



Welcome to McCone County

McCone County MSU Extension provides non-biased, research-based education to constituents in the county and neighboring areas. In 2017, McCone County MSU Extension offered programming in Agriculture, Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Science, and Youth Development.

McCone County was established in 1919 and was named in honor of state senator George McCone.

McCone County encompasses 2,594 sq. miles. Circle is the single incorporated town in the county and is also the county seat. The county has a population of 1200 people. Agriculture is the primary business in McCone County.



Photo by Tandi Kassner

McCone County seeks to provide quality services to its citizens with integrity, fiscal accountability, and positive leadership through encouraging public participation, communication, collaboration, and innovation in working to build a strong community.

Rolling Cows

A workshop on livestock truck accident protocols was held in March at the McCone County Fairgrounds. The workshop was a joint effort between Jeanne Rankin, DVM, Associate Specialist with MSU Extension, and the McCone County Extension Office. Twenty-five individuals from a three-county area took part in the classroom and hands-on workshop, which helped first responders, volunteer firefighters, law enforcement personnel, local farmers/ranchers, and truck drivers be better prepared in case of an accident involving vehicles transporting livestock. The workshop addressed dispatch and first responder roles, methods for animal containment, determination of animal survivability, extrication of animals from the truck, animal behavior, relocation of animals, and animal euthanasia issues. Participants are now trained to act quickly and save animal or human lives in case of future livestock truck accidents.



Family and Consumer Science

Day-to-day office contacts in the area of Family and Consumer Sciences most often involve basic food safety, home canning, estate planning, home gardening, plant care, and home weatherization. Many daily contacts address economic concerns. With today's economy, making the dollar go further is as important as ever in most households.

The McCone County Extension office hosts many cooking classes throughout the year, including "Once a Month Cooking" and "Mastering the Pressure Cooker," which served 47 local people this year. Office staff teamed up with Tara Andrews, FCS Agent from Custer County to teach "Once a Month Cooking," which offers an instructional way to cook once a month. Locals learned to choose recipes, make and customize a menu, shop a grocery list, and prep ingredients. The workshop included hands-on instruction to prepare a meal, using recipe cards and cooking instructions to assemble, cook and package multiple meals, and how to freeze and label packaged meals for later use.

Another class offered was "Mastering the Pressure Cooker," which is a hands-on class with samples of a variety of foods cooked in a pressure cooker. Pressure cooking can save time and money while producing food that is ultra-tender, low in fat and full of flavor. The pressure cooker reduces cooking times by 1/3 or more, allowing quick delivery of a delicious and nutritious meal to the table. Pressure cooking also retains more nutrients than other types of cooking and uses less energy.

Once A Month Cooking
Date: January 22nd, 2018
Time: 5:00PM
Location: Custer High School (Main Entrance Room)
Rsvp by January 19th

"Mastering the Pressure Cooker"
Date: March 15th
Time: 5:30-7:30
Location: McCone County Fairgrounds

Family and Consumer Science workshops

4-H Youth Development

McCone County has four 4-H clubs with 58 members and 12 leaders. 4-H continues to offer youth learning opportunities through a number of events and activities during the year.

Enhanced life skills of public speaking, leadership, social skills, and more are gained through club meetings, project work, judging events, summer camp, mini-congress, market quality assurance, Rec Lab, club trips and outings, shooting sports events, training and educational workshops, County Fair, fundraising events, a livestock jackpot show and the achievement program and banquet.

Involvement in 4-H allows for hands-on experience through project work. That hands-on experience and lessons learned can form the basis for post-secondary institution selection or ultimately, career choice and development.

The 4-H program also allows many opportunities for adults to be involved in life skills development of youth through project leadership and volunteer work to assist with various projects and activities.

The 4-H Cloverbud enrollments (for youth ages 5-8) continue to rise with increased interest and participation. The 2017-2018 year saw six Cloverbuds, who had added options for activities and projects geared to their age group to work on throughout the year and bring to fair.

Agriculture

McCone County MSU Extension offers programming that addresses production issues, nutrition, forage testing, water testing and marketing for livestock producers. Programming is also offered for crop producers dealing with specialty crops, weed control, rental rates, and general crop production topics. Face-to-face programming is done through producer meetings and workshops, as well as one-on-one consultations in the office and/or at the farm or ranch.

A very effective means of communicating with the producers about a wide variety of issues is the weekly newspaper article, "Notes from Nelson." This weekly column focuses on current agricultural issues, which often results in calls or visits to the Extension office to further discuss topics addressed.



Beginning of Fair



The McCone County MSU Extension agent also teams with several other Extension agents who present current issues and information via a weekly radio spot on a Miles City radio station.

The severely dry summer brought on concerns of high nitrate levels in area forages. From June through November, approximately 50 forage samples were tested for nitrate content in the McCone County Extension office. Of the samples tested, approximately 5% contained nitrates at a level that required special management.

A very popular service of MSU Extension continues to be in the area of weed, plant and insect identification.

Samples are brought in on a regular basis. Samples that cannot be identified immediately are submitted to the Schutter Diagnostic Lab. Although not as many as in previous years, a number of forage samples were also brought in for nitrate content analysis.

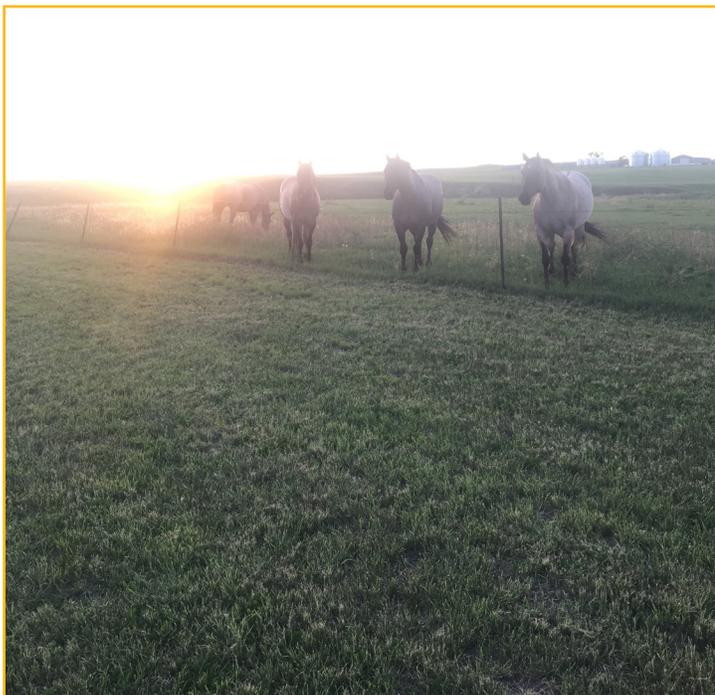


Photo by Tandi Kassner

Livestock water quality continues to be a local concern. Educational efforts were put forth to help make livestock producers aware of water quality concerns.

A major programming focus for the past year has again been All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) safety. ATVs are widely used on most Montana farms and ranches. Farmers and ranchers, as well as their employees and family members, are involved in many accidents involving ATVs, resulting in serious injury and deaths. Approximately 185 youth and 28 adults attended ATV safety-related events through the McCone County MSU Extension office. Six events were held, including three ATV Safety Rider Courses, three school presentations, and two days of instruction at the Montana Boy Scout Camp.

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