



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Yavapai County Cooperative Extension

To engage with people through communities, the environment, and economies in Arizona and beyond.

Photo by Caleb Miller



Photo by Caleb Miller



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We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O’odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.



From the County Extension Director

Dear Stakeholder,

Every year I'm reminded that Cooperative Extension touches nearly every corner of Yavapai County. In 2025 alone, our programs delivered research-based education and technical assistance to more than 15,000 residents, from youth discovering their interests through 4-H to farmers, ranchers, families, and businesses working to strengthen our communities.

Cooperative Extension is the outreach arm of the University of Arizona, providing science-based education to the public since 1914. Our work is supported through a partnership of federal, state, and county governments to "extend" university knowledge to communities across Arizona. In Yavapai County, programming focuses on three core areas: 4-H Youth Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Family, Consumer and Health Sciences.

Our 4-H Youth Development program enrolled 424 members in 2025, supported by 79 volunteers contributing more than 7,500 hours of service. Through clubs, STEM programming, and school visits, the program reached more than 4,500 youth and families across the county. The James 4-H Camp also remained an important hub for outdoor education, hosting over 1,600 campers and guests while continuing key facility improvements.

Agriculture and natural resources programming also continued to grow. 146 Master Gardener volunteers contributed more than 12,600 hours of service, providing horticulture education through help desks, workshops, and community events. Extension also supported agricultural producers through more than 50 on-farm consultations, educational programs for livestock producers, and collaborative rangeland monitoring across 76 sites and 16 grazing allotments.

Extension's Family, Consumer and Health Sciences programs also contributed to healthier communities. In 2025, more than 3,400 residents participated in nutrition and physical activity education, while 2,046 children and adults attended Nature Niños outdoor learning events. Our Child Care Health Consultation program delivered 77 trainings to 409 childcare professionals, improving health and safety practices for more than 1,200 young children. Food safety education reached more than 200 participants through certification courses and workshops.

None of this work would be possible without the dedicated faculty, staff, and volunteers who support Cooperative Extension. We are also deeply grateful to the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors for their continued support through funding, facilities, and partnership.

It is an exciting time to serve Yavapai County through Cooperative Extension, and I look forward to continuing our work with communities across the county in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Matt Halldorson
County Extension Director
Associate Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources



Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Faculty



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Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Staff



Programmatic Staff

- **Mary Barnes**, Program Coordinator, Sr. Agriculture and Natural Resources & Master Gardener Programs, barnesm@arizona.edu
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Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Office Locations



Prescott Office
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928-445-6590



Camp Verde Office
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Camp Verde, AZ 86322
928-554-8990

Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board Members 2025-2026



Drew Cannon, Viticulture/Wine Industry
Heather Klomprens, Community Health Services
Laura Lopez, Child and Family Support Services
Chip Norton, Viticulture, Agriculture
Shanti Rade, Small Agriculture Producer
Angela Tesky-Peterson, Chair, 4-H Leader/Rancher
Gail Steiger, Vice-Chair, Rancher
Rich Peterson, Agriculture

Yavapai County Board of Supervisors

Brooks Compton, District 1 Supervisor Chair
Nikki Check, District 3 Supervisor, Vice Chair
Dee Jenkins, District 2 Supervisor
Chris Kuknyo, District 4 Supervisor
Mary Mallory, District 5 Supervisor



4-H Youth Development



Because of the Yavapai 4-H Program...

Teen members earned the opportunity and were invited to attend National 4-H events such as the Ignite Summit in Washington DC, National Congress in Atlanta, Georgia, Western Regional Roundup in Denver, Colorado and the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky.

40 members received their Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) Certification, a national quality assurance program, from our instructor-led training.

87 members attended summer camp at the James 4-H Camp, receiving over \$6,800 in Tractor Supply and Lane Trust scholarship funding.

An AmeriCorps Outreach Assistant was hired to provide 300 hours of STEM and agriculture education programming.

Yavapai County 4-H engages youth ages 5-18 in the participation of high-quality positive learning activities that promote the exploration of leadership, communication, community service, healthy living, and civic engagement. 4-H helps develop competent, caring, and actively engaged citizens who strengthen our community. Through research-based curriculum and university ties, 4-H opens a world of possibilities to youth and their families who want to explore their spark.

Project opportunities in Yavapai County 4-H include gardening, small and large stock animals, culinary, public speaking, bee keeping, sewing/weaving, blacksmithing, equine, robotics, rocketry, shooting sports, entomology, woodworking, photography, veterinarian science, and more! Visit <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/yavapai> to enroll, volunteer or donate.

