University of Nevada, Reno
Extension
College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources

Extension | Pershing 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.

Extension, Pershing County Office
810 6th St. | Lovelock, NV 89419
775-273-2923
Kristen Burr Extension County Coordinator
kburr@unr.edu | 775-493-8768

Program Impacts

Nevada Cooperative Extension is an outreach college of the University of Nevada that provides information to solve problems and deal with critical issues within local communities. With local needs at the forefront, we develop educational programs in a number of ways - public presentations, workshops, demonstrations, publications and through the media. In recent years, we've begun to use Internet, interactive video and satellite broadcast technologies, bringing knowledge directly to your home and community. With the help of volunteers, we deliver educational programs in these areas: Agriculture, Children-Youth and Families, Community Development, Health and Nutrition, Horticulture and Natural Resources.

Agricultural Impacts

Pesticide Application

Pershing County farmers and ranchers expressed a significant need for practical, up-to-date knowledge on safe, economical pest and weed management. In response, the Pershing County Extension office held a Pesticide training class. Led by Dr. Andrew Waaswa, Statewide Agriculture Educator, Extension delivered four hours of Continuing Education Unit (CEU) training at the Pershing

County Community Center. The session combined interactive video learning with discussion tailored to local production conditions, where five community members earned CEUs toward their pesticide applicator certification.



Horticulture, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment Needs Assessment

Dr. Andrew Waaswa joined Extension's Horticulture, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment (HANRE) needs assessment team in October 2024, which has progressed significantly since his start. This is a comprehensive statewide needs assessment that will have a direct impact on Pershing County's natural environment and producers, in addition to its implications for production and natural resources across the state.
To date, more than 48 stakeholders, including producers, county commissioners, and other county leaders, have participated in interviews and focus group discussions across Nevada. The final phase, a statewide survey designed to capture broader quantitative input from producers and natural resource stakeholders, is scheduled for launch in November 2025. Once data collection is complete, they will proceed with comprehensive analysis, synthesis, and reporting to identify priority issues and guide future Extension programming within the HANRE program area in every county across the state, including Pershing County.

Direct Support to Pershing County Producers

Producers from across Nevada, including those in Pershing County, regularly reach out to Extension for agronomic guidance, documentation support, and assistance with production challenges. Dr. Waaswa maintains an active, responsive presence in the county, strengthening relationships with local growers, addressing high-priority questions, and ensuring timely, science-based support whenever needed. For example, Dr. Waaswa provided individualized support to Pershing County growers on urgent production and compliance needs. Producers reached out with questions regarding Prevent Plant (PP) eligibility, water limitations, and agronomic decision-making. These producers were able to the get letters of support they needed in order to move forward with their plans and continue growing.



Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

Dr. Waaswa attended the Pershing County Water Conservation District meeting with longtime Pershing Extension collaborator Steve Foster, Emeritus Extension Educator, where he met prominent farmers, learned about local water challenges, and positioned himself as a trusted point of contact for future questions. This engagement has allowed him to

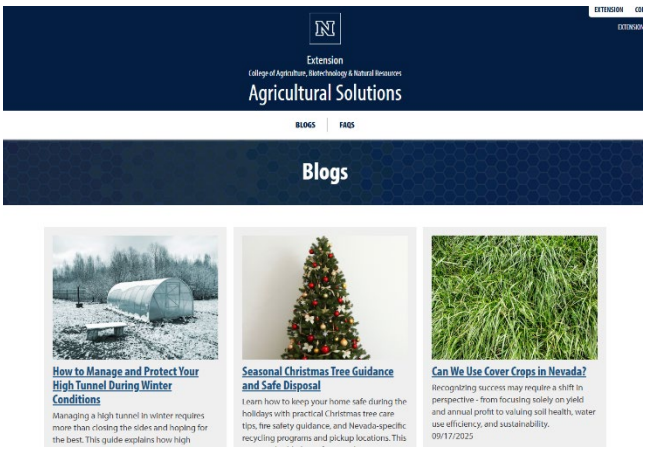
respond more accurately and quickly to producer needs, especially those relating to water allocation, crop decisions, and insurance documentation.

