

MSU Extension Impacting the Lives of Daniels County Residents

Research-based Education Changing Lives



The MSU Cooperative Extension System is a non-formal educational program implemented in Montana, designed to help people use research-based knowledge to improve their lives. The service is provided by the state's designated land-grant university, Montana State University. In Daniels County the educational focus is in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, family consumer science, community economic development, and youth development, including 4-H.

For over 90 years MSU Extension has successfully provided a service to the citizens of the county, facilitating programming to bring important tools to aid in decision making for production agriculture, estate planning, youth development, community health and more. Daniels County Extension has provided a location where research-based resources are immediately accessible.

Agriculture & Natural Resources

* **MonDak Pulse Day** - Over 150 producers from Northeast Montana and Western North Dakota attended this regional program sponsored by MSU Extension, NDSU Extension and Northern Pulse Growers. Following presentations, attendees were asked if they would incorporate any of the management practices discussed at the program in their operation. 88% of the 150 attendees responded yes. Of the 150 attendees, approximately half considered themselves as experienced pulse growers.

* **Northeast Montana Pulse Plot Tour** - An annual event that provides an in-field look at the current research on pea, lentil and chickpea varieties, disease studies, and other pertinent information. The plot is a cooperative undertaking of MSU Extension, MSU Eastern Ag Research Center, Northern Pulse Growers, and local landowners, Richard Fulton and Marvin Tarum. Well attended, over 60 producers, landowners, agency personnel and researchers share experiences and expertise on the pulse industry through personal conversations and presentations. It has been estimated that over 500,000 acres of pulse crops were grown in Montana in 2015, with the greatest amount being planted in northeast Montana.

* **Narrow-leaf Hawksbeard Research** - Two research plots were established in Daniels County with a focus on understanding how to manage a new invasive weed species: narrow-leaf hawksbeard. Increasing acres of infestation of this weed has landowners, producers and land resource managers very concerned. One site in Western Daniels County is located on land currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. The second site is located in Eastern Daniels County in cropland with a focus on control of this new weed invader in small grains and pulse crops. Results of the research have been productive. Several recommendations for controlling narrow-leaf hawksbeard in both rangeland and cropland are now available.

* **Northeast Montana Weed Tour** - Bringing landowners, producers and interested individuals to the field is undoubtedly the best tool to teach how to identify and manage weeds, especially noxious weeds and what impacts can be expected from these invasive species if nothing is done to manage them. Over 35 participants attended the tour and learned about new invaders such as houndstongue and narrow-leaf hawksbeard. Participants also visited range sites infested with spotted knapweed, Canada thistle and baby's breath.

* **Pesticide Applicator Trainings** - Continuing education is a large component for individuals who have private or commercial pesticide applicator licenses. The guiding principle towards assigning applicator credits to a program is if the topic (s) will contribute to the competence in the use and handling of pesticides by the applicator ([40 CFR 171](#)). Currently there are 85 private pesticide licenses issued in Daniels County.



Producers determining plant disease cycles of small grains and pulse crops. Understanding the path of the pathogen increases the probability that a producer's treatment will be more effective.

Family Consumer Science

* **DEEP – Diabetes Education Empowerment Program** - People in all walks of life are affected by many health issues. In the United States over 26 million people have diabetes. Rural Daniels County is not immune to those statistics. There has been a gradual increase in the number of Type 2 diabetes diagnosed in Daniels County in the last five years. The MSU Daniels County Extension Agent received training in DEEP after realizing diseases like diabetes do not discriminate, from a grandmother to a livestock producer, and the need for continuing education is growing. The goal of the DEEP program is to help people with diabetes live better and make better choices and to prevent and/or reduce adverse health outcomes related to diabetes. One participant wrote: “Thank you so much for offering this class. I learned so much. I appreciate all the reference materials and the format of the class. Great discussions within the class and good ideas. Overall you get a 5 star rating.” Kathy Greenwood, Rancher, Glentana, MT.



Carol Dighans, (left) has had type 2 diabetes for 40 years. Helping her locate information in the material furnished for the class is Teresa Danelson, RN with the Daniels County Health Department.

* **Improving Behavioral Health Awareness in Daniels County** - In 2015 the Daniels County community was shaken by three young women committing suicide. This prompted a Community Health and Needs Assessment in which results indicated the need for mental health education. The Daniels County Health Department received a grant from the Montana Health Care Foundation, with Daniels Memorial Healthcare Center as a partner, to implement and educate the community. MSU Extension Daniels County is an active member of the working group that has identified three items of high priority: (1) Develop a resource list for Daniels County residents with a list of places and phone numbers for help with mental health problem. (2) A media/communication action plan using various media tools to reach citizens; (3) Develop an assessment tool to be used in a clinic or hospital setting for a better clinical pathway.

Youth Development & 4-H

* The Daniels County 4-H Program continues to offer a solid foundation for youth and adult leaders to learn new skills and improve old ones. Understanding the potential for community members who have specific skills that can enhance a program is a great tribute to the mission of 4-H. The parents of 4-H members who wanted to participate in the shotgun project recently recruited a young deputy sheriff to become a certified shotgun leader, which has brought other successes for that project.

* County, Regional and State programming provides opportunities for youth to experience interacting with others and learning in a safe environment. County fairs offer a local connection, whereas 4-H Camp and State Ambassador Trainings give youth a platform to meet and make new friends, work on leadership skills and develop teambuilding skills. Daniels County is proud to sponsor participants in these traditional events and looks forward to continuing their support of local youth.

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