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EXTENSION NEWS ■ FCS ■ MASTER GARDENER ■ 4-H ■ MASTER FOOD SAFETY ADVISOR



Extending Your "Healthspan"

Living longer will give you time to do more, see more, and enjoy more time with loved ones and friends—but only if you're healthy enough to do so. Extending your lifespan (the number of years you live) is not enough. What you really want is maximize your "healthspan" (the number of years lived in good health).

Aging is a main risk factor for many diseases. Excluding accidents, the top five leading causes of death in the U.S. are heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic respiratory diseases, and Alzheimer's disease. Risk for every one of these (along with other illnesses and fall risk) increases with age. And they all impact your ability to do the things you want to do—even if they don't lead to death.

The Aging Body

Visible signs of aging, like grey hair and wrinkles, are just outward manifestations of changes taking place at the cellular level.

Researchers have already identified 12 "hallmarks of aging" that happen in the body with advancing years. These include changes in our DNA and gene expression, weakening of mechanisms that keep our cells working properly, slowing of ability for tissues to repair and regenerate, an increase in chronic inflammation, and a shift in the type of microbes in our gut. These changes are inevitable, but the speed with which they happen may be modifiable.

TAKE CHARGE!

***MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES.** Consume a healthy dietary pattern, stay physically and mentally active, get adequate sleep, work to reduce stress and excess body weight, don't smoke, and avoid or limit alcohol.

***TAKE CARE.** Regular check-ups and screenings can catch problems early and proper treatment can reverse or slow progression.

***TAKE YOUR MEDS.** If your healthcare provider has prescribed medications, take them regularly according to directions.

***DON'T BE FOOLED.** No supplements or treatments have been proven to slow or prevent aging or age-related changes. Longevity tests have not been proven useful outside of research settings.

Source: Adapted from Tufts Health & Nutrition Letter; December 2025, Vol. 43, No. 10

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Master Gardener Column



How Not to Kill Your Grocery Store Venus Flytrap



Not a tropical plant by any means, the Venus flytrap is adapted to a moist, mild temperature climate.

So you did it. You walked into Grocery Outlet or Super 1, intending to buy some necessity; milk, eggs, the usual. Somehow either at the behest of your kids or your own impulses, you're walking out with a brand new Venus flytrap in hand. You may have tried to grow this carnivorous plant before with little success, but swear this time will be different. While Venus flytraps are a bit finicky, it is more than possible for yours to thrive here in Boundary County.

First off, a little background. Contrary to popular opinion, the Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*) is NOT a tropical plant. It is native to the eastern United States, specifically to a narrow stretch of coastal bogs and meadows in the Carolinas. They are closely related to sundews, a much more widespread group of carnivorous plants which can be found in the wild right here in Boundary County.

It is also quite likely that Venus flytraps can be grown successfully here outside in a bog garden. They can be hardy down to USDA zone 5, whereas most of Boundary County is in zone 6. Your Venus flytrap will most likely require mulch to successfully overwinter. Bog gardens are beyond the scope of this article, but if you happen to have one, that is probably the best place to put your new Venus flytrap! Just make sure you harden it to outdoor conditions by gradually introducing it to sunlight, wind, and temperature fluctuations- a process you should do for any indoor plant that you transplant outside. However since you most likely do not have a bog garden (and if you do, please come tell me about it), the rest of this article will cover raising Venus Flytraps as a houseplant.

First off, if you want your plant to thrive, you may want to switch your plant out of that little grocery store terrarium.

As a wetland plant, Venus flytraps like it moist and humid. I keep mine in a small reptile terrarium with the pot standing in ~1/2 – 1.5 inches of distilled water, keeping the water filled at all times. A saucer will also do, but a small terrarium will keep things a little more humid. Only ever use distilled or rainwater on your Venus flytrap, tap water contains minerals which can harm them. Next up you need to worry about sunlight. Venus flytraps are a fairly sun-hungry plant, requiring 6-12 hours of bright, direct sunlight. If you are trying to grow them in a windowsill, find the sunniest south facing windowsill available to you in your house. To ensure the health of your plant, it may be a good idea to invest in some grow lights; if you do not have a sunny, south facing window, grow lights are likely going to be required in our area. Venus flytraps require boggy, acidic soils; a 50-50 peatmoss-sand mix should work, be careful that the sand and moss do not have fertilizers or pesticides added to them. Keep them in a warm area that stays at least above 70.

As we already established, Venus flytraps are a temperate, not tropical, plant. Like many temperate perennials, in the wild they go through winter dormancy each year. Opinions vary on whether Venus flytraps need winter dormancy in indoor cultivation or not. If you would like to put your flytrap into dormancy, the best thing to do is place it in an area that remains cool, around 32-55 degrees Fahrenheit. The plant should ideally still receive some light. A windowsill in a garage or in a cool room of the house can be a good spot for winter dormancy. The flytrap will still need to sit in distilled water or rainwater during dormancy, though you can let it get a little drier than when it is actively growing. Winter dormancy should last from about November – February, during this time your flytrap may slow growth or die back which is normal- be sure to prune off the dead leaves. Many sources now believe that Venus flytraps do not require winter dormancy in cultivation.

Finally, what to do about those tantalizing traps? It may be tempting to play with the trap, but the less you agitate them the better. You can feed your plants with mealworms from the pet store, or most small insects from the garden (an earwig nymph would be ideal). Just make sure that the bug is slightly smaller than the trap itself and is moving around enough to trigger the closing mechanism. Feed your flytraps at least once or twice a month during the growing season. Never feed your Venus flytrap anything other than an insect or spider! Aside from feeding, which is how Venus flytraps get much of their nutrients, only fertilize your plant with carnivorous plant-approved fertilizer, as they are very sensitive to nutrient overload. Ultimately it's far more important to worry about feeding your flytrap the right type of water, sunlight, and soil before you worry about what bugs to give it.

