

The background of the entire page is a photograph of lush green plants, including long, pointed leaves and some smaller, rounded-leafed plants, growing among large, reddish-brown rocks. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

**MARICOPA COUNTY  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2024-25**



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

**Cooperative Extension**

Maricopa County





**SNAP-ED leader directing students at the  
Wilson Elementary School Walk to School Day.**





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Notes from the Director .....</b>	<b>04</b>
--------------------------------------	-----------

## **4-H Youth Development**

• 4-H Youth Development .....	06
-------------------------------	----

## **Family & Consumer Sciences**

• Early Childhood Development .....	11
• Nutrition Programming .....	14

## **Agriculture**

• Agricultural Literacy & STEM .....	20
• Field Crops & IPM .....	22
• Center for Urban Smart Agriculture .....	24
• Urban Horticulture .....	28
• Pesticide Safety Education .....	30
• Turfgrass Science .....	32
• Smartscape .....	34

## **Natural Resources**

• Arizona Project WET .....	35
-----------------------------	----

## **Community & Leadership Development**

• Arizona Center for Rural Leadership .....	36
---	----

## **Extension at a Glance**

• Mission & Vision .....	38
• Faculty & Staff .....	39
• Contact Info .....	42
• Make a Donation .....	43
• Thank You .....	44



# DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

In one of the nation's fastest-growing counties, Maricopa County Cooperative Extension **turns science into solutions** that strengthen communities.

From dairies to cotton fields, Maricopa County agriculture drives both state and national impact—leading in yields, value, and global reputation.

## Maricopa County Agriculture by the Numbers

- Top 1% of U.S. counties – **\$1.6B in market value**
- **#1 in U.S. for alfalfa** hay yield per acre
- **#1 in Arizona for dairy cow** statistics
- **High-quality durum wheat** with global reputation
- **Tops U.S. in upland cotton** yield per acre

This blend of agricultural tradition and urban innovation is where Cooperative Extension thrives—**leading with science, connecting people with solutions, and strengthening communities.** Behind every number is a story—and our true impact is measured not just in statistics, but in the trust and collaboration we share with the people of Maricopa County. Science drives solutions, but people power our success.



**70+ Staff & Countless Volunteers**  
Powering our program influence



**Neighborhoods, Schools, & Farms**  
Local presence, statewide influence



**Classrooms to Farms**  
Science-driven solutions reaching every corner of Maricopa County and throughout Arizona.



**Board of Supervisors & Partners**  
Leadership and support that allows Extension to turn ideas into action and impact

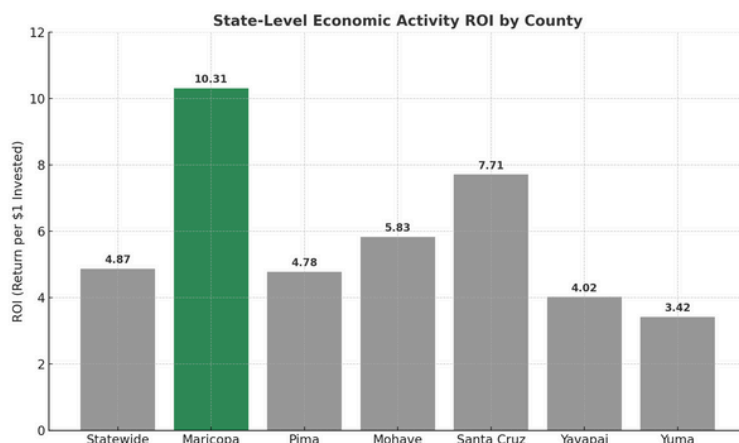






## Maricopa County leads the way for Arizona Cooperative Extension, delivering nearly a 10× return on investment.

Nearly **80% of our work** is fueled by grants, contracts, and gifts—but the true power comes from how those resources are put to work in our community. For every county dollar invested, **Maricopa County delivers the highest return on investment in Arizona—\$10.31 for every \$1 invested**—a testament to the meaningful difference Extension creates in people's daily lives.



In 2024, more than **2,300 families** with young children turned to the Family Resource Center for parenting support, referrals, and resources that build a foundation for long-term success. Thousands of youth gained healthier habits through 4-H, EFNEP, and SNAP-Ed, including **13,334 students** who explored water science at Arizona Water Festivals and more than **3,000 connections** made by Summer Food Ambassadors in Maryvale.

Health outcomes spoke volumes: Diabetes Prevention Program participants lowered A1C levels by **2.7% on average**, met **91% of weekly exercise goals**, and lost **over 100 pounds** collectively. Agriculture programs secured **\$300,000+ in new grants** for small-scale and urban growers, while **720+ producers** engaged in research-based training to farm more profitably and sustainably.

**Please take a moment to read through this report and discover how today's efforts are shaping tomorrow's Arizona.**

Best Regards,

*Ayman Mostafa*

**Ayman Mostafa, PhD**

Interim Director of MCCE,

Programmatic Area Agent, Field Crops IPM &

Center for Urban Smart Agriculture

Regional Specialist, Department of Entomology





# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



**Maricopa County,  
Arizona  
4-H Youth  
Development**





# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Maricopa County 4-H thrived in 2024 as one of the most dynamic youth development programs in Arizona. More than **750 youth members**, supported by **85 certified volunteers** and **21 active clubs**, immersed themselves in projects that spanned agriculture, animal science, equine programs, STEM, healthy living, the arts, and civic engagement.