2025 – By The Numbers

- 424 enrolled 4-H youth members
- 79 volunteers reported 7584 hours
- 42 school STEM visits reaching 1250 students
- 3325 residents served through community outreach events and collaborative educational



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Stacy DeVeau, Program Coordinator, Sr. 4-H Youth Development STEM Programs, sdeveau@arizona.edu



James 4-H Camp

Providing exceptional service to campers and guests who visit the James 4-H Camp is our top priority. We continue to focus on infrastructure improvements that include electric, water and gas line upgrades. While this doesn't seem exciting, it is essential to ensure camp is operational for years into the future.

Last camping season we served over 1,600 campers and guests, during which over 11,000 meals were prepared and served. Additional improvements made in 2025 include resurfacing of dining hall/kitchen floors, new food prep stations, ice machine, bathhouse renovations, and upgrades to the electrical service distribution in lower camp.

A very special project was completed by a Prescott Boy Scout who chose to build a bridge over a key water crossing for his Eagle Project. The bridge affords campers a safe way to cross a deep ravine/pond overflow space when playing disc golf. The new disc golf course was completed by a National AmeriCorps team last March. The baskets were donated by the Dahlberg Foundation in honor of longtime Outdoor Education Supporter, Jim Williams.

A highlight of our summer was being the site for a Yavapai County Master Gardner/4-H Volunteer Vala-palooza. The event highlighted activities we do regularly at camp. It was a great day of sharing and learning.





Nutrition & Physical Activity

Yavapai County Cooperative Extension promotes healthy communities by supporting nutrition, physical activity, and local food systems for residents across the lifespan.

In 2025, through AZ Health Zone (SNAP-ED), we expanded access to healthy foods and nutrition education for families with limited resources, and guided participants through the year-long National Diabetes Prevention Program to lower their risk of type 2 diabetes.

Our early care and education (ECE) initiatives trained childcare providers in nutrition and physical activity curricula and expanded Farm to ECE activities through garden- and food-based learning. As a Nature Niños partner, we also encouraged outdoor learning and play for young children and families.

Across the county, we improved food access through food pantry partnerships, gardening programs, cooking demonstrations, nutrition education, and activities for older adults.

2025 - Because of Cooperative Extension

- 100% of Seed to Supper participants gained confidence, knowledge and skills, and planned to grow their own food.
- 80% of Seed to Supper participants were motivated to eat more fruits and vegetables.
- 95% of childcare providers increased knowledge of nutrition, physical activity, or gardening; and 97% planned to implement new practices within six months.
- 89% of childcare providers said trainings will improve the health and safety of children in their care.
- 95% of Nature Niños families returned to an outdoor space after the event; 98% plan to attend again and 100% would recommend it to others.
- Diabetes Prevention Program participants lost 135 pounds, an average of 4.59% of their starting body weight, in the first six months of the program.

2025 - By the Numbers

- 3,412 community members reached through community nutrition and physical activity education
- 2,046 children and adults participated in 11 monthly Nature Niños events
- 8 event site assessments completed and 8 events supported; annual partner meeting hosted and outreach materials distributed
- Technical assistance provided to 2 food pantries to increase healthy options
- 3 financial literacy lessons delivered at the Prescott Juvenile Justice Center
- 2 cohorts completed the year-long Diabetes Prevention Program
- 3 new educational/community gardens installed
- 20 recipe demonstrations and taste tests conducted across community sites
- 1 kitchen appliance loaner library established at a senior housing site
- 7 childcare provider trainings delivered on gardening, nutrition, and physical activity curricula





Food Safety



Yavapai County Cooperative Extension (YCCE) provides research-based food safety education and technical assistance to food establishments, food entrepreneurs, farmers markets, and community members. Since 1999, our partnership with Yavapai County Community Health Services (YCCHS) has combined regulatory expertise with practical training to help prevent foodborne illness across the county.

Our Food Protection Manager Certification (FPMC) trainings offered monthly in Prescott and Cottonwood, and quarterly online, prepare food service owners and managers to meet state and county requirements, pass a nationally recognized exam, and build a culture of food safety.

In collaboration with YCCHS, we convene the Yavapai County Food Safety Industry Council (FSIC), which serves an advisory role to YCCE and YCCHS. The 13-member council, appointed by the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors, includes 10 industry representatives and three community members who provide input on countywide food safety priorities.

