



University of Nevada, Reno

**Extension**

College of Agriculture,  
Biotechnology & Natural Resources

## Extension | Eureka County

Annual Report | Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025

Extension is a unit of the University of Nevada, Reno's College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources engaged in Nevada communities, bringing research-based knowledge to address critical community needs. It is a county-state-federal partnership providing practical education to people, businesses and communities.

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## Program Impacts

### **4-H & Youth Development**

The foundation of the 4-H Program lies in building life skills that empower youth to lead productive, meaningful lives. Throughout the 2024–2025 program year, Eureka County 4-H continued to focus on helping young people gain skills that strengthen both their personal growth and their communities. This year, we worked to meet the basic needs of the youth while helping them build competencies essential for success—both within 4-H and beyond. Through hands-on learning, leadership development, and community involvement, we strive to help youth become 4-H Beyond Ready.

The *Beyond Ready* initiative reflects 4-H's commitment to preparing youth for life after school—whether that means pursuing higher education, entering the workforce, or taking on leadership roles in their communities. Being *Beyond Ready* means youth are confident in their abilities, skilled in communication and teamwork, and equipped to make responsible decisions. It represents the culmination of the 4-H mission: helping youth develop into capable, caring, and contributing members of society.

The Eureka County 4-H Program was supported by 16 dedicated volunteers who mentored 65 enrolled youth through more than 200 individual projects. Additionally, 4-H workshops reached 40 non-enrolled youth, providing hands-on opportunities to explore new interests and develop new skills.

Projects this year included, but were not limited to: Leatherwork, Dog Agility, Sewing, Floral Arrangements, Hunting, STEM, Legos, Wood-burning, Photography, Animal Science, Horse, Market Livestock, Show Livestock, Shooting Sports, and more.

Volunteers contributed an estimated 800 hours of service. Using the Nevada volunteer hourly rate of \$30.86, this represents an in-kind community contribution valued at \$24,688—a testament to the dedication and generosity of our 4-H leaders.

Some events during this year included the Eureka Lions Club Pumpkin Patch where 4-H youth helped organize and run games, managed a bake sale, and hosted a community photo booth. Proceeds supported local 4-H programming and promoted youth leadership in community events.



Nine youth attended a Stained-Glass Workshop taught by Anna Fallini where they learned techniques for creating simple patterns such as a tulip, horse, butterfly and more.



The Eureka Jr. Livestock Club Show & Sale show featured 22 participants, 26 registered buyers, and 17 market animals sold. The event celebrated months of dedication and hard work by youth exhibitors while strengthening agricultural connections in the community.

Eight youths participated in an interactive Animal Science Workshop where they learned skills such as livestock tagging, proper injection techniques, and artificial insemination processes—introducing them to real-world applications in animal science.

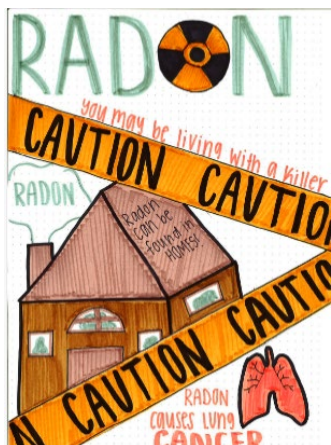
4-H hosted a Valentine's and Christmas Holiday party. These festive events provided opportunities for 15 local homeschool families to gather for games, crafts, and community building while fostering belonging and friendship among youth.

Summer Picca joined the team in April as an Ameri-Corps 4-H Environmental Educator. She served in Eureka County from April 2025-August 2025. She led 30 youth in various topics such as STEM, animal science, goat education and outdoor education.

As we move into the next program year, the Eureka 4-H team remains committed to helping youth develop the confidence, resilience, and responsibility that define being *Beyond Ready*. Through community partnerships, expanded project offerings, and new leadership opportunities, we look forward to continuing to empower the next generation of leaders right here in Eureka County.

## Radon Education and Outreach Summary

On August 6, 2024, Chris Kelly, Program Manager for the Nevada Radon Education Program at the University of Nevada, Reno, conducted a comprehensive training for Eureka and White Pine County Extension staff. The session focused on understanding radon, the health risks associated with exposure, and effective strategies for educating the public about testing and mitigation.



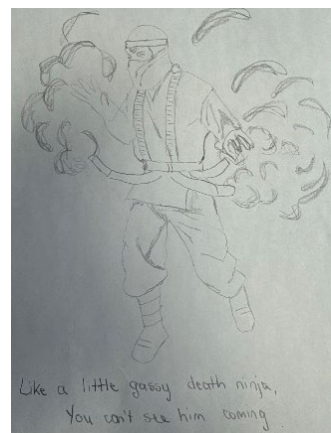
Chris Kelly also participated in the Eureka National Night Out, where she provided informational materials and answered residents' questions about radon testing and home safety. Approximately 60 people attended the event.

To further engage the public, the Eureka County Extension Office hosted its first-ever Radon Visual Art Contest for residents ages 9 and older. The contest ran from November 18, 2024, through January 6, 2025, inviting participants to create original artwork illustrating topics such as what radon is, how it enters homes, its health impacts, and the importance of testing. The contest received **11 entries** across three age categories:

- Ages 9–13: 4 entries
- Ages 14–19: 4 entries
- Ages 20 and older: 3 entries



Winning artwork was displayed at the Extension Office, featured on the Eureka Extension Facebook page and county webpage, and highlighted in the *Eureka Star*. Through this initiative, the Extension Office promoted community creativity while increasing local awareness of radon safety and home testing. A special thank-you goes to Commissioner McKay and Realtor Tognoni for serving as judges and supporting our efforts to advance environmental health education in Eureka County.