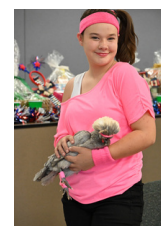
**21 CLUBS** enrolled **750+ Youth (5-19)** with **85+ VOLUNTEERS**

These hands-on experiences gave youth the chance to build confidence, strengthen life skills, and discover the importance of service to their communities. Behind every successful project were the volunteers who are truly the heartbeat of 4-H. Their countless hours of mentoring, guidance, and encouragement created safe, welcoming spaces where young people were empowered to learn by doing and grow into capable leaders.

Leadership remained at the core of 4-H this year. **Youth stepped into officer roles, represented Maricopa County at statewide events, and sharpened their public speaking and decision-making skills.** Equally important was their commitment to service—clubs organized food drives, volunteered at senior centers, and took on neighborhood clean-ups, bringing the 4-H pledge of “hands to larger service” to life.









# SIGNATURE EVENTS

The Maricopa County Fair stood out as a highlight, held for the first time across two weekends.

The opening featured breeding and showmanship, while the second highlighted market animals, small stock, and auctions. Thanks to community support, youth reinvested proceeds into future projects or saved for college.

Beyond the barns, **100+ youth showcased 400+ exhibits** in photography, fine arts, woodworking, welding, and cooking—capturing the creativity and skill of 4-H members.

Camp GRIT brought together **65 campers from four counties for five days on Mingus Mountain**. Fishing, hiking, canoeing, archery, and campfires gave youth opportunities to grow in confidence, make memories, and form lasting friendships.

**Communications Day** gave youth the stage to demonstrate their public speaking skills and **several participants advanced to state and national competitions.**

The year closed with the **73rd Annual Celebration of 4-H Youth Night**, honoring record book achievements and recognizing the dedicated volunteers who make 4-H possible.



## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO START SHOWING SMALL STOCK WITH 4-H?

Just throw yourself into it - even if there is no novice class in a show. That's what I did! **You're guaranteed to learn something.**

4-H Ambassador Tiffany





# FAMILY, CONSUMER, & HEALTH SCIENCES:

- ✓ University of Arizona - Roosevelt  
Family Childhood Resource Center
- ✓ SNAP ED
- ✓ EFNEP
- ✓ Diabetes Prevention Program
- ✓ Financial Literacy





# EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

### OUR MISSION

The University of Arizona-Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center (FRC) creates a community of support and encouragement for families with children ages 0–5. By fostering family resilience and promoting positive parent–child relationships, the center helps children reach their full potential and prepares them for long-term success.

In 2024, the **FRC connected directly with families across South Phoenix**, offering educational opportunities and critical resources that strengthen stability, nurture young children’s growth, and build a foundation for future success.

Families participated in programs on **safe infant sleep**, kindergarten readiness, **Play & Learn groups**, and **Family Nights**, creating opportunities for bonding and early skill development.



480

**480 Families** received **683 referrals** to assistance with needed resources and services such as **employment, food, housing, and utilities.**

2308

**2308 Families (Unduplicated)** with children under 5 **participated in the parenting activities.**

332

Families also benefited from **332 parenting activities**, ranging from educational workshops to Play & Learn sessions that strengthen parent–child interaction.



## Research shows programs like those offered through the FRC help children:



Achieve developmental milestones.



Build school readiness and literacy skills.



Increase positive parent-child interactions.



Strengthen families by decreasing risk factors.

The FRC responds to community needs daily, **handling phone calls, texts, emails, and social media requests to connect families with up-to-date information** about jobs, food pantries, utility assistance, healthcare, and housing.

Because their parents completed the **Car Seat Safety Education Program**,

# 94

children received **free car seats** from the FRC.



ALL FRC PROGRAMS ARE **FREE OF CHARGE** THANKS TO FUNDING FROM:

**FIRST THINGS FIRST**  
**MOLINA COMPLETE HEALTHCARE**  
**CHARLES SCHWAB**  
**WALMART**  
**VARIOUS LOCAL PARTNERS**

Services are offered in **English, Spanish, and Arabic** at the Martin Luther King, Jr. School site in South Phoenix, open 40 hours each week.







Through community partnerships, the FRC provides programs such as :

- Parenting Education
- Child Development Classes
- Ready! for Kindergarten
- Referral Services
- Group Support

These programs help families feel connected, equipped, and resilient.



“The program has instilled confidence in my children and a lifelong thirst for learning. - FRC Parent”





# SNAP-ED

## WHERE HEALTHY HABITS TAKE ROOT



**From school gardens to monthly Family Cooking Nights, SNAP-Ed takes nutrition education far beyond the classroom.**

The team—comprised of about **21 staff**—leads community-wide efforts to build health equity through policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes.

