

Hands on safety education at Blackfoot Progressive Ag Safety Day

AT A GLANCE

Providing agricultural safety education through hands on learning to the youth of Blackfoot and the surrounding area.

The Situation

Agriculture production is the driving force behind many communities in Idaho. In Bingham County, the market value of agriculture products sold in 2022 was \$575,692,000. As agriculture production is such a vital part of the Bingham County and Blackfoot framework it is important that the residents of Blackfoot understand agriculture production and how to be safe around farms and equipment. The city of Blackfoot is the hub of Bingham County and is surrounded by farm ground and agriculture operations. However, not all the citizens of Blackfoot are directly involved in the day-to-day agriculture production happening around them. Because of this the public and more specifically the youth of Blackfoot are not always aware of the dangers that agriculture production may pose if they are not mindful of the risks and dangers associated with farming.

Our Response

In response to these concerns the University of Idaho Extension office in Bingham County hosted an ag safety day field trip for the fifth-grade students in Blackfoot for the past three years, starting in 2022. We contacted multiple businesses and partners to provide



Reed Findlay teaching farm safety hand signals. Photo by Carmen Willmore.

a variety of ag safety hands-on educational activities. Specific topics that have been covered include:

- ATV safety
- Rangeland uses
- Gun safety
- Power/electricity safety
- First aid
- Search and rescue
- Hand Signals on the farm
- Wildlife safety

Program Outcomes

Over the past three years the Blackfoot Progressive Ag Safety Day has reached over 750 youth and adults in Blackfoot. The University of Idaho Extension office in Bingham County coordinates and plans the safety day with help from the Progressive Ag Safety Day Foundation who provide training and supplies for the event. The participants received a T-shirt and bag as part of the event, along with any materials that are handed out at the stations.

To evaluate the impact of this program, an evaluation tool was created in 2025 to gauge the effect the ag safety day was having on the fifth grade students. The evaluation tool used was a small paper journal with questions pertaining to each station the youth visited.

At one of the stations in 2025, kids learned about common hand signals used on the farm and how to handle farm chemicals. At the conclusion of the lesson 97% of the youth responded that they now knew the correct hand signal for STOP and 93% knew the correct gloves that should be worn when mixing herbicide.

Over the past three years a food safety station has also been included in the safety day program. In 2025 90% of the youth in attendance understood the importance of hand washing. ATV safety has also been incorporated into the program. For the past two years it has been taught by an older youth that was in an ATV accident in 2022 that almost cost him his life. Many of the

kids over the past few years have said that the ATV station at Ag Safety Day is their favorite because of this. As a result of this station 90% of the 2025 youth responded that they now understand the importance of wearing a helmet and that they should not drive an ATV as fast as possible. First aid is also a vital part of many agriculture operations and has been included in the past few years. This year, 89% of the youth reported they now know where to find a first aid kit. The survey also asked the youth if they learned more than, the same amount, or less than a regular school day, and 96% reported that they learned as much or more at the Ag Safety Day than they did at a regular school day.

The Future

The University of Idaho Extension office in Bingham County has plans to continue to expand the Blackfoot Ag Safety Day program and hopes to invite more rural schools in the county to attend in the future. We hope to educate more youth in Bingham County about how to be safe in a farming community.

Cooperators and Co-sponsors

Thank you to our partners that make the Blackfoot Progressive Ag Safety Day happen: iRoam, Idaho Power, Rocky Mountain Power, Kim and Parli Weiland, Idaho 4-H Program, Bingham County Search and Rescue, AmeriCorps, U.S. Forest Service and Idaho Ag Credit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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30-25-cwillmore-safety-day • 10/25