



Community Compass



EXTENSION OFFERS A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS

Gallatin County Extension is proud to offer programs that educate the people of Gallatin County in a variety of topics. Whether you are 5 or 65 or live in downtown Bozeman or a ranch in the valley, Extension has a program for you. Extension offers researched based unbiased information through Extension programs. These programs can consist of one time workshops or a series of classes, field visits, guest lectures, brochures and newsletters. Here is just a sample of the programs that are offered through Gallatin County Extension.

If you like to garden or want to improve your green thumb, then the Master Gardener class is for you. This is one of the most popular classes offered by Extension. Students can progress through 3 levels and gain the skills and knowledge.

The Small Acreage class is the perfect class for land owners to do more with the land that they own. The class teaches how to manage their land to meet the goals of the landowner. Participants create their own plan throughout the class. Information from water resources, weed management, grazing, wildlife issues to wild fire prevention are covered.

The 4-H program offers youth ages 5-18 opportunities to try a variety of projects from livestock, photography, leadership and robotics to name a few. The 4-H program also offers workshops for volunteers and parents to strengthen their leadership skills and provide them with the tools necessary to run an effective 4-H meeting. Volunteers are always needed! Workshops provided are; Using Technology to Communicate, Building Communities, Teaching Life Skills and new volunteer orientation to name a few.

The Natural Resources Agent position is grant funded and offers programs based off of the focus of the different grants. A sample of the programs offered is one-on-one consultation with property owners/managers to help develop a plan to manage the health of their forest while reducing the risk of wildfires.

Gallatin County Extension offers more program than what is listed here, and is always evaluating the needs of Gallatin County to add program to meet those needs.

MSU Extension Gallatin County

Fall/Winter 2017
Volume 1, Issue 3

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ASK THE AG AGENT

When is the best time to amend garden soil?

Fall is a great time to improve your garden soil for the coming growing season. Here are a few tips:

Compost is a great way to recharge your soil over the winter. A three to four inch layer over your garden soil while it is still warm will allow the microbes to do their job before freeze sets in.

Raw organic material, such as leaves or manure, are a great way to slowly increase nutrient loads. Make sure that you help your soil microbes by shredding or crushing plant material and then mix it in with your soil. Soil microbes do require nitrogen to do their work so nitrogen rich fertilizer, or manure are a great compliment to organic matter.

GALLATIN COUNTY WEED DISTRICT

Winter is near, is your sprayer ready? A little maintenance now will prevent cracked seals and leaky pumps next spring.

Before you begin, check the herbicide label. Always wear the protective equipment required for mixing and loading. The label also gives instructions for cleaning your sprayer, including what cleaner you will need. For many herbicides this will be a 1% solution of household ammonia. Detergents or commercial tank cleaners are also sometimes used.

Fill your spray tank halfway with fresh water and shake it so that all of the interior surfaces are rinsed. Also rinse all nozzles and hoses. Add more fresh water and the cleaner called for on the label, and circulate through the entire system. Allow this to sit for several hours or overnight to break down herbicide residues. Spray the liquid onto a site approved on the herbicide label and rinse the sprayer until the cleaners are out of the system. Next clean any residue off all filters, seals, and nozzles, and lubricate all O-rings with vegetable oil.

Finally, run a 50% solution of antifreeze through the tank, hose and especially the pump. Automotive antifreeze is recommended because it is less corrosive to spray equipment pumps and seals than RV antifreeze. However, automotive antifreeze is toxic and must be collected for reuse or disposed of properly. RV antifreeze is non-toxic and may be sprayed on the ground.

MEET THE AGRICULTURE AGENT

Hello everyone! My name is Josh Bilbao and I am the new Agriculture Extension Agent for Gallatin County. I am very excited to be back in Montana working with MSU Extension and share my agricultural expertise with Gallatin county.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I was born and raised in Livingston. I attended college here at MSU where I attained my B.S in Wildlife Management and my M.S in Range Management. I also worked at the University in a research capacity for 3 years where we worked with topics such as, prescriptive grazing, weed management and wildlife habitat improvements.

I moved to Colorado after I completed graduate school where I spent 8 years working for both Boulder County Parks and Open Space and the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks. My main areas of focus were in water resource management, plant ecology, wildlife habitat, education, IPM and agricultural lease management. I managed ag leases that ranged from large scale cow/calf operation to small acreage organic vegetable farms and just about everything in-between! Much like the vision of MSU extension, our goal with the ag lease program was to a trusted source of unbiased information to improve the quality of the agricultural operations on the City's property.

I look forward to the working with all of you to grow and develop the Agriculture and Horticulture programs for Gallatin County.