Submitted by: Samuel DeGrey, Agriculture Extension Educator

Unsafe Food Hacks



Unsafe food hacks often involve shortcuts that violate crucial food safety principles, such as proper temperature control and preventing cross-contamination, which can lead to severe foodborne illnesses.

Here are several unsafe food hacks you should avoid:

1. Washing Raw Poultry

Washing raw poultry, or any raw meat, in the sink is dangerous because the water splash can spread harmful bacteria like *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* across your kitchen sink, utensils, and surrounding areas. Washing raw meats does not result in any significant bacteria reduction. Cooking the meat to the appropriate internal temperature (e.g., 165°F for roasts or steaks) is the only effective way to kill these bacteria.

2. Thawing Frozen Foods at Room Temperature

Leaving frozen meat or other perishable foods on the counter to thaw is a major food safety mistake. This causes the exterior of the food to enter the *danger zone* (between 40°F and 140°F) where bacteria can multiply rapidly thus increasing the risk of foodborne illness.

- **Safe Alternatives:** Thaw food in the refrigerator or in a sealed, zip-top bag submerged in a bowl of cold water (70°F or lower), changing the water at least every 30 minutes. You can also defrost frozen foods in the microwave, but only if you will be cooking them immediately.

3. Using the Same Cutting Board for Everything

Using only one cutting board for raw meats, produce, and cooked or ready-to-eat foods without proper cleaning causes

cross-contamination and spread bacteria from one food to another.

- **Safe Alternative:** Use separate, clearly marked cutting boards for raw meat, fresh produce, and ready-to-eat foods. Wash all cutting boards with hot, soapy water after each use. After washing, cutting boards can be sanitized with a solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water.

4. Leaving Cooked Food Out for Too Long

Cooked food left out at room temperature might look and smell fine, but illness-causing bacteria can still grow to dangerous levels fairly quickly. Perishable food should not be left in the *danger zone* for more than **two hours**.

- **Safe Alternative:** Refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible by dividing hot food into smaller, shallow containers to cool rapidly. Do not stack these containers on top of each other and allow room for adequate air flow.

5. "Cooking" Food in a Dishwasher

Viral trends have suggested cooking salmon or other foods in a dishwasher can save time and energy. This is not advisable because most dishwashers do not reach or maintain accurate temperatures needed to cook food thoroughly and safely. Furthermore, soap and food debris can contaminate your food if the packaging is not completely sealed.

6. Storing Avocados in Water

A popular social media hack suggests storing whole avocados in water in the fridge to keep them fresh longer. The USDA warns against this practice, as pathogens like *Listeria monocytogenes* can grow in the avocado skin and may be drawn into the flesh while submerged, even if the skin is intact.

- **Safe Alternative:** Wrap cut avocados tightly with citrus juice or using an airtight container for short periods. Whole avocados can just be refrigerated.

Submitted by Amy Robertson, FCS Extension Educator

DIAL PRESSURE GAUGE TESTING



- * Please plan on bringing your canner lid in to the office and leaving for 24 hours.
- * A \$2.00 fee will be imposed for those brought in on other days for on demand testing.
- * Dial gauges need tested every year.

If your pressure canner only has a weighted jiggle, it does not need to be tested.

Butternut Squash & Lentil Soup

Serving Size: 1 cup
Servings: 10

Ingredients

2 cups uncooked lentils
¾ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon curry powder, (or cumin)
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 onion
4 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
1 butternut squash (about 1½ pounds)
4 cups low-sodium broth
2 cups water, as needed



Directions

1. Boil about 4 cups of water. Rinse lentils in strainer and place in a bowl. Pour boiling water over them and let sit for 15 minutes.
2. Combine salt, curry powder or cumin, cinnamon and pepper; set aside.
3. Cut onion in half and peel off brown layers. Chop into ½ inch pieces or smaller. Peel garlic and mince. Peel ginger and grate.
4. Heat butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add spice mixture; stir until fragrant, about 1 minute.
5. Add onion, garlic, and ginger; cook until onion turns clear, about 4 minutes.
6. Peel butternut squash, cut in half lengthwise and remove seeds. Cut into ½ inch pieces. Add to pot and continue to cook until it begins to soften; about 5 minutes.
7. Add broth and bring to a boil; reduce to a simmer. Drain lentils in strainer and add. Cook until squash is tender and lentils are soft, about 20 to 30 minutes. Add additional water to get to a desired consistency. Adjust salt by about ⅛ teaspoon for each cup water added.

Per serving: Calories: 174; Total Fat: 3g; Saturated Fat: 1g; Cholesterol: 6mg; Total Carbohydrate: 29g; Dietary Fiber: 12g; Protein: 10g; Sodium: 355mg; Potassium: 535mg

Vitamin A 91%	Vitamin C 25%
Iron 20%	Calcium 5%

Source: Virginia Cooperative Extension; Family Nutrition Program-Eat Smart, Move More

Selecting and Preparing Winter Squash

- ◇ Choose firm, well-shaped squash that are heavy for their size and have a hard tough skin.
- ◇ Avoid squash that have sunken, soft, or moldy spots.
- ◇ Store in a cool, dry place. Winter squash will keep for several months if stored correctly.
- ◇ To bake, wash and cut in half or quarters depending on the size. Scoop out seeds with a spoon. Place cut side down on a shallow baking pan and bake at 375°F for about 40 to 50 minutes.
- ◇ To boil or steam, wash and cut into smaller pieces. Peel and remove seeds. Boil or steam in a small amount of water for about 25 to 35 minutes, or until tender.

