

STILLWATER COUNTY AG & HORTICULTURE EXTENSION NEWSLETTER

Drought Mitigation Resources



SCAN HERE

**Livestock Forage Disaster
Program (LFP)**



SCAN HERE

**Emergency Assistance for
Livestock Program (ELAP)**



SCAN HERE

**Disaster Assistance Discovery
Tool**

**Call our local FSA Office 406-322-5348 or visit www.farmers.gov for more
information regarding resources available**

Pesticide Recertification Training December 3rd | 4-H Building in Billings

Join us at the 4-H Building at Metrapark (308 6th Ave) in Billings for an all-day workshop covering pest management topics to get your pesticide recertification credits!

****Potentially up to 6 pesticide credits will be offered****

- **Topics will include:**

- **Vertebrate Pest Management**
- **Pesticide Storage and Calibration**
- **Invasives Species**
- **Rangeland Weed Management a la cart**
- **Aquatic Invasive Managment**
- **Aerial Pesticide Application**

9 AM- 4 PM

**LUNCH WILL
BE PROVIDED!**

Questions? Reach out to Sarah-Jane | sarahjane.french@montana.edu | 406-322-8035

RSVP: Please contact the MSU Yellowstone County Extension Office at 406-256-2828 or
f.gamboaherrera@montana.edu



sarahjane.french@montana.edu



406-322-8035

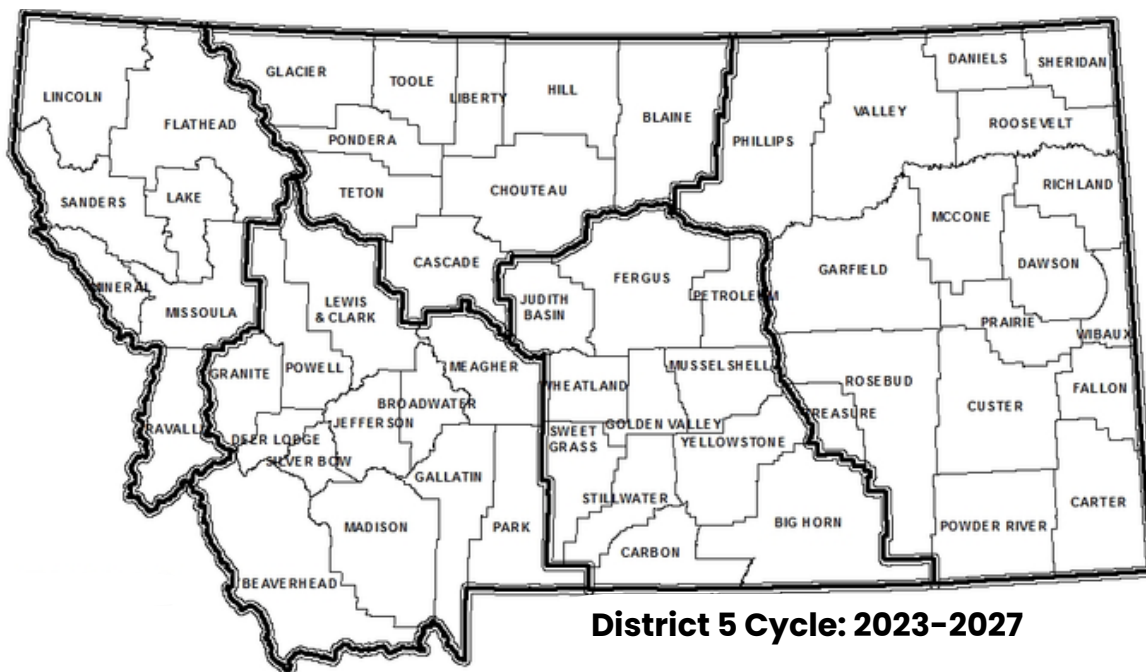
Private Pesticide Applicator License Cycle Ends December 2027 for District 5

The PAT Program is for individuals who need to apply restricted- use pesticides on land they own, rent or lease for agricultural purposes. There are two ways to become certified: 1) take an exam 2) attend an Initial Private Applicator Training. An Initial PAT includes eight-hours of instruction covering the basics of pesticide use.

