

Extension Elevated



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Message from the Director

Dear Weld County Clients, Constituents, Stakeholders and Residents:

It's hard to believe that 2022 has come to an end. As I reflect on my first year as the Weld County Extension Director, there are several memorable moments that immediately come to mind such as weighing and tagging animals in preparation for Fair alongside Agents, attending various 4-H events and recognition programs throughout the year to honor youth and volunteers, professional development and teambuilding with staff, facilitating an Annie's Project, and certainly getting to know the community and residents of Weld County.

I am often asked what the best thing is about living in Weld County, and it's the people... Weld County has great people!

2023 is already shaping up to be a great and eventful year, and I look forward to writing this message next year and reflecting on all the great things we will experience.

I hope you enjoy reading this snapshot highlighting a good and successful 2022 for me and my Weld County Extension Team.

Happy New Year!

Hannah Swanborn

Director

Colorado State University,
Weld County Extension



Administrative Update

Michelle Langston and Cindy Nosko, Office Technicians; and Cheryl Aragon, Weld County Fair Administrative Assistant



Accounting All accounting aspects of the Weld County Extension Office, as well as numerous accounts and programs such as the Dairyman Fund, the Weld County 4-H Foundation, the Endowment Fund, the 4-H Raffle Fund, the Livestock Sale, the Weld County Fair, and weekly accounting and fiscal activities are all managed by Cindy Nosko, a 12-year Office Technician within the Department.

Cindy also manages and maintains the Weld County 4-H Foundation Website, as well as the Extension Advisory Council page on the CSU Extension website. As she was in 2022, she is committed to learning new skills in order to provide better services for Extension programs and clients.

4-H 2022 has been a year of learning, says Michelle Langston, Office Technician, who supports 4-H programming within the Weld County Extension Office. A new forms component for the Extension website system was deployed providing numerous efficiencies such as the ability to create forms, surveys, registrations, and on-line payments. Several new requirements were implemented for USDA Civil Rights, and CSU Extension is undergoing a USDA audit which has revealed multiple items that the CSU of Weld County Extension Team is updating in order to be compliant.

Michelle graciously assisted all Agents with a variety of projects during the past year and served as a coach/mentor to many new staff members as they joined the CSU of Weld County Extension Office.

Administrative Update continued...

Weld County Fair There are so many tasks and special projects related to the planning and preparation for Weld County's Annual Fair. Cheryl Aragon joined the team in early 2022 and was immediately immersed in tasks and projects in support of this effort. Tasks included facilitating camper reservations for exhibitors and their families, managing vendor applications for the Vendor Committee, soliciting award sponsors, set up and working the Fair Office, training and helping to administer the Fair website, and other duties as assigned before, during, and after the big event, as well as supporting other areas of the Extension Office as needed.

She continues to be amazed at all of the things that the CSU Extension of Weld County is involved in and shares this best kept secret of Weld County with friends, family, neighbors and other professional connections. You can find Cheryl in the Fair Office in July of this year, so stop by and say hi and let her know if she can answer questions or be of service in any way.

The Administrative Team in the CSU of Weld County Extension Office enjoys working together to serve the needs of staff, boards, and committees and of course 4-H members, leaders and families, Fair goers, vendors and sponsors, and they look forward to another fun and event-filled year!



4-H Events

Kim Eastwood, 4-H Agent and Teresa Johnson, 4-H Event Coordinator

Recognition Night Weld County prides itself on the great members and volunteers who are in the Weld County 4-H Program. This past year the program included 970 youth members, ages 5 to 18, and 230 adult volunteers. These individuals are involved in the Program by attending club meetings, leadership camps, workshops, contests, and the Weld County Fair. With this great involvement, it is only right to offer them a night where their accomplishments can be showcased, and the prestigious Outstanding Member and Volunteer Awards can be given out, which all happens on annual Recognition Night.

On Recognition Night, with the support of the Weld County 4-H Foundation, Chevron, and other sponsors, 400 attendees were served dinner, and youth were recognized for their accomplishments in contests, judging teams, serving as sale ambassadors and premier exhibitors, and were honored for their years as a member. Additionally, all members who attended the Colorado State Fair had an opportunity to share how they did with their project areas. Cloverbuds, the youngest members, were recognized as they graduated to become traditional members. Weld's 4-H program would not be what is today without volunteers, and they are also recognized during this event.



