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Brigham City, UT 84302
The Blue Creek Research Farm focuses on small grains breeding, conservation tillage techniques, soil fertility, rangeland grass varieties, forage kochia, safflower production and other dryland agriculture problems and concerns. It was founded in the early 1960s when farmers in Box Elder County purchased 40 acres of prime dryland farm ground and deeded it to the Utah Agriculture Experiment Station for research. Another 50 acres were purchased in 1992 by farmers and agribusinesses. Field days are held at the research farm every other year, allowing researchers to showcase with local growers the research plots and to discuss their results with them. Wheat plant breeding has been a long-term research project at the Blue Creek farm with several new wheat varieties being released every couple of years as a result of the USU Wheat variety research project. Dryland tillage practices, along with fertilizer studies, have been conducted for many years at the farm and have benefited local growers over the years. Field experiments at the Blue Creek research farm and local growers' fields are conducted to generate the information necessary for Utah agricultural producers to make management decisions regarding crop inputs on their operations.

Interest in cover crops among Utah farmers has been on the rise in recent years due to a desire to improve soil health. Utah State University (USU) Extension, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and local Soil Conservation Districts have been sponsoring soil health workshops in Utah over the past four years throughout various parts of the state. Participation at the workshops has been at capacity at each location every year. These workshops have included several local farmers that have been cautiously incorporating cover crops and no-till practices on their farms while touting the benefits. Relatively few Utah growers have tried cover crops to date, because of the uncertainty of what to grow, water availability, and how to plant them.

USU Extension received a $29,993 grant from USU Extension to conduct a multi-county project to collect replicated data on how cover crops perform and how they influence forage and soil quality in Utah. Replicated research plots for both warm and cool season crops were planted and harvested in 2020 to answer cover crop questions.
Utah produces nearly 23 million pounds of safflower, which ranks it second in U.S. production only behind California. Mountain States Oilseeds (MSO) contracts 20,000 acres of safflower annually in Northern Utah and Southern Idaho. USU Extension in Box Elder County continues to do research work on safflower, with emphasis this year being placed on dormant seeded fertilizer planting rates. We are evaluating pre and post-emergent herbicides that will control weeds in dormant seeded safflower. The results from the studies will be presented at the Mountain States Oilseed schools and publications will be written and posted to the USU Extension Crop website. The Idaho Oilseed Commission funded the study “Weed Control Options for Dormant and Spring-Seeded Safflower”.

Currently there is a huge trend in the United States (U.S.) to grow our own food and/or purchase locally grown products. USU Extension offices along the Wasatch Front receive hundreds of phone calls requesting information about gardening, fruit trees and small fruit production in 2020 due to the pandemic. With more than 75 percent of the population living along the Wasatch Front (Utah, Salt Lake, Davis, Weber and Box Elder Counties), the need for a fruit tree and small fruit research and demonstration garden is critical to assist homeowners to be successful in learning the basics of small fruit and fruit tree production and care. Box Elder County Extension agent Mike Pace, received a grant to establish the demonstration orchard to provide educational opportunities for the public through viewing exhibits, attending classes and hands-on gardening experiences. The orchard focuses on the selection and cultivation of standard tree fruit and small fruit crops suited for growing along the Wasatch Front. Homeowners can see over 80 different varieties of fruit trees from heirloom to modern apples, peaches, plums apriums, plumcots and pluots. The key to this garden is that whether homeowners are choosing two or three favorite fruit trees or grape vines for a small urban backyard or have a larger orchard for the family and even farmers-market production, they will find up-to-date useful information on variety selection and care at the USU demonstration orchard.
The Farm and Ranch Succession Planning Program is a collaborative educational program that was started in Box Elder County based on needs assessment responses from agricultural producers. The program focuses to better prepare farmers and ranchers in succession and estate transition planning. Family communication, short term, long term goals, problem solving, conflict resolution, identification of all parts of the estate, transition goals, and identification of resources to aide in the process are just some examples of focal points of the program. The programs emphasizes the importance of being proactive in the succession process, and the benefits of implementing the process well before it is too late and another entity determines what happens to the estate. To date we have conducted four programs with attendees representing over $200,000,000 in ranch and farm asset values. Currently we also have two more counties scheduled in 2021 to conduct this program.

A successful transition to the next generation takes careful planning.

80% OF FARM & RANCH FAMILIES HOPE TO PASS ON THE FAMILY FARM
30% OF FARMS & RANCHES SURVIVE THE SECOND GENERATION
12% OF FARMS & RANCHES SURVIVE THE THIRD GENERATION

LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS EDUCATION SERIES

The below courses were offered both in person as well as virtually to accommodate the needs of the producers we serve.