We also offer food preservation education, pressure canner gauge testing, and high-elevation cooking and baking classes to help residents safely adapt recipes and preservation practices in Yavapai County's high country.



2025 - By the Numbers

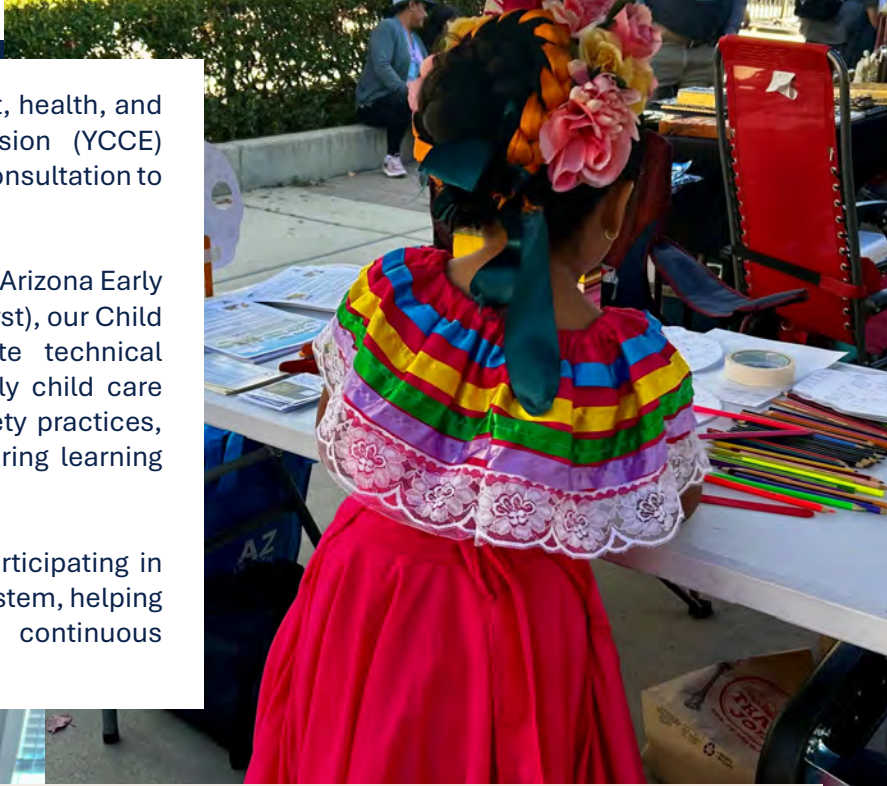
- 23 food safety and preservation sessions delivered, reaching 208 participants through 153 hours of direct education
- Food Protection Manager Certification (FPMC) offered 20 times (5 virtual, 15 in person), serving 129 participants
- Food Safety Industry Council met 4 times to address countywide food safety priorities
- 2 issues of Food Safety Scoop newsletters distributed to all licensed food establishments
- 49 participants attended 4 canning demonstrations
- 38 participants attended 2 high-elevation baking classes

2025 - Because of Cooperative Extension

- 94% of Food Protection Manager Certification (FPMC) participants passed the nationally recognized certification exam.
- 86% of FPMC participants increased their food safety knowledge; 52% will implement at least one new practice within six months.
- FPMC participants demonstrated knowledge gains in key areas: food allergens (47%), safe cooling (38%), and anaerobic pathogens (37%).
- 100% of home food preservation participants increased safe canning knowledge and plan to adopt new practices.
- 97% of high-elevation baking participants increased knowledge; 100% will apply new techniques within six months.