NATURAL RESOURCE CORNER

For three years now, MSU Extension has been monitoring wetlands throughout Gallatin County, looking for how our developing region may be affecting these fragile systems. The project, which started in 2015, has surveyed 59 wetland sites in Montana from West Yellowstone to downtown Bozeman. Educating citizens about the uses and benefits of wetlands is one of the primary goals of this project; wetland educators try to stir up as much volunteer interest as possible to join them for wetland surveys. When surveying a site, project leaders and volunteers look for human influences that may have an impact on the wetland such as roads, agricultural runoff, buildings, and any kind of construction. They also look at the water clarity, species diversity, number of noxious weeds, fish habitat, amphibian habitat, as well as naturally occurring springs, and whether the wetland is still a wetland or has been lost. For various reasons, the number of viable wetland sites dropped last year to 43, but during 2017 survey, not one was removed.

This year's project couldn't have been completed without the help of the 20 volunteers totaling over 100 hours that came out to assist us throughout the summer. We would like to thank all of our volunteers who came out and got messy with us this summer, you all are the reason we do this.

We hope the funding for this project continues so we can continue monitoring the wetlands in Gallatin County, and educating citizens about the benefits of wetlands for years to come. If you are curious about the project, go to:

<http://msuextension.org/gallatin/NaturalResourcesWetlandsWET.html>

A NEW 4-H YEAR BEGINS

Autumn is known for crisp cool days, school back in session, and the leaves turning color. Around the Extension Office Autumn is known for another event; 4-H enrollment time! This year, enrollment begins on October 1st 2017.

New and old 4-H members are encouraged to enroll online at **mt.4honline.com**. The Gallatin County 4-H website and Facebook page has an easy-to-follow video that walks through each step of the enrollment process. Find the video at **Gallatin4H.org** or **facebook.com/GallatinCounty4H**.

The online video also has detailed information about what types of activities and requirements 4-H members are involved with throughout the year, as well as information about enrollment fees and project fees.

Gallatin County 4-H is a thriving youth development program that cultivates life skills in kids through active learning with a topic of their choice. With over 200 project topics, ranging from animals to sewing, there is something for every interest! 4-H is a great way for youth to develop lifelong friendships, important life skills, and confidence to follow their interests and passions.



For questions please call the Gallatin County Extension office.

WINTER CRITTERS IN YOUR BACKYARD

You'd be surprised with how little you have to do in order to help wintering birds out even on the harshest days. Here are a few ways you can help!

1. Food is helpful, but not necessary. Birds have been able to survive the winters here in Montana long before humans started putting seed out for them. Seed and millet helps, but are not necessary.
2. Unfrozen water source. Not surprisingly, liquid water is a hard commodity to find when it freezes so fast. On particularly sunny days, put out a serving plate of water, or, if you are feeling adventurous, buy a fish tank heating coil from a store and drop it into your bird bath to keep the water unfrozen.
3. Leave your tree leaves or dead garden plants through the winter. The materials provide bedding and seed resources for birds and small mammals.

ASK THE 4-H AGENT

How do I become a volunteer?

The first step to becoming a 4-H volunteer, is to determine your monthly time commitment. There are opportunities for you whether you have two hours to spare or 20. There are also different times of the year that need volunteers more so than others.

The second step is to identify your personal interests and skills. With over 200 project areas, there should be a topic that you can help youth learn. However, there are still opportunities for you to help with if you don't have a particular interest in anything.

The last step is to fill out a volunteer application online. There is a one-time fee of \$10 that covers a background check. Then, call the 4-H office to get information on training dates and to be placed with a volunteer opportunity that fits your time commitment and interests!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November

- November 23-24: Office Closed

December

- Dec 12: 4-H ULC Committee Meeting
- Dec 14: 4-H Workshop
- Dec 25-26: Office Closed

January

- January 1: Office Closed
- January 3: Beef Producers Luncheon
- January 5: Beef Producers Banquet
- January 9: 4-H ULC and 4-H Foundation Annual Meeting
- January 13: Bar J Wrangler Concerts
- January 15: Office Closed
- January 22: Master Gardening Level 1 begins.



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The Bar J Wranglers, world famous singing cowboys from Jackson Hole, WY, will entertain the entire family with western harmonies straight from the range, cowboy stories and jokes that will have you laughing in the aisles, and an evening of inspiration that will continue to lift your spirits long after the show.



Supporting Gallatin County 4-H
Bar J Wranglers in Concert
January 13, 2018 2 pm & 7 pm
Tickets on sale now at msuextension.org/gallatin