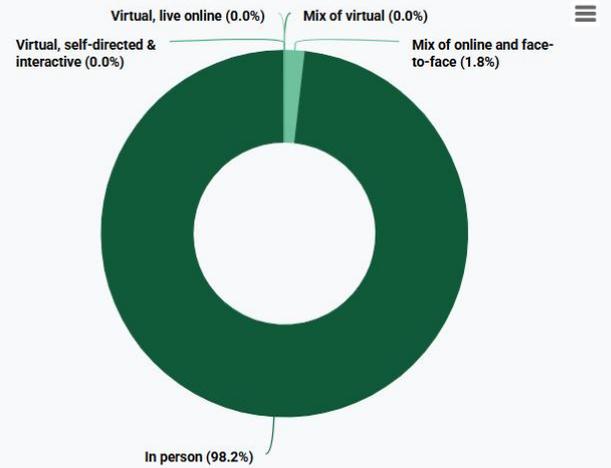
Direct Educational Contacts in Taney County

Participants
1,787

Sessions
141

Hours
144

Delivery Methods



Indirect Educational Contacts in Taney County

Intervention Channels and Reach

Category	Total Reach	Channel Count
Hardcopy materials (e.g., calendars, fact sheets, flyers, pamphlets, recipe cards, newsletter for mailings)	1733	18
Nutrition education reinforcement items (e.g. pens, pencils, wallet reference cards, magnets, door hangers, and cups with nutrition messages)	784	6
Community events / fairs - in which participated	150	2
Other, please specify	0	1