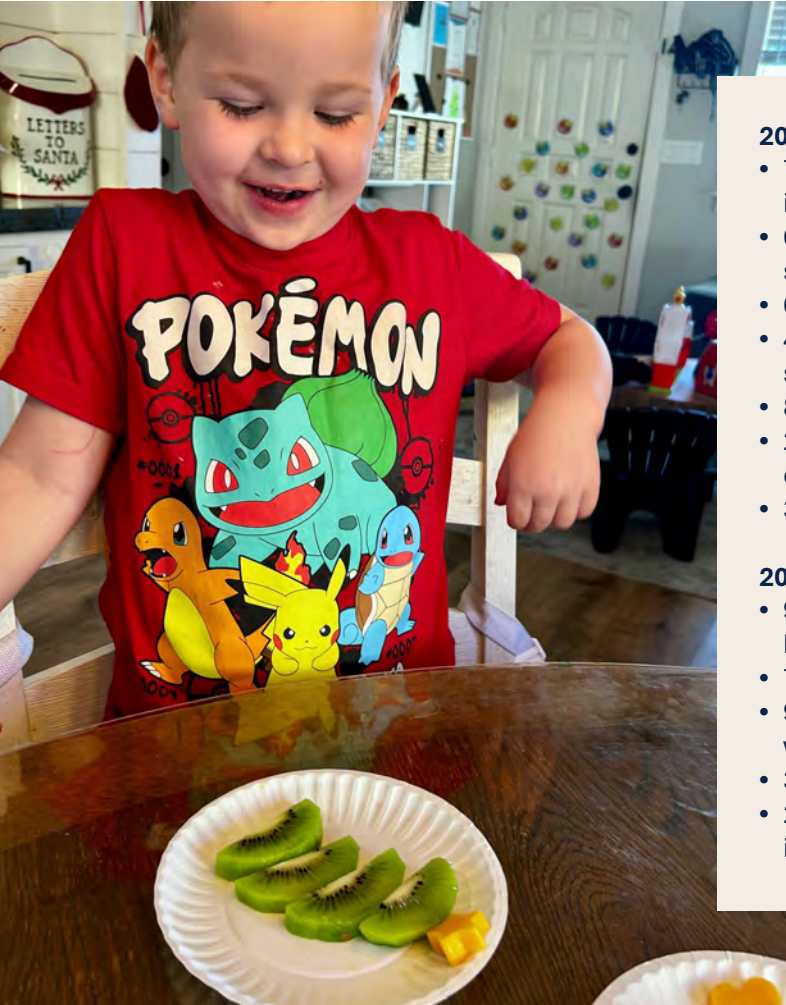
Early Childhood Health and Safety



Early childhood is a critical period for brain development, health, and lifelong success. Yavapai County Cooperative Extension (YCCE) supports this foundation by providing Child Care Health Consultation to early care and education programs across the county.

Funded through an intergovernmental agreement with the Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board (First Things First), our Child Care Health Consultants deliver training and on-site technical assistance to child care centers, preschools, and family child care homes. Services focus on strengthening health and safety practices, preventing illness and injury, and promoting safe, nurturing learning environments.

This year, consultants supported 40 child care sites participating in Quality First, Arizona’s Quality Rating and Improvement System, helping programs meet higher standards of quality and continuous improvement.



2025 – By The Numbers

- 77 trainings delivered to 409 child care professionals, impacting 1,245 children
- 650 hours of training, technical assistance, and on-site support
- 61 hands-on health lessons with children
- 47 staff stress-reduction sessions and 10 assessment-prep sessions provided
- 820 educational materials distributed to strengthen learning
- 27 health and safety assessments; and 35 site observations completed
- 3 Directors’ Meetings and 51 collaboration meetings held

2025 - Because of Cooperative Extension

- 92% said training they received would improve children’s health and safety.
- 74% increased health and safety knowledge.
- 94% planned to implement a new health and safety practice within six months.
- 34 action plans completed to meet health and safety goals.
- 2 sites updated policies to support health and safety improvements.

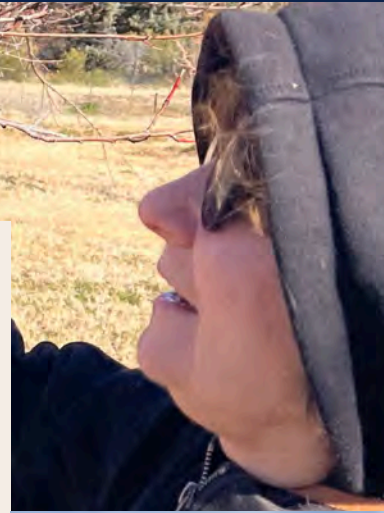
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Commercial Horticulture



The Commercial Horticulture Program supports small- and mid-scale farmers, specialty crop producers, and value-added food businesses throughout Yavapai County. The program focuses on strengthening the viability, resilience, and profitability of local agricultural operations through science-based education, applied problem solving, and on-farm technical assistance.

Yavapai County agriculture is characterized by diverse production systems operating across varied climates, elevations, and regulatory environments. Producers range from beginning farmers on small acreages to established commercial operations managing water constraints, labor shortages, pest and disease pressure, and complex zoning and food safety requirements. This program works directly with producers to address those challenges through practical, locally relevant guidance.

