

# EXTENSION TRENDS: **BENEWAH COUNTY**

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



## 2020 By the Numbers

- **5,438** direct contacts
- **604** youth participants
- **72** volunteers
- **2,317** volunteer hours
- **\$132,890** extramural funding

## Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Benewah County: Becky Harold, Windy Sotin, Erin Reid, Sally Grant, Gretchen Aasgard and Nancy Malensky.

## UI Extension Educators



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## 2020 Impact

The effects of COVID-19 were felt in 2020. Benewah County does not have a strong technology infrastructure in rural areas which resulted in limited program reach. UI Extension staff worked hard to provide creative solutions including take-home kits with projects and lessons that were sent with the school district lessons and lunches weekly.

The Extension team also created lessons that were mailed or picked up for a brand new Explore 4-H program so that youth could learn more about programs. The Idaho Master Gardener program created newsletter articles and social media posts to educate the community about gardening while they were social distancing. A national American Youth Horse Council Virtual Game Night was hosted to connect with youth across the nation. The county fair was held in person, with limited attendance, social distancing and live web streaming.

Despite these challenges, Benewah County 4-H youth were able to complete their projects, the annual Sixth Grade Natural Resource Tour was safely held with some significant changes and the annual awards night was converted into a fun drive in show and dessert.

More than 86 forest owners, loggers and professional foresters attended UI Extension forestry programs held in Benewah County and many residents also attended programs held in adjacent counties. Programs on forest health, fire risk reduction for homes located in the wildland urban interface, and a multi-faceted program, 10 Acres and a Dream, were offered via Zoom with over 316 participants, including many from Benewah County. Currently, one Benewah County forest owner is a certified UI Extension Idaho Master Forest Steward.

## 4-H in Benewah County

The 4-H program in Benewah County serves over 180 youth through traditional clubs and group programming. Twenty-four volunteers oversee 16 4-H clubs. Day camps were canceled in 2020, however using technology access in the UI Extension office, 4-H club volunteers were able to provide programming to youth.

A new 4-H club and program, 4-H At Home/Explore 4-H, was developed which provided students and families with lessons and materials to stay engaged and active in 4-H programming throughout the year. This also attracted new 4-H families to the program. A partnership with The Milling Center, a new youth community center, resulted in 4-H Fun Fridays throughout the spring. Students participated in art, engineering, candy making, cooking and other 4-H projects. These students also participated in a community art exhibition where they were able to showcase their 4-H experience to the public.

## On the Horizon

The UI Extension staff is excited about the partnership with The Milling Center, getting back to in-person learning and partnering with all three of the local 21st Century Community Learning Centers for increased outreach to youth and adults. The addition of two AmeriCorps volunteers to provide youth development programming will also be a highlight.

Educator Gail Silkwood is now certified to teach Mental Health First Aid and will collaborate with the Suicide Prevention Awareness Network of Benewah County to increase outreach and education about mental health awareness.