

# 2023 Selected Impact Statements

University of Wyoming Extension is grounded in the belief people have the ability and power to enlarge their lives and plan for their futures. Extension education is research-based—an extension of the University of Wyoming—and results-oriented, with partnerships and collaboration key to the process. UW Extension educators and specialists gather input from stakeholders to ensure educational programs are relevant to the lives of Wyoming citizens. UW Extension works to **Foster Economic Vitality**, **Empower Wyoming's Future Leaders**, **Protect Our Natural Resources**, **Improve Health and Wellness**, and **Produce Food, Fiber, and Energy**.

## Youth Cooking Education



In today's fast-paced world, teaching youth cooking skills is crucial for independence, healthy eating, and creativity. Wyoming's holiday baking challenge and Food, Fun, 4-H programs aim to engage youth in cooking to promote smarter food choices and budgeting. Recipes and kits were provided to participating families, with a focus on high-altitude baking. Surveys showed increased knowledge and a shift toward family dinners. By teaching culinary skills, they promote healthy habits, confidence, and lifelong learning beyond the kitchen.

## Wyoming Walks



Campbell County's Wyoming Walks program promotes wellness, physical activity, family bonding, and community knowledge. Integrated events like yoga and walking combine exercise with education on healthy cooking. Participants are encouraged to track their steps, ensuring ongoing assessment. With positive feedback indicating increased physical activity, enjoyment, and community engagement, Wyoming Walks stands as a transformative intervention, fostering healthier, more connected communities.

## Combating Invasive Grasses & Weeds



Invasive grasses and weeds threaten Wyoming's diverse ecosystems and agricultural productivity. An educational initiative involving various agencies and private landowners in northeast Wyoming focused on treating ventenata and medusahead. Field tours fostered collaboration among partners from multiple counties and neighboring states. Participants gained insights into long-term control methods and the importance of timely herbicide treatments. This initiative promotes knowledge exchange and collaborative management, safeguarding Wyoming's ecosystems and serving as a model for the region.

## Livestock Feed Efficiency



At UW, addressing the rising demand for livestock production involves prioritizing feed efficiency, especially in ruminant livestock. Extension efforts focus on improving efficiency across all stages of cattle and sheep production, aiming to enhance sustainability. Research delves into pregnancy success, health, and feed efficiency in high-altitude conditions, offering valuable insights for decision-making. Training programs cover crucial topics for sheep producers, yielding significant knowledge gains among participants.

## Pesticide Applicator Education

Private pesticide applicator education in Wyoming is crucial for rangeland health and agricultural sustainability. Tailored programs address local challenges and promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Compliance with regulations, like the Worker Protection Standard (WPS), ensures safety and environmental protection. Extension efforts impact nearly 1,000 applicators annually. Participant feedback indicates high confidence in behavior change, with intentions to improve safety measures. Success is evident in the absence of adverse incidents.

## Sustaining WY Grass Seed Industry

Wyoming's grass seed production industry faced a crisis with the discovery of the smooth brome seed midge causing significant damage. Collaborative efforts between UW Extension, stakeholders, and producers led to management protocols targeting effective insecticide applications. Extension bulletins and fact sheets were created to share the latest information. Proactive monitoring and management efforts resulted in harvestable crops for all producers, saving the smooth brome seed production market. Despite challenges in 2023, producers' proactive efforts demonstrate resilience, ensuring sustainability and economic stability in Wyoming grass seed production industry.

## Livestock Nutrition in Winter

In Wyoming's harsh winter conditions, hay-based diets pose a challenge for cattle producers, risking nutrient deficiencies. Utilizing hay sampling and modern ration calculators is essential for tailoring feed combinations to different livestock classes. Routine hay sampling ensures accurate nutrient supplementation, optimizing herd nutrition and performance. Extension programs support producers in mastering hay sampling and ration calculation, enhancing preparedness and resource utilization. By leveraging online tools, producers formulate cost-effective rations without compromising nutrient requirements, ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience.

## Growing Volunteer Board Capacity

Managing a county effectively requires the contributions of elected officials, staff, and appointed volunteer board members. Extension organized comprehensive board training attended by various county boards, commissioners, and staff. The training covered board roles, fiscal responsibility, and statutory requirements. Evaluations showed increased knowledge and skills, with a high overall rating of 4.67 out of 5. Participants valued insights into board responsibilities and expressed intentions to implement changes based on the training, demonstrating the initiative's value in fostering effective governance.

## Empowering New Landowners

UW Extension aids residents by offering the New to Wyoming workshop, introducing participants to native plants, climate, and wildfire risks. Post-event evaluations reveal a significant improvement in participants' understanding, with 89% giving the workshop the highest score. Beyond imparting knowledge, the workshop supports and welcomes newcomers, aligning with USDA's focus on education and community development.