In **South Phoenix**, a community garden became a vibrant space for cross-cultural connection and shared harvests. And in **Maryvale**, the Summer Food Ambassador program expanded from **6 to 13 youth leaders**, who made over **3,000 community contacts** and contributed **187 hours of service**—deepening SNAP-Ed's commitment to community-led change.

**Through its Food Systems, Childhood Health, and Active Living teams, SNAP-Ed continues to root change in the people it serves.**



**650+ Volunteers** served **2646 Hours** valued at **\$88,614**



# EFNEP

## REAL STORIES. REAL RESULTS.

**In kitchens, classrooms, and treatment centers across Maricopa County, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) transforms lives.**

With just **three part-time educators, EFNEP reached thousands** through direct, hands-on instruction—and the stories speak for themselves. EFNEP doesn't just teach nutrition—it **empowers people to take control of their health, share lessons with their families, and inspire change in their communities.**

Through practical lessons in meal planning, food safety, physical activity, and nutrition, participants are making lasting changes—at home and beyond.

★★★★★

### **Young adult EFNEP participant**

After completing the course, I reversed my Type 2 diabetes, dropped my A1C from 7.0 to 5.6, and lost 20 pounds.

★★★★★

### **EFNEP graduate, July 2024**

I've lost 40 pounds in 90 days. I feel energized, focused, and more in control of my health.

★★★★★

### **Young mother and EFNEP participant**

When I started, my A1C was 10.7. Two months later, it's 5.6—and I'm off my meds. Now I'm helping my dad manage his diabetes too.





# FINANCIAL LITERACY

NEW

The Financial Literacy Program is often paired with EFNEP, offering participants a seamless transition from nutrition education to financial skills that support healthier eating.



“Now I see exactly where my money goes - and how to make it work for me instead of against me.”

— Workshop Participant

The Financial Literacy Program gives adults the skills to take control of their money—tracking expenses, reducing waste, and stretching food dollars to improve overall food security. Using the ***Building Financial Security*** and ***Where Does Your Money Go?*** curricula, participants learn to prioritize spending and plan for the future.

Through **more than 15 community partnerships**, classes reach participants where they live, learn, work, and gather—including schools, places of worship, Native American Connections centers, community centers, rehabilitation programs, and domestic violence shelters.

**128 People** found **\$3131 Spending Leaks** found **94% Rethink Money**

## PLANNED ACTIONS AFTER THE WORKSHOP



- ✓ Start savings – **71%**
- ✓ Pay off bills – **48%**
- ✓ Purchase needed item – **38%**

## FUTURE BEHAVIOR CHANGES



- ✓ Track expenses – **62%**
- ✓ Reduce spending leaks – **79%**
- ✓ Spend on needs before wants – **57%**
- ✓ Develop a spending/savings plan – **63%**





# DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

NATIONAL  
DIABETES  
PREVENTION  
PROGRAM

The CDC-supported National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a **12-month, 26-lesson lifestyle change program** that brings together science, coaching, and peer support to help adults with prediabetes change their trajectory.

In 2023–2024, a cohort of 11 participants committed to a full-year lifestyle change program.

They completed **286 class contacts** in the National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) led by FCHS Agent Traci Armstrong Florian, who also co-taught and managed program data. The cohort received curriculum manuals along with food and activity tracking logs to record their progress.

By the end of the year 100% reported:

- Understanding the importance of preventing type 2 diabetes
- Believing their personal efforts could reduce their risk
- Crediting DPP with helping them make healthier food

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



**224** min/week average exercise

**91%** met the 150+ min/week goal

## DIABETES RISK REDUCTION

**91%**

achieved at least one risk-reduction goal

## WEIGHT AND HEALTH OUTCOMES



**108** lbs total weight loss

**2.7%** average A1C reduction





# SNAP-ED & EFNEP BY THE NUMBERS

## YOUTH KNOWLEDGE & ATTITUDES (KAN-Q SURVEY)

Across schools like Wilson, VH Lassen, Zito, and CJ Jorgensen:

**30–37%**

could identify whole grain needs

**25–35%**

knew lower-calorie milk types

**22–50%**

could identify recommended daily fruit & veggie intake

## MEASURING MOTIVATION & SHIFTING ATTITUDES (SCALE 1-5)

- ♥♥♥♥♥ Fruit (4.6 - 5.0)
- ♥♥♥♥♥ Veggies (3.4 - 4.5)
- ♥♥♥♥♥ Low-Sugar Beverages (3.5 - 4.15)
- ♥♥♥♥♥ Physical Activity (3.9 - 4.6)



## IMPACT STORY

### WILSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

In Wilson School District, SNAP-Ed partnered with food services and teachers to launch **Family Cooking Nights** featuring produce from the **school garden**—events so impactful they're now written into the district's wellness policy.

The district also embraced active living through the Wilson Walk to School initiative, encouraging families to build healthy habits together.