In 2025, programming emphasized direct technical support and applied education. On-farm site visits focused on soil health, nutrient management, irrigation efficiency, and pest and disease identification. Educational workshops addressed compost use, production scaling, pruning, crop succession planning, organic production integrated pest management, sampling, scouting, and the needs of beginning farmers. The program also provided support in navigating on-farm food safety requirements and local regulatory processes.

In addition to individual consultations and workshops, the program contributed to broader agricultural planning and resource development through environmental monitoring, support for local climate data, and industry reporting. Needs assessment work conducted in 2025 helped identify top producer concerns, which include water availability, labor, capital access, pest and disease pressure, and zoning. These needs, as expressed by the county's food producers, will guide future educational programming and partnerships.

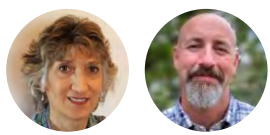
2025 – By the Numbers

- 50+ on-farm site visits providing direct technical assistance to commercial and emerging producers
- Multiple workshops delivered on compost and soil health, pruning, production scaling, crop succession planning, organic production, integrated pest management, monitoring, sampling, and beginning farmer education
- Industry data collection and reporting to support grower decision-making and long-term planning
- Environmental and climate monitoring support, including maintenance and testing of the Chino Valley AZMET station
- Needs assessment completed, identifying top producer priorities: water, labor, capital, pest/disease pressure, and zoning
- The Arizona Statewide Viticulture program supported grape growers in Yavapai County and beyond with workshops, publications, and the 2025 Arizona Wine Grape Harvest Report, which quantified and qualified the industry and coordinated with county and agricultural industry leaders

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Consumer Horticulture

Propelled by the extraordinary participation and impact of the Master Gardeners, consumer horticulture education in Yavapai County supports the community by teaching stakeholders to grow and manage their plants. Serving the community since 1973, the Master Gardener Program enlists engaged citizens to become valuable volunteers who in turn support the community by sharing science-based horticulture practices. These activities include staffing horticulture help desks in Prescott and Camp Verde, giving talks to the public, staffing information tables at public events, and working with 18 non-profits such as museums, schools, community gardens, and city/town landscapes. Several additional formal training sessions were available to the general public.

Volunteers were celebrated at our first Vol-a-Palooza for Master Gardener and 4-H volunteers. Outdoor educational activities were held at the James 4-H Camp, which provided a forum for partnerships between the two programs.

For those who could not participate in the Master Gardener program, our 7-week Home Horticulture Zoom series allowed participants to learn the basics from the comfort of their own home.

Several workshops were held throughout the year. For home orchard enthusiasts, 3 fruit tree pruning workshops were conducted at orchards in Camp Verde, Prescott, and Mayer, with the Orme School workshop in Mayer allowing for a hands-on experience for participants. Stakeholders also had the opportunity to learn how to graft trees and vines amongst other skills at the Propagation Workshop.

Being Firewise® and creating defensible space is of great community interest. Master Gardeners developed a webpage and information-table resources to support outreach within the community. Their list of Yavapai County “fire-resistant” and “fire-prone” plants has been of particular interest to homeowners.

<https://extension.arizona.edu/publication/yavapai-county-firewise>

The Native and Naturalized Plant Database, which includes 1935 Yavapai County plants, continues to provide intuitive, easily accessible information which is crucial to land managers in Yavapai County and beyond.

The program also provides numerous educational publications of interest to gardeners such as fruit tree varieties for the Arizona Central Highlands and the Herbivory Series, both of which incorporated local stakeholder knowledge, unique to our area. There were 7,970 page views to our Firewise, Water Conservation, New-in-Town and Yavapai Gardening web pages.



Vol-a-Palooza water testing activity



Yavapai County Fair “kids corner” staffed by Master Gardeners

2025 – By the Numbers

- 146 Master Gardeners reported 12,668 volunteer hours of service to Yavapai County
- 33 Master Gardeners staffed 2 Help Desks, processing 1062 contacts
- 2680 residents received horticulture information at events including Yavapai County Fair, festivals and Farmers’ Markets in Prescott, Camp Verde, and Sedona and other event information tables
- 83 residents completed our formal horticulture training (Master Gardener, Home Horticulture classes & Propagation classes)
- 120 Speakers’ Bureau presentations were given to a total of 1062 attendees.

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Matt Halldorson, Yavapai County Extension Director, Associate Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources, mmhalldorson@arizona.edu





Livestock



Photo above: Agent Katie H. Spanyers demonstrating how to give injections to livestock when needed for medicine or vaccines.

Because of the UA Agent and Specialist support...

New World Screwworm Surveillance Kits are in producers hands through the ALIRT (Arizona Livestock Incidence Response Team) program.

