



# OUTCOMES & IMPACT QUARTERLY — SPRING 2024

## INTRODUCTION

As the weather shifts from snow to sunshine, many of us refocus on our health and the environment as we spend more time in the sun. As such, the impacts provided in this issue span from food security and diabetes to vaping, wildlife grazing, and home gardens. I am so pleased with the work of our USU Extension faculty and staff around the state and their efforts to move us toward a healthier and more sustainable future. Please join me in reading our latest issue of the Outcomes & Impact Quarterly Report.

Sincerely,

**Kenneth L. White**

Dean, College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences; Vice President, Extension and Agriculture



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Balancing Agriculture and Wildlife: The Impact of Elk and Deer Grazing on Farm and Ranch Lands
- Providing Pest Management Education for Home Gardeners in Utah
- Assessing Parent and Guardian Outcomes for the Be Epic, Escape the Vape Program in Rural Southeast Utah
- NourishTank: An Innovative Program on Solving Hunger
- Outcomes of Virtual Diabetes Cook-Along Classes

# BALANCING AGRICULTURE AND WILDLIFE: THE IMPACT OF ELK AND DEER GRAZING ON FARM AND RANCH LANDS

Ethan Gilliam, Anna Gilliam, Jody Gale

Many farmers and ranchers in Utah face the challenge of crop and forage loss due to wildlife grazing. While some support wildlife grazing, others strongly oppose it. Although mediation procedures are in place in Utah, these issues can cause contention between residents in the same community who represent different organizations.

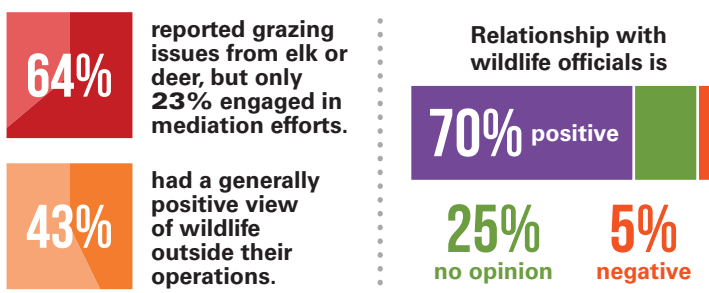
Understanding the positions of farmers and ranchers on national issues can seed conversations that address the competition between wildlife sustainability and farming/ranching sustainability.

To aid understanding, a five-question survey regarding public perceptions of wildlife grazing was developed and administered at the American Farm Bureau Federation National Conference, held in Salt Lake City in January. Data was collected from a national spectrum of agricultural stakeholders at the conference.

Recognizing the importance of wildlife for various recreational activities, survey results emphasized the need for balanced solutions to address agricultural concerns. Future efforts will focus on assessing the long-term impact of elk/deer grazing in selected areas of southern Utah and replicating the study in other regions to inform and create effective management strategies.



140 survey respondents indicated:



## PROVIDING PEST MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FOR HOME GARDENERS IN UTAH

Nick Volesky, Marion Murray



200+ survey respondents indicated:



USU Extension horticulture programming provides research-based information for gardeners. Historically, the USU Extension Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program's vegetable pest education outreach focused on commercial and small-acreage producers. However, the recommendations, such as crop rotations and pesticide selections, do not apply to home gardeners.

In January 2024, the USU Extension IPM program launched the Garden Pest Academy, a three-part class series designed to enhance Utah's home gardeners' abilities to identify and manage insect and plant diseases.

USU Extension plans to continue the IPM program with vegetable pest education and outreach to home gardeners through a new series of garden pest management fact sheets, providing identification and management information on common pests applicable to home gardeners. The IPM program will also continue education and outreach through pest advisories, social media accounts, and in-person tours at demonstration farms. This initiative aligns with the USU Extension IPM program's mission to promote sustainable pest management practices across Utah, evidencing its commitment to environmental stewardship and community education.