4-H Events continued..

Camp Cloverbud Weld County 4-H has a very active Cloverbud program, which encompasses youth from age 5-7 before they enter "regular" 4-H for youth 8-18. With over 150 Cloverbuds in Weld County, it is a very exciting program with lots of fun activities. Every year Teresa Johnson, 4-H Event Coordinator, oversees the planning and implementation of two Cloverbud Day Camps. These Camps are held annually in February at the Southern end of Weld County and the first of June at Island grove Park in Greeley.

While the camps have celebrated a number of different themes from First Responders to Science Guys to Pioneer Days & Cowboys, you can be sure that there is always a number of fun, educational activities planned. In addition to Cloverbuds, older members ages 12 to 18 help on the day of the camp by serving as group leaders, passing along advice, building leadership skills, and becoming mentors to the youth.

In 2022 both the winter and summer camps focused on science. While the goal is to aim for both camps having a different topic, last year there was a chance to capitalize on S.T.E.M. and engage the youth through different activities at each. Campers built wobble bots, volcanos, battery motors, extracted strawberry DNA & built catapults. They also raced balloon cars, started fires with steel wool, and explored the mystery of water. Camp would not be complete without a good community service project, which have included sending shoeboxes to military personnel, packing school bags for those less fortunate, and making cards for the elderly.

Many Cloverbud members participate in local 4-H events as well such as project days, speech and demonstration contests, Fashion Revue, County Fair and Camp Cloverbud. These events offer the younger youth a chance to get a taste of what is to come within their 4-H career and participate alongside older members.



4-H Endowment

Patrick Pulis, 4-H Outreach Agent



Weld County 4-H was able to reach youth thanks to the Jean Hoshiko 4-H Endowment that supports an Outreach position held by Patrick Pulis. He has been an educator for five years, serving one of those years as an AmeriCorp member in Pueblo County.

Every month, youth from around Weld County attend an afterschool program held at various schools and libraries. Topics range from making wobble robots out of a cd and motor to learning about the planet Mars by building rovers that can maneuver obstacles. Interest in STEM has increased since these different programs have been offered to youth. Nationally, 4-Hers are four times more likely to make contributions to their communities, two times more likely to be civically active, and two times more likely to make healthier choices.

In addition to these monthly programs, 4-H outreach has made its presence in a variety of venues including presenting the Energy of Motion at Stock Show, being on a panelist for youth presenting pollinator projects at STEM Launch School, running various activities at Milliken Middle School's week of Olympics, presenting the Van de Graff generator at Windsor Charter Academy's Innovation night, and many others.

