

EXTENSION TRENDS: **CUSTER COUNTY**

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2022 By the Numbers

- **3,014** direct contacts
- **80** youth participants
- **33** volunteers
- **\$6,100** extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Custer County.

UI Extension Educator



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2022 Impact

Staffing and funding shortages continued to be a challenge, but with the help of volunteers and partnerships, the needs of residents in the county and state continue to be served. Important highlights in 2022 included empowering young beef producers to become profitable and successful through the Idaho Young Cattle Producers Conference; improving consumer perceptions and increasing marketing opportunities for beef producers with the Beef Quality Assurance certification and training program; conducting agriculture education in every classroom in Custer County (over 300 students) through Ag Week programming; teaching adults about cost saving ways to fuel their families with healthy, nutritious and affordable beef cutting demonstration workshops; providing support for beginning butchers at local meat processing facilities; conducting 4-H and FFA carcass contests to teach youth and adults about the importance of end product quality; partnering with the soil conservation district and other natural resource groups to educate youth about water, range, soils, and public and private lands during the annual Natural Resource Day, 5th Grade Conservation Tour and Pioneer Day; and partnering with local and state wildlife groups and agencies to educate local producers about wild and domestic livestock interactions.

Numerous calls were addressed, and office and field visits conducted on beef related issues, including soil and hay testing consultations, fertilizer recommendations, nitrate testing of annual forages, and pest and weed management. Educational programs were held on natural resources, range management, and forage management, including field calls on pasture management, fertilizer, damaging grasshopper infestations, ground squirrel, vole, and gopher control, and other pests.

4-H in Custer County

Four new volunteer leaders brought enthusiasm and new 4-H members to a robust livestock and teen leadership dominated 4-H program. These new volunteers joined a group of veteran leaders to provide hands-on learning opportunities and empowered youth to become responsible, productive citizens. The District Teen Leadership program began and flourished under the direction of a Custer County volunteer leader.

Livestock numbers continued to grow and 2022 saw the largest market animal sale ever recorded in the county. In just 10 years, sales have increased over \$190,000 thanks to outstanding youth projects and tremendously supportive businesses and individuals. Market lambs averaged \$17.26/lb compared \$5.60/lb in 2012. Market steers averaged \$5.03/lb compared to \$1.68 in 2012, and market hogs averaged \$13.67/lb compared to \$3.79/lb in 2012. Add-on contributions were over \$70,000 compared to just over \$50,000 at last year's sale.

On the Horizon

Serving the third largest Idaho county (in land mass) has its challenges traveling large distances to reach clientele in rural communities in Challis, Mackay, Stanley, Clayton and all acres in between. However, partnerships with local businesses, agriculture groups, volunteers and county leaders enables UI Extension to stretch limited funds and staff to offer educational programming and resources to community members. The UI Extension, Custer County office is excited to continue to offer research-based education and bring the University of Idaho to local citizens in 2023.