



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

# Wayne 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



Donna Aufdenberg  
Horticulture Specialist



Brad Coleman  
4-H Specialist



John Fuller  
Human Development Specialist



Jason Morris  
Ag Business Specialist



Scotty Smothers  
Agronomy Specialist



Alexis Stumpe  
Livestock Specialist

## OUR COMMUNITY

Every year Missourians turn to the University of Missouri (MU) Extension for practical knowledge, problem-solving, and guidance in navigating change. As a key resource for informed decision-making, we play a vital role in delivering this knowledge, fostering progress, and empowering individuals and communities to thrive.

## OUR MISSION

As a land-grant institution, our mission is to **Bring Mizzou to YOU**. We bring the University of Missouri's cutting-edge research and expertise to the residents of the county, helping individuals, businesses, and municipalities make informed decisions that improve quality of life. Through our educational programs, we aim to strengthen communities, boost local economies, and promote sustainable growth by offering accessible, relevant, and responsive solutions backed by the resources of the University of Missouri System.

## OUR MAIN PROGRAM AREAS

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

# WHO WE ARE – Your Local Office

## Faculty and Staff



Judy Koehr  
Nutrition Program Associate

Fran Mann  
Office Assistant

Kelley Brent, EdD  
Nutrition and Health Specialist

Davida Pedigo  
4-H Program Associate



Jennifer Williams,  
Extension Engagement Specialist

## Council Members

Julie Gronski, Council Chair  
Christina Kime, Vice-chair  
Kimberly Combs, Secretary  
Angie Boshell, Treasurer  
Beverly Brown, Member  
Kimberly Diesel, Member  
Sue Henry, Member  
Patty Shoelhamer, Member  
Donna Pennington, Member  
Vinnie Clubb, Farm Bureau Appointed Member  
Brian Polk, Commissioner

## Commissioners

Doug Wood, Eastern District Commissioner  
Brian Polk, Presiding Commissioner  
Steve Foster, Western District Commissioner



# BUDGET AND MORE

## Appropriations budget

Income	
County Appropriations	25,000
Final Addl 3-yr.Funding	3,998
Total Income	28,998
Expenses	
Salaries/Benefits	29,224
Travel	4,706
Postage/PO Box Rent	233
Office Supplies/Service	510
Advertising – Election Ad	173
Copier Expense	761
MU Quickbooks License	160
Total Expenses	35,767

## Return on investment

University System	124,878
Donations and Grants	14,000
Program Revenue	4,087

**For every dollar invested by the county, MU invests \$3.06.**

## Reach

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

## Key Outcomes

- Events: Greenville Easter Egg Hunt, Wayne CO 4-H Art Show, 4-H Ignite Summit, Jack O 'Lantern Jubilee, Wayne County Fair Pie Contest, LPFA Grant Distributions, Clearwater Family Fun Night, 4-H Cardinal Day, 4-H Day at the Capital, Eagle Days at Greenville
- Programs: Youth Futures/MO Options, "Eating from the Garden", "Fuel for Life", "Chair Yoga", "Families Eating Smart & Moving More", "Kids in the Kitchen" at Clearwater, "Eating for Heart and Brain Health, iPad Essentials, Smart Phones, Summer School SNAC Program at Clearwater & Greenville
- Classes: Swimming Lessons, Alzheimer Holiday Tips, Growing and Harvesting Herbs, Questions about Medicare, Private Pesticide Applicator Training
- **2 Century Farms** acknowledged
- 5 MU Extension Tax School Attendees
- Questions Received: Wayne County Courthouse History, Grazing School, Farmer's Market Regulations, Cow College, Alpha Gal, Farm Lease Rates, White Lime/Pelletized Lime, Carbon Credit Program, Identification of wild Blue Skullcap, Drought Relief, Growing Grapes, Johnson Grass in Hay, Tractor Club, Master Gardening Classes, Small Business Grants, Animal Abuse Contact
- Give Aways through Grants or Donations: Popcorn, Honey, Meat, Frozen Turkeys, Dog/Cat Food, Small Kitchen Appliances, Aloe Vera Plants, Gardening Seeds, Gardening Pamphlets, Farm Lease Info, 4-H Membership Info, Heating and Cooling Assistance Pamphlet, Renter's Tax Form
- Reached 19,785 via Facebook, 261 via Email, 506 via Phone, 120 in Person
- Personal Accomplishments: Kelley Brent - Doctorate Degree, Fran Mann – MU SE Regional Secretary, Davida Pedigo – Parttime 4-H YPA for Bollinger County, Judy Koehr – Spotlighted in Family Nutrition Education Program Monthly Newsletter