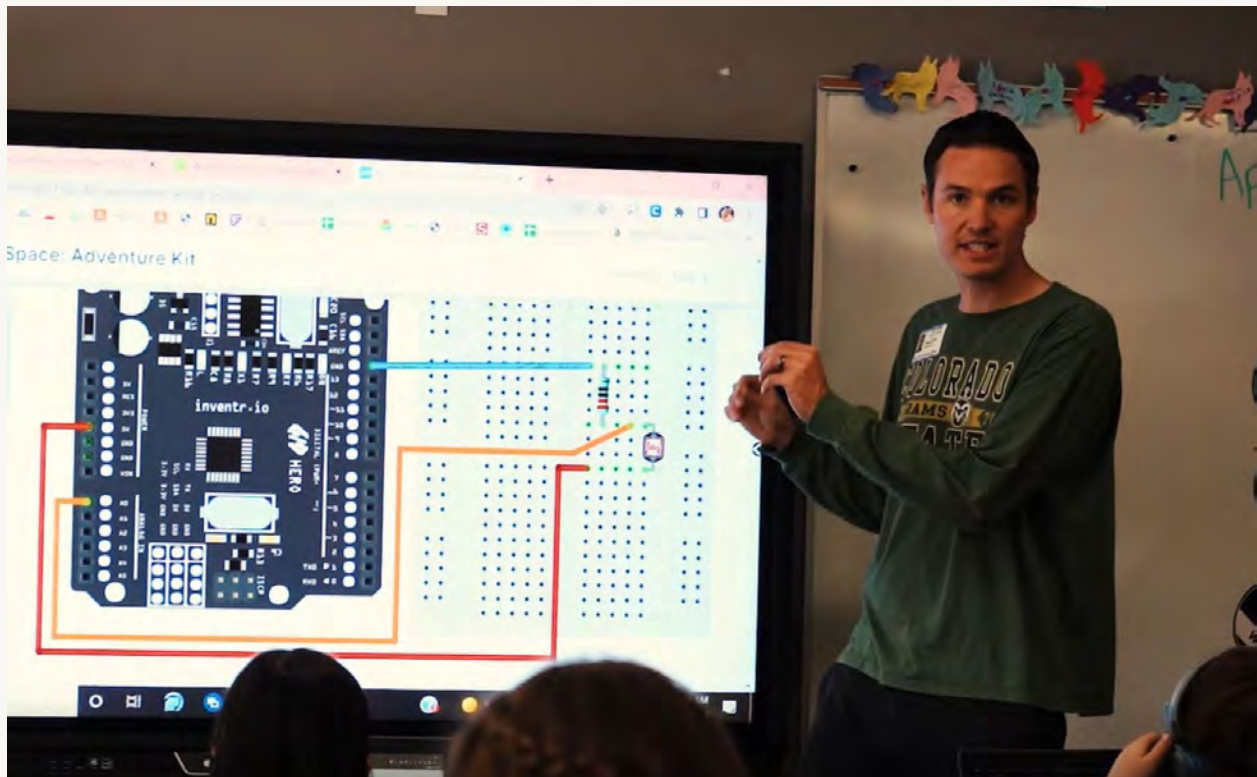
Weld County 4-H Outreach has also made an impact during School hours. For two full months, all 150 fourth and fifth graders at Union Colony Elementary School were able to learn how to code in a 15-hour Coding Camp and how to analyze data in a 15-hour Data Detectives Camp. In the "30 days Lost in Space" Coding Camp, youth learned how to hard wire an Arduino Hero circuit board with LED lights, switches, OLED displays, and other electronic components as well as write out code on computer software to make their hardware turn on and perform various tasks.

4-H Endowment continued..

In 2022 a total of 2,788 youth were reached, which is a 78% increase from last year.

Another great program coming to 2023 is the Juntos Program thanks to a generous gift. The Juntos Program aims to increase graduation rates, reducing drop-out rates, and leading to youth seeking secondary education options. It is for Hispanic as well as all youth and families who want to participate and will launch with six Family Workshops. It will then move to Family Nights that involve the surrounding community and partners aimed at helping youth succeed and will culminate with one-on-one coaching sessions that will empower youth for success, as well as an opportunity to experience a week-long stay at a local University.

Finally, 4-H Outreach has expanded far beyond Weld County and has served youth across the nation through the Pollinator Curriculum that has been placed on the national 4-H.org website. Thanks to a 4-H At Home grant, hands-on programs featuring honeybees, butterflies, ants, hummingbirds, bats, and ladybugs are now available online. In addition to these hands-on programs, Weld County 4-H Outreach is part of collaborative work at getting seven Pollinator modules made for youth that will be interactive and teach youth about these fascinating animals.



Livestock

Larry Hooker, Livestock Agent

The 20th Annual Colorado Dairy Youth Extravaganza was held at Greeley's Island Grove Regional Park June 12-14, 2022. It was an awesome three days for all dairy kids and represented the first year Larry Hooker, CSU of Weld County Livestock Agent, helped with this program. He shared that he found it to be an exciting and worthwhile activity for all youth who participated. The first three days were packed full of things to do including feet trimming, one-on-one clipping advice, showmanship practice, dairy judging clinic and contest, dairy quiz bowl, ice cream social, pizza party, and a dairy costume contest. A showmanship contest followed by a heifer and cow show rounded out the program.