# AGRICULTURE

- ✓ **Ag Literacy & STEM**
- ✓ **Field Crops & IPM**
- ✓ **Center for Urban Smart Agriculture (CUSA)**
- ✓ **Urban Horticulture**
- ✓ **Pesticide Safety Education**
- ✓ **Turfgrass Science**
- ✓ **Smartscape**





# AG LITERACY & STEM

In 2024, the Arizona Agricultural Institute (AAI) once again gave educators an insider's view of Arizona's agricultural diversity. These immersive tours connected teachers directly with growers, producers, and researchers—equipping them with real-world examples and classroom-ready ideas.



## AAI 1.0 - Maricopa County

**18 educators** visited **12 agricultural entities** over four days, bringing new insights to **2,800 students**. Highlights included:



Composting education



Watermelon fields



Yogurt processing facilities



Cattle feedlot operations



Precision agriculture technology



Cotton production



Greenhouse technology innovations



The wholesale nursery industry



Ranching operations



University of Arizona research facilities



Pecan orchard production



A mining facility

**Impact:** Pre- and post-program surveys showed **increased agricultural knowledge and more positive perceptions** of all operations visited.







“AAI I.O has given me what I need to go into the classroom next year with new and innovative ideas for incorporating agriculture into teaching. AAI I.O participant, 2024”

## Growing Maricopa Program

Five monthly webinars on raised-bed gardening in Arizona's unique climate reached **24 educators and 2,145 students**. Each participant received agriculturally relevant books to expand their classroom libraries. The program wrapped up with an in-person farm tour, where **15 educators learned about low-desert farming** and connected with local growers—bringing that knowledge to **1,700 students**.



## Ag Literacy & STEM Newsletter

**Reaches 367 subscribers**, providing agricultural education resources and opportunities to classrooms statewide.

## MEET THE **NEW** AG LITERACY & STEM ASSISTANT IN EXTENSION **CAROLINE**

Say hello to Caroline Woolsey, the **new leader of the Ag Literacy & STEM program**! With a degree in education, She brings both classroom teaching experience and hands-on agricultural knowledge to her role. She will guide professional development tours, coordinate educator programs, and provide resources that help teachers connect students to the science and story of agriculture.







# FIELD CROPS & IPM

**The University of Arizona's Field Crops & IPM Program equips growers with **effective, environmentally conscious tools to manage pests** and protect human and ecosystem health.**

In 2024, our team stayed at the forefront of protecting Arizona agriculture. **We tested 23 insecticide compounds** against alfalfa weevil and aphids, confirmed a sprayer-mounted insecticide method as an effective, fully registered option, and expanded research on leafhoppers and lepidopteran pests.

A major success was the smartphone app for Pest Control Advisors and growers, launched in January at the New Mexico Hay and Forage Conference. **It logged 1,000+ uses in 2024 and was used by 70% of outreach participants**, reshaping pest management decisions across the region.

Adoption is on the rise: **nearly 75% of growers** now use updated alfalfa weevil thresholds (up from 24% in 2014), and selective insecticide use in sorghum has jumped from 0% to 65% since 2020. **With over \$1.75 million in USDA-NIFA and industry support**, including multi-state collaborations and new work on pollination, the program continues to deliver sustainable solutions for Arizona growers.



**23 compounds** tested in 2024 trials



**1,000+ app uses** since January launch



**70% outreach participants** used the app



**75% adoption** of new thresholds

(up from 24% in 2014)



**65% sorghum acreage** managed with

selective insecticides (up from 0% in 2020)



# EXPANDING REACH & BUILDING RESILIENCE

The Field Crops & IPM team is looking beyond immediate challenges to prepare growers for the future.

Together with **Utah State University** and **New Mexico State University**, we're studying how natural enemies contribute to controlling major alfalfa pests. We also continued monitoring insecticide resistance across Arizona in collaboration with western partners, providing an early-warning.



system so growers can adapt before problems escalate. At the same time, we've begun whole-genome sequencing of resistant species to identify early genetic markers - paving the way for faster, more targeted pest management strategies.

Our outreach also remained strong. **The team delivered hundreds of consultations**, visiting farms, hosting virtual meetings, and responding quickly to grower concerns. In addition, **we hosted or participated in 15+ outreach events**, creating direct opportunities for producers to learn about new thresholds, smartphone tools, and sustainable pest control practices. **These personal connections remain at the heart of Extension - where research meets real-world decision-making.**

Together, these projects ensure Arizona producers aren't just responding to pests today - **they're building the knowledge and tools to stay resilient for the future.**







COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES  
Cooperative Extension

# THE CENTER FOR URBAN SMART AGRICULTURE (CUSA)

FORMERLY URBAN AG PRODUCTION

A collaboration between Cooperative Extension, urban agriculture communities, universities, government agencies, and students, the Center serves as a hub for innovation—bringing together scientists, farmers, industry leaders, regulators, and policymakers to advance soil health, agroecology, drought adaptation, climate resilience, nutrition security, and economic sustainability.

## OUR MISSION:

Create the conditions for urban and sustainable agriculture programs to be adopted, implemented, and scaled across Arizona—rooted in research, driven by community, and proven in practice.



