



PUEBLO COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Pueblo County PATHWAYS

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This Issue:

- Pueblo County Fair
- Ag Farm Tours
- 4-H Dog Fun Day
- Award Recipients
- Welcome Amanda Weidner
- Upcoming Events

Photo by MJ Fisher



Pueblo County Fair

The sheep and the cattle were snug in their beds, while visions of sugar plums danced in their heads... This year, the theme of the Pueblo County Fair was "The Sweetest Fair." All around the event center, peppermints and lollipops decorated the General and Consumer Science Exhibits. The stage boasted a Candyland backdrop and an impressive 10 foot "marshmallow" balloon arch to frame the Fashion Revue and Scholarship presentations. And throughout the Colorado State Fairground, little code numbers were hidden as part of a scavenger hunt, conceptualized by the Pueblo County 4-H Leadership Society.

Every Pueblo County Fair is a little bit different, but so too is it always a little bit familiar. Families meet each other in the barn, some representing a second or third generation of showmanship. The Pueblo County Round Robin competition allows older members to pass guidance and helpful tips to younger members across multiple species. Kids compete in Shooting Sports, Dog Trials, Horse Shows, and Interviews to see who's the best of the best.

There were over 1,200 entries from 269 kids across 14 departments. Shooting Sports, Livestock, and the Horse Show comprised the majority, though there were over 160 General and Consumer Science (GCS) exhibits, a 23% increase over last year. The GCS Exhibits that placed first in their divisions went on to the Colorado State Fair in August, with a number of them receiving state-level awards as well. There were also many community-submitted Open Class entries, ranging from breathtaking quilts to scrumptious muffins.

Family Fun Day made its appearance on the second Friday of the County Fair. Several community partners came to show their support, including the Pueblo County Beekeeper's Association, Steel City Solar, CSU Pueblo, the Fountain Creek Watershed District, and the Pueblo Fire Department. The CSU Extension Office was also present in full force, with tables for Master Gardener, C.A.R.T., and Ag Homeschool Programs. 3 Sisters Farm and Dairy set up a petting zoo, with baby goats, alpacas, and a camel! In the Ag Palace, Pueblo County Shooting Sports teen leaders led an archery demonstration, complete with wrist guard sizing and aiming techniques. In the Livestock Pavilion, the Pueblo County Fair Pee Wee Livestock Show gave pint-sized wranglers a chance to gain some hands-on experience with goats, lambs, and swine (and yes, some of the showmen were smaller than the animals!). Later, that same show ring was flipped to accommodate the Barnyard Olympics, where teams of two competed for the best times in a raucous relay of donning overalls, circling the ring in a gunny sack, shooting milk bottles with water guns, and "feeding and watering" a pair of inflatable bovines. Even the County Fair Board President took a turn and ended up winning against his sons (due to an accusation of inflatable cattle rustling on the part of the younger team).

The County Fair wrapped up, as it often does, with the Showcase Sale. This year's Sale brought in \$410,400 for Pueblo County 4-H and FFA youth. In attendance were Pueblo County Commissioners Daneya Esgar, Zach Swearingen, and Eppie Griego; Mayor Nick Gradisar; CSU Extension Director Sherie Shaffer; and more than 100 local businesses and sponsors. Upon conclusion of the Sale, Cody Cozz started his concert in the PB&T Pavilion.

The Pueblo County Fair would like to thank the Pueblo County Fair Board, Colorado State Fairgrounds, the CSU Extension Office, all of our community partners and sponsors, and all of the 4-H and FFA youth for making this year, truly, the "sweetest" of them all!





Pueblo County Ag Farm Tour

Despite a wild season of weather, farmers in Pueblo County were still able to grow and provide a wide variety of produce and agricultural products. Community members were able to “experience” the farms firsthand when they joined the Pueblo County Extension Farm Tours this past growing season. Two tours were provided this past summer showcasing different farms in the county as well as different aspects of agriculture.