Collaborations with other agents, specialists, producers, conservations districts, agencies and other industry organizations have served hundreds of stakeholders in the region.

By the numbers:

- Education was provided one-on-one by responding to 40 calls/emails, 12 online/in-person inquiries, and 1 site visit.
- Hands-On Artificial Insemination (AI) Clinic taught AI principles to 11 producers from 8 counties
- 109 registrants were provided education on the emerging issue of New World Screwworm
- 50 participants learned proper injection methods at the N. Arizona Homestead Conference
- 37 producers were certified/re-certified for Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) amongst 4 trainings
- 39 youth were certified through instructor-led Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) program through a collaboration with 4-H

The Yavapai County Livestock Program supports livestock production by promoting best management practices that enhance productivity, profitability, and animal welfare. Livestock remain central to the county's agricultural economy, accounting for 65% of all agricultural sales, with cattle as the leading commodity. In addition, small livestock and poultry production continue to expand. A county-wide needs assessment reflected this diversity, showing operations composed of 71% cattle, 10% sheep, 38% goats, and 29% other livestock, and identifying producer priorities such as operations management and herd health. These needs directly shaped the program's 2025 educational efforts and outreach strategy.

The 2025 program year built directly on these needs and marked a period of expansion in educational outreach, producer engagement, and youth development. The program collaboratively delivered a full slate of workshops, clinics, and certifications including the Artificial Insemination Clinic, New World Screwworm Webinar, Range 101 Workshop, and multiple Beef Quality Assurance trainings. This collectively reached hundreds of producers with participants consistently demonstrating substantial knowledge gains, often exceeding 50–80%, and reporting strong intentions to implement new management practices.

Youth and beginning livestock owners were also a major focus in 2025. Through the Livestock Basics Class, Youth for the Quality Care of Animals trainings, and hands-on demonstrations at the Northern Arizona Homestead Conference, the program provided foundational instruction in livestock health, nutrition, and welfare. These efforts supported projects and strengthened the skills of over 150 youth and new livestock owners across the county.

Throughout 2025, the program deepened relationships with stakeholders, producer groups, and industry partners ensuring that programming remained responsive, relevant, and aligned with the evolving needs of Yavapai County's livestock industry. The year's accomplishments established a strong foundation for continued growth and impact in the years ahead.

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Katie H. Spanyers, Area Assistant Agent, Livestock, khaz@arizona.edu



Rangeland Management

The Yavapai County Range Program had a big year in 2025 with the hiring of Caleb Miller as the Range Assistant in Extension in May. Many stakeholders in the county will recognize him as the previous Range Monitoring Specialist, but with this hiring he has officially become a Yavapai County Extension staff member. The program has thus been in the process of expanding and focusing on learning about stakeholder needs and making meaningful professional connections with other agencies.

The program has established partnerships with Yavapai Cattle Growers, Prescott National Forest, and the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts. Despite setbacks associated with the government shutdown and the drought, the monitoring program has been moving forward strongly and has continued to be a fantastic example of both collaboration in the county and the role of Cooperative Extension as educators and scientists. The program has even expanded to also serve ranchers on the Red Rock District of the Coconino National Forest, showing that the program is county-wide. Other notable collaborations include the Range 101 Workshop as well as an Extension-wide monitoring effort on the V-Bar-V Experiment Station. The program has also had multiple outreach opportunities such as the Talk to a Farmer Friday with the Farm Bureau and having a booth at the Yavapai County Fair.

The year 2025 has built a great foundation for the continuation of the Yavapai County Range Program. Relationships with partners and stakeholders have become stronger and will ensure that future programming will continue to grow and be aligned with the community's needs.

By The Numbers:

- 50% of ranchers participated in trend monitoring
- 76 monitoring sites completed
- 16 allotments monitored



U of A Cooperative Extension and Experiment Station staff gathered for V-Bar-V monitoring.



Caleb Miller presenting at the Range 101 workshop at Deep Well, November 20, 2025



Photo of common yarrow collected as identification example by Caleb Miller



Finance & Administration

The University of Arizona is a Land-Grant institution operating under ARS Title 3 – Agriculture and is financially supported in part by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. As part of this mission, Yavapai County Cooperative Extension is funded through a partnership of County, State, and Federal resources.

