



Welcome to Beaverhead County

Founded in 1865, Beaverhead County is Montana's largest county with an area of 5,571 square miles. Of the 3.566 million acres of land, 69% is publicly owned, which contributes to the sparse population of the county. The population density in Beaverhead County is less than 1.7 people per square mile, but the average cattle population is 27.6 per square mile. The economy is driven largely by agriculture, mostly cattle and hay production, but tourism and recreation also contribute. The county is ranked first statewide in cattle production and annual forage production.

Doctoring calves on a sunny day



Crops

For the small grain and livestock producers in Beaverhead County, nitrate concentrations in feed can be a potential problem that can cost thousands of dollars. Grown as feed for cattle or rotational crops, barley and oats are the most common small grains in the county. In some cases, nitrate can accumulate in crops faster than it can be converted to protein and if eaten at toxic levels in the plants, it can be lethal to livestock. This year in Beaverhead County, approximately 64 nitrate tests were conducted, which led to producers making informed decisions on nitrate levels for safe feeding.

This year in Beaverhead County, 475 acres were certified as noxious weed seed free. Not only does this program increase the producers bottom line, but helps reduce the spread of noxious weeds on public and some private lands. In addition to gaining one new participant in the program, three producers walked their fields with the inspector to learn more about their weeds.

Riding in the Centennial Valley



Using the Schutter Diagnostic Lab at Montana State University, Beaverhead County MSU Extension submitted over 70 samples of plants and insects to identify pests and diseases. The county's economy being largely driven by agriculture relies on MSU Extension to help identify pests and diseases that can affect crops. This year, samples of potatoes, barley, alfalfa, wheat, and hops were sent to the lab. Common scab, bacterial leaf streak, fusarium root rot, phoma, leaf spot, herbicide injury, aphid damage, black grass bugs, leaf hoppers, and grass flies were among the economically-significant problems that affected Beaverhead County crop producers this year.

4-H in Beaverhead County

The Beaverhead County 4-H program includes 200 youth in 10 clubs. Youth ages 6-19 are given the opportunity to explore education and interests by participating in youth activities. Sixty-five adult volunteers help to deliver the program to the county's youth.

The Beaverhead County 4-H program had 134 members that participated in a livestock project. All 4-H and FFA members are required to be certified in livestock quality assurance to exhibit an animal, so Animal Quality Assurance workshops held this year focused on feed rations, injection practices, and water quality. Youth who participate in livestock projects are exposed to the industry at a young age, learn self-reliance, and sportsmanship. This year, Beaverhead County 4-H youth achieved livestock

acolades with five Steer of Merits, eight certified lamb carcasses, and 27 hogs that fell within the Montana swine Symbol of Excellence criteria.

Many 4-H members participated in other projects that ranged from air rifle and archery to weed collections and baking. Through these 4-H projects, the kids learn initiative, responsibility, and to develop their leadership skills. Four 4-H members participated in 4-H Congress this year in Bozeman, where they were able to compete in or watch different contests, attend workshops, and meet other 4-H members from across the state. Attending events like Congress allow youth to be more involved in leadership opportunities and bring new ideas back to their communities. The Beaverhead County 4-H Foundation awarded one \$1500 scholarship to James Kramer to further his education in agriculture.



4-H Member Asher at the Beaverhead County Fair.

contact us:



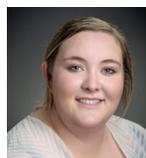
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