



Welcome to Judith Basin County

Judith Basin County is located in central Montana in a fertile basin between the Highwood, Big Snowy, and Little Belt mountains. The county population is 1,940. The principal communities are Stanford, Hobson and Geyser, and there are numerous other small communities. Judith Basin County's economy is based on agriculture. The major components of this industry include livestock, small grains and forage production. The county ranks tenth in Montana for beef cattle numbers, eleventh in winter wheat production, and sixth for alfalfa hay production. Timber and mining enterprises take place on a small scale.

The MSU Central Ag Research Center is located in the county near Moccasin. The Judith Basin 4-H programs consist of over 90 youth members and 31 volunteer leaders in four organized clubs. The county offers a variety of recreational opportunities, which include hiking, hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling and skiing. A major ski area is about 45 minutes from Stanford. The Judith Basin was the home of the legendary western artist Charlie Russell. Many of his paintings were scenes captured by the artist between Lewistown and Great Falls.



Daisy Peak, Little Belt Mountains

Agriculture and Natural Resources Education

Forage and Hay Workshop

The forage workshop hosted by Cascade and Judith Basin counties this year included presentations on forage production, forage health, forage testing, evaluation, data analysis, hay storage, fertilizer use, and weed control. Speakers included Rose Malisani, Cascade County MSU Extension agent; Katie Hatlelid, Judith Basin County MSU Extension agent; David Wichman, MSU Central Ag Research Center Superintendent and Agronomist (retired); Emily Meccage, MSU Extension Forage Specialist; and Jane Mangold, MSU Extension Invasive Plant Specialist. This was the third year a forage workshop was held, and the information presented has now reached over 75 producers in the area. With forage production being one of our major revenue sources in the county, information on how to be more efficient raising and storing a high quality product is very important to local producers.

Biocontrol Education

For the third consecutive year, Judith Basin County has hosted Melissa Maggio from the MT Biocontrol Coordination Project for a workshop. Previous workshops included releasing insects with the intent of establishing an insectary for other landowners and producers to come and collect *Cyphocleonus achates*. This root weevil attacks spotted knapweed plants by entering the stem and burrowing all the way down into the root. As it attacks the plant from the inside, it allows outside stresses to take a higher toll and more effectively control this noxious weed. This year, participants were able to use sweep nets and collect enough insects for one of the attendees to make a release in a weed-infested area.

Sweeping for biocontrol insects. Photo by Katie Hatlelid



All in a day's work. Photo by Katie Hatlelid.

4-H Afterschool Program

MSU Extension in Judith Basin County partnered with Stanford Schools to host the third year of the 4-H Afterschool program. Held from October-May once a month in the multi-purpose room at Stanford School, attendance averaged 30 youth from pre-school to sixth grade. Topics for each session included cooking, electricity, forestry, wildlife, and outdoor adventure.

During the course of the afterschool program, 55 students were reached. Of those, 11 were already 4-H members. Sixteen have enrolled in 4-H as a new member as of October 2018. There are several more students who aren't old enough to be a full 4-H member yet, but are waiting patiently to join!

In addition to Stanford, students came from Denton, Geysler, and Hobson to participate in the learning activities.



Students learning about simulated forest fires.
Photo by Katie Hatlelid

75th Annual Judith Basin County Fair

Judith Basin County celebrated its 75th annual County Fair this year. In the spirit of recognizing the past and future generations, historical displays were assembled in the exhibit hall. The parade was also brought back after a long hiatus. The weather also blessed attendees with the highest temperatures of the summer, and unfortunately, no dunking booth! This year there were over 100 exhibitors between the 4-H and Open Class categories, and many outstanding performances and products were brought to show.



Return of the parade to the Judith Basin County Fair. Photo by Katie Hatlelid.

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EXTENSION

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