# The University of Arizona Center for Urban Smart Agriculture (CUSA) champions research-backed solutions to the unique challenges of urban agriculture in Arizona.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

-  **Identify** environmental, socioeconomic, and political factors shaping urban agriculture in Arizona.
-  **Develop** applied research and education models to increase sustainable practices in the Sonoran Desert.
-  **Track and measure** the long-term impacts of sustainable practices statewide.
-  **Strengthen** communication among local, regional, and national collaborators.
-  **Promote** policies that enable production, entrepreneurship, and resilient supply chains.

## AREAS OF FOCUS

-  **Water & Climate**
  - Adaptation, conservation, and resilience strategies.
-  **Agroecology & Sustainable Production**
  - Soil health, biodiversity, and regenerative practices.
-  **Business, Socioeconomic & Entrepreneurship**
  - Economic growth and farmer viability.
-  **Policy, Evaluation & Supply Chain**
  - Systems to support equitable market access.
-  **Healthy Dietetic & Human Nutrition**
  - Linking production to community health.

In 2024, with a diverse funding portfolio of **approximately \$1 Million**, CUSA worked alongside partners to create new funding opportunities for local growers:

- **Service Eligibility Partners (SEP) Grant Program** – Helps beginning farmers and ranchers access USDA programs.
- **Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture (RSA) Grant Program** – **Administered by the City of Phoenix**, providing financial assistance to help growers navigate environmental and economic challenges.

# \$300,000

Together, these programs will distribute over \$300,000 to Maricopa County producers in 2025–2026, ensuring our farmers have the resources they need to grow sustainably and profitably.





## IMPACT & EVENTS

## HANDS-ON LEARNING, STRONGER COMMUNITIES

In 2024, CUSA **hosted and participated in 33 events, engaging 720 community members statewide**. These included monthly *Urban Ag Hours*, farmer field days, and farm tours designed to connect growers with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to thrive.

### Key Topics:

- Soil health and composting
- Conservation planning
- Seed saving and animal care
- Specialty crop production
- USDA loan programs and land access
- Transitioning to organic through the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)

These events provided more than information—they created hands-on learning spaces and strengthened relationships between farmers, educators, and agencies. Partnerships with **USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service)**, **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**, **Spaces of Opportunity**, **ASU's Swette Center for Sustainable Food Systems**, and **St. Vincent de Paul** helped extend our reach and deepen our impact.

**CUSA offers training for urban, small-scale, and beginning farmers, including:**

- 🐝 Beekeeping for Beginning Farmers
- 📖 Small-Scale & Urban Agriculture Conservationist Certificate and Apprenticeship
- 🖥️ E-learning curriculum
- 🧑‍🌾 Field days & workshops

### What Our Farmers Grow

Eggs (chicken, duck, quail) • Honey • Lavender • Grapes • Dates • Citrus • Poultry • Beef • Lamb • Kale • Tomatoes • Beans • Pecans • Microgreens • Mushrooms • Seeds • Olive Oil • Goat Cheese • Edible Flowers

### WHO ARE OUR FARMERS?

**60%**  
Farms under  
5 acres

**12%**  
Certified  
Organic

**77%**  
Follow Organic  
Principles

**40%**  
Less than 1 year  
of experience

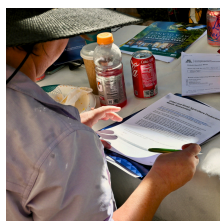
**26%**  
1–5 years of  
experience

**21%**  
Over 10 years  
of experience





**Working across Arizona, UACUSA helps urban farmers grow stronger businesses, healthier food systems, and more resilient communities—one seed, one acre, and one step at a time.**



“These events gave me the tools, confidence, and connections to make my farm thrive in Arizona's climate. — Program Participant”





# URBAN HORTICULTURE

## MARICOPA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Urban Horticulture's largest outreach arm, **the Master Gardener Program**, trains volunteers to share research-based gardening knowledge across Maricopa County. From **tackling invasive weeds to training future Master Gardeners**, they blend research, hands-on training, and outreach to keep desert landscapes **healthy, sustainable, and thriving**.

**1240** Plant Problems Tickets

**51+** Volunteer Training Hours

**819** Fall Festival Attendees

**20+** DIG Classes the Public

**424** Attendees



# WHERE KNOWLEDGE TAKES ROOT

In 2024, the Master Gardener Program expanded its reach and deepened its impact across Maricopa County. The Fall 2024 training class welcomed **71 participants**, with **64 graduating** and **19 earning full certification**.



“Our volunteers are at the heart of every healthy garden and thriving landscape we touch.”  
*Michael Chamberland*



Our signature Citrus Clinics drew **193 attendees in the East Valley** and **81 in the West Valley**, offering a display and tasting of more than **100 citrus varieties**. The Fall Garden Festival brought together 819 attendees and 139 volunteers for a day of learning, inspiration, and community connection.

Educational programs remained a cornerstone of outreach. The **Desert Institute of Gardening (DIG)** offered **20 classes to 424 attendees**, while Home Horticulture Classes provided research-based instruction to **70 students across the fall and spring seasons**. The Plant Help Desk continued to be a trusted resource, resolving **1,240 plant problem tickets** with science-backed advice.