Source: wasnap-ed.org/FFF

LENTILS



Lentils are actually edible seeds and are part of the legume family. There are a number of varieties: brown, green, puy, yellow, red, and beluga. Each type of lentils offers its own variation of nutrients, such as antioxidants and phytochemicals, but they are all an excellent source of protein, folate, iron, and fiber, among other vitamins and minerals.

Buying and storing

BUYING

When buying dried lentils, look for bright colored lentils with a uniform size and smooth skins and without chips or shriveled skin.

STORING

Store in an unopened package or air-tight container in a cool, dark, dry place. Cooked lentils store well for up to 3 days in the refrigerator or for several months in the freezer.

Source: www.montana.edu/extension/buyeatlivebetter

Visit Us On The Web @
uidaho.edu/boundary

Workshops, Programs, Bulletins & Classes

Due to space restrictions, program planning of handouts and trying to ensure an effective learning environment, all Extension sponsored workshops, programs and classes require **pre-registration**. Please contact the Extension Office listed for the workshop, program or class you wish to attend. The University of Idaho Boundary County Extension Office does not want anyone denied access to educational classes based on inability to pay. To inquire about scholarship availability, contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.



UI Extension Sheep and Goat Monthly Webinar:

UI Extension offers webinars on sheep and goat topics. Follow them on Facebook @UISheepandGoats for the current schedule of topics.

Pressure Canning Basics

Thursday, January 8, 2026

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$10



Learn how to safely make and preserve low-acid foods at home such as vegetables, meats, dried beans, and mixed foods. This hands-on class will also teach participants the basics of pressure canning and proper care for your canner. Each participant will make their own jar of product which they can pick up the day after the class. Class size is limited to 12 people.

Contact the Boundary County Extension Office to **register**; 208-267-3235.

Basic Dehydration

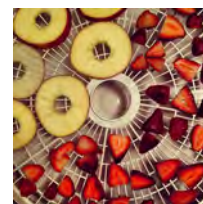
Wednesday, January 21, 2026

1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST:\$10



In this class we will be sampling different dehydrated foods and making fruit leather. You will learn specific techniques for using your home oven or dehydrator to dry fruits, vegetables, herbs, and meats. Your family will love these healthy snacks.

Contact the Boundary County Extension Office to **register**; 208-267-3235.

Boundary County Cereal School

Thursday, January 22, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM-2:30 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: FREE



Eight cereal school events are held across the state, including three in northern Idaho. They are sponsored by the Idaho Wheat Commission, the Idaho Barley Commission, and the University of Idaho. These educational workshops provide an opportunity for producers to learn about issues in their region, including insect issues, disease updates, variety trials, weed control, canola issues, markets, and more. Four Pesticide recertification credits will be available.

There is no charge for the workshop, but we need an accurate head count by Friday, January 16, for the lunch order. To **register**, please contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235 or email boundary@uidaho.edu.

Freeze Drying

Sandpoint

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

10:00 AM-11:30 AM

Sandpoint Organic Agriculture Center

N. 10881 Boyer Road

COST: \$10



Want to learn about freeze dryers designed for home use? This is the class for you! During this class you will learn about the various freeze dryer models, purchasing and maintenance costs, how to operate a freeze dryer, and proper storage of freeze-dried goods. You will be given the opportunity to see how to prep food and begin the freeze-drying process. We will also be sampling a variety of freeze-dried foods.

Contact the Boundary County Extension Office to **register**, 208-267-3235.

Workshops, Programs, Bulletins & Classes

Water Bath Canning

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$10



Learn how to safely make and preserve your own high-acid foods including jams, jellies, tomato products, pickled vegetables, and fruits. This hands-on class will also teach participants about canning basics as well as proper storage and handling of home canned foods. Each participant will make their own jar of product which they can pick up the day after the class. Class size is limited to 9 people.

Contact the Boundary County Extension Office to **register**; 208-267-3235.

IDAHO MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Boundary County—
"Helping People Grow"



The purpose of the UI Master Gardener Program is to develop a network of trained volunteers who can provide our community with research-based horticultural education and technical assistance with gardening and home horticultural problems. Master Gardeners receive about 12 weeks of college-level lectures and hands-on training with UI Extension Specialists, faculty, and local experts. After completion of the training, Master Gardeners must attend 40 hours of education time and a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer time (which must include at least one plant clinic session) for new Master Gardeners to their community in order to graduate.

Areas of training include:

- Basic Botany
- Soils & Fertilizers
- Integrated Pest Management
- Entomology
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Trees, Shrubs & Flowers
- Weed Science

Part of the volunteer hours are spent in the Extension Office Plant clinics assisting homeowners with their gardening questions. The other volunteer hours can be spent on a variety of educational gardening projects. Volunteers must meet course requirements and volunteer hours to receive a certificate, name badge, and field magnifier. The cost is \$150. Certified Master Gardeners will receive a \$75 refund upon completion.

Class space is limited. **The deadline for registration is January 15, 2026.** To **request an application** for the Idaho Master Gardener Training Program contact the Boundary County Extension Office @ 208-267-3235 or email boundary@uidaho.edu.

