

# EXTENSION TRENDS: **MINIDOKA COUNTY**

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



## 2024 By the Numbers

- 2,721 direct contacts
- 4,059 youth participants
- 112 volunteers
- 5,600 volunteer hours

## Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Minidoka County: Sophie Cowgill, Troy Draper, Kris Faux, Tiffany Grischkowsky, Justin Studer, Tawnya Tracy, Adrian Vergara, Salvador Moreno, Jeff Miller, Doug Hansen, Brian Kossman and Lanae Nalder.

## UI Extension Educator



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## 2024 Impact

UI Extension, Minidoka County is dedicated to supporting local farmers and community members through practical pest management solutions. Community workshops and field visits provided hands-on guidance, reaching over 4,500 individuals, including underserved populations. The Idaho Insect ID website now provides faster pest identification, saving local farmers time and money. These efforts reflect a commitment to addressing the county's unique challenges while fostering a collaborative environment that benefits both agricultural producers and residents.

With 345 members and 112 volunteers, Minidoka County 4-H provides valuable opportunities for youth to lead classes, mentor peers and excel nationally. The LifeSmarts varsity team placed fourth in the national competition, showcasing their knowledge of technology and safety. Teen members also traveled to Texas for a cultural exchange, continuing a 27-year tradition. Summer STEAM activities reached new audiences, further enriching youth education and engagement.

## 4-H in Minidoka County

Minidoka County has a well-established traditional 4-H club program with 345 youth and 112 adult volunteers in 22 clubs. Teen leadership is strong in the county with members of the 4-H Teen Association frequently teaching youth classes, serving as counselors at overnight and day camps, and attending and serving on state and national committees. 4-H Coordinator Jeni Bywater coached a varsity 4-H LifeSmarts team that placed fourth at the national competition in San Diego, California. LifeSmarts teaches teens about technology, the environment, consumer rights and responsibilities, personal finance, and health and safety. Eight members of the 4-H Teen Association traveled to Texas for a state-to-state exchange in June. Minidoka County has consistently held state-to-state exchanges since 1997. During summer programming, an extern through the Idaho STEM Action Center provided STEAM activities to many non-traditional club youth in partnership with the Historic Wilson Theatre and the Minidoka County School District.

## On the Horizon

Minidoka County 4-H will focus on providing STEAM curriculum and activities such as LEGO AgRobotics. In AgRobotics, teams build their own robots and program them to perform specific tasks within a specified timeframe. Tasks are performed on mats with different themes, such as farming on the moon.

Another project in 2025 will be the creation of the Idaho SEED Podcast – Short Educational Extension Discussions. This will bring valuable, research-based agricultural insights directly to farmers and residents of Minidoka County. Each weekly episode will break down UI Extension publications and research papers into engaging, easy-to-understand content, tailored to support local farming practices. By addressing topics like sustainable farming, pest management and emerging technologies, the podcast will provide practical solutions to challenges faced by the community. Leveraging artificial intelligence for efficiency, every episode is carefully reviewed by experts to ensure accuracy. This innovative project will strengthen local agriculture, enhance decision-making and empower our community with knowledge for growth.