## RESEARCH & EDUCATION IN ACTION

### Science-Driven Solutions

- **Agave Mite Research:** Field trials in Tucson and Queen Creek and advanced imaging at UA are helping classify and manage this microscopic pest damaging ornamental agave leaves.
- **Invasive Species Projects:**
  - **Stinknet:** Completed 2-year study on seed cold tolerance; co-hosted AZ-CA Stinknet Symposium (140 attendees, 97% positive feedback).
  - **Invasive Plant Risk Evaluation:** Partnered with Cal-IPC to assess invasive potential of ornamental plants using the Plant Risk Evaluator tool.







# PESTICIDE SAFETY EDUCATION

The **Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP)** is a statewide program designed to provide pesticide safety information and resources to people working in the agricultural and structural pest control industries.

PSEP offers programs in English and Spanish to serve the linguistic needs of its clientele and coordinates outreach efforts with colleagues involved in state, county, and tribal pesticide programs. These partnerships and programs are key to ensuring certified applicators receive training and informational resources to help them work safely and effectively with restricted-use pesticides.

## The Pesticide Safety Education Program:

Provides pest management professionals with information and tools to protect themselves, other people, and the environment when handling pesticides.

Develops study materials and presents workshops to prepare individuals for state-mandated pesticide applicator certification and Pest Control Advisor licensing exams.

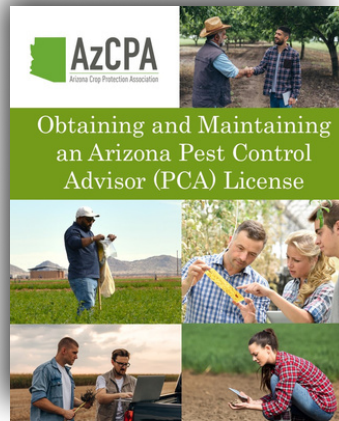
Updates clientele on pesticide-related regulations, issues, and solutions so they can make informed decisions when using pest control products.





# 2,500+

**2,552 growers, tribal partners, applicators, ag teachers, Pest Control Advisors, and safety trainers learned about courses, resources, and regulatory changes via the PSEP listserv.**



PSEP worked with the Arizona Department of Agriculture (AZDA) and the Arizona Crop Protection Association (AzCPA) to update state Pest Control Advisor (PCA) licensing materials.

After creating a new study guide chapter on how to obtain and maintain a PCA License, the team realized the chapter would also make a great standalone booklet for aspiring PCAs.

The booklet contains a list of prerequisite courses and experience; testing requirements and exam categories; and guidance for keeping licenses current. The **booklet is now available for free on the AzCPA website.**

**During 14 safety sessions, expos, conferences, and continuing education courses, PSEP provided 844 individuals information about:**

## 844 INDIVIDUALS

- Pesticide safety tips and tools
- Regulatory changes
- Pesticide exposure cases
- Pesticide safety and compliance
- Applicator certification and licensing resources
- Pesticide program updates

“

*Thank you for hosting the pesticide applicator class. I really appreciated the effort you put into the class, especially all the activities to keep us awake and engaged. It definitely helped me with retaining the information, and with getting too bored. 😊*

*Thank you again!*

”



# TURFGRASS SCIENCE

The University of Arizona's Turfgrass Science Extension Program is the **only active turf-focused extension program in the state.**



**\$17,000**

**GENERATED AND REINVESTED  
INTO PROGRAMMING**

The Turfgrass Science Extension Program is quietly shaping the way Arizona manages its green spaces. Since 2022, it has been managed by Dr. Shaku Nair following the retirement of the last full-time Turf Agent.

Through research-based education and technical support, it promotes efficient irrigation, pest and weed management, and environmentally responsible turf care. The program supports schools, municipalities, tribal communities, pest control professionals, golf course staff, and landscaping companies across Arizona.

In 2024, the program expanded its reach by offering seminars in two additional locations and continued to provide timely, practical information through in-person and virtual events.

**+500**

**TURF-RELATED CLIENT  
QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

**~1,000**

**CEU HOURS DELIVERED TO  
SUPPORT PESTICIDE LICENSING  
AND PROTECT JOBS**

**3,245**

**TURF & LANDSCAPE  
PROFESSIONALS TRAINED  
THROUGH IN-PERSON AND  
ONLINE EVENTS**





**We delivered timely, science-based training throughout the state - both in-person and online - with standout events that continue to grow in reach and impact.**

## **SIGNATURE EVENTS**

- Outdoor Track at the Arizona School IPM Conference
- Annual Pest Management & Pesticide Safety Seminars (Turf & Landscape focus)

*\* Due to popular demand, CEU seminars expanded to one additional location in 2024.*

## **KEY TOPICS COVERED**

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for gophers & burrowing rodents
- Environmental & Plant Services Division (EPSD) pesticide compliance & safety (WPS & licensing)
- Plant hormones, herbicides, & growth regulators
- Managing witches broom & mistletoe on landscape trees
- Texas Root Rot in desert landscapes
- The Endangered Species Act: What it means for pesticide users

**100%**

**100% of attendees reported they will use seminar takeaways outside their primary workplace.**





# SMARTSCAPE

**Smartscape** provides landscape training that combines expert knowledge with hands-on experience, focusing on water-wise techniques tailored to our region's unique needs.