Selecting Seeds for Your North Idaho Garden

Thursday, February 12, 2026

1:00 PM-3:00PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$5



It's time to start planning your garden for next spring. The seed catalogs start arriving in January giving you lots of ideas, but how do you select seeds that will thrive here in North Idaho? Boundary County Advanced Master Gardeners will share tips to help you understand how to choose the best varieties for your garden, as well as how to organize and store the seeds.

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235. Class size is limited.

Dehydration Basics

Thursday, February 19, 2026

11:00 AM-Noon

FREE- Via Zoom



You will learn specific techniques for using your home oven or dehydrator to dry fruits, vegetables, herbs and meats. We will also cover recommended storage for your dried foods. Your family will love these healthy snacks! To **register**, go to <https://bit.ly/dehydration26>

Workshops, Programs, Bulletins & Classes



Winter Session starts
January 15, 2026
Registration Deadline : January 12

Do you want to learn how to can, dry or freeze your garden's bounty safely? University of Idaho Extension invites you to enroll in Preserve@Home, an online 6-week food preservation class to teach individuals how to safely preserve a variety of foods.

The registration deadline is **Monday, January 12, 2026**. The first lesson of the 6-week course opens online on **Thursday, January 15 at 10am MT**. Each lesson includes online text (that can be downloaded and printed), online discussion boards, a weekly real-time chat with instructors & classmates, and open book quizzes. The weekly online chat session for the first lesson will be on **Thursday, January 22 from 1:00 to 1:45 pm MT**. Topics to be covered include: Foodborne Illness, Canning Basics, Canning Acid Foods, Canning Low Acid Foods, Canning Specialty Foods, Freezing and Drying.

The cost is \$35.

Text/Supplemental Materials-

Preserve@Home uses the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning and a series of Pacific Northwest (PNW) publications. Some of these publications will be used each week in the lessons and to complete the quizzes. The complete list of approved references will be sent to you via email before the class begins. It will also be posted in the classroom. It will be easier if you have a hard copy either printed from online or secured at an Extension office.

Register online at:

https://marketplace.uidaho.edu/C20272_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=2135

For More Information Contact:

Laura Sant, MS RD, UI Extension Educator Franklin County: lsant@uidaho.edu or call the Franklin County Extension Office, 208-852-1097.

Growing Sprouts and Microgreens Indoors



Monday, February 23, 2026

1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$10

Join our hands-on class to learn how to grow nutrient-packed soil sprouts at home. We'll guide you through selecting seeds, understanding growing methods like microgreens vs. sprouts, and harvesting your crop. Perfect for beginners, this class makes indoor gardening simple and successful.

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.

Money Habitudes



Tuesday, February 24, 2026

4:00 PM-5:30 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$5

Money Habitudes uses a game-like assessment to help people understand and talk about their finances in a fun, constructive way. It also allows people to pinpoint underlying financial habits, attitudes, and motivations to make real behavior changes. Join us to learn more about your own financial habits!

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235. Class size is limited.



Basic Orchard Care

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

1:00 PM-4:00PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$5

Join us for a comprehensive Home Orchard Care Class that will guide you through the essential annual maintenance tasks for a thriving orchard. The University of Idaho Sandpoint Organic Agriculture Center's Orchard Operations Manager, Kyle Nagy, will walk you through a calendar year in the orchard month-by-month, starting with early spring pruning and training, followed by fertilization, pest management and irrigation checks as the growing season ramps up. In summer, learn how to manage fruit thinning, pest & disease control and water needs. As fall approaches, we'll focus on harvesting, long-term storage, and preparing the trees for winter dormancy. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced gardener, this class will help you keep your orchard healthy and productive for years to come. Class size is limited to 15 people.

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.

Cooking Under Pressure

Thursday, March 12, 2026

11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$10



Have an electric pressure cooker or thinking about buying one? Come join us to learn how to make quick and easy meals for your family. This is a hands-on class, so don't forget your apron. We will also be comparing various brands of electric pressure cookers and seeing how each one operates in order to help you decide which type of electric pressure cooker best meets your needs. Class size limited to 12 people.

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.

Food Handlers Class

Monday, March 23, 2026

8:30 AM-5:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

FREE



Do you work in the food industry or have a job that involves cooking for others? Take our class and receive your Idaho Food Handlers Card. This class will be held at the Boundary County Extension Office on Monday, March 23 from 8:30 AM-5:00 PM. This class is offered free of charge and pre-registration is mandatory. Snacks and beverages will be provided but participants are asked to bring a sack lunch.

Class size is limited. To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.

Plan the Garden, Preserve the Harvest

Thursday, March 19

11:00 AM-12:30 PM

FREE- *Via Zoom*



Learn how to plan out your garden, so you are prepared when it's time to plant! This class will also cover harvesting and safely preserving your garden. Research-based recommendations will be shared for preparing a great garden and also consuming it! There will be opportunities to ask questions, so you are ready to plant, grow, harvest, and store your garden's bounty!

To **register**, go to <https://bit.ly/planpreserve2026>

Boiling Water Canning Basics

Thursday, March 26, 2026

11:00 AM-Noon

FREE- *Via Zoom*



Learn to safely preserve your garden using a boiling water canner. Important steps to process foods for shelf-stable storage will be covered. Safe recipe options will also be shared! To register: <https://bit.ly/boiling26>

Fermentation: Sauerkraut and Other Veggies

Thursday, March 26, 2026

1:00M-3:00 PM

Boundary County Extension Office

6791 B Main Street

COST: \$10



Learn the basics of fermenting foods for preserving the harvest and enhancing the nutritional value, healthfulness, and digestibility of foods. As part of this hands-on class, you'll take home a jar on its way to fermented goodness!

To **register** contact the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235.

