

EXTENSION TRENDS: **GEM/BOISE COUNTY**

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2023 By the Numbers

- 2,961 direct contacts
- 1,138 youth participants
- 58 volunteers
- 1,460 volunteer hours

Our Advisory Council

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

UI Extension Educator



Rebecca Mills
208-365-6363
rmills@uidaho.edu

2023 Impact

Providing support to area home gardeners has been a challenge in recent years. Declining Master Gardener volunteer numbers and an overall lack of horticulture program area support led UI Extension to become more creative to meet the needs of clientele. In recent years, two staff members have become certified Idaho Master Gardeners and, because of their commitment to the program area, UI Extension, Gem County has been able to continue to accept questions and get them answered. In 2023, office staff spent 160 hours answering home gardening/pest related questions working with horticulture faculty and specialists from around the state to make sure the questions of clientele were answered.

4-H in Gem/Boise County

In 2023, the 4-H program in Gem and Boise counties had 55 certified volunteers and 18 chartered clubs serving approximately 350 youth.

In 2023 yaks were added as a fair exhibit in the beef breeding area. One family in the program has been working to get this approved for a couple years. The yaks were different than any other animals on display and created lots of conversation for 4-H and community members alike.

A group of youth and adults traveled to Michigan for seven days in June as part of a State-to-State Exchange program. Participants toured the state and stayed with 4-H families.

A new beef award sought to highlight local ranching traditions. An exhibition class sponsored by a local long-time ranching family created a new type of recognition for youth who are raising and showing cattle that would otherwise be destined for the commercial meat market as opposed to cattle that are bred for the show ring.

On the Horizon

At the beginning of the 4-H year volunteer interviews were conducted to meet with each 4-H volunteer about their volunteer experience. A report of what staff learned from those interviews will be presented back to the program later in the year.

Typically, UI Extension small acreage focused faculty members in the Southern District hold a 10-14-week small acreage management series early in the year. This year the series will focus on pasture management rather than several general topics like in previous years.

The UI Extension, Gem County office is partnering with UI Extension in Payette and Washington counties to host an Idaho Master Gardener volunteer training course early in 2024 to recruit more Master Gardener volunteer support.