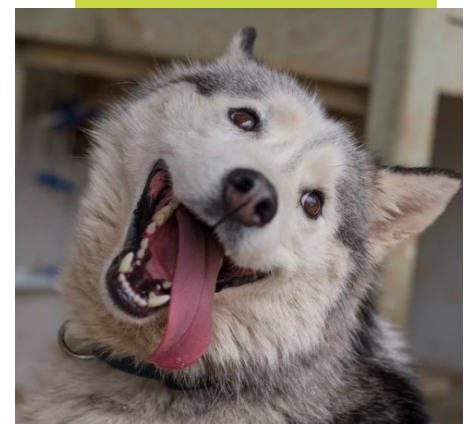


The first tour occurred July 30th, just as all of the produce was beginning to fill the roadside markets and farm stands. On this tour, participants visited Larga Vista Ranch, a regenerative dairy farm, producing raw milk and milk products along with summer vegetables like sweet corn and melons. This farm has been functioning in the county for many generations and is always working to improve the soil and in turn the lives of their clients. They also visited Vic Mauro Produce and had an opportunity to shop at the market and see the fields where the produce is grown. They tried their hands at starting siphon irrigation tubes as well. This farm aims to please customers, providing fresh, nutritional produce of all kinds, including peppers, tomatoes, melons, and root vegetables. During the tour, a few cantaloupes were procured, and the tour group went back to the extension office and made some cantaloupe ice cream. This helped participants better understand how produce on a farm can be transformed, completing the cycle of agriculture from farm to table.

The second tour of the summer was a collaboration with the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) and some grant funds they received through the Colorado Department of Agriculture’s Specialty crop Block Grant Program. On this tour a 56-passenger charter bus was the mode of transportation to three different specialty crop produce farms in the county. Though the bus was not filled, 15 participants learned about different farming and production practices and methods from DiSanti Farms (learning about produce cleaning and packaging), Mauro Farms and Bakery (transforming produce into baked goods and more), and from Heckmann Hollow Orchards and Garden (gaining knowledge in growing fruit crops). At the end of the tour, participants enjoyed lunch from Bingo Burger and heard from the Pueblo Chile Growers Association liaison/ advocate John Beaupre, learning all about the infamous Pueblo Chile. These tours gave community members a chance to hear directly from local farmers and agricultural producers and experience farming on a more personal and hands-on level. And farmers received some more time to build connections and make sure their farms are well known among the community. More farms tours and activities will be planned for the 2024 growing season.

4-H Dog Fun Day!

4-H Dog trainer Karen Zagol inspired the idea for a fun event for the 4-H Dog project members, after all their hard work for the year. This September was our first 4-H Dog fun day at the McHarg Community Center in Avondale. 4-H Dog project members, their families, and leaders were invited to attend an evening of games, pizza and dessert, face painting, with awards and prizes. The members ran a rally course with them being the “dogs”, with the fastest time winning. This gave the members a fun chance to practice rally from a different perspective without their dogs. Certificates of completion were given to all attending 4-H Dog project members with Special Awards to Mattie C. for Best Attendance, Jamie G. for Best Sportsmanship, Daniel E. for Most Determined, Eve C. for Best Attitude and Jessica H. for Best Role Model.



Award Recipients

Family Health and Wellness Awards

Laura Griffin, Extension County Specialist of Pueblo, CO was honored recently at the National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) 89th annual session, whose theme was "Oceans of Opportunities." She was a member of the team that received the 1st Place Western Region NEAFCS Family Health and Wellness award at the conference held Sept. 11 - 14 in Providence, Rhode Island. In receiving the award, Laura was recognized for The Meal Planning with Confidence toolkit that helps Extension Specialists empower clients with the skills and resources to save time, money, and energy, while reducing stress and food waste.

The NEAFCS Family Health and Wellness Award, which was established in 2012, recognizes innovative programs that promote and improve the health and wellness of families in areas such as nutrition, fitness, family meals, meal planning, time or stress management, healthy lifestyle, and more. Laura's commitment to meeting the needs of individuals, families, and communities is exemplary. This award is sponsored by the NEAFCS membership and awards fund.

Laura was also awarded the OEE Team Award for the Nutrition, Food Safety & Health Team. The OEE Team award recognizes program outcomes and impacts of teams which come together for a specific period of time to work on a special initiative or goal.