STRONG WOMEN PROGRAM

January 6—March 12, 2026

All Equipment Provided

Location: UI Extension Conference Room

Time Choices:

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday

Strong Women Stay Young — 2x/week

10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday

Strong Women Strong Bones — 2x/week

Cost: \$30 * for 10 week session



Space is limited.

*Scholarships available, contact Angela at 208-267-3235.



IF YOU ARE MOVING/HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS, OR WOULD PREFER TO HAVE THE NEWSLETTER EMAILED TO YOU- PLEASE CALL US AT 208-267-3235 OR EMAIL boundary@uidaho.edu



University of Idaho
Extension
Boundary County

4-H CLOVER TALK

JAN./FEB. 2026



Monique Russell

4-H Program Coordinator

HAPPY NEW YEAR! May the coming year bring you success, happiness, and everything you've been working towards.

I hope your year is off to a bright start. As we settle back in after the holidays, it's time to gear up for another great 4-H season. Projects are beginning soon, so please double-check that you are enrolled in Zsuite and that your fees are paid. The deadline to enroll and be eligible to exhibit at the fair is January 10, 2026.

The fee for 4-H members is \$25 for up to 3 projects, and each project after that is an additional \$3. Horse and Dirt Bike are each an extra \$2, Dutch Oven is an extra \$10, and Jewelry is an extra \$5. We have a drop box outside of the Extension Office's north door, to the left, if you can't make it in while we are open. The office can only accept cash or checks for payment.

We can always use an extra set of hands. If you have a skill or talent you'd like to contribute, we'd be happy to have you involved as a 4-H volunteer. We are looking for project leaders for sewing, scrapbooking, geology, entomology, and photography, as well as a club leader for Catacootas.

JANUARY 13th IS THE MANDATORY MEETING FOR ALL 4-H LEADERS.

The Livestock meeting starts at 6:30 pm and the Leaders meeting is at 7:00 pm. We need all leaders to attend as we will be reviewing updates and policy changes. We will also be distributing the 2026 4-H calendar of events.

All leaders need to stay current on their training/education. Returning leaders need 2 hours annually and new leaders need 3 hours. Attending the monthly Leaders and Livestock meetings is a great way to meet these requirements. You must attend a minimum of 6 meetings for this to meet your training requirements.

Mandatory Civil Rights Training

This training is mandatory for all 4-H vol-

unteers to ensure compliance with federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and inclusivity in our programs. The training is approximately 10 minutes long and will be on Zsuite in Clover Academy.

Bonner-Boundary Super Saturday is an upcoming 4-H volunteer training. This year it will be held on February 21, from 8:30 am-1 pm at the Naples Elementary School, 145 Schoolhouse Rd, Naples ID. If you are a new leader or returning leader this is a fantastic way to get your training in, and we will have lots of informative topics. Registration starts at 8:30 am with the first classes beginning at 9:00 am. It is free to attend, and lunch is included. Please call the Boundary County Extension Office to reserve your spot.

We are holding our Livestock Quality Assurance Trainings. Members in 4-H and FFA are required to attend one of the classes offered if you are new to the market animal project or if your last name begins with the letters H-O. Dates when classes are offered are as follows:

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH, 2026 @ 10AM-11:30AM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4TH, 2026 @ 5:30PM-7PM

FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH, 2026 @ 10AM-11:30AM

All classes are located at the Extension Office, 6791 Suite B, Main St., Bonners Ferry.

The Boundary County Fair will be August 11th-15th, 2026. The theme is "There's magic in the air." The fair office is accepting designs for the fair book cover until January 1.

With the new 4-H year underway, now is the perfect time to begin your record books and set your learning goals for the year. Keeping track of your expenses and progress as you go will make things much easier when fair season arrives. Starting early helps you stay organized and get the most out of your project experience.



January

January 1-New Year's Day

January 7-Horse Committee
4:00 p.m. @ Ext. Office

January 10-Signup Deadline
For 4-H Fair Participation

January 13-All Swine Leaders Mandatory Meeting 5:30 a.m. Ext. Office

January 13-Livestock & Leaders Meeting 6:30 p.m. Ext. Office

January 19-Human Rights Day Ext. Office Closed

February

February 4-Horse Committee
4:00 p.m. @ Ext. Office

February 10-Livestock & Leaders Meeting 6:30 p.m. Ext. Office

February 14-16-KYG In Boise

February 14-Valentine's Day



February 16-President's Day
Ext. Office Closed

February 20-Mandatory Quality Assurance Training For All New Market Animal Members & Returning Market Animal Members Last Names Starting With H-O. 10:00 a.m.. @ Ext. Office

February 21-Super Saturday
8:30 a.m. @ Naples School

Persons with disabilities have the right to request and receive reasonable accommodations. Please complete the form found at [reasonable-accommodation-for-4-h-parent-complete.pdf \(uidaho.edu\)](https://www.uidaho.edu/reasonable-accommodation-for-4-h-parent-complete.pdf), to assist in evaluating the reasonable accommodation request at least two week prior to the event. Accommodation applications cannot be approved without supporting documentation. Submit the request form found in the link above along with supporting documentation to Center for Disability Access and Resources 875 Perimeter Drive Moscow, ID 83844-4257 cdar@uidaho.edu Phone 208-885-6307, Fax 208-885-9404



March

March 4-Horse Committee
4:00 p.m. @ Ext. Office

March 4-Mandatory Quality Assurance Training For All New Market Animal Members & Returning Market Animal Members Last Names Starting With H-O 5:30 p.m. Ext. Office

March 8-Daylight Savings Begins

March 10-Livestock & Leaders Meeting 6:30 p.m. Ext. Office

March 13-Ownership/possession Deadline For ALL MARKET BEEF 150 Days

March 17-St. Patrick's Day



March 20-Spring Begins

March 20-Mandatory Quality Assurance Training For All New Market Animal Members & Returning Market Animal Members Last Names Starting With H-O 5:30 p.m. Ext. Office

March 21-Market Beef Weigh In 9:00 a.m. @ Fairgrounds (142)



ATTENTION ALL

4-H LEADERS—

Please mark **January 13 & February 10 on your calendar.**

Come to the meetings to stay on top of what is going on in 4-H. Livestock committee meets first at 6:30 p.m. followed by Leaders' council starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Extension Office. All parents, members, and community members are welcome to attend meetings.