In recognition of the importance of radon awareness, the Eureka County Board of Commissioners officially declared February 2025 as National Radon Action Month in Nevada. Additionally, one local resident submitted a radon test kit during the reporting period, which returned a result of 1.5 pCi/L, below the action level of 2.7 pCi/L. This result underscores the ongoing need for continued education and testing to ensure all homes remain safe and radon-free. Through these combined efforts, the Eureka County Extension Office continues to advance its mission of fostering healthy, informed communities through proactive education and outreach.

## Living with Fire

The Living With Fire Program, developed by the University of Nevada, Reno Extension, provides research-based education to help Nevadans live more safely in wildfire-prone environments. Through collaboration with state and local partners, the program delivers practical information on defensible space, home hardening, fire-adapted communities, and evacuation readiness—empowering residents to take proactive steps to reduce wildfire risk and strengthen community resilience.

On May 1, 2025, Micaela Truslove, Community Wildfire Preparedness Coordinator with UNR Extension, met with Jake Tibbitts, Eureka County Natural Resources Manager; Jeb Rowley, Public Works Director; and Hallee Dechambeau, Natural Resources Department Assistant, to discuss the process of developing a County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).





Following this meeting, Truslove and Donald Lovejoy from NDF participated in the Eureka/Diamond Valley and Crescent Valley/Beowawe Firewise USA® community events held on May 2 and 3, 2025. The Firewise committee reported an estimated attendance of 283 individuals among the two days. During these events, residents received wildfire preparedness materials, including *Home Hardening and Defensible Space* booklets, *Evacuation Checklists*, and *Ember Aware* publications. Community members learned about:

- Creating defensible space through thoughtful plant selection and placement
- Hardening homes against wildfire with practical, affordable measures such as screening vents and clearing debris
- Preparing a “go bag” and developing family evacuation plans

Attendees also participated in a Wildfire Preparedness Trivia Wheel, adding an engaging and interactive element to the educational outreach.

## Elected Official Training

Brad Johnson, an assistant professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, visited Ely, NV to meet with county and city officials in February 2025. Dr. Johnson discussed the nuances of local government in Nevada includes legal context, ethics, and open meeting law. The half-day session was attended by approximately 20 participants from White Pine County, Eureka County and Elko County who engaged in collaborative discussions about how these topics applied to their county or city.

## Dementia Engagement, Education & Research Program (DEER)

Casey Venturini, the assistant director of the DEER Program hosted a presentation at the Eureka Depot on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2025. Casey covered an overview of dementia, some signs and symptoms, ways to reduce risk, approaches to care and support, available resources for people living with dementia, care partners and opportunities to connect with the Dementia Friendly Nevada initiative. There were 7 community members in attendance.

## Sustainable Agricultural Practices Program

Agriculture is a primary economic and social component of Eureka County. Sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices which maintain or regain soil health are critical to the future of agriculture in Eureka County and throughout the US. Gary has participated in the Statewide Ag sustainability program and has delivered soil health presentations in Elko, Lincoln Counties and at the Farm Bureau Annual meeting and the Tribal conference in Elko.

## Livestock Biosecurity

Livestock biosecurity refers to the practices and measures designed to protect livestock from infectious diseases, pests, and contaminants. It focuses on preventing the spread of disease within and between farms or ranches, while also minimizing the introduction of pathogens from external sources.

- Gary McCuin co-hosted **Enhanced Biosecurity Planning (FMD/FAD) For Livestock Producers** workshop in Elko, NV. It was partially funded by the American Sheep Industry through a USDA APHIS NADPRP grant. In April 2025, Gary and Tracy Shane (Extension Livestock Specialist) have worked through the prior year to create the Livestock biosecurity webpage (<https://extension.unr.edu/livestock-biosecurity/default.aspx>).

## Integrated Pest Management

Noxious and invasive weeds are widespread throughout Nevada and threaten the productivity of cropland, pasture and rangeland. I continue to serve on the county weed and rodent committee and assist local producers, Nevada Department of Agriculture, and Conservation Districts to provide research-based information for weed issues they encounter. Gary McCuin assisted the Eureka County Public Works Department in locating and treating invasive weeds in the spring and fall county wide.

## Rangeland Resources

Rangeland resources on both private and publicly managed lands are a crucial resource for Eureka County agricultural producers, hunters and recreationists and community. As a rural county, rangeland resources provide the foundations for all agricultural enterprises and serve as the basis for rural life and the culture and custom of the community.

- Gary McCuin participated in The Free Roaming Equid and Ecosystem Sustainability Network (FREES) to achieve the goal of healthy humans and wild horses on healthy western landscapes as a steering committee member.
- Gary McCuin continued serving on the Eureka County Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC) to review natural resource issues on federally managed lands in Eureka County and adjacent counties as shared concerns arose.

## Great Basin Research and Extension Center (GBREC)



The Great Basin Research and Extension Center (GBREC) in Diamond Valley, Nevada, continues to advance the sheep industry through research, innovation, and superior genetics. Home to the Rafter 7 Merinos, GBREC focuses on developing dual-purpose bloodlines that improve wool quality, lambing efficiency, hardiness, longevity, and herding instinct. Each September, GBREC hosts its annual Ram Sale, featuring high-quality purebred Merino and Rafter 7 Merino X Rambouillet rams. Yearlings are selected for longevity, while two-year-olds provide valuable data on wool micron ranges (16–23 microns).

These rams are raised under true range conditions in Nevada's high desert, ensuring they perform in real-world environments. With over 30 years of experience, GBREC remains dedicated to supporting sheep producers through research-based education and genetic excellence. Manager Scott Huber and Range and Livestock Specialist Fabrizio Cartagena continue to lead operations, providing producers with reliable, field-tested genetics and industry expertise.

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