Agricultural Solutions Program

Since joining the Extension team, Dr. Waaswa has launched the **Agricultural Solutions Program** and significantly expanded its reach across the state including Pershing County. This effort was informed by training he received at the National Extension Risk Management Education Conference, where he learned new digital outreach models for producer engagement. The program is delivered through blogs and practical responses to frequently asked questions.

Timely Blogs:

During field visits and calls with growers, recurring issues such as pocket gopher damage, alfalfa pests, irrigation challenges, and soil questions were translated into research-based, practical blog posts. Popular articles include *"Pocket Gopher Control Strategies for Farms and Lawns"* and *"Aphid Trouble in Alfalfa? Here's How to Stay Ahead."* Once published on the UNR Extension website, these blogs are emailed directly to producers for fast, accessible guidance, but also remain available on the website and accessible at anytime from anywhere by producers.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

The FAQ section complements the blogs by directly addressing high-frequency questions raised by growers through calls, emails, and office visits. Each FAQ provides clear, concise, Nevada-specific recommendations and links growers to additional resources when needed. Dr. Waaswa has developed a growing county-specific distribution list, now including several Pershing County producers. This list allows for rapid dissemination of answers to common questions, newly published blogs/FAQs, and timely alerts regarding pests, water updates, and emerging issues.

SNAP-ED and Healthy Living

Pershing County School District Agriculture (Ag) Day

This year Ag Day was held April 2 -3rd 2025. 621 students from the Pershing County Elementary, Middle and High Schools were invited to attend. Organized by University of Nevada, Reno Extension staff in partnership with classroom teachers and school administrators, students moved between nine stations learning about various aspects of agriculture including: animal science for horses, sheep, cattle, swine and goats, Ag mechanics, pollinators, irrigation, planting, introduction to current tractors of today, and Nutrition. Of these nine stations, seven were provided by Extension staff or 4-H youth.

Of the students who attended, 489 students came by the nutrition booth where SNAP-Ed curriculum was used to educate students about healthy eating, with a focus on nutrition in everyday foods and the time it takes to grow the foods we eat. To highlight this topic, students participated in a pineapple

taste test and learned about the nutritional benefits of pineapple. Did you know that pineapple is high in vitamin C, which supports eye health and strengthens the immune system?

Healthy Aging Newsletters

Every month, an estimated two hundred newsletters from the University of Nevada, Reno's Healthy Aging Initiative were obtained and delivered to the Pershing County Senior Center. They were then handed out at the center as well as sent with the homebound senior's meals. The newsletters were also posted at restaurants, the library, and the post office. Some of the highlighted topics included mental health and depression, nutrition and dietary guidelines for older adults, connecting with the youth in your life, and more!

Radon Education in Action

In January 2025 the Pershing County Extension office began promoting Radon Education across the county. In February 2025 the Pershing County Extension Coordinator Kristen Burr gave a presentation to the county commission explaining what Radon is, why it is important to test for Radon, and answering general questions about Radon. She also announced an art contest for children ages nine and up, where one child was awarded art supplies for their drawing on the dangers of Radon.

Over five Radon home test kits were given out to Pershing County Residents.

4-H Youth Development Highlights

4-H programming helps youth thrive through hands-on, inquiry-driven learning that emphasizes career development, community service, leadership, and record keeping. Youth identify their spark, build belonging, form meaningful relationships, and engage in their community. Through this learning many youth experience improved academic or vocational success, civic engagement, and overall improved happiness and well-being.



This year, our program delivery expanded to include special interest (SPIN) clubs, as well as in-school and after-school offerings such as hydroponics and livestock judging. Eighteen traditional 4-H clubs continued to operate, offering evidence-based curriculum to Pershing County youth. Through these youth-officer-led clubs, participants gained skills in record

keeping, public speaking, and hands-on parliamentary procedure.