As we turn the page to a brand-new year, 4-H Friday Friends is ready to jump into 2025 with excitement and energy! We wrapped up an amazing fall full of hands-on STEM projects, creative crafts, and awesome guest visitors, and now we are gearing up for even more!

Our guests have included regular story time with Ms. Teri from the Boundary County Library. Ms. Mary with Idaho 4-H AmeriCorps has started up STEAM sessions with us once a month. Ms. Amy has come to make gifts in a jar, just in time for Christmas. We made Christmas cards to share with our friends at the Boundary County Community Restorium and at the Boundary County Extended Care.

4-H Friday Friends is a drop-in/open enrollment education program for kids in K-5th grade. Our program is held at the Boundary County Middle School on Fridays during the school calendar year. Our hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We provide all materials and two nutritious snacks; however, we do ask participants to bring a sack lunch. The cost is \$15 per child, but we do have a sliding fee scale available, call (208) 267-3235 for more information.

We can't wait to pack 2026 with even more awesome guests, mind blowing science, creative crafts, and unforgettable adventures!

<u>Dates: First Semester</u>	<u>Dates: Second Semester</u>
September 5, 12, 19, 26	February 6, 13, 20, 27
October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	March 6, 13, 20, 27
November 7, 14, 21	April 10, 17, 24
December 5, 12, 19	May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
January 9, 16, 23, 30	June 5



The Symbols of 4-H

The Four H's: The four H's stand for **Head, Heart, Hands, and Health**, and represent the four-fold training and development that 4-H members receive. Together the four H's symbolize the development of the **Head**, to think, plan, and reason; the **Heart**, to be concerned with the welfare of others, accept the responsibilities of citizenship, and develop positive attitudes; the **Hands**, to be useful, helpful, and skillful; and **Health**, to practice healthful living, enjoy life, and use leisure time productively.

The 4-H Colors: Green and white are the 4-H colors. Green is emblematic of springtime, life, and youth, while white symbolizes high ideals.

The 4-H Motto: "To make the best better".

The 4-H Pledge: I pledge....My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service, and My Health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world.

Did you miss the opportunity to advertise in this year's Fair Book? Do you know someone who has a business or is new to town that would benefit by advertising in the Fair Book?

Please call Boundary County Extension Office to get advertising information for the 2026 Fair Book. If you have questions, would like to sell ads or advertise, please contact the Extension Office at 208-267-3235.



Livestock News



2026 WEIGH-IN DATES

Please be sure to mark these dates on your calendar!

BEEF-Saturday, March 13, 2026
9:00 a.m. (150 Days)

SWINE-Saturday, May 16, 2026
7:00 a.m. (Breeder's go first) (86 Days)

LAMB & GOAT-Wednesday, June 3, 2026 5:30 p.m. (68 Days)

5:30 p.m.

RABBIT-Tuesday, July 7, 2026
5:30 p.m.

Members, it is your responsibility to be at weigh-in and to arrive promptly. You will need to make sure you have the appropriate paperwork with you such as bill of sale and health certificate (required if your animal is obtained out of state).

Swine Leaders and Parents, now is the time to be looking for your market hog projects!

You will want to make sure you have contacted a producer about obtaining an animal. Don't procrastinate!



Do not forget to bring your paperwork to the weigh-ins

- **BEEF**-HAUL SLIP, BILL OF SALE
- **SWINE**-BILL OF SALE, HEALTH CERTIFICATE (IF PURCHASED OUT OF STATE)
- **LAMB/GOAT**-BILL OF SALE, SCRAPIES TAG (HEALTH CERTIFICATE IF PURCHASED OUT OF STATE)
- **RABBIT**-PROOF OF OWNERSHIP OF TWO OR MORE DOES, MUST BRING DOE, LITTER MUST HAVE THREE FRYERS, ALLOWED ALTERNATE PEN OF THREE FRYERS

QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING

Training is mandatory for **FIRST YEAR** 4-H/FFA Market Animal members and returning members with **LAST NAME** starting with **H-O**.

There are three dates to choose from:

Friday, February 20 10:00-11:30 AM

Wednesday, March 4 5:30-7:00 PM

Friday, March 20 10:00-11:30 AM

It is requested that parents accompany their child(ren) and also plan on attending the training.

All trainings will be held at the Boundary County Extension Office 6971 B Main St.

Trainings are limited to 30 members.

Registration is required.

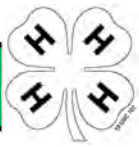
Please call 208-267-3235 or email, boundary@uidaho.edu to register.

MARKET LAMB CONTEST



This is for all Boundary County 4-H members.

If you are looking to start the Market Lamb Project this contest is for you! Submit an application with an essay attached by 5:00 pm, January 10th, 2026 to the Extension Office located at 6791 Suite B, Main St., Bonners Ferry or email to mmrussell@uidaho.edu Applications can be picked up at the Extension Office or emailed to interested members.



