



Richland County MSU Extension Office by Richland County Extension.

Named to attract settlers, Richland County is the thirty-second largest county in area in the state of Montana with 2,084 square miles. Richland County is Montana's twentieth most populous county, with an estimated 10,803 residents according to 2019 census data. Sidney, the county seat, is the state's nineteenth-largest city, with a population estimated at 6,173. Other towns in Richland County include Crane, Fairview, Lambert, and Savage. Agriculture and oil production are widely recognized as two staples of Richland County's economy. Much of Richland County is located in the Bakken Oil Zone, and cattle, wheat, sugar beets, pulse crops, and other small grains are the top agricultural commodities produced. Richland County MSU Extension currently has three agents to bring research-based information to residents of Richland County to better their lives and futures.

Updates to the Richland County Farmer's Market

For over 20 years, the Richland County Farmer's Market has been high on the list of things to check out during the

summer months. The new Montana Local Food Choice Act opened the door for new vendors to participate in the market. This, along with additional improvements made by Richland County MSU Extension Agents Carrie Krug and Marley Manoukian, helped make it a successful 2022 market season.

The Montana Local Food Choice Act provided exemptions from licensures and requirements, which provided opportunities for new vendors to participate. Foods that can now be sold at the market include baked goods including bread, pastries, cookies, and pies, cereals, trail mixes, granola, snack mixes, dried and freeze-dried products, jams, jellies, fruit butter, canned fruits and vegetables, dried herbs, seasonings, honey, whole shell eggs, and others. This encouraged more vendors to participate in the market, with 25 participating.

Krug and Manoukian made efforts to increase awareness of the market. Advertisements and multiple articles were placed in the newspaper, along with yard signage around town. The agents worked to increase the farmer's market visibility by posting photos of items available at each market on social media, and by featuring a "Vendor Spotlight." The Vendor Spotlights recognized individual market vendors.

When vendors were asked about the market this year, one stated, “Great! We had more activity and people than in previous years,” and another said it was a “good experience.”

Grasshoppers Wreak Havoc in Richland County

Hazard outlook maps provided by the US Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) showed that the spring and summer of 2022 would bring high populations of grasshoppers to Richland County and the surrounding area. Richland County Agent Marley Manoukian partnered with the Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) Northern Plains Agricultural Research Laboratory and USDA-APHIS to provide a Grasshopper Workshop to address these issues.

The Grasshopper Workshop was offered both in person and online. Producers were eager to learn about grasshopper biology and how they could manage pests on rangelands and in their crops. Sixty participants took in the workshop in person, and an additional 138 participants joined online. USDA-ARS Northern Plains Agricultural Research Laboratory scientist Dave Branson explained grasshopper biology, life cycle, and species identification characteristics. Gary Adams, USDA-APHIS State Plant Health Inspector, provided the audience with an update on USDA-APHIS control program and provided control options for grasshoppers in rangelands. MSU Extension Specialist Kevin Wanner also provided control options for grasshoppers in crops. This workshop provided producers with the knowledge and tools to help control grasshopper populations.

Following the workshop, many producers reached out to the Richland County MSU Extension for pesticide recommendations for grasshoppers in their rangelands and crops, as well as to discuss crop damage they had experienced due to grasshoppers. Manoukian was asked to visit sites and assess grasshopper damage in crops and rangelands. In some instances, grasshopper populations were so high that even multiple pesticide applications couldn't control them, and total crop damage was experienced.

Richland County Bread Fair

Richland County MSU Extension partnered with North Dakota State University Extension to provide the Bread Fair to fifth-grade classrooms in Richland County and the surrounding area. Students learned about the bread-making process and made their own loaf of bread to take home and share with their families.

Agents Josie Evenson, Carrie Krug, and Marley Manoukian visited eight fifth-grade classrooms and discussed the process of making bread. Fifth graders learned about the ingredients in a loaf of bread, where they come from, and how they are produced, and finally, they learned what each ingredient does in the bread-making process. Many ingredients came from agricultural commodities produced in Richland County

and the surrounding area. This provided the students with an opportunity to learn about local agriculture and how the crops grown in their backyards are made into products they might enjoy in the food they eat daily.

While the 131 students were learning about the bread-making process, they made their own loaf of bread. The students also learned about the nutrients provided by bread and how those nutrients are important for a fifth grader.

When asked, a majority of the students said they plan to make bread again and provided comments about the Bread Fair, including: “I loved it,” “It was the funnest thing ever,” and, “This was awesome.”