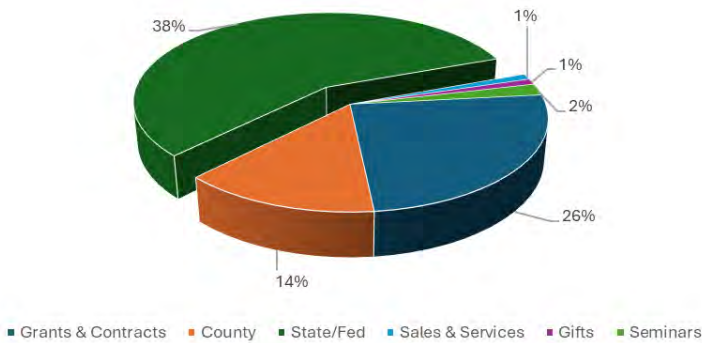
In addition to these foundational funding sources, Extension faculty and staff actively pursue grants and alternative funding opportunities to expand programming and address emerging community needs. These efforts help further our mission of delivering research-based solutions to solve real-world challenges throughout Yavapai County.

With strong local support, Yavapai County Cooperative Extension maintains two office locations—one at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds and another in Camp Verde—facilities generously provided by Yavapai County Government.

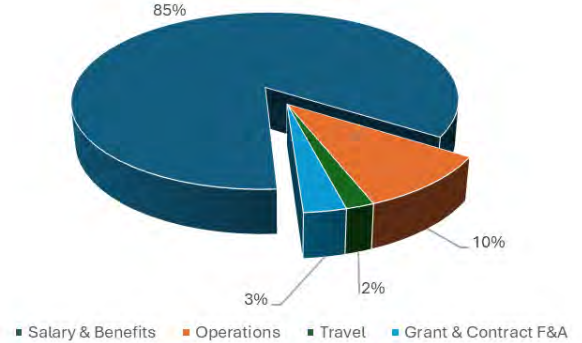
Our goal is to support and strengthen our community through education, outreach, and responsive programming. We value open communication with the residents we serve and strive to continuously improve by building on both our successes and lessons learned. We are deeply grateful for the dedication of our volunteers and the continued support of our funding partners, and we look forward to continuing to provide impactful educational programs throughout our community.

Thank you for your support!

Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Revenue, FY 2025



Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Expenses, FY 2025



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Phillip Peek, Regional Business Manager, phillippeek@arizona.edu



New to Extension

More Good Things to Come in 2026!



Caleb Miller, Assistant In Extension, Range

Caleb Miller started as an official Yavapai County employee in May 2025, but you've probably seen him around as a Rangeland Monitor for the past couple years. He has begun as an Assistant in Extension and is now in charge of the Range program in Yavapai County. He hopes to "keep a good thing going" with the collaborative range monitoring program, and is pursuing a master's degree in rangeland management to better serve this community.



Lydia Watts, Administrative Support Assistant

Yavapai County Cooperative Extension is excited to have Lydia Watts return as an Administrative Assistant after three years working in the community. Initially hired in 2015, she utilized the Qualified Tuition Reduction (QTR) employee benefit to earn her Bachelor's Degree in English from Arizona State University online. In this role, Lydia will be a part of the administrative team providing support to programmatic faculty and staff and greeting the public at the Prescott office.

Bi-weekly Newspaper Articles

Be on the lookout for published articles in the newspaper! And if you would like to look back on previously published articles, scan the QR code to the right.



Monthly Newsletter

Stay up to sate on all thing Yavapai County Cooperative Extension by subscribing to our monthly newsletter.



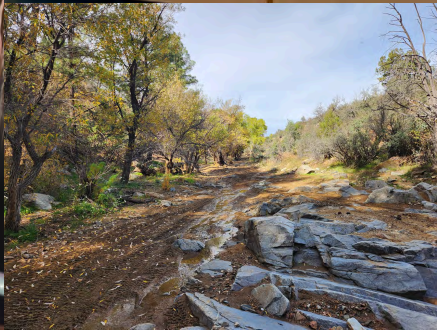
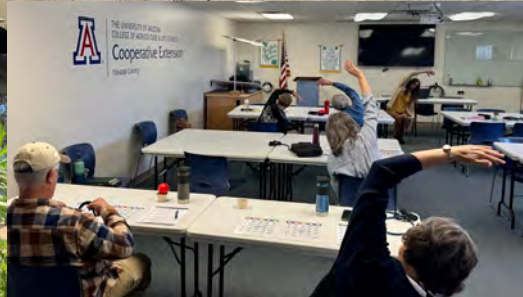
Emerging Opportunities

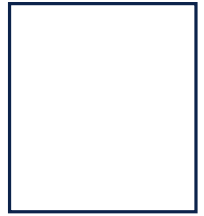
- Livestock Basics Workshops
- Home Canning Classes
- In-Person Food Protection Manager Certification Classes in Prescott, Cottonwood, and virtual
- Grafting Workshops
- Gardening Series
- Childhood Education
- Getting started as a 4-H Member
- Become a Master Gardener
- Home Horticulture Course
- Cottage Food Education

Extension at Work



Happy Holidays 2025





Thank you for your continued support!

