



MSU Extension Education & Research Improving the Quality of Life

In Park County

Extension Links County Residents to MSU and USDA

The Park County Extension Office links residents to subject matter specialists on the Montana State University-Bozeman campus as well as resources in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In Park County, this link has been available since 1924 when the first agent arrived in Livingston. Technology has changed considerably since that time. These links now include the use of the World Wide Web. Residents now have the ability to contact the office electronically to receive information. The "Park County Home Page" includes active links to MSU-Extension, Renne Library, and USDA. In addition, Extension Staff maintains the web site for Park County, which can be found at www.parkcounty.org.

Strong Noxious Weed Education Continues

Approximately 180 small acreage landowners from Park County attended a session on the identification and control procedures for noxious weeds and their impact. The session was marketed by sending out 10,000 educational newsletters as an insert in the daily paper. This eight-page newsletter included articles from weed control specialists on identification and management. The newsletter also included the names and phone numbers of commercial pesticide applicators. Two trailer mounted sprayers, which will allow small acreage applicators to control noxious weeds on their property, have been donated by concerned landowners.

There are many non-resident landowners who own large tracts of land in Park County. These individuals do not spend many days in the county and typically devote their time in the county to non-work related activities. They are not well educated on natural resources, have little or no knowledge on the impact of invasive species or their impact. In an effort to educate these landowners, Extension cooperated with the Montana Land Reliance to send them a packet of weed related bulletins and weed related news articles. The Montana Land Reliance supplied the mailing list, introductory letter and envelopes and Extension supplied the material and postage. The mailing was sent to 60 landowners in the county who would not be receiving the weed message through normal channels.

Nutrition Education Delivered

Nutrition education and information is offered to our local food bank and community kitchen, as well as service organizations and daycare providers, which assist volunteers by providing helpful facts, tips, and recipes to the people they serve. By knowing how to read a nutrition label and understanding the meaning of "light" and "low-fat" consumers of every economic level can improve their eating habits leading to healthier living.

Weed Grants Help Residents Combat Knapweed

The Park County Extension Office maintains a vigorous noxious weed grant writing effort. During the past three years, grants have provided over \$281,000 to assist landowners in the weed control effort. They consisted of an herbicide cost share and a sheep-grazing grant. Both grants were written to assist landowners in fighting the expanding spotted knapweed problem in the County. In 2001, we obtained a \$271,000 grant to assist landowners in preventing noxious weeds from invading the Fridley Fire area. These were used to fund an intensive weed prevention area in the blackened acres and areas surrounding the burned perimeter. To date, 135 landowners have used the grant funds for herbicide application, reseeding efforts and monitoring efforts.

The Park County Extension Office is located 414 E. Callender St in Livingston Phone 406-222-4156



An educational resource dedicated to improving the quality of people's lives by providing research-based knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of families, communities and agricultural enterprises.

FSNEP Collaborates with Extension

Limited income households often find it challenging to stretch food resources to cover the entire month even when they receive food stamps. Many limited income individuals are also employed, although not at a living wage. As family members are employed, less time at home demands greater efficiency with food resource management including wages, food stamps and WIC. The purpose of the Montana Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) is to work collaboratively with the Montana Department of Health and Human Services to provide food stamp recipients and food stamp eligible households with information and educational opportunities. These will help participants develop skills and behaviors leading to improved nutritional well-being and increased ability to manage resources and become more self-sufficient.

Working closely with the Family and Consumer Science Agent, the FSNEP paraprofessional provides a series of lessons and demonstrations with practical information and skill-building tips for choosing better foods, food handling, food storage, and food safety practices. FSNEP partners with numerous community agencies and organizations to provide effective programming. Class participants learn to make healthy food choices and effectively manage their food resources.

4-H Offers Educational Events

A recent MSU study of Montana youth testifies how important 4-H is to the development of young people. 4-H members are receiving what all young people need: confidence, compassion and connections with caring adults. Park County Extension Office oversees 8 clubs with 154 members and 63 leaders. The many events during the year that members prepare for and participate in to enhance their learning include: Speech & Demo Day, Fashion Revue, Summer Camp Animal Clinics, Park County Fair, and Achievement Night

Food Safety Education Offered

The Park County Extension Office offers food safety education and training to reduce food-related illness. Local food service workers, service organizations, summer camps, church groups, community kitchen volunteers, 4-H members and leaders, and a group homes= staff for developmentally disabled have participated in classes. Raising awareness of food safety and the concern regarding health problems from improper procedures results in safer food for the public.

Agricultural Clubs Meet in Park County

A marketing club continues for beef and grain producers in the Wilsall area. A DTN marketing computer continues to be well used in the Wilsall Coffee shop. This allows producers to obtain up-to-date information on markets and commentaries from marketing specialists.

Horse Management Seminar

The Extension Office sponsored a six-week horse management workshop attended by 75 people. According to the county assessor, there are approximately 7000 horses in the county. Owners of these horses spend approximately \$2000 per head maintaining and using these horses. A fee of \$50 per person was charged for this event held at a local hotel. Two horse veterinarians and two MSU faculty provided information on horse management topics, including Maintaining Your Horses Health, Understanding the Nutritional Requirements of the Horse, Maintaining and Establishing Quality Horse Pastures, and Building and Maintaining a Horse Safe Fence. According to the evaluation, participants reported a savings of \$500 by attending the seminar. This equates to a savings of \$37,500 for the group.