## Local support

Did you know you can donate directly to *Wayne 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.



# UM SYSTEM COUNTY IMPACTS

## MU Extension in Wayne County Community Impact Report

This report offers a detailed overview of how MU Extension positively impacts Wayne 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 Impacts https://community.umsystem.edu/impact-report/?geoid=05000US29223unty's Impact Report.](https://community.umsystem.edu/impact-report/?geoid=05000US29223)



# 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 Wayne 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 Wayne County is addressing these challenges. Each section breaks down county-specific statistics compared to state averages.

<https://allthingsmissouri.org/grand-challenges/?geoid=29223>



# Wayne County

## Health & Human Sciences: Nutrition & Health

### Local Impact – Kelley L. Brent, Ed.D.

- Programming and Grant Initiatives had an educational Direct Reach for over **4,780** participants in the area.
- The initiatives indirectly impacted **16,286** residents for Kelley's coverage areas of Wayne, Carter, Butler and Madison counties.
- **24** events were held within the four counties offering over **\$188,700** worth of locally purchased food products using USDA grant funds.
- These events were made possible with the help of 46 community partners, 24 local schools, and 72 volunteers.



\*A new 24 session Flexible Fitness: Chair Yoga Class series was offered in Wayne County. This class was 1 in 5 classes approved to be offered as a PILOT curriculum across the state.. The class enrolled 18 attendees and graduated a total of **9 participants** who attended 18 or more classes.



\* 8 sessions covering research-based nutrition education were offered in Piedmont in a collaborative effort with the NPA, Judy Koehr's, Fuel for Life Series.

# Wayne County

## Health and Human Science

### Profiles and stories

### Judith Koehr , Nutrition Program Associate

#### SNAP Education

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Education or SNAP-Ed) brought over \$11,419,598 in federal funds to Missouri in 2025 to support engagement with 70,722 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients and eligible citizens. Through direct education, newsletters, health fairs, food pantries, and the Show Me Nutrition helpline, Judith reached **991 direct and 4120 indirect contacts in Wayne County.**

MU Extension nutrition educators work with individuals and groups in a variety of settings throughout the state to meet a wide range of needs. Whether reaching out to youth and adults through direct education or working with communities to promote healthy policies, systems and environments (PSE), our goal is to help participants make behavior changes to achieve lifelong health and fitness. Often people tell us how the program has impacted their lives, even years after they have participated. Each day there are new stories that bring home the same important message: The MU Extension Family Nutrition Education Program makes a difference, a difference that means better health and fitness for a lifetime.

"I had been conducting the "Families Eating Smart, Moving More" program with a group at the **Bluff View Community Center**. For attending all the classes, each attendee would receive a kitchen appliance of their choice. A few days before I was to deliver the appliances, a tornado went through the community and most lost their homes. The community center was the hub for relief so I went there with the appliance hoping to see my group. Some of the ladies were there and when they saw their appliances, they broke down in tears. The stories of what they had gone through were heartbreaking! The appliances couldn't have come at a better time!"

**991** participants (both youth and adult) received direct education in Wayne County in 2025.



FESMM attendees with their new appliances

# Wayne County

## Health and Human Sciences

### Local Impact

#### Technology Education Impact – Wayne County (2025)

Wayne County has a high percentage of older adults, many of whom struggle with digital Literacy.

MU Extension's technology classes directly reduce the digital divide in a rural region where this gap has major daily-life consequences.

