

EXTENSION TRENDS: **MINIDOKA COUNTY**

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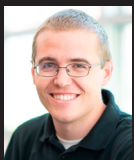
2023 By the Numbers

- 13,395 direct contacts
- 5,077 youth participants
- 107 volunteers
- 5,300 volunteer hours
- \$3,517 extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Minidoka County: Sophie Cowgill, Troy Draper, Kris Faux, Tiffany Grischkowsky, Justin Studer, Tawnya Tracy, Adrian Vergara, Salvador Moreno, Jeff Miller, Doug Hansen and Brian Kossman.

UI Extension Educator



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2023 Impact

In terms of agricultural education, Educator Jason Thomas continues to work with the Pest Friends board game which is being used in the county and nationwide. This curriculum was the national winner of the communications award for publications with the National Association of County Agriculture Agents. The board game is an educational simulation teaching farmers, homeowners and high schoolers about the importance of integrated pest management. Thomas has held trainings across the nation about this important curriculum and continues to develop it. He also reached thousands of youth through his work with insects and spiders allowing youth to hold them and interact with them. He continues to coordinate with educators across the state to ensure county residents receive important training at venues like pesticide recertification classes, the Idaho Potato Conference and Cereal School.

4-H in Minidoka County

Minidoka County has a well-established traditional 4-H club program with 365 youth and 106 adult volunteers in 20 clubs. Teen leadership is strong in the county. Members of the 4-H Teen Association frequently teach youth classes, serve as counselors at overnight and day camps, and attend state and national events. Two teens applied and were selected for the Idaho Pollinator program and attended the IGNITE 4-H Summit in Washington D.C. to gain valuable information to teach others about the importance of pollinators in the world. 4-H Coordinator Jeni Bywater also coached a varsity 4-H LifeSmarts team who qualified for the national competition in Cincinnati, Ohio. LifeSmarts teaches teens about technology, the environment, consumer rights and responsibilities, personal finance, and health and safety. The team placed fifth nationally. Ten members of the 4-H Teen Association traveled to Missouri for their state-to-state exchange in June. They learned about the Missouri 4-H program and were able to visit many sites. Minidoka County has consistently done state-to-state exchanges since 1997.

On the Horizon

Minidoka County 4-H will continue to host district overnight horse and poultry camps. The dog program saw significant growth in 2023 and should continue to grow. With the addition of a volunteer who has an interest in cats, 4-H will offer camps and classes for youth with cats in order to gain more opportunities for learning and growth in this project area. If everything goes as planned, the Minidoka County Fair will have its first 4-H cat show in 2024.

Thomas is investigating the usage of virtual reality for educational programs. He also continues to work with the Pest Friends board game and has created an events expansion and is working on a weed scenario with Albert Adjesiwor, UI Extension weed specialist.