

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY Spring Report 2025

Serving Grays Harbor County for more than 100 years

Washington State University Extension Grays Harbor County helps people put research-based knowledge to work, improving their lives, communities, and the environment.

To realize this mission, faculty and staff plan, conduct and evaluate research and experience-based educational programs to improve the lives of Grays Harbor County residents.

WSU Extension Grays Harbor County also employs the assistance of hundreds of volunteers and community partners and provides access to the resources available at Washington State University and the National Land Grant University Extension System.

Grays Harbor County and Washington State University have a long-standing partnership in providing educational programs and research-based information to residents throughout the county.

This partnership ensures that resources are committed from Federal allocations and University funds to keep important educational programs available in Grays Harbor County.



WSU EXTENSION
Grays Harbor County

PARTNERSHIPS

Additional Grays Harbor County Partnerships include:

- Greater Grays Harbor, Inc.
- Early Learning Coalition
- Timberland Regional Library
- Grays Harbor Fairgrounds
- Senior Nutrition Program
- Aberdeen, Hoquiam, and Elma School Districts
- DSHS Community Services Office (CSO)
- Grays Harbor Community Foundation
- Grays Harbor Public Health
- WA State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)
- Grays Harbor Conservation District

Cooperating agencies: Washington State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Grays Harbor County

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extension.wsu.edu/graysharbor

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Elma, WA 98541

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Tracie Hanson, 4-H Coordinator

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

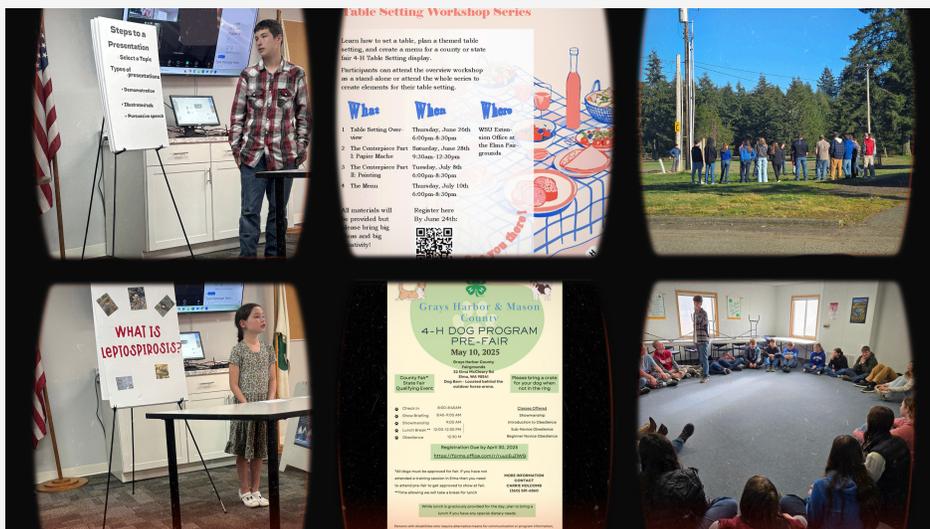
4-H members shared their knowledge about Leptospirosis in dogs, Incubating Eggs, and Public Presentations during the Spring Public Presentation event! A big thanks to these amazing 4-H members and the adult 4-H volunteers who offered their feedback and encouragement!

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

In partnership with Mason County 4-H, community members & 4-H families are invited to join free specialty workshops/clinics aimed at providing hands on learning in a focused area. This spring our talented volunteers shared their expertise in: horse gaming and performance, dog care and training, public presentation skills, youth leadership, table setting, baking and record keeping. Local 4-H members were able to gain hands-on experience through the 4-H "Learn by Doing" motto while working together with caring adult mentors in our community!

4-H CAMP COUNSELORS AND TEEN LEADERSHIP

In January we kicked off our camp counselor training for summer camp 2025. We had over 30 youth in 9-12th grade join us to learn about becoming a camp counselor. Counselor training started the following month, for the 4-H members to develop skills to use at summer camp. Each new counselor is required to complete 32 hours of training; returning counselors complete 16 hours of training. Our summer camping program is 100% volunteer driven and works in partnership with the WSU Extension 4-H program coordinator to provide a fun and safe camp.





Michelle Floch, Nutrition Educator

A local collaboration to feed Grays Harbor

An interagency agreement between Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), Grays Harbor County, WSU Extension Grays Harbor, and with SNAP-Ed assistance, enabled a \$66,686.75 CSFRF grant to be passed through to Coastal Harvest, Grays Harbor's hunger relief agency that procures, stores, allocates, and transports food to local food banks and pantries.

The collaboration turned pressing food access challenges into a powerful multi-agency community response. By leveraging WSDA grant funding, the county coordinated with state agencies and Coastal Harvest to launch a county-led emergency food distribution initiative—filling gaps left by the discontinued USDA Farmers to Food Box program. Key to the initiative's success were local farmers, who became essential “spokes in the wheels” of the operation.

Their farm-fresh products reached all areas in Grays Harbor County, restoring access to nutritious, locally cultivated food for families in need.

Changes to SNAP-Ed

Due to discontinued Federal funding, we are disappointed to share that we will no longer be offering SNAP-Ed services. Washington State University Extension is proud of its legacy of SNAP-Ed programming, where we have provided real on-the-ground support to families and communities that need it most. This work has made a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of the people living in Washington state. WSU is working internally to provide guidance and support to our valued affected employees, and each of our county Extension offices are managing transitions as thoughtfully as possible given current constraints.

