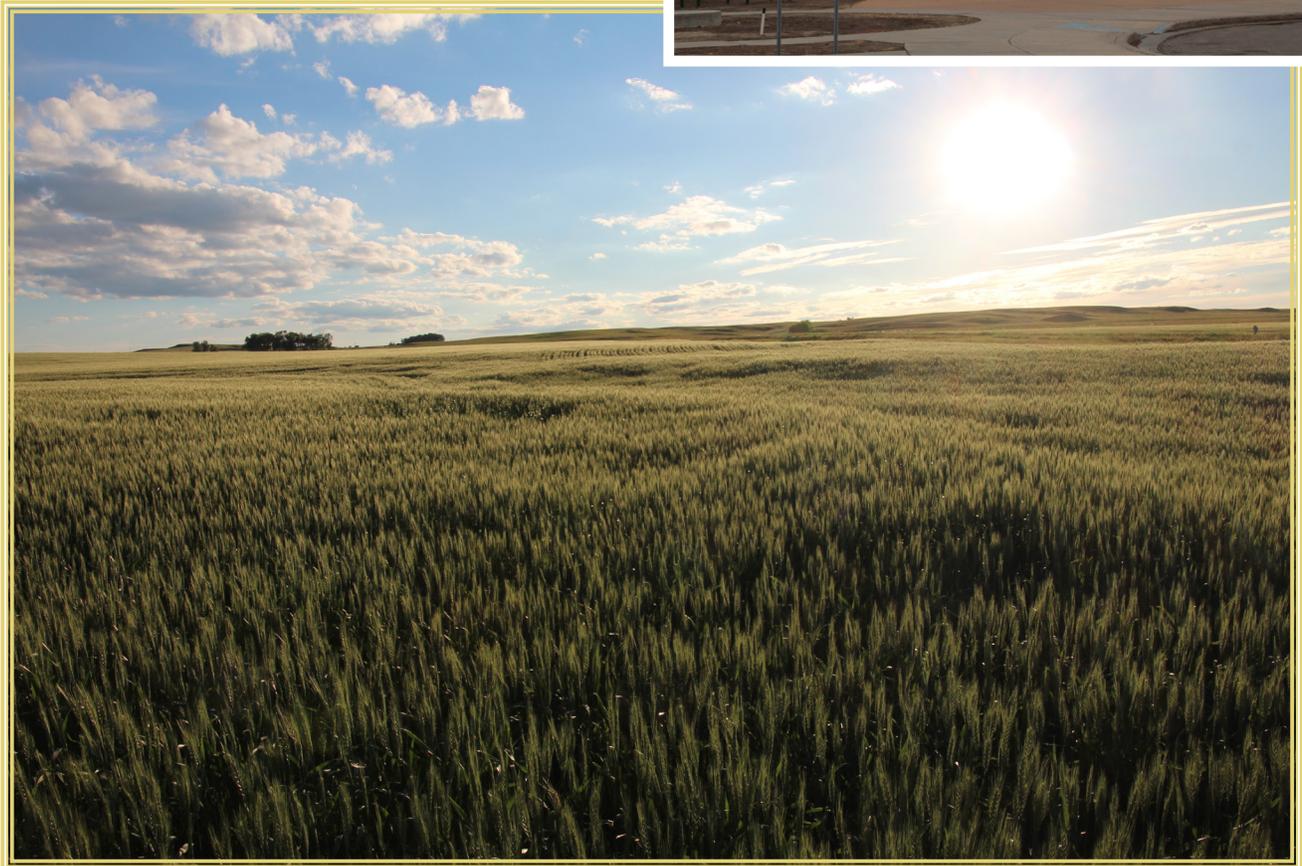




Welcome to Fort Peck Reservation

The Fort Peck Reservation is made up of 2,094,000 acres located in the northeast corner of Montana. Poplar is the home to the Tribal Council headquarters. The reservation is isolated from Montana's populated areas as well as manufacturing centers, but does overlap oil and gas developments. The largest employer on the Fort Peck Reservation is the Fort Peck Tribes. The main economic driver is agriculture with the land rich in natural resources, generating over \$78 million in cash receipts and ranking ninth in the state.