- **11 technology classes** delivered
- **29 participants** reached

#### Participants reported:

- Increased confidence using smartphones, tablets, and the internet
- Reduced fear of technology and improved problem-solving skills
- Greater independence in everyday digital tasks (health portals, banking, communication)
- A supportive, patient, judgment-free learning environment
- High interest in continued learning opportunities



John Fuller works with attendees to learn more about using their iPad

#### Building Strong Families Impact – Wayne County (2025)

Since BSF participants are *not* the general public

- they are a **very small, high-priority group** involved with social services
- serving 5–6 families represents a **large share of all active cases** in the county.

This work supports:

- Child safety
- Family reunification
- Stability and reduction of risk factors
- Stronger communication between caregivers and children

Even small improvements in this population have **major social and fiscal impact**.

#### 2 Building Strong Families (BSF) sessions delivered 5–6 families served

#### Families reported:

- Improved communication and conflict-resolution skills
- Stronger routines and parenting consistency
- Increased confidence in handling difficult moments
- A supportive, judgment-free learning environment

#### Partnerships:

Aging Matters  
Senior Planet  
Division of Social Services

# Wayne County

## Missouri 4-H

### Local Impact

The Wayne County 4-H has **three active 4-H clubs** that are steadily growing and providing new opportunities to the youth in their communities. We have multiple 4-H groups established in all the public schools and throughout the area, impacting **over 1,900 youth annually**. Our social media reaches over 48,000 views a year.

This year, **17 Wayne County youth and parents** were able to attend the 4-H Day at the Capital. They received a tour of the whole building, meet local state representatives, the governor, and they were recognized on the capital floor for their dedication and commitment to their organization.

For the first time Wayne County had not only a **4-H State Council member, Ms. Aaliyah Higgs**, but **two State 4-H Ambassadors, Ms. Chloe Turner and Ms. Alyssa Mann**. Chloe and Alyssa volunteered at the Missouri State Fair along with their local county fairs.

Our State 4-H Vice President Aaliyah Higgs also graduated from High School with a **Scholarship from the 4-H Foundation for \$2,500** that she can renew annually for the next 4 years for up to \$1,000 per year.



**Wayne County 4-H Members at the 4-H Day at the Capital**



**State 4-H Vice President Aaliyah**



**4-H Ambassador Chloe**



**4-H Members Participating in Club Activities**

**4-H Ambassador Alyssa**



# Wayne County

## Missouri 4-H

### 4-H Profiles and stories

4-H Day at the Lake Regional Camp provided youth with lake safety skills, healthy nutrition food options, while they learn a few 4-H Activities & Projects.



Wayne County 4-H SNAC programming classes impacted over **300 youth** ages 5 to 18 with classes and 1-on-1 skills to help them lead a healthier lifestyle. Youth learned how to measure, prepare, and store foods. This has been an ongoing summer school program for three years.

Over **60 4-her**s & their families attended the annual 4-H Day with the Cardinals. Each 4-Her received a custom 4-H & St Louis Cardinal shirt to display as they walked the around the baseball field.



Group of 4-H'ers



4-H'ers on the Baseball Field



4-H'ers on the Big Screen

# Wayne County

## 4-H at the Wayne County Fair !!



4-H Rodeo Beauty Pageant Fundraiser



Free 4-H kid's activities.

## Missouri 4-H

### 4-H Farm Art Show



Over fifty 4-Hers participated in the Fair Arts & Crafts Show



## Wayne County 4-H Clubs Create, Connect, and Show Off their Talents!!



Piedmont Club



### Greenville Club



Williamsville Club

## Business and Community

### Local Impact – Extension Tax School



Class Attendees



Instructor talking to Class

University of Missouri Extension coordinated and offered tax education through one summer and three fall tax schools. The summer school was in person and live online. Fall schools were in Columbia and Springfield and an online school. The schools were designed for those who prepare taxes including enrolled agents, tax preparers, CPAs, individuals, and attorneys.

The training included updates on legislation, rulings and cases, individual taxpayer issues, agricultural and natural resources topics, ethics, trusts and estates, agriculture and natural resource tax issues, business tax issues, business entity tax issues, IRS issues, installment sales, tax benefits of home ownership, retirement tax issues, and individual tax issues.