Master Gardeners

Wendie Balmer, Volunteer Coordinator

Master Gardeners Home and Garden Show

The Grays Harbor and Pacific County Home and Garden Show had an estimated \$750K impact in Grays Harbor County. The estimate was based on discussions with Fairgrounds staff from last year. :

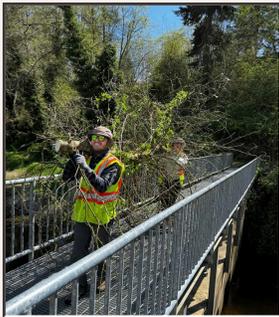
Impacts noted:

- Number of booths (fees paid, estimate that they at least covered costs of attending)
- Sell-out booths: the Mennonite bakery (Saturday only), Solemi Nursery, sold everything but his Japanese Maples)
- High-end booths selling >\$2500 items (including SolarGem greenhouses, the shed people - who I saw writing up some contracts, plus many vendors on the Home side)
- Number of stay-over nights and local dining from vendors (the Stay Beyond Inn across the street in Elma was 60% full on Friday and 50% full on Saturday nights plus breakfasts and dinners from vendors, directly evidenced by Mike/Bev/me recognizing vendors at area restaurants during that weekend)
- Anecdotal purchase reports from our own MGs: For example, Mike K bought \$1600 of outdoor chairs!
- Number of attendees: Assume that perhaps 75% made a purchase under \$100.
- Fairgrounds food service: The number of burgers, fries, etc. can be tallied as a proxy figure.



Noxious Weed Program

Danika Davis, Noxious Weed Coordinator



GHNWCB has been busy this Spring! We promoted our technician, Andrew Will, into our full-time specialist position and brought our other technician, Declyn Foster, on full time. With this full crew we treated several acres of scotch broom, sprayed about 3 roadside miles of wild chervil, and was assisted by WSDA in the treatment of phragmites around the bay, and the first 15 miles of the West fork of the Satsop river.

On March 1st we teamed up with the GH Stream Team to host a weed pull event at Lower Satsop ponds where 15 volunteers showed up to remove the tansy, scotch broom and blackberry. Then we celebrated Earth Day with the Grays Harbor College Forestry program and went out to Mill Creek Park in Cosmopolis to remove ivy, scotch broom, blackberry and feral holly. Grays Harbor College joined us again in June to pull Jewelweed at Twin Bridges County park where we removed more than 25 bags full! In addition to volunteer activities, GHNWC also managed to schedule quite a few education and outreach events such as a Master Gardener noxious weed tour at the fairgrounds, identification, and control presentations for groups such as the Coastal Interpretative Center, the Grays Harbor Backcountry Horsemen, and the Wishkah Home & Community Educators group. Lastly, we manned a booth at the Home & Garden show where we engaged more than 100 community members about noxious weed impacts, ID, and control strategies.

The team is now focusing on treating knotweed on the Satsop river and monitoring tansy ragwort throughout the county. We are pulling tansy in the rights-of-way and sending out educational materials to landowners with uncontrolled infestations. Landowners are encouraged to use the GHNWC weed dumpster for any tansy or thistle they pull on their property. This dumpster is sponsored by GHNWCB and will be available by appointment until the end of September.

If you have any questions or would like our assistance in planning for weed management on your property, please reach out to us at 360-964-1592 or by emailing us at GHnoxiousweed@gmail.com. You may also use our QR code to report noxious weeds you discover in Grays Harbor County.

Scan Here!



Food Preservation and Safety

Andrea Kochrian, Food Safety Advisor

It's blueberry season!

Try this delicious spiced blueberry jam from
‘So Easy to Preserve’.

2 ½ pints ripe blueberries

1 tablespoon lemon juice

½ teaspoon ground nutmeg or cinnamon

5 ½ cups sugar

¾ cup water

1 box powdered pectin

Sterilize canning jars. Wash and thoroughly crush blueberries, one layer at a time, in a saucepan. Add lemon juice, spice and water. Stir in pectin and bring to a full rolling boil over high heat, stirring frequently.

Add the sugar and return to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; quickly skim off foam. Pour jam immediately into hot jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe jar rims and adjust lids. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath.

Does your gauge need its annual check?

Call our office and make an appointment!

360-482-2934



Digital Navigator Program

Shannon O'Brien, Digital Navigator

It's Fair Time!

This past season, I supported the Grays Harbor County Fair by assisting in setting up the project hierarchy within FairEntry, the online platform that is used to enroll projects and exhibits into the fair for both 4-H and Open Class showing.

I helped provide the foundation for how exhibits were organized and submitted. This initial setup ensured each project was linked to the appropriate department, division, and class- making the system accessible for participants online. This removed some of the barriers that come with paper forms or in-person registration.

On the front end, my roles were varied and included assisting in project check-ins and recording ribbon results. I provided direct support to community members by helping them navigate the FairEntry software- creating profiles, adding still-life and animal projects, and completing submissions. It is great to connect with those bringing in their exhibits and to see the creativity and passions in our community.

Changes to the Digital Navigator Program

Due to the changes in the Federal Budget, our program's funding was eliminated. I have enjoyed my time with WSU Extension Grays Harbor but most of all, connecting with those in our communities that needed help with technology.

Our Team



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Master Gardeners- Visit pnwmg.org or call (360)358-0805 with plant questions

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