Serving a diverse range of landscape professionals across Maricopa County, the program shares **research-based best practices for designing, installing, and maintaining water efficient landscapes.**

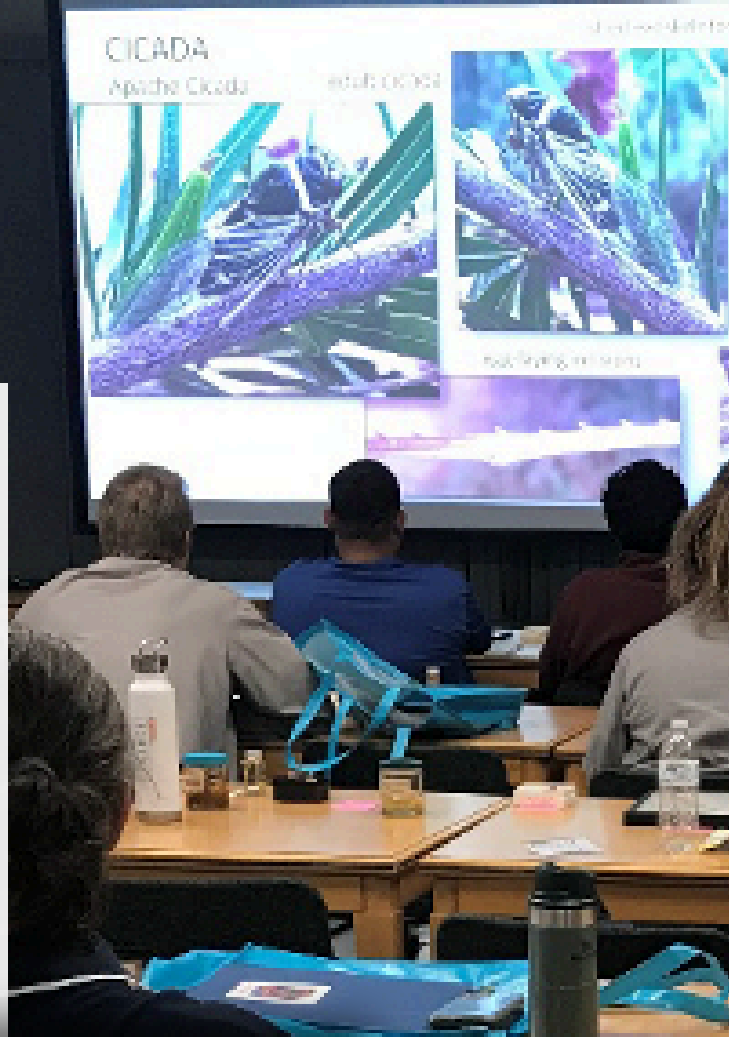
Our goal is to empower industry professionals to create attractive, sustainable landscapes that thrive in the desert environment.

**2,647**

**Smartscape Program  
Graduates as of  
January 2024**

## MEET THE **NEW** SMARTSCAPE ASSISTANT IN EXTENSION **EMILY**

We're excited to welcome Emily Webb as the **new Smartscape Assistant at Maricopa County Cooperative Extension.** With advanced degrees in plant science and biology, hands-on industry experience, and a passion for sustainable solutions, Emily will help strengthen **Smartscape's** mission to promote water-wise, desert-friendly landscapes.







# ARIZONA PROJECT WET

**As an Extension program, Arizona Project WET (APW) connects K–12 students and teachers with the expertise of Arizona’s water professionals.**

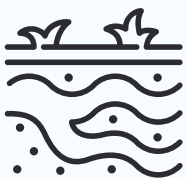
Through hands-on learning, classroom presentations, and large-scale Water Festivals, APW equips the next generation with the knowledge to value, conserve, and protect one of our state’s most precious resources.

## MARICOPA COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS



### Water Festivals

Thousands of 4th grade students across the Valley engaged in interactive science activities linking curriculum to real-world water issues.



### Groundwater Education

16 classroom presentations at 3 schools in Surprise reached 410 students, deepening their understanding of Arizona’s groundwater.



### Community Partnerships

Collaboration with city partners, educators, and volunteers ensures programs are accessible, impactful, and sustainable.

## BY THE NUMBERS (STATEWIDE IMPACT)



**13,334 students** participated in Arizona Water Festivals in **28 communities**



**2,144 students** reached through classroom & field programs



**1,505 teachers** enhanced their water science knowledge through professional development



**Supported by 30+ cities, water companies, and partners statewide**







## ARIZONA CENTER FOR RURAL LEADERSHIP

### **Project CENTRL** is a premier, statewide leadership development program for 16 individuals connected to rural Arizona.

The program meets participants where they are in their leadership journey—enhancing personal and professional skills for those in production agriculture while educating non-agriculture participants about the industry's critical role in the state's economy and communities.