MENTAL HEALTH PRODUCER WORKSHOPS: 15 PARTICIPANTS
Suicide prevention and mental health issues specific to those working in agriculture.

SHEEP PRODUCER EDUCATION: 2 WORKSHOPS: 30 PARTICIPANTS
Education on disease prevention and "grazing to control" specifically for sheep producers.

MULTI-COUNTY DAIRY PRODUCER EDUCATION (2 WORKSHOPS): 40 PARTICIPANTS
Focused on issues important to dairy such as insurance options and protecting local dairy producers.

BEEF & RANGE PRODUCER EDUCATION (3 WORKSHOPS): 60 PARTICIPANTS
Feeder cattle trends, futures, and recommendations on managing range and pasture environments.

CHICKEN& POULTRY (2 WORKSHOPS): 83 PARTICIPANTS
Backyard Chicken education, from husbandry to breed selection and more!

230 Total Producers Served

BOX ELDER COUNTY IS THE LARGEST CATTLE PRODUCING COUNTY IN THE STATE
AN AVERAGE-SIZED STEER WILL FEED 860 PEOPLE
Box Elder County Extension applied for and successfully obtained a water quality grant opportunity for Box Elder, Cache, Weber, and Morgan County livestock producers. Producers had the opportunity to apply individually for up to $10,000 of the $75,000 grant. Over $25,000 was awarded to Box Elder County Livestock Producers. The money will go towards helping the producers improve their operations and the overall quality of waterways near them. We also received a $13,000 grant to further research to combat the black grass bugs that greatly effect grass, crops, and pasture in Box Elder County. We are currently seeking to find where their eggs are stored, how grazing changes their life cycle, and other forms of control.

Box Elder Extension is part of a team that has received over $200,000 in funding to work towards creating better resources for Agricultural Stress Management and Suicide Prevention. This was started from an expression of need in Box Elder County. Soon we will have a hotline, specific to Farmers/Ranchers, where they can call at any time to speak with a specialist who understands agriculture and mental health. Preparations are also being made to implement mental health and suicide prevention trainings that are agricultural specific into the already established curriculums.

### MONIES AWARDED TO PRODUCERS THROUGH BOX ELDER EXTENSION GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>Awarded to producers for water quality improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>Awarded to battle the black grass bug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>Awarded for farmer ranchers suicide prevention resources</td>
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### MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID & SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Farmers face a multitude of unique stressors, such as difficult economic conditions and extreme weather. These challenges have led to a recent increase in the number of farmers battling with mental health. This course discussed the warning signs of suicide and how communities can help farmers and their families address mental health concerns.

- 20 participants from Box Elder County resulted in help hotline
- Grant awarded to support cause
- Met needs in several counties

### BOX ELDER COUNTY WOOL POOL

A wool pool is a way of marketing like grades of wool together for a set price. The purpose of the Wool Pool is to cut out the "middle man" and provide a wool buyer a volume of wool that has been graded and bundled in bales. The Box Elder County Wool Pool served 21 producers and sold $4,830.54 in total payments collecting....

12,312 Pounds of Wool
Box Elder 4-H

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H inspires the next generation of leaders, inventors, entrepreneurs, and problem solvers. 4-H is the nation's largest positive youth development program and in Box Elder County we offer a wide variety of programs, projects, contests and events from livestock to sewing, and leadership to robotics.

Box Elder 4-H adjusts to virtual formats

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: GREEN APRON

Seeing the need to keep youth engaged and participating in Box Elder County 4-H, we adapted. This "hybrid program" was the first of its kind, allowing kits to be picked up and taken home for virtual classes. The supply kits for the "Green Apron" program contained kitchen supplies, 4-H swag, and recipes for our classes! Youth participating tuned into a live cooking course broadcast from the 4-H office. This model paved the way for other hybrid activities, including rock painting and charcuterie board design.

with schools in and out of session, more 4-H youth found themselves in quarantine. Rather than this disrupting their leadership opportunities and involvement, virtual formats kept us connected.

Box Elder County is 6,729 square miles with 4-H members from Willard to Park Valley. In the past, travel has been a barrier to participating. 2020 encouraged a change to help make 4-H accessible to all.

