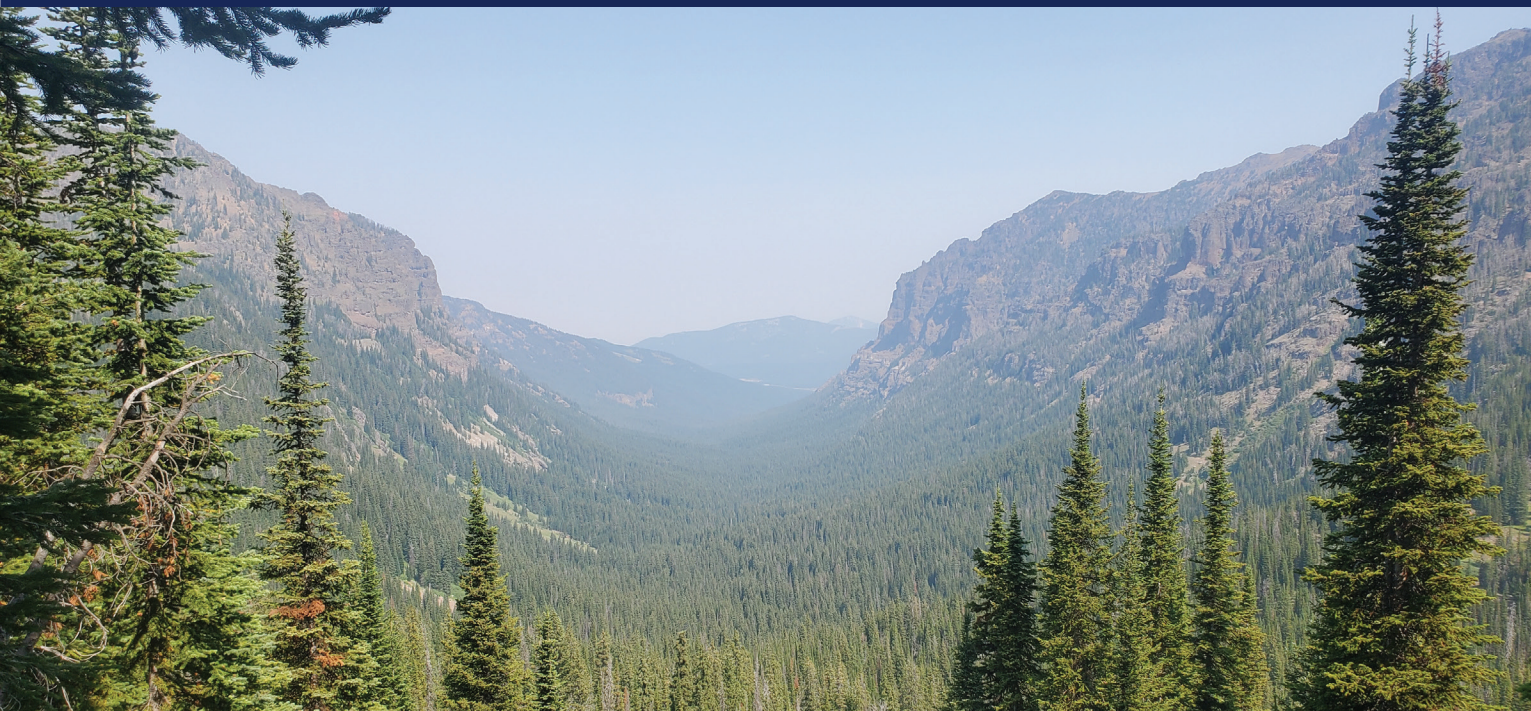


Gallatin County



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Smoky view from Hyalite Canyon August 2021 by JaNaie' Godin.

Gallatin County is Montana's fastest-growing county with a population of 118,960 at the 2020 Census. As part of Montana State University and the land-grant university system, MSU Extension is a statewide educational outreach network that applies unbiased, research-based university resources to practical needs identified by the people of Montana in their home communities.

Work in agriculture, natural resources, horticulture and youth development is based on local community needs. Gallatin County MSU Extension provides essential resources and expertise that helps others reach their goals. The major function of MSU Extension is to provide informal adult and youth education--to help people help themselves. It is action-directed education for helping people solve various day-to-day problems.

