

EXTENSION TRENDS: **TWIN FALLS COUNTY**

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2025 By the Numbers

- **14,125** direct contacts
- **4,897** youth participants
- **216** volunteers
- **863** volunteer hours
- **\$1,216,427** extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension in Twin Falls County: Heidi McCall, Kyanne Frandsen, Lydia Buffington, Rocky Mathews, Lisa Bermingham, Josie Albritton, Chance Munns, Tom Schwartz, LaMar Orton, Kali Sherrill, Kirk Tubbs, Robin Rausch, Tonya Corle, Sherry Olsen-Frank, Don Hall, Rocky Matthews, Brett Reinke, Abby Greenfield, Cooper Smith, Katie Barnhill, Kyli Gough, Makenzie Searle, Liz Mandelkow, Sarah Brown and Susie Beem.

UI Extension Educators



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2025 Impact

Educator Tina Miller focused on teaching leadership and life skills to youth in the community and adult volunteers.

Educator Andy West and local Idaho Master Gardeners approached the local library about conducting a regular six-month topic schedule for the year. Topics were discussed based on feedback from previous classes and workshops previously held at the library and the needs of participants. Topics included a seed swap, starting seeds, fruit tree management, container gardening, gardening issues and how to put the garden to bed for winter. Attendance at some workshops maxed out the room space available at the library with some standing room. This partnership has resulted in a broader reach to the community by tapping into the library clientele, resulting in increased participants in other programs offered by UI Extension. West also worked on a literature review to research the medicinal qualities of native plants for the Native Plant Demonstration Project. He is overseeing a grant to finish the transfer of plant materials and research information to an industry partner and is working on compiling a list of medicinal qualities of the plants to further the marketing niche of this plant material.

Educator Siew Guan Lee and the Eat Smart Idaho team participated in the Chobani Summer Program in Twin Falls and Jerome. While families received free meals, UI Extension offered physical activities and hands-on food exploration to promote healthy habits and wellness. A total of 1,947 children and adults were reached through interactive and educational activities. Nearly 1,700 children and adults sampled fruits and vegetables in various forms – fresh, dried, baked, or as a dip, with 93% of participants reported liking the foods and 88% of participants reporting that they would eat them again. Adult participants appreciated being introduced to new foods, textures and flavors. Many children tried fruits and vegetables for the first time. The program's success was well received, and the team will participate again in 2026. Lee also collaborated to develop and offer bilingual canning classes with a Spanish interpreter in Jerome, Twin Falls and Rupert. Each class consisted of a lecture followed by a hands-on boiling water canning lab, reaching 45 participants (87% Hispanic). Due to strong interest and demand, additional sessions will be offered in 2026 to include pressure canning.

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4-H in Twin Falls County

Miller conducted Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT), a series of workshops for youth in grades 5-7. She chose this age to encourage them to become more involved in leadership and enhance their leadership skills at a younger age. Some of the skills they learned were accepting differences, goal setting, stress management and community service. Each workshop consisted of a different theme and was built upon each other. Leadership skills that were taught were also accompanied by a STEM activity followed by a written report on what they learned and how they would apply it.

On the Horizon

UI Extension, Twin Falls County will be one of two sites in Idaho conducting Caminos a Carreras (CaC)/ Career Pathways in Agriculture learning and career opportunities. This program, funded by a two-year Juntos YEA grant, is designed to enhance the skills and capacities of Latino youth and engage youth in STEM-related learning.

In partnership with neighboring Extension educators, West is organizing a six-week course on managing small acreages to help meet the needs of clientele in multiple counties in the area. The strengths of each of the educators involved will make for a very educational instruction of the key topics involved. The topics (goals/planning, soils, water management, poultry and horse development, gardening and pasture management, cattle and sheep/goat development) will be looked at from a gardening/horticulture, small scale agriculture, and livestock management perspective.

Lee will collaborate with colleagues on the development of two youth curricula: sugar beets and wheat. Each curriculum includes five lessons incorporating agriculture technologies, STEM activities, nutrition, food safety and recipe preparation to promote agricultural literacy and healthy behaviors among youth.

