

# EXTENSION TRENDS: **MADISON COUNTY**

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



## 2023 By the Numbers

- **6,105** direct contacts
- **2,091** youth participants
- **55** volunteers
- **925** volunteer hours
- **\$2,044,408** 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: Steve Dennis, Shaun Blaser, Gale Harding, Cheryl Empey, Tiffany Nielson, Chris Johnson and Maren Nichols.

## UI Extension Educators



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## 2023 Impact

UI Extension, Madison County has been increasing its agricultural and horticultural presence in the community. In March, Madison and Jefferson counties hosted a high tunnel workshop that over 100 participants attended, learning how to manage high tunnels effectively. The climate of eastern Idaho and the Upper Snake River Plain is highly variable at the beginning and end of the growing season. Many marginal crops can be successfully and economically grown if provided with moderate season extension or frost protection. Participants learned how to use these simple greenhouses to manage soil, temperature and site conditions to optimize the production of warm-season vegetables, berries and cut flowers. They also learned about marketing and financing such small-scale specialty crops.

The youth financial literacy program Employment Feud started in Madison County, earning national recognition with a third-place award as an innovative youth program. This program is taught at Madison and Sugar City Jr High Schools and teaches youth what they need to know to find and interview for employment. One of the main focuses in Madison County is to offer financial programs to youth and adults in the community.

## 4-H in Madison County

The 4-H program continues to grow as new families move to the area and new volunteers share their ideas and create new 4-H clubs. Educator Jared Gibbons helped Madison Middle School implement their school garden project and taught kids about the science and wonders of soil chemistry and microbiology. All day camps were well attended and supported by community members, including a new holiday day camp in December. Over 30 youth attend this camp, learning how to make holiday ornaments and decorate holiday cookies. The county fair was well supported, livestock shows were competitive, and participants did an admirable job with their animals. Livestock sales for 4-H youth were a success due to the generosity and support of the great residents of Madison County.

## On the Horizon

Educator Jared Gibbons is implementing a study examining the effects of biological inoculants on winter wheat seedlings for improved vigor and establishment and reduced fertilizer need. In 2024, he will use drones that Extension already uses for 4-H programming, updating the optics and looking for differences in water use efficiency in the wheat and barley varieties planted at U of I field trials in southeastern Idaho. 4-H Coordinator Kande Boice is working with local schools to introduce robotics and support their efforts by sharing her knowledge and allowing use of Lego robotics kits. Boice is dedicated to ensuring that UI Extension keeps up with new STEM educational programs available through 4-H. Educator Lance Hansen is working with the U of I Farm Stress team to help bring awareness to the issues associated with mental health among farmers and ranchers. Administrative Assistant Shay Muir is working to improve the operation of the local office, including an improved online presence using social media.