

# EXTENSION TRENDS: **PAYETTE COUNTY**

University of Idaho Extension, Payette County • [www.uidaho.edu/payette](http://www.uidaho.edu/payette)



## 2024 By the Numbers

- **2,834** direct contacts
- **424** youth participants
- **78** volunteers
- **4,056** volunteer hours
- **\$639,860** extramural funding

## Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Payette County: Barbara Brody, Danny Gabiola, Mike Partin, Jennifer Galloway and Keith Hyatt.

## UI Extension Educator



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## 2024 Impact

The UI Extension Eat Smart Idaho program positively impacts communities by promoting healthier lifestyles through nutrition education and resource accessibility. It empowers low-income families and individuals to make informed food choices, stretch their food dollars and prepare nutritious meals. Through hands-on workshops, school programs and partnerships with local organizations, Eat Smart Idaho addresses food insecurity while emphasizing physical activity and sustainable habits. Participants report improved dietary behaviors, increased confidence in meal preparation and better understanding of nutritional guidelines. By fostering healthier communities, the program contributes to reducing chronic disease risks and improving overall well-being in southern Idaho.

Educator Joey Peutz offers engaging food preservation workshops that teach essential skills like safe food handling, canning, freezing and dehydrating. These hands-on sessions empower participants to extend food shelf life, reduce waste and enjoy local produce year-round while preserving nutritional value. By blending scientific expertise with practical demonstrations, Peutz fosters self-reliance and sustainability, making food preservation accessible to all.

The Tri-County Master Gardener program, serving Payette, Washington and Gem counties, recently completed its initial session in Payette County. Sixteen participants, including six from Payette, logged 195 volunteer hours, showcasing their dedication to horticulture, education and sustainable community development.

## 4-H in Payette County

Payette County 4-H saw significant growth in 2024, highlighted by the success of the Payette County Teen Leaders program. Designed for members aged 13 and older, the group focuses on leadership skills. Monthly meetings alternate between business and social activities, providing an outlet for older members. This initiative addresses prior challenges with retention in the 13-18 age group by fostering connections among peers from different clubs. As a result, teens remain engaged in 4-H, replicate learned skills within their clubs, and mentor younger members, promoting growth for all involved. The Teen Leaders facilitated a successful 4-H Fun Day in June, teaching over 30 youth at four interactive stations. This fun educational environment, supported by caring adults, allowed teens to build confidence and leadership skills.

Other impactful programs included May's Electronic Dissection Day, where 12 youth explored donated electronics to learn tool use, materials and recycling. This hands-on event emphasized experiential learning. In August, over 300 youth participated in interview evaluations with volunteers, reflecting on their goals and achievements. With 25 community members serving as judges, this event strengthened connections between youth and the wider Payette County community.

## On the Horizon

The UI Extension, Payette County office will be working on the exploration and development of an integrated health app that could transform well-being by offering Idaho residents accessible information on community locations for physical activity, mental wellness resources and local engagement opportunities.