Class 33 distinguished itself as the **first cohort to visit seven Arizona counties across seven in-state seminars**—a journey that also extended to Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. Their year exemplified the program's mission: exposing leaders to diverse perspectives and equipping them to address complex challenges.

Participants strengthen their leadership through skill building, issue awareness, and strategic networking.

Over the course of nine seminars, leaders:



Develop essential skills in **public speaking, effective interviewing, advocacy, conflict resolution, meeting facilitation, and legislative engagement** at the local, state, and federal levels.



Deepen their understanding of issues affecting rural Arizona, including **water management, forest health, international trade, immigration, education, healthcare, and corrections**.



**Build networks** with nationally recognized trainers, local experts, alumni, and sponsors who serve as resources long after graduation.

## 750+ ALUMNI

Since it began in 1983, Project CENTRL has produced 750+ graduates leading change across Arizona.





# CLASS 33: REFLECTIONS

By the close of the program, Class 33 members strengthened their leadership skills and deepened their understanding of rural Arizona's role in the state, nation, and world. The seminars and **participant reflections captured here showcase the lessons, challenges, and growth** that defined their journey—illuminating how a diverse group of leaders built confidence, gained new perspectives, and formed lasting connections that will continue to shape their communities

## SEMINAR ONE

### Fundamentals of Leadership - Flagstaff, AZ

If more leaders could take that seminar, I think that there would be a lot more understanding of what leadership is, which in turn would help them become greater leaders.

## SEMINAR TWO

### Effective Communication - Prescott, AZ

The methods instructed at the seminar have helped me handle myself better to be more confident and clear in my delivery of information in communication of all forms.

## SEMINAR THREE

### Natural Resources - Show Low, AZ

Such a wonderful group of people and speakers that touched on every topic of rural AZ and rural areas in general across the nation!

## SEMINAR FOUR

### International Seminar - Sonora, Mexico

It has become eye opening to see that it's not really a "first-world" versus "third-world" perspective anymore, it's an "our-world-in-cooperation" perspective.

## SEMINAR FIVE

### State Budget Basics: Healthcare, Education & Corrections - Tucson, AZ

As leaders in Arizona's three largest budgetary sectors - corrections, healthcare, and education - we must have a keen understanding of operational needs. To actually walk behind the gates was very impactful.

## SEMINAR SIX

### Agriculture in an International Border Community - Yuma, AZ

This was such a real-world experience to take back as leaders and implement into how we approach international exchanges as it affects all of Arizona. Very immersive and informative.

## SEMINAR SEVEN

### Public Policy in Arizona - Phoenix, AZ

The seminar helped me better understand this complex legislative world, how bills move through the process, lobbying remarkable responsibilities and challenges, the importance of connecting with our own representatives on issues that matter to our communities and so much more!

## SEMINAR EIGHT

### National Public Policy - Gettysburg, PA & Washington, D.C

Appreciated the opportunity to engage with federal policy makers in their daily environment. Gaining understanding of how policy is discussed and negotiated day in and day out was eye opening.

## SEMINAR NINE

### Polishing Leadership Skills - Tubac, AZ

This is the final Seminar, and I think puts a cap on the overall experience from the previous year which has been excellent and contributed to my growth and learning in so many ways.



# MISSION

To engage with people through applied research and education to improve lives, families, communities, the environment, and economies in Arizona and beyond.



We empower people to expand their capabilities to improve their lives.



We develop capable leaders in all communities.



We are a trusted partner in communities for leadership education.



We are a well-known, effective, and accessible educational resource for all communities.



We are recognized experts for developing and disseminating research-based information.

# VISION

To be a vital national leader in creating and applying knowledge to help people build thriving, sustainable lives, communities, and economies.

## MARICOPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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# MARICOPA COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION STAFF

**ANR** - Agriculture and Natural Resources

**CENTRL** - Center for Rural Leadership

**DPP** - Diabetes Prevention Program

**EFNEP** - Expanded Food and Nutrition  
Education Program

**FCHS** - Family, Consumer and Health  
Sciences

**FRC** - Family Resource Center

**IPM** - Integrated Pest Management

**SNAP-Ed** - Supplemental Nutrition  
Assistance Program-Education

**TOP** - Teen Outreach Program

**WET** - Water Education for Teachers

**YD** - Youth Development

**SRPMIC**: Salt River Pima-Maricopa  
Indian Community

\*Click employee's name to visit their **University of Arizona** Profile Page.

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Phoenix AZ 85040

**Phone:** 602-980-3692



Explore all of the  
**MCCE Programs**  
Online and on Social Media



SCAN HERE

*\*After 25+ Years with  
MCCE, Pam Justice of  
Project Wet retired in  
August 2024.*





# MAKE A DONATION

**2024 MCCE OUTSTANDING  
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# THANK YOU



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

## Cooperative Extension

Maricopa County

The progress we've made this year is **a shared achievement**—powered by the dedication of our community and the partnerships we've built together. Your support has helped us turn vision into reality, creating lasting impact across Maricopa County. As we look to the future, we are inspired by what's possible when we work side by side, and we remain committed to **building a stronger, healthier, and more connected community for all.**