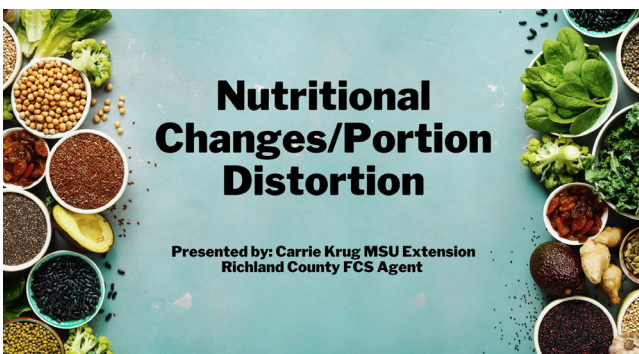
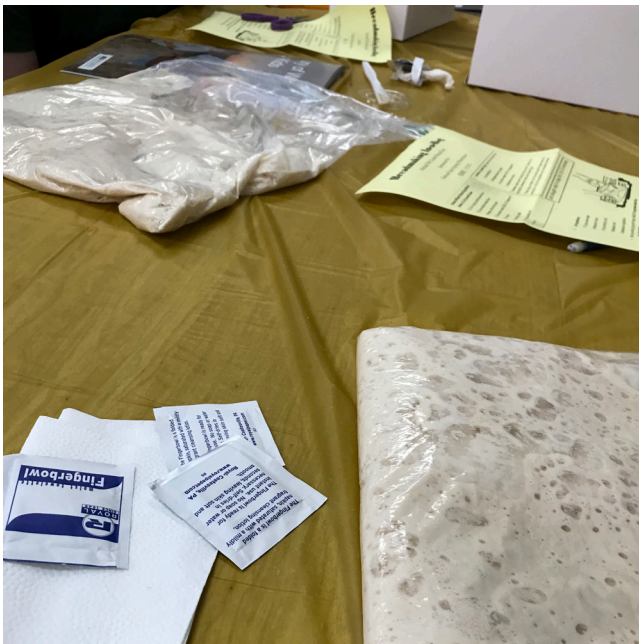
Richland County Youth Prepare for the Future Through Involvement in 4-H

“The 4-H program has equipped me with the skills I need to excel in my future no matter what path or career I choose”. – Richland County 4-H Member

4-H offers opportunities for youth to participate in activities where they can learn skills that will aid them in their future. During the most recent 4-H year in Richland County, 241 youth were engaged in learning life skills through involvement in 4-H. Youth gain skills by participating in hands-on projects like beef, swine, foods and nutrition, wood science and photography. The most popular project, market beef, continued to gain in popularity and drew new members to the 4-H program. In 2022, 106 members participated, meaning the Richland County Fair and Rodeo had the largest exhibition of market steers in their history and the most market beef projects on exhibit for a single county fair in the state. Through this learn-by-doing project, members learn responsibility, determination, confidence, patience and good animal husbandry skills. By partnering with 107 certified volunteers in 4-H projects and clubs, members participated in club meetings, service-learning projects, and a variety of activities and events to aid in their personal growth and development.

Nutrition Education for Local High School Students

Carrie Krug, MSU Extension Richland County Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Agent, offered Sidney High School culinary students a program about the changes to our American Dietary Guidelines and portion control. Students also got to participate in a hands-on activity directly involving portion sizes. They were presented with four different food items, and on one plate, they placed what they would typically eat, and on the second plate, they placed the actual serving size of that food item. Then they discussed calories, fats, reading food labels, and healthy food alternatives. A total of 28 culinary students from three classes participated in this program. When asked what they would do differently now, one student stated, “I will double check the serving sizes so I can make sure I don't eat too much.” Around 85% of the students



Top Row: (left) One of the many booths at this year's Richland County Farmer's Market, by Marley Manoukian; **(right)** Grasshopper damage resulting in total crop loss in a wheat field in Richland County, by Marley Manoukian; **Center Row: (left)** The making of bread in a bag and the items used, by Carrie Krug; **(right)** A Richland County 4-H member shows their market steer at the Richland County Fair, by Josie Evenson; **Bottom Row: (left)** Introductory slide from high school nutrition presentation, by Carrie Krug Richland County MSU Extension FCS Agent; **(right)** The Richland County 4-H Livestock Judging Team, by Josie Evenson

who participated in the program indicated they “Definitely” or “Probably” learned something they didn’t know. Overall, this program appeared to be a fun learning activity for our local high school culinary students.

Richland County 4-H Livestock Judging Team Earns Honors to Represent Montana at Western 4-H Roundup

Montana 4-H Congress is a statewide leadership event held on Montana State University’s Campus in Bozeman every July. In 2022, Richland County 4-H sent a delegation of seven members to the event to gain leadership skills and compete in state 4-H contests. Of the delegation, four members competed in the livestock judging contest. In a livestock judging contest, 4-H members practice skills in visual evaluation and decision-making as it relates to the livestock industry. Classes of beef, swine, sheep, and goats are evaluated, and reasons are given; reasons test members’ ability to defend their decision on class rankings to an official judge. The four members who represented Richland County placed second in the statewide contest. By placing second, the team will now represent Montana at the Western 4-H Roundup in Denver in January of 2023. The Richland County 4-H members who will proudly represent Montana are Jori Horsburgh, Marett Schieber, Garrett Larson, and Landry Larson.

Richland County Staff



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

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