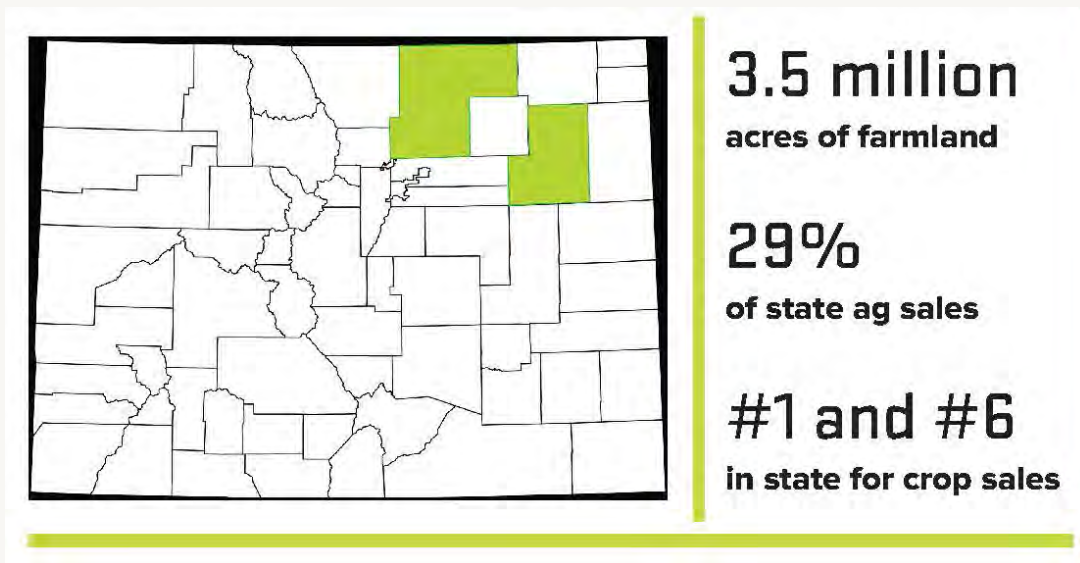


A total of 73 youth participated in the Colorado Dairy Youth Extravaganza this year and they brought 139 heads of dairy animals to the show. The breeds represented were 66 Holsteins; 29 Brown Swiss; 27 Jersey; 5 Milking Shorthorn; 3 Ayrshire; 1 Guernsey; and 8 Other breeds. This is a very hands-on activity and the youth look forward to this program year after year. Tee shirt, numerous prizes, and cash awards are given out during this extravaganza. In 2023, a similar schedule will be followed along with a few additional clinics will be added to the educational component of the program including Nutrition, Genetics, and Dairy Health. Watch the Weld County Extension website for 2023 information.

Agronomy


Kat Caswell, Agronomy Agent

Weld County cropland encompasses approximately 106,000 acres of corn, 1,500 acres of sorghum, 111,000 acres of wheat, 135,00 acres of forage, 3,700 acres of sunflowers, and is the top county in the state for crop sales. Agronomy focused programming in Weld County was initiated in the summer of 2022.



Weld County Extension will be working in partnership with existing CSU Extension Agronomy programming including crop clinics for crop advisors, crop variety testing, and supporting research efforts. Future programming will include diverse production systems, integrated weed management, water use, producer lead projects, and on-campus faculty research. A large effort will be going towards developing an up-to-date online resource for crop producing in the state of Colorado, similar to existing resources in other states.

Crop Acreage Snapshot



Values given in acres harvested	Corn	Sorghum	Wheat	Forage	Sunflower
Weld	105,661	1,486	110,603	134,532	3,692
Washing-ton	121,591	19,855	219,114	47,421	2,318

Colorado Master Gardeners

Kathryn Nyborg, Horticulture Program Assistant

The Master Gardener program for 2022 consisted of 62 volunteers and 4 apprentices who provided research-based horticulture information to the residents of Weld County.



Garden Help Desk The Garden Help Desk is a primary outreach area next to Information Booths. Clients can be directed to resources, fact sheets, and helpful videos to answer their gardening questions. This year the Weld County CMGs responded to 326 issues in the office with walk-ins, samples, phone calls and emails.