Fort Peck Tribal Headquarters



All photos by Wendy Becker

Extension Programs Benefit the Public in a Variety of Ways

Sausage Making - Advancing Your Market Livestock

In Montana, market livestock projects are one of the most popular and rewarding projects. When meat science is discussed, we educate about loin size, tenderness, and intermuscular fat, not the lesser valued cuts. This goal of this program is to improve comprehension of food value particularly in marginal cuts, and to demonstrate and educate on meat processing techniques. A hands-on approach was used for 4-H market livestock project enrollees, and non-traditional 4-H programs in the classroom. Since the beginning of the program, over 810 students, leaders, and adults have participated in 32 programs. They learned various cuts of meat, muscle structure, recipe framework, food safety, equipment safety and packaging. Invaluable program outcomes have been student-learned decision making, math and communications skills, and pride in their projects. Before the program, only 4% had made fresh-stuffed sausage, 26% had made jerky products, and none had made summer sausage

or snack sticks. Students and adults were also able to transfer the education into wild game ground meat production. From evaluations, 96% of attendees wanted to learn more about meat science and forms of sausage making, and 100% remembered the correct internal temperature for ground meat products—important for food safety. People who have benefited include those in Tribal Programs, 4-H programs, adults, and teachers that are mandated to include Indian Education for All in their classrooms. Through start-up grants and local support, MSU Extension has been able to provide this program for free, creating a net savings of \$200 per person, or \$162,000.

Mon-Dak Pulse Day

In Northeast Montana, pulse crop acreage has been increasing due to the favorable growing conditions for cool season crops, incorporation of crop rotation, no-till practices, and economic returns. Producers began experimenting with pulse crops near the turn of the century, but had little knowledge specific to Montana. The need for producer education regarding disease and pest identification, rotations, marketing, and weed management has grown rapidly. Local programs were developed that alternate delivery between Montana and North Dakota in order to bring as many producers as possible together with nationally-recognized experts in the field. Recently, the pulse crop education



Packaging and grinding meat.





Speaker room at MonDak Pulse Day.

program expanded its coverage and grew to a full day of presentations, a commercial trade show, networking opportunities, and specialized topics. It grew from 40 participants to 170, and from six commercial trade show booths and sponsors to 33. Stats from program participants:

- 49% of attendees were very experienced in growing pulse crops with 5% raising them for the first time.
- Top pulse crops grown regionally are chickpeas, lentils, and yellow peas.
- 59% of producers had not used the nitrogen credit supplied by legume crops.
- A new invasive weed was found in 46% of the acres
- New management practices learned at seminars were incorporated by 88% of producers, and 100% would like the program to continue.

Pulse crops and cropping practices in Northeastern Montana have become more sustainable by enabling producers to manage rotations, develop markets, select herbicides, and take advantage of continuous cropping strategies.



Pumpkin patch

Tribal Extension Garden

Fort Peck Reservation MSU Extension developed an educational program based on rural agri-tourism, working with cultural educational customs, and horticulture practices of Northeastern Montana. The Fort Peck Reservation Tribal Executive Board gave use of 99 acres of land owned by the Tribes to Fort Peck Reservation's MSU Extension for educational functions. The purpose of this project was to showcase horticulture on the Fort Peck Reservation and help people who grow gardens, do landscaping, or purchase horticulture products with networking possibilities. Grants were awarded to fund program activities used to achieve the goals of this project. Activities included horticulture tours which included local businesses, with local garden and landscape enthusiasts, growing and tending a pumpkin patch, garden food preservation classes, a rain barrel workshop, and now a community garden.

A large garden was grown and showcased, and then all of the produce was given to the Tribal Elderly Program, community members that had lost their gardens from adverse weather conditions or hard times, and to supplement other healthy programs that were directed from Fort Peck Reservation MSU Extension. Over 350 people benefited from the activities provided from these activities over the course of the last few years. Program participants indicated that the information obtained was invaluable for feeding their families, conserving water, sharing ideas, networking with other horticulturists, and was deemed highly successful. Fort Peck Reservation was in at least one stage of drought for over a year, so educational opportunities, both failures and successes, were crucial to learning and local food production.



Progressive Agriculture Safety Day

According to the National Children's Center for Rural and Agriculture Health and Safety, about every three days, a child dies in an ag-related accident. Every day, 38 children are injured in an agriculture-related accident, yet 80% of those injuries were not from working when the injury occurred.

For the past 24 years, the Progressive Agriculture Foundation has trained hundreds of volunteers about agriculture safety and how to hold a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day in our communities. The Fort Peck Reservation is the only community hosting one in Montana, and the MSU Extension office has been granted curriculum, t-shirts, and insurance for the program.

Participants this year included the Wolf Point Schools Pre-Kindergarden to third grade, and faculty. The curriculum provided by the foundation encourages hands-on activities so that everyone can learn and participate. Topics included ATV,

chemical, grain, sun, emergency preparedness, fire, railroad, bike, water, food, hand-washing, disability awareness, hearing, PTO, and seatbelt safety. Students were fitted with bike helmets provided by Fort Peck Housing Authority, and take-home bags filled with \$6,000 worth of donated items from local programs, businesses, and MSU Extension.

The Progressive Agriculture Safety Day program is the largest rural safety and health education program for children in North America. Their mission is to provide education and training to make farm, ranch and rural life safer and healthier for children and their communities, and the Fort Peck Reservation was excited to provide this to our youth.



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