These 18 clubs included: Arts & Crafts, Baseball, two Community Clubs, Dog, Foods & Nutrition, Float Building, Horse, Garden, Hot Air Balloon, Livestock (six animal species), Photography, Record Keeping, Shooting Sports, Self-Defense, Sewing, Softball, and Snow Skiing. Additional day camps were offered in Fishing, Horse, Livestock, and Shooting Sports.



Youth Members of Organized 4-H Community Clubs (with duplicates): 339

Youth Members of Organized 4-H After School Clubs (with duplicates): 68

Total 4-H Club Membership (with duplicates): 407

Youth Participating in 4-H Special Interest/ Short Term Programs (with duplicates): 55

Youth Participation in Overnight Camping Programs (4-H Camp Lake Tahoe): 15

Youth Participating in 4-H Day Camping Programs (with duplicates): 542

Total Youth Participating in 4-H Camping Programs (with duplicates): 557

Youth Participating in School Enrichment Programs (with duplicates): 1173

Youth Participating in After School Programs Using 4-H Curricula/ Staff Training: 41

Total Youth Participation with Duplicates: 2233

Total Youth Participation without Duplicates: 1446

A duplicate enrollment is a youth who has enrolled in more than one program. For example, a youth who participates in both the Livestock Club and sewing club.

Amazing 4-H Volunteers

Our 70 adult volunteers continue to be the foundation of the Pershing County 4-H program. They volunteer numerous hours to better the lives of Pershing County youth. They do this by sharing their knowledge and passion for the various clubs with the youth that they lead with a focus of helping youth become “Beyond Ready.”

SPIN Clubs



In FY 2024-2025 our program delivery expanded to include special-interest (SPIN) clubs. A SPIN Club is a six-week course of educational content that allows youths to experience a new topic and try a shorter version of 4-H programming. We had 55 youths participate in these SPIN Clubs. The most popular offerings were the Lego Engineering and Robotics clubs, where youth developed critical-thinking and problem-solving skills through engineering challenges using Legos and creative robot-building projects using everyday materials.

Other SP-IN clubs offered included: Forces of Nature, Floriculture, Hydroponics, American Indian Beading, Succulent Planting, and Woodworking.

Bat Boxes for Wildlife



4-H and Extension in Pershing County partnered with the Big Meadows Conservation Board in a cooperative effort to build wildlife conservation boxes with donated wood from Mike Stremmler's Out West Buildings in Fallon. Guided by experienced woodworking leaders, 22 4-H youths learned about local conservation efforts while gaining career-related skills in woodworking safety, tool identification, structural design, patience, and creativity. Because of this hands-on project, kids walked away with greater awareness of the environment they live in and with the technical skills to design and build their own woodworking projects from start to finish.

In School Programs

Extension in Pershing County also partnered with Green Our Planet to support a grant to Pershing County High School. This grant provided one large commercial hydroponics unit and nineteen small tabletop hydroponics units to the school along with seed-starting materials and accompanying curriculum. These resources were incorporated into classroom instruction, giving 16 students the practical skills needed to grow their own food and understand fundamental plant science.

Lake Tahoe 4-H Camp

Pershing County 4-H was excited to attend 4-H camp at Lake Tahoe in 2024. Pershing County was represented by 14 campers, one teen camp counselors and two adult chaperones. Campers participated in a wide range of activities including learning about Living with Fire, animal health, rocket construction, team building, food systems education, animal byproducts, and archery. Daily swimming in Lake Tahoe remained a highlight and favorite tradition among campers.



Nevada State 4-H Expo

In September 2024, Pershing County sent eight youths and 39 exhibits to the Nevada State 4-H Expo held in Churchill County at the Rafter 3C Complex. Pershing youth had an excellent showing, earning several Grand and Reserve Champion awards along with many blue ribbons.

Fiscal Overview

Expenses	
State	43,445
Federal	379
County	50,500
Grants	22,232
Gifts	605
Other	1,244
Funds	
Opening Balance	204,206
Revenue	116,043
Ending Balance	269,749

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