BOUNDARY COUNTY 4-H

Welcome New and Returning 4-H Families

4-H enrollment period is October 10, 2025-January 10, 2026

All of us with Boundary County 4-H are excited for the beginning of a new 4-H year. We look forward to seeing all of our returning members and meeting our new members.

All enrollments for new and returning members and leaders needs to be done online @ <http://4hzsuite.org>. This is also the platform that is used for record books with the exception of Cloverbuds. Returning families will log-in and new families will create a log-in when enrollment opens after October 10, 2025. After that date, when you log in there will be an enrollment tab on the left hand side of the screen. Zsutes is accessible by Smartphone, or if using a computer, you must use Firefox or Google Chrome, as Internet Explorer is not compatible. For any families without internet access we will have a computer available at the Extension Office for enrollment use.

The program costs are listed to the right.

All program fees still need to be paid in cash or check at the Boundary County Extension Office, 6791 B Main Street or mailed to PO Box 267, Bonners Ferry. Unpaid enrollments will remain in pending status until program fees have been paid.

The Participation Deadline for 2025/2026 is January 10, 2026 for 4-H projects to be part of the 2026 Boundary County Fair. There is a special date for beef projects of November 1, 2025.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact Amy Robertson or Monique Russell at the Boundary County Extension Office; 208-267-3235.

**CLOVERBUD
\$25**

**MEMBER
\$25**

**HORSE
\$27**

**DIRT BIKE
\$27**

**Jewelry
Extra \$5 to cover cost of
materials**

**Dutch Oven
Extra \$10 to cover cost of
materials**

**4 or More Projects add \$3
per project**

Calling all 4-H'ers!!! Boundary County Oral Presentation Day will be held on Monday, April 27, 2026 at the Boundary County Extension Office starting at 4:30 p.m.

All members are encouraged to take the opportunity to participate in this event. It helps polish your presentation techniques and there may be opportunities to take your demonstration to events outside of Boundary County.

When preparing your presentation, remember there are different presentations that you can do such as an Illustrated Talk, Presentation, and Speech. Look for information in the March/April Newsletter to help you prepare.

This contest is judged and winners will be chosen from each age group. Awards will be presented at the 4-H Awards Ceremony in the fall.

Age divisions:

Time allowances for presentations are as follows:

Juniors 8-10

Juniors 5-7 minutes

Intermediates 11-13

Intermediates 7-10 minutes

Seniors 14-18

Seniors 8-12 minutes



**PLEASE CALL THE
EXTENSION OFFICE AT
208-267-3235 BY
FRIDAY, APRIL 24 TO
PRE-REGISTER!**



Know Your Government

February 14-16, 2026

Boise

Registration opens

December 8, 2025

The Know Your Government (KYG) Conference aims to empower youth to be well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities and the world. KYG is held each Presidents Day weekend in Boise while the legislature is in session.

The 2026 conference will be held **Feb. 14-16**. Registration for the 2026 conference opens on **Dec. 8, 2025**.

The conference is designed for youth in **grades 8-10** to:

- Learn how state government decision-making works.
- Influence state government.
- Learn how the state judicial system works.
- Find out how cases are brought to court.
- Observe the legislative process in action.
- Share ideas with legislators, judges and other elected officials.

- Have breakfast with legislators and judges.
- Meet teens from across the state.

Youth may attend the KYG conference as a delegate two (2) years. Additional years are only available to youth selected to serve in the steering committee.

The 2026 KYG conference will be held at University of Idaho College of Law, the Basque Center, the Boise Centre, the Ada County Courthouse and the Idaho State Capitol building.

Bus transportation to Boise is provided for participants. Delegates and Chaperones are required to provide their own transportation to and from the district bus stop locations.

The 2026 registration fee is \$230 for delegates. Steering committee members and chaperones are eligible for up to \$75 in financial assistance. Attendees register through ZSuite. To register, youth must be enrolled in both 4-H **and** the Know Your Government project for the current year.

Details about the conference will be made available after registration closes on Jan. 8, 2026. If you have questions regarding the KYG conference, please contact Mike Knutz at mknutz@uidaho.edu or view the KYG handbook (pdf).

Leaders Needed

Join the 4-H Community as a member or volunteer leader today!

The start of a new 4-H year is just around the corner and leaders are needed in many different areas. If you are interested in joining as a Leader or Volunteer contact the Extension Office at 208-267-3235.



Follow Boundary County 4-H on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/boundarycounty4h

Scholarships

The FAFSA application opened on October 1, 2025

Those who are interested in attending a college or university and would like to apply for a 4-H college scholarship will need to complete their online FAFSA and submit an application through the University of Idaho. All applications must be received by the **Jan. 31, 2026 deadline**. This means, students will need to submit an application and all applicable documents (e.g. unofficial transcripts) to UI prior to the January 31st deadline as well. Applications and materials received after January 31st will not make it in the application selection pool. Applying for a 4-H College Scholarship **does not** mean that you have to accept the University of Idaho as your institution for higher education to receive the 4-H scholarship, unless specified with the scholarship requirements.



You can find useful information in the *APPLYING FOR 4-H COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS, A Guide for Idaho 4-H Scholarship Applicants* manual located at www.uidaho.edu/extension/4h/programs/scholarships.

Call Amy Robertson or Monique Russell at 208-267-3235 to get information on how to access the application.

Please be prepared and apply EARLY! Contact the University of Idaho Extension, 4-H Youth Development Office if you are unsure or have any questions: fourh@uidaho.edu or 208-885-6321.