# ASSESSING PARENT AND GUARDIAN OUTCOMES FOR THE BE EPIC, — ESCAPE THE VAPE PROGRAM IN RURAL SOUTHEAST UTAH —

Ashley C. Yaucher, Christina Pay, Josie Hatch, Cris Meier

Over 2.1 million youth in the U.S. reported current e-cigarette use in 2023, despite the known health risks. Preventing the use of e-cigarettes or "vape" use is a top priority, particularly in areas such as Southeast Utah, where rates of youth e-cigarette use are among the highest in the state.

The Be Epic, Escape the Vape Program was designed in 2020 as a youth e-cigarette prevention program using a multi-component approach to prevent the use of e-cigarettes among youth in Southeast Utah. Be Epic seeks to support caretakers by educating them about their critical role in preventing youth e-cigarette use and instilling confidence in them to communicate effectively with their youth.

Each year, the project team employs local health and wellness prevention coordinators to implement program activities for teachers, parents/guardians, youth, and the community. The program continues to be funded by the Southeast Utah Health Department, and evaluation results are continuously used to improve the program each year.



## Evaluation results from the first three years showed:



Parents' knowledge about e-cigarettes increased.



Parents were more likely to discuss the risks with their youth after the training.



Participants felt this one-time training format was effective.

Learn more and view the program toolkit at [extension.usu.edu/be-epic](https://extension.usu.edu/be-epic).

# — NOURISHTANK: AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM ON SOLVING HUNGER —

Palak Gupta, Ashley Sullivan, Kristin Hoch, Lea Palmer, Jocelin Gibson, Mateja Savoie-Roskos, Heidi LeBlanc

Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for everyone in a household to live an active, healthy life. It is a significant concern in Utah.

USU's Hunger Solutions Institute developed a unique program to address the statewide food insecurity concerns. NourishTank, a Shark Tank-style event, was formed so students could propose food and nutrition insecurity solutions.

The success of NourishTank's inaugural event sets a precedent for future endeavors in addressing food-related challenges through innovation, collaboration, and community engagement. As the winning proposal evolves into a sustainable program, NourishTank can make a meaningful difference in the fight against food insecurity.

1/11 people are food insecure in Utah.



## Objectives of the NourishTank program:

### At NourishTank:

28 students formed 11 teams.

**WINNING IDEA:**  
"Farm2Fork Gone Mobile"

The winning idea earned \$1,000 toward their proposed project.

1

Spread awareness of hunger issues among university students.

2

Engage students from multiple disciplines to collaborate and develop original ways to address food insecurity.

3

Invite innovative proposals from student groups to develop into an Extension program.

# OUTCOMES OF VIRTUAL DIABETES COOK-ALONG CLASSES

April Litchford, Jenna Dyckman, Cindy Jenkins, Andrea Schmutz, Carrie Durward



In 2021, the American Diabetes Association reported that 8% of the adult population in Utah, or 187,000 people, have been diagnosed with diabetes, while an estimated 51,000 adults in Utah have undiagnosed diabetes. Currently, about 20,000 Utah adults are diagnosed with diabetes each year.

A diagnosis of diabetes requires significant lifestyle changes, including learning to self-manage symptoms to improve quality of life and reduce the risk of severe disease complications. However, diabetes self-management classes are typically poorly attended due to cost, availability, and distance of travel to classes.

To help remedy this, two USU Extension county faculty and an Extension nutrition specialist developed a five-class "Virtual Diabetes Cook Along Series." The series was offered six times between January 2022 and March 2023. Each hour-long class focused on specific diabetes self-management topics and included interactive activities.

The classes were conducted via Zoom and were recorded for those who could not attend or for later reviewing. USU Extension plans to continue offering the Virtual Diabetes Cook-Along Series to provide accessible diabetes self-management education.

**1,119** total participants

## Program participants indicated:

**86%**

were very satisfied with the information shared in the classes.

**77%**

were very likely to use information from the class to change their behavior.

## Survey participants resided in:

**15**  
Utah counties

**25**  
states

**5**  
countries