The work done by the Gallatin County MSU Extension office could not be done without the support of MSU and the county government of Gallatin County. Their support of the office and personnel has allowed us to expand and improve programming throughout the county. We hope you will enjoy learning about what we have been able to do this past year and we look forward to our work in the next year.

Gallatin County Welcomes New Agent

In June 2021, Gallatin County MSU Extension gained a new Agriculture and Horticulture Agent, Molly Yurdana. Yurdana hails from the foothills of northern California, where she actively participated in FFA, co-owned a swine production, and worked for various agricultural marketing and retail companies. She earned two associate degrees in Ag Business and Ag Sciences/Natural Resources from Butte College in Chico, CA, before transferring and later receiving her Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education and Extension from Montana State University. Although she is new to her agent position, she is no stranger to the Gallatin County office, as she was first selected as a summer intern in 2020, which led to her former position as the Gallatin County 4-H Program Manager and Assistant to the 4-H Agent. Yurdana hit the ground running this summer with site visits, forage inspections, sample analysis, and networking with the Gallatin County community. She plans to bring back many of the historically popular educational programs for local producers and Master Gardeners, as well as offer new learning opportunities for small acreage landowners and youth in agriculture.

Plant, Tree, Insect and Nitrate Samples Galore

Summer time is busy in MSU Extension, especially with providing diagnostic services including identifying pests, diseases and abiotic issues on a wide array of samples. Gallatin County Ag and Horticulture saw a large increase in sample submissions this year from homeowners, producers, and landscaping businesses. With over 165 one-on-one client inquiries, Ag Agent Molly Yurdana, in conjunction with the MSU Schutter Diagnostic Lab, MSU Analytical lab and various soil labs, worked to identify and/or diagnose approximately 23 garden/vegetable, 21 tree, 19 insect, 10 weed and 7 crop samples as well as processed multiple soil nutrient tests. Additionally, with this year's low moisture and drought conditions, nitrate levels were of high concern for forage and livestock producers. Yurdana conducted 22 nitrate tests in the summer of 2021 as a free service to clientele. She plans to use the increasing number of sample submissions as inspiration to create resources and workshops to better educate those in Gallatin County on what may be affecting their gardens, trees, and pastures.

Gallatin County 4-H Program

The Gallatin County 4-H Program annually enrolls 400-600 youth ages 5-18 years old in over 50 educational projects. Most 4-H members attend educational workshops in more than one project, with an average of 3-4 projects per member. Families participating in 4-H can attend leader and youth training workshops as well as out-of-county events and can become as involved in 4-H as their time allows.

In the 4-H year 2021-2022, Gallatin County had 498 4-H youth members and 101 adult volunteers. Youth participation took place in a variety of projects, with the highest enrollments in Shooting Sports, Swine, Horse, Beef, Poultry, and Rabbit. Gallatin County youth also attended Animal Quality Assurance Workshops, Club Meetings, a County Communication Day Contest, County Cooking Contest, County 4-H Overnight Summer Camp, and state events. Gallatin County 4-H is sending five youth to compete at the National 4-H Competitions in November 2021.

Successful Season of Noxious Weed Certifications Despite Drought

Gallatin County MSU Extension had 10 local producers participate in the Montana Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage (MNWSFF) program through Montana Department of Agriculture in the 2021 growing season. With approximately 800,000 acres of public land in Gallatin County and close proximity to Yellowstone National Park, this is a popular





Previous Page: (top) Field of wheat straw awaiting MNWSFF inspection and certification by Molly Yurdana; **(center)** Molly Yurdana, Ag & Horticulture Agent by MSU University Communications; **(bottom)** Ag Agent Molly Yurdana pictured with Montana noxious weed, Salt Cedar (Tamarisk) by MSU Park County; **This Page:** August 2021 Summer Camp Youth and Counselors, by Kerri Marx, 4-H Volunteer

program that strives to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. With 16 field inspections, Agriculture Agent Molly Yurdana inspected a grand total of 409.8 acres with 394.4 acres successfully passing certification. Despite yields being down over 40% due to Stage 3 drought conditions in Gallatin County for most of the growing season, participating producers were still able to harvest approximately 511 tons of certified forages. As a response to the severe hay shortage plaguing the state of Montana, Gallatin County MSU Extension saw an increase in small acreage forage production and hopes to recruit more local producers into the MNWSFF program in the coming years.

Gallatin County Staff



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

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