Yavapai County

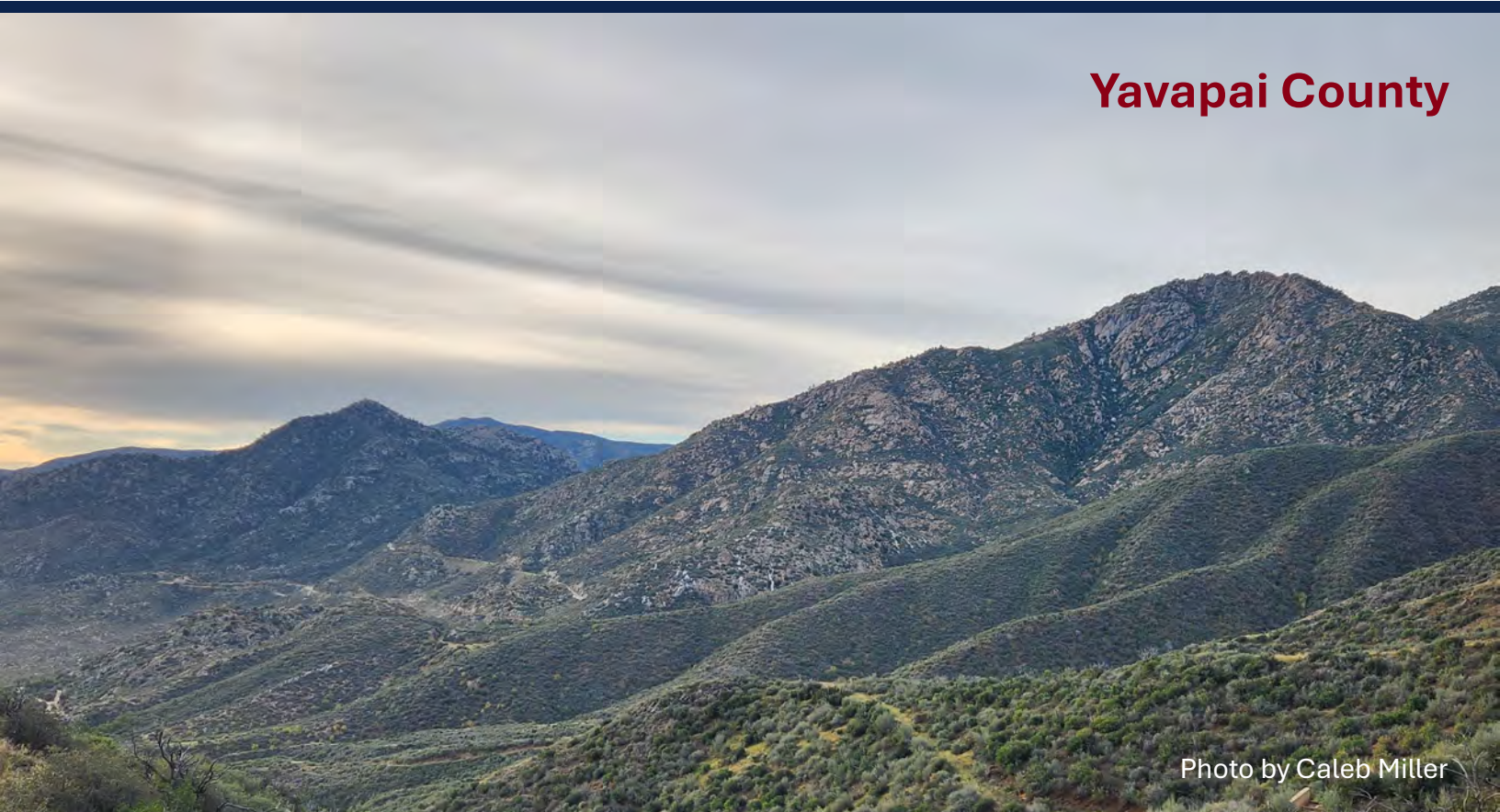


Photo by Caleb Miller

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