Farmers Markets and Information Booths CMGs served weekly at Farmers Markets in Greeley and Windsor, with a new opportunity to serve monthly in Milliken. Through the growing season, they had direct contact with over 700 people in our communities at Info Booths.

Gardening Classes CMG's had many teaching opportunities across the county. They reached over 700 learners at local libraries, monthly classes at Treasure Island Demo Garden in Windsor, and the Children's Water Festival. Gardening courses were offered at Aims Community College in Ft. Lupton and Greeley.



Colorado Master Gardeners continued..

Island Grove Demonstration Garden 2022 was the 5th year for the Weld County Extension Demonstration Garden cared for by the Weld County CMGs. Thank you to the City of Greeley Forestry Division for a Dwarf Crabapple tree!

Tree Team The CMG Tree Team assisted 12 properties and reached as far as Grover in 2022! The Tree Team identifies trees, diagnoses tree diseases, recognizes planting issues, and provides education on how to properly care for trees.

Weld County Fair The Weld County CMGs are an integral part of organizing and implementing the Flower Show and the Vegetable and Herb Show annually at Weld County Fair. They setup and teardown these events as well as help with registration and assisting judges.



Community Gardening and Greening Projects The Weld County CMGs helped host the Greeley Garden Tour in which volunteers are on site at local homes to answer questions and share information about plants. The program contacted over 1,100 visitors across several landscapes. A Weld County CMG and Apprentice participated in the 2022 NoCo Urban Homestead tour with over 400 visitors in one home landscape.

Family Consumer Science

Sheila Beckley, Family Consumer Science Agent

The Family and Consumer Science Program continues to make progress in offering programming to diverse communities in Weld County. In addition to the previous year's partnerships with the High Plains Library District, Alzheimer's Association Northeast Colorado, and others, much progress has been made in partnering with new organizations. This year "Grow Smart Eat Smart", a pilot program from CSU Extension about growing container vegetables and preparing them into healthy dishes, was launched.

In partnership with Centennial BOCES, a cohort of about fifteen families from Latinx communities had an opportunity to participate. Programs on healthy aging have also been started with residents of Meeker Commons in Greeley, members of the Aspen Club-UCHealth, as well as with clients of the Asian Pacific Development Center.

Additionally, Family and Consumer Science Agent Sheila Beckley was able to host, mentor and/or advice two doctoral students as Extension interns whose research projects involved beans and sourdough. A highly successful webinar on the health benefits of beans was held in Weld County with over 60 participants. Resource materials for the science of sourdough and techniques of preparing sourdough starters and breads were developed.

The year ended with planning and scheduling programs and opportunities for the upcoming year along with partnering agencies.



Weld County Fair

Jenette Masarie, Fair Coordinator

Jenette Masarie, Fair Coordinator, has tried to create new opportunities for the Weld County Fair so the exhibitors will have a great experience and look back on this event favorably. She started with Weld County when times were a little crazy during the pandemic, but she and the team worked hard to do as much for the exhibitors as they could during that year. Since then, the Fair has returned to many of its' traditions, started new traditions, and welcomed new exhibitors, volunteers, employees, events, and more to the Weld County Fair Family.



2022 Weld County Fair brought in the first Ranch Rodeo. It hosted ten teams of five cowboys and cowgirls who competed for awesome prizes and a great time. It was not only fun for them but was a FREE community event for all to enjoy closing out the Fair. This year it is set to be WRCA sanctioned giving these cowboys and cowgirls the chance to compete for the opportunity to qualify for the Finals to round out their season.



Weld County had a great 104th Annual Fair with high attendance, high entry numbers, events, and a record-breaking Jr. Livestock Sale of \$1.5 million. The Fair offers an Open Show and 4-H General Projects filled with Floriculture, Quilts, Baking, Photography, Ceramics, Model Rocketry, Robotics, and more. There is so much history with the Open Show, and it offers everyone the chance to showcase their projects no matter what age and whether entrants are involved in 4-H or not. Plans have already begun for the 105th Annual Weld County Fair, July 22- 31, 2023 at Greeley's Island Grove Regional Park!



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