The 2025 school attendance totaled three hundred eighty-nine people, which was an 11% increase from 2024. **Wayne County had 5 participants** – 31 attended in the summer class and 2 in the fall class.

The evaluations had many positive comments and helpful suggestions. One comment from an online participant was “The video was outstanding – best I’ve seen on any CPE I’ve done live.”. Planning is underway to offer trainings in 2026. Local county residents benefit when local tax preparers have the opportunity to gain knowledge, which benefits their clients and communities.



Tax Information Pamphlets on Table

## Agriculture and Environment

### Horticulture Highlights – Donna Aufdenberg, Horticulture Specialist

Donna Aufdenberg offers horticulture programming in the Southeast Region in Missouri. Services offered include plant diagnostics, plant identification, insect identification, soil test assistance, greenhouse consultations and troubleshooting, and gardening programs.

In 2025, there were 1749 direct contacts through gardening programs where participants (locally and across the state) engaged in learning through in-person and online programs.

#### Popular Programs in 2025

- Beginning Hydroponics
- Hobby Greenhouses
- Growing and Using Herbs
- Gardening in Containers
- Growing Strawberries
- Seed starting
- Winter Sowing



Hands-on learning with container gardening

Master Gardeners (78 members from Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Scott and Perry Counties) completed 2,596 hours valued at \$90,000 given to local communities through beautification, education, and service to others. Twenty-two gardeners complete Master Gardener Core training in 2025.



Demonstration Garden

Donna oversees the All-American Selections demonstration garden at the MU Extension office in Jackson, MO where over 400 plants can be observed growing. Over 250 gardeners from the surrounding counties visited the demonstration garden in 2025 to learn what annuals and perennial flowers do best in Missouri gardens. Each plant is labelled with a QR code leading to websites about the plants. Area Master Gardeners help maintain the garden.

## Horticulture

/ ' hōrdə , kəlCHər /

*Noun* 1. the art or practice of garden cultivation and management

### 900+

Participants in 35+ Programs in the Southeast Region

### 800+

One-on-One Education  
➤ Calls and Emails  
➤ Walk-ins

## Top Gardening Requests

Vegetable Gardening • Growing Berries • Planting Fruit Trees • Composting • Soil Testing • Raised Bed Garden • Hydroponics • Greenhouses

Garden Spade Newsletter reaches over 2,556 subscribers every month with a 9.6% increase in readership during 2025. Each issue shares practical, research-based information that is “Reliable, Responsive, and Relevant” to Missouri Gardeners. Subscribe to the garden spade at <https://extension.missouri.edu/counties/cape-girardeau> or click the QR code at the right.



## Agriculture and Environment

### Local Impact

#### Soil Testing

Soil health begins with a proper soil analysis and interpretation. Agriculture producers, homeowners and gardeners rely upon MU Extension to provide accurate soil analysis and amending recommendations. In addition to gaining knowledge of soil health, many agricultural producers rely on funds from county, state, or federal cost share programs to invest in their operations. Most of these programs require a soil analysis from a reputable soil testing facility. In 2025 there were **120 soil samples** processed and interpreted for Wayne County. Those samples represented **2,015 total acres** in Wayne County.

#### Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT)

All Agricultural producers in Missouri who use restricted use pesticides on properties that they own or lease, are required to attend a state approved safety training before purchasing or applying Restricted Use Pesticides. MU Extension is tasked with providing access to those trainings. In 2025, there were **2 in-person trainings** offered in Wayne County and **1 producer** was certified to purchase and apply Restricted Use Pesticides.



Cows in a Field

# Wayne County

## Events and Activities



Instructor and Attendees at Medicare Class



Kelley and the "Fuel for Life" Attendees



Judy with nutritional snacks



Rose family being honored at the State Fair



Hopkins Family at Homeplace



Ladies at Herb Class



Extension Pie Contestants



Kids enjoying our Easter Egg Hunt and Coloring Contest Winners



Snapshots of Multiple LPFA Grant Events