Being a family friendly organization, USU Extension is familiar with parents and volunteers running from one event to home and back. Our virtual formats allow 4-H families to better manage their time and resources in tuning in from anywhere.
Each year local food pantries seek donations from the public. This year, 4-H volunteer Amanda John took the lead with her livestock club "Bacon Bits". Every member of this 4-H club set a goal to round up 100 pounds of donations each. They sought out non-perishable items, toiletries, and baby items. In true volunteer spirit, this club leader challenged her kids, certain she could raise 200 pounds of donations herself. So, with a friendly spirit of competition, the club went to work. Keeping in mind their total club goal was 2,000 pounds, we were astonished to learn that in total they gathered 3,678 pounds of non-perishable food items! The 4-H pledge states "I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, and my health to better living. For my club, my community, my county, and my world", and they did just that.
Formerly named "Food $ense", now "Create Better Health" is Utah's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education, provides nutrition education to SNAP recipients and food stamp eligibles. Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) offers a variety of classes to expand participants' knowledge of nutrition, budgeting, cooking, food safety, and physical activity. These hands-on classes are taught by Nutrition Education Assistants (NEAs), who are trained through the National Nutrition Certification Program, created by Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) of Utah.

Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) connects program participants with the knowledge and skills they need for continued access to safe and healthy foods. Participants learn how to cook healthy meals on a budget, buy and prepare whole foods, read food labels, practice safety in the kitchen, and much more. With the overall increase in disease and obesity in the United States, particularly among individuals from low-income households, there is an obvious need for more education to prompt lifestyle changes. Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) is designed to increase the knowledge, skill set, and overall well-being of those it serves.

In Box Elder County 26 series of classes were offered. These classes were comprised of 105 individual lessons. A Box Elder Create Better Health Ambassador said this of the program "I ran into the family of a girl who was in the 2nd grade class I taught in two years ago. We immediately recognized each other and the mom began telling me how she had been trying for the longest time to get her kids to eat whole grains but all they wanted was white bread. But then she explained, as soon as I taught the whole grains lesson, there was an immediate change. She said her daughter came home and taught her what she had learned about the benefits of whole grains and the different parts of the grain. The mother continued to tell me that since then, all they eat is whole grains. It was so fun and rewarding to hear this from the mom and know that even two years after one class, there was a difference being made in this family".

Youth participation sky rockets with Food, Fun, & Reading curriculum

374 YOUTH PARTICIPANTS IN BOX ELDER
53 ADULT PARTICIPANTS IN BOX ELDER

65% of Parents reported their child talks about healthy food more frequently.
40% of Parents reported their child eats vegetables more frequently.
25% of Parents reported their child eats fruit more frequently.
While teaching the protein lesson today and briefly discussing Thanksgiving from last week, one participant advised that she thought about MyPlate on Thanksgiving Day. She said that she tried to make her plate look like that, and she added more vegetables. [The participant said], ‘I thought about MyPlate and added more vegetables to my plate....it actually looked a lot like the MyPlate that you show us.’

- Box Elder Create Better Health Ambassador

Create Better Health falls under the general jurisdiction of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). At the state level, Create Better Health (SNAP-ED) operates as a partnership between Utah State University Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences, USU Cooperative Extension Services, the Utah Department of Workforce Services and our community. Box Elder Extension has partnered with...

- Brigham City Community Center
- Bear River Senior Center
- Tremonton Food Pantry
- Kent’s Market
- Welcome Baby
- The Brigham House
- ILSC
- USU Brigham City Campus
- Boys & Girls Club
- McKinley Elementary School
- Mountain View Elementary School

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Giving Back

Over 600 lbs

of fresh produce donated to the pantry from the Brigham City Community Garden.

Celebrating Ann Henderson's 37 years

Serving as the Box Elder County Family Consumer Science Extension Agent for 37 years, Ann Henderson is a staple to our community. From coordinating fair exhibits, to facilitating 4-H camps and contests, to teaching family finance and cooking courses, Ann has done it all. In addition to her ever enduring service to our community, Ann has trained and taught countless employees and interns in our office. She is a resource to all, and although she now hopes to enjoy her retirement we are sure we will be calling on her expertise in the future. Thank you, Ann, for your dedication to Box Elder County Extension.
Discover 4-H campaign
2,008 views

Three short videos demonstrating and promoting available 4-H resources.

Achievement awards
7,018 reached

In lieu of our in-person awards we recognized our youth & volunteers virtually and with yard signs.

National 4-H feature
52,000 followers

National 4-H shared a Box Elder 4-H video of youth in our program reciting the pledge.

2020 ONLINE PRESENCE
This year we better understand the value of our online presence. World-wide social media participation increased by 10.5% (more than 376 million people). Seeing the pandemic as an opportunity to engage, we marketed USU Extension - Box Elder County programs through social media like never before. We welcomed the positive response. Here are some of our largest interactions.

Our Community
USU Extension - Box Elder County offers its services to both youth and adult professionals alike. It's because of this that we have two social media outlets. Our Box Elder 4-H accounts serve youth and volunteers involved in positive youth development. The more general USU Extension - Box Elder County pages serve adults by relaying research and information in topics such as horticulture, agriculture, and family consumer sciences.
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