

EXTENSION TRENDS: **VALLEY COUNTY**

University of Idaho Extension, Valley County • www.uidaho.edu/valley



2023 By the Numbers

- **2,705** direct contacts
- **1,725** youth participants
- **103** volunteers
- **4,310** volunteer hours
- **\$4,400** extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Valley County: Sandy Dingman, Steve Anderson, Shauna Arnold, Delta James, Sherry Maupin, Karla Eitel and Lindsey Harris.

UI Extension Educator



Melissa Hamilton
208-382-7190
mbhamilton@uidaho.edu

2023 Impact

A McCall Community Garden committee was convened in 2023 and a document outlining community projects was created. The Bienvenido Community Garden was established in McCall and Extension Educator Melissa Hamilton recruited, organized, and provided leadership for classes, workdays, and volunteerism in this space throughout the summer including five families, five raised beds, and 150 hours of community service from 60 direct contacts at seven programs throughout the summer. The Idaho Master Gardener program provided leadership in maintaining and establishing an herb garden at the McCall High School Garden and provided a four part-pollinator class to 150 middle school students. The Advanced Idaho Master Gardeners conducted applied research projects investigating native bees and mushroom cultivation.

4-H in Valley County

4-H continues to grow along with increasing demand for agriculture education and club programs. 4-H programs provide support for rural ranchers, horsemen, and other dedicated youth development volunteers. 4-H Coordinator Alysson Statz, along with newly hired part-time 4-H Assistant Cadey Mead, increased programs delivered by UI Extension by 37%, with a 65% increase of Cloverbud programming (youth aged 5-7). Statz obtained a seasonal 4-H AmeriCorps that delivered multiple STEM programs in Cascade, Donnelly and McCall. In addition to the increased human capital to provide programs, a STEM travel trailer was secured from the UI Extension 4-H state office to support programming needs. The STEM trailer served the region through a train-the-trainer STEM workshop and a trailer loaner program with community partners. The trailer provided resources for the successful implementation of multiple after-school programs, day camps, and summer STEM activities. A grant from the Idaho Horse Board helped to provide three summer 4-H horse clinics with professional clinicians at no cost to youth and families enrolled in 4-H. Expanding 4-H offerings has shown significant results as the program continues to grow incrementally 33% from 2019-20, 32% from 2020-21 and 37% from 2022-23.

On the Horizon

In 2024, UI Extension will focus on continued support to maintain existing projects and commitments in all program areas, including applying for grants and human capital opportunities to maintain programs. Hamilton will continue to serve and support community committees including the WCM Creative District, WCM Food Coalition, WCM Economic Development Council, Cascade Arts Walk, Cascade Mobility Team, Community Garden committees, Community Educators Alliance, and the WCM Trails Coalition. Statz will continue to lead the local 4-H program and serve and support committees including the 4-H Leaders Council, Animal Market Sale Committee, Fair Board, Youth Advocacy Council, FFA, and Planet Youth programs.

UI Extension will continue to strengthen the local food system by offering 4-H clubs and community programs. The WCM Food Coalition will continue to support local farmers through the maintenance of the coalition webpage, story map, educational events including a Farm to Table dinner planned in 2024. The Master Gardener program will be offered in a hybrid format (online and in-person). In addition to this new format, UI Extension, Valley County will partner with UI Extension offices in Teton and Blaine counties for a virtual lunch and learn throughout the Master Gardener course for enhanced learning.