

EXTENSION TRENDS: **MADISON COUNTY**

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2024 By the Numbers

- **16,951** direct contacts
- **592** youth participants
- **36** volunteers
- **1,560** volunteer hours
- **\$62,999** extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Madison County: Lexi Baron, Dustin Parkinson, Chris Johnson, Cheryl Empey, Gale Harding, Shaun Blaser and Steve Dennis.

UI Extension Educators



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2024 Impact

UI Extension, Madison County experienced an incredible year of growth and achievement in 2024. The Junior Livestock Auction was a major highlight, which saw record-breaking participation and overwhelming community support. Outreach was made to several new schools, increasing the number of classrooms engaged in 4-H activities. Two passionate interns and an AmeriCorps member joined the team to deliver impactful youth programming focused on STEM and family and consumer sciences. Thanks to continued funding and support from county commissioners, the AmeriCorps member was retained for winter and spring. This has allowed 4-H programs in classrooms and afterschool activities across five elementary schools, specifically targeting 3rd-4th grade students. Educator Jared Gibbons taught 204 grade schoolers the fundamentals of soil health, highlighting its importance to agriculture. Gibbons also conducted two groundbreaking studies on small grains. The first focused on enhancing winter wheat seedling vigor using biological inoculants to reduce fertilizer reliance. The second leveraged drone technology to measure water-use efficiency in wheat and barley crops. With a focus on practical skills, innovation and community engagement, the UI Extension, Madison County team continues to offer high-level programs that equip youth and farmers with tools for success.

4-H in Madison County

Madison County 4-H continues to thrive as new families join the community and new volunteers collaborate to create new 4-H clubs. 4-H youth built valuable life skills this year through projects and showcased their dedication at the county fair. The livestock shows were a highlight, with participants demonstrating exceptional care for their animals, and the livestock sales were a tremendous success thanks to the generosity of Madison County residents. This year's standout achievement was the Employment Feud program, led by Educator Lance Hansen, which earned first-place honors at the Idaho and Western Regional levels for its creative approach to teaching employment skills. 4-H Coordinator Kandee Boice also expanded opportunities for youth with a mix of new and established day camps, including drones, Lego robotics, cake decorating, candy making and hiking – all were well attended and welcomed many new participants. With unwavering community support, Madison County 4-H is excited to build on these successes and continue empowering youth to reach their full potential.

On the Horizon

Gibbons plans to complete and publish research on biological inoculants and drone technology. Moving forward, he will shift focus to micronutrient management, offering new classes on agronomy and exploring plant health from a scientific perspective. These efforts aim to boost farm efficiency and profitability while supporting sustainable agricultural practices. Rising interest in food preservation education has led to plans for expanded workshops that will teach families essential skills in food safety and preservation. Recognizing the importance of mental health in agriculture, a partnership with the Idaho Farm Bureau and the UI Extension Farm Stress team will continue. This collaboration has produced three impactful videos addressing mental health challenges in the farming community. These online resources highlight the importance of resilience and community support. Videos can be viewed at www.uidaho.edu/extension/farm-stress/stories. UI Extension, Madison County remains committed to creating innovative, engaging programs that address local needs, inspire youth, and foster a stronger, healthier community.