O. M. Plummer Memorial Scholarship

The Oregon Community Foundation offers an annual scholarship to an Idaho 4-H member who has participated in livestock showing or judging beyond the county level. Applicants must be a senior in high school, a member of a 4-H livestock club and have taken livestock projects for at least three years. The amount of the scholarship has varied from \$300-\$570 in recent years. Completed applications must include an achievement story, a transcript and a photo. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Idaho Friends of 4-H College Scholarship

The Idaho Friends of 4-H offers \$1,000 college scholarships to Idaho 4-H members attending post-secondary schools in Idaho universities, colleges, technology or trade schools. Applicants must be between the ages of 16 to 20 and have been a 4-H member for four years, with at least two of those years during high school. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Roy and Mamie Jones

A \$1,000 college scholarship is available to graduating 4-H members from the Northern District (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai/Shoshone, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce Counties), who have been in 4-H at least 5 years. Leadership and 4-H achievement in projects other than livestock shall be the primary consideration.

Community involvement and academic achievement are secondary considerations. The award is not based on financial need. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Johannesen Leadership Scholarship

A \$1,000 college scholarship is available to graduating Idaho 4-H members who have been in 4-H at least four years and are currently enrolled in 4-H. Overall leadership and 4-H achievement shall be the primary considerations. Community involvement, academic achievement, and financial need are secondary considerations. Applicants must have a high school GPA of 2.8 or higher. Preference will be given to students attending the University of Idaho. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Ruth Shane Memorial Scholarship

A \$1,000 scholarship is available to any Idaho graduating high school senior, who has been in 4-H at least four years and is currently enrolled in 4-H. Applicant must attend the University of Idaho and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5. Primary consideration will be given to applicants based on their Family and Consumer Sciences project achievement and leadership experience in 4-H and their community. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Lillian Jeanette Craig Memorial Scholarship

A \$1,000 college scholarship is available to a graduating high school senior, or someone currently enrolled in an institution of higher education, who has been involved in 4-H in Idaho and is a childhood cancer survivor or the sibling of someone who has had childhood cancer. If a sibling, the applicant must have lived in the same household and been between the ages of 4 and 18 when his/her sibling was diagnosed and treated. The scholarship may be used at any college, university or vocational institution. Preference will be given to applicants attending academic institutions in Idaho. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Murdoch Ranch and Home Supply 4-H Scholarship

The Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply Scholarship offers \$1,000 college scholarships to Idaho 4-H members attending post-secondary schools. This is not limited to Idaho only. Scholarships will be offered for first year students at any university, college, technology or trade school. Applicants must be between the ages of 16-20 and have been a 4-H member for four years, with at least two of those years during high school. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Quinn Family 4-H Food Preservation Scholarship

The Quinn Family 4-H Food Preservation Scholarship shall provide eligible Idaho 4-H students who have participated in food preservation projects with scholarships to support their post-secondary education. Applicants must provide 250-words detailing their participation in food preservation projects during their 4-H Career. This scholarship is available to students planning to attend a two-year trade school, two-year associates degree program, or a four-year college or university of the student's choice. Applicants must apply through the 4-H College Scholarship application process by the **January 31** deadline. For instructions on how to apply, please follow the *Applying to the University of Idaho Guide* (PDF) instructions.

Bonner County Cattlewomen and Cattlemen Agricultural Scholarship

Any college Junior or Senior entering the field of Agriculture or pursuing a degree in Education or any other major, where the student could show an impact on Agriculture (preferably beef). The student must have received their High School diploma while residing in Bonner or Boundary County and be entering their Junior or Senior year attending an accredited college in the State of Idaho. Applications are available at Bonner and Boundary County Extension Offices and are due on or before April 15, 2026.

Rotary Scholarship

The Rotary Scholarship is offered to any deserving citizen of Boundary County who is graduating or has graduated from Bonners Ferry High School or Home School Program, and wishes to pursue higher education at any accredited college in the State of Idaho. Applications and deadline will be available early 2026.

4-H Leaders Super Saturday

Leader Training

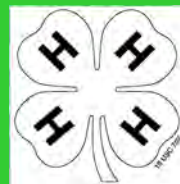
Saturday, February 21, 2026

Naples Elementary School

145 Schoolhouse Road, Naples

Boundary/Bonner County Super Saturday leader training on February 21, 2026, starting at 8:30 a.m. in Naples Elementary School, located at 145 Schoolhouse Road, Naples, Idaho. Topics will include conflict resolution, organizational clubs, harmful animal noxious weeds, fun games for meetings, and many others. Pre-registration is requested, but not mandatory for this event to ensure we have an adequate supply of materials. Please call the Boundary County Extension Office at 208-267-3235. Your participation in this event will fulfill your leader training requirements for 1 year. Returning leaders are required to have 2 hours of training per year, and new leaders are required to have 3 hours of training per year.

**ADVERTISE YOUR CLUB &
PROJECT MEETINGS IN THE
CLOVERTALK!!!**



UI EXTENSION BOUNDARY COUNTY
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BONNERS FERRY, ID 83805

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January/February 2026

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTED



BOUNDARY COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF

Amy Robertson	Extension Educator Family & Consumer Sciences
Samuel DeGrey	Extension Educator Agriculture & Horticulture
Monique Russell	4-H Program Coordinator
Susie McDonald	4-H Friday Friends Program Coordinator
Angela Tucker	Administrative Assistant
Sheila Pruitt	Secretary

*Where trade names used, no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the University of Idaho Extension System is implied.

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