Laura Griffin received two Family Health and Wellness team awards

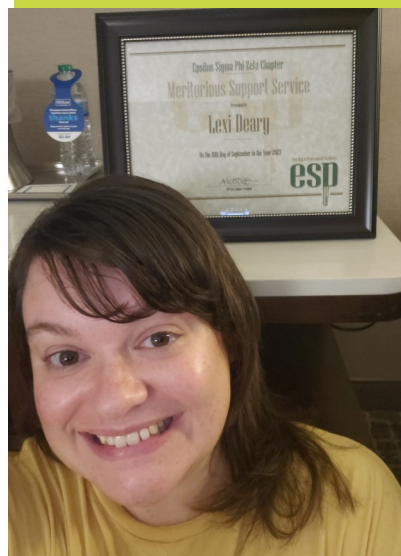
Meritorious Support Service Award

Pueblo County 4-H and CSU Extension-Pueblo County are proud to let you know that at the 2023 CSU Extension Forum held in Fort Collins, CO, earlier this month, our very own Lexi Deary was awarded the Meritorious Support Service Award. This award is given to "field and state support staff who have demonstrated excellence to support Extension programs."

Lexi was nominated because in the very short time she's been with us, she's learned 4-H Online, Fair Entry, has helped with 4-H programs such as Adventure Day Camp, last year's carnival, Achievement Night, and more. Aside from the 4-H program, Lexi helps out with other areas in the office when she can. She has developed some of our most eye-catching flyers (people asked us to print her Cody Cozz posters for them!) and has found ways to make the 4-H Program Assistant position more streamlined (there's a lot of information to track and Lexi has done an outstanding job in the last 18 months!). And if you've ever met Lexi you know that she is very friendly and will do whatever she can to make sure our members and families have a terrific 4-H enrollment and County Fair entry experience.

Lexi does a lot of work that everyone sees, and there is an equal amount of work - or even more - that goes on behind the scenes to make sure the 4-H and County Fair programs run as smoothly as they can. She has made an outstanding contribution not only to the 4-H program, but to our entire Extension team.

Please join us in extending our congratulations to Laura and Lexi next time you are in the office!



Lexi Deary received the Meritorious Support Service Award



PUEBLO COUNTY

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Upcoming Events

For details, call 583-6566 or visit
<http://pueblo.extension.colostate.edu>

Family and Consumer Programs

- Foods Safety Training for Cottage Foods Producers, 3-year certification, fee \$50.00. Various online webinar dates are available. Register at Eventbrite.com
- Free pressure gauge testing. Call 719-583-6566 for appointment.
- Follow the FCS program on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloFCS/>

Horticulture Programs

- All Pueblo Grows Seed Library, collecting and packaging seeds. Look for neighborhood seed boxes. Visit: allpueblogrows.org
- Follow the Horticulture program on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloCountyHorticulture>

4-H/Youth Development

- 4-H Carnival and Dance, Sat., Oct. 28 4:00 PM in the Auditorium and Dining Hall at the fair grounds. Tickets 5 for \$1.00
- 4-H Accepting new members—call 583-6566 for information
- Ongoing Club and County Programs
- Follow us on Facebook and YouTube

Agronomy/Ag/Range/Natural Resources

- Agriculture Homeschool Enrichment, Oct. 26, 10:00 AM at the Rawlings Library
- Rain Barrel Construction, Oct. 27, 3:00 PM \$25.00, register at <https://rainbarrel1023.eventbrite.com>
- <https://www.facebook.com/PuebloAg>

Follow Pueblo County Extension on Instagram
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Welcome



Pueblo Extension Welcomes New Staff

Please help us welcome our new Horticulture Specialist, Amanda Weidner. She started with us on October 3, 2023. We'll let her introduce herself:

I was born and raised in Pueblo, CO and have always loved being outside whether it was on the open prairie covered by our bright blue Colorado skies or hiking amongst the Ponderosa pines in the nearby foothills. Once I began college, I knew I had to do something that would get me outside so I chose landscape design and had a blast attending CSU-Fort Collins earning my degree in landscape horticulture. Afterward, I worked as a landscape designer/account manager and later, as a stay-at-home parent.

Nowadays I'm an obsessive gardener living in Pueblo with my husband and two daughters. We love to get out and enjoy hiking and learning about our local ecosystems. I also currently serve on the board of directors of the Nature and Wildlife Discovery Center where we work to promote community health through engagement with the environment and all the flora and fauna that reside there.

I'm excited to join the Extension team here in Pueblo and to have the opportunity to work to bring horticulture-based education and impactful projects to our community.