

# Dawson County



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*The Yellowstone River near Glendive, MT, by Tim Evanson, Wikimedia Commons.*

Located along the Yellowstone River and surrounded by Montana’s largest state park, Makoshika State Park, Dawson County is home to 1,525,000 acres, with over 1.13 million acres in farmland. The top dryland crops in Dawson County include wheat, lentils, and peas, as well as forage hay. We are fortunate to have the Yellowstone River running through and can utilize it for crop irrigation. Irrigated corn and sugar beets are two crops grown on the river bottoms. There are many livestock operations throughout the county, with cattle operations being the largest sector. With an increasing population of 9,518 people, Dawson County continues to grow. Glendive Medical Center, BNSF Railway, and Glendive Public Schools are the three top employers in the county. The county is also home to Dawson Community College and the Makoshika Dinosaur Museum. From tourist attractions, to recreational activities, Dawson County has something for everyone.

## Leadership Starts Here

The Dawson County 4-H Program has five organized clubs with over 70 youth members and 32 volunteer leaders. Some of the most popular projects in Dawson County are photography, arts and crafts, and large and small animals. We have also focused on growing our Cloverbud Program

and have introduced a new “Building with Legos” project for our enrolled members.

The Dawson County 4-H organization had a busy 2019-2020 year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and has big plans for the next 4-H year. 4-H members and leaders were responsible for planning their own county fair event. Despite challenges from COVID-19 restrictions, our members, leaders, and the staff in our office came together and worked diligently with our local board of health, fair board, and county commissioners to create a safe fair plan that would allow us to continue our event and the fair. The community was visited by 4-H’ers during National 4-H Week: from collecting canned goods for the food bank, to delivering over 3,000 clover cookies to Dawson County businesses, the 4-H’ers of Dawson County participated in many community service projects.

We continue to take pride in our community efforts and joined forces with our local GATE Trade Show Committee to help organize and plan the annual trade show. We also hosted our own booth and were featured as guest speakers during one of the breakout sessions. The goal of the 4-H youth program is to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills for youth, through learning programs, and our local 4-H youth have done just that by getting involved in many outreach

programs in the county. The 4-H program in Dawson County continues to grow enrollment, grow in our project numbers, and grow our leadership base.

### Communicating To All Audiences

It has been 10 years and counting since Dawson County MSU Extension partnered with Glendive Broadcasting. Weekly, three-minute radio spots are delivered to listeners across Dawson County. Various topics that range from livestock health and nutrition to crop pests and management, and to food preservation, are broadcast to radio audiences. These radio shows allow the MSU Extension agent to connect with local community members and provide facts and answer questions. The MSU Extension agent also partners with other agriculture-related committees, organizational boards, and community members to promote upcoming events, local news, and more to the listening community. Glendive Broadcasting has continued to be a proud supporter of MSU Extension and the 4-H program in Dawson County. Dawson County 4-H was selected as the August Community Highlight program and was showcased the entire month of August. Video clips, pictures, and radio spots were just a few ways they promoted Dawson County 4-H.

Glendive Broadcasting also attended the 4-H Fair and broadcast live from the fairgrounds. Youth members, 4-H leaders, and community members were able to speak live on the radio. They also live-broadcasted our 4-H Youth Livestock Sale. MSU Extension is grateful for Glendive Broadcasting and their continued support.

MSU Extension in Dawson County has also utilized social media applications to promote Extension services and the 4-H youth program. Since technology has moved to the forefront this year, we have found ways to connect with young producers, potential 4-H members, and community members directly. By utilizing the marketing tools social media provides, we have been able to increase our audience and communication through applications such as Facebook. We have also created a “MontGuide Wall” at our office and have updated our MSU publications from agents and specialists. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, we offered members in our community many chances to hear from Extension specialists and educational speakers in person to allow them networking and educational opportunities, and we have offered those opportunities virtually in the latter half of the year.



**Top:** Dawson County 4-H members; **Bottom:** Glendive Broadcasting takes part in our fair event by livestreaming our livestock shows and sale, by Jaycee Searer

## Dawson County Staff



Montana State University Extension is an ADA/EO/AA Veteran's Preference Employer and provider of educational outreach.

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