

EXTENSION TRENDS: CUSTER COUNTY

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2020 By the Numbers

- **3,194** direct contacts
- **79** youth participants
- **9** volunteers
- **\$9,750** 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



Sarah Baker
208-879-2344
sdbaker@uidaho.edu

2020 Impact

2020 brought many challenges, including funding shortages, staffing challenges, and canceling many in-person classes due to COVID-19. However, the UI Extension office still managed to serve clients and meet their needs with programming and information via a variety of methods.

Educator Sarah Baker conducted numerous meat cutting demonstrations, hosted beef carcass contests for FFA and 4-H members, organized and conducted the Idaho Young Cattle Producer's Conference with colleagues, and conducted two Winter Beef Schools, one Hay School, two Fertilizer Schools, and various Ag Week education events in Custer County.

During the pandemic, Baker continued to address numerous calls and conduct field visits on beef related issues to local producers, including soil and hay testing consultations, fertilizer recommendations, nitrate testing of annual forages, and weed identification and management. She also conducted numerous field calls to discuss pasture management, grasshopper infestations, ground squirrel, vole, and gopher control, and other pest management programs. She provided research-based information on natural resource and range management and served as a resource on public policy issues through organized meetings, tours, and trainings, including assisting ranchers in completing year-end monitoring requirements on public rangelands.

A popular event held in 2020 was Beef Up Your Table-Holiday Edition, where Baker presented beef cutting demonstrations and beef nutrition information. Attendees learned how to break down primals and sub-primals of beef, how to cook meals with an electric pressure cooker, and how to prepare easy, nutritious, cost-effective meals for their families.

4-H in Custer County

In 2020, a small but active Teen Leadership Club made headlines when a member was elected as the State Teen Association Vice President. Members attended statewide leadership events, including Know Your Government, Ambassadors, and the Idaho 4-H State Teen Association Convention. They brought information back to the county and encouraged other youth to become involved in these opportunities.

Livestock program numbers were down slightly due to COVID-19, but a successful county fair and market animal sale was held. 2020 saw the largest sale on record, thanks to a supportive community and outstanding youth and livestock projects: 59 animals sold for a total of \$227,140, topping 2019's total of \$170,266 and 73 animals sold. Market hogs averaged \$10.25/lb compared to 2019's \$4.60/lb. Market steers averaged over \$6,000/animal; sheep averaged over \$1,500/animal, and hogs averaged over \$2,700/animal.

On the Horizon

A newly hired program assistant will help keep the office open five days a week. UI Extension, Custer County provides educational programming and resources to community members in Challis, Mackay, Stanley, Clayton, and many other small rural populations. The office is small with only one educator, one staff member, and numerous volunteers, but they are excited to be a resource to the community with programming in livestock, beef end-product quality, range management, and 4-H youth development.