On January 12th , there will be in an initial training course held in Billings at the 4-H Building in Metra Park. More information regarding this event will be coming out soon but mark you calendars if you are interested in getting your PAT License. The course registration fee is \$40 and \$60 licensign fee. This event will take place from 7:30 AM- 5:30 PM and lunch and refreshments will be provided. **If you are interested in obtaining your license, please feel free to reach out to the office and we will make sure to get your contact information to share when registration is live.**

Permit Fees: Private applicators must pay a \$60 fee. This \$60 covers the 5-year cycle (\$12/year).

Recertification Credits: Once you have obtained your PAT License, you will have to renew your pesticide permit for another five year cycle. There are two options to recertify: 1) take the MT Private Applicator Certification Exam 2) obtain six continuing education credits prior to the end of the refertification cycle. For example, if you obtained your license in 2023, you would need six credits before the end of the District 5 cycle (December 2027). These classes can be found throughout the year at workshops and re-certification trainings.



District 5 Cycle: 2023-2027

2026 Pesticide Education Webinar Series

The MSU Extension Pesticide Education Program is hosting a webinar series where you can obtain pesticide re-certification credits. Online registration is required.

- **November 5th, 12:00–1:00 PM | Precision Weed Management in Montana**
- **November 19th, 12:00–1:00 PM | Management Options for Herbicide Resistant Kochia**
- **December 3rd, 12:00–1:00 PM | Aquatic Plant Management in Montana: Regulations, IPM, and Key Species**
- **December 10th 1:00–2:00 PM | Basics of Non-Soil Fumigation for Montana Private Applicators**

To register:

<https://montana.webex.com/webappng/sites/montana/webinar/webinarSeries/register/8c6f86aa7e96480b98cb5a75d72f1c7c>

SCAN ME!



Waste Pesticide Disposal Program

The Montana Department of Agriculture is hosting a fall pesticide disposal event.

The first 200 lbs of material are free; amounts over 200 lbs are assessed at \$1/lb.

Visit the Montana Waste Pesticide Disposal Program website to register

Location: Red Lodge, MT

When: September 25th



Fall Recertification Pesticide Training October 14th, 2026

The Montana Department of Ag is hosting a Pesticide Training for obtain re-certification credits for current Pesticide Permit Holders.

For more information, visit <https://agr.mt.gov/Pesticide-Training-Recertification-Program>.

To register for the one in Billings, scan the QR code below.



Palmer Amaranth: An Invasive To Watch Out For

In 2023, this problematic broadleaf weed was identified in Montana. While Palmer amaranth is part of the pigweed family, several characteristics make it more concerning than your run-of-the-mill pigweed—including rapid growth, the ability to produce hundreds to thousands of seeds per plant, and resistance to multiple herbicides.

To date, Palmer amaranth has been detected in Cascade, Hill, Chouteau, Custer, Fergus, Roosevelt, Carter, Daniels, and Toole Counties. While detections have occurred in several counties, there are still relatively few known populations, and we want to keep it that way!

Identification Can Be Tricky

Knowing what to look for is an important part of early detection. **Key characteristics include:**

- Stem: Reddish, smooth, and without hairs
- Growth: Long central stem with lateral branches; can grow up to 8 feet tall
- Leaves: Alternate leaves with a long leaf stalk (petiole) that is often longer than the leaf blade
- Flowers: Palmer amaranth is dioecious, meaning male and female flowers occur on separate plants

Overall, this invasive is very hard to identify and often times requires expert assistance for confirmation.

Prevention Is Key

Help prevent the spread of Palmer amaranth by:

- Using seed from reliable, reputable sources
- Checking vehicles and farm equipment before leaving an area
- Cleaning shoes, clothing, and equipment that may carry seeds
- Avoiding the movement of potentially contaminated soil, hay, or plant material

What Should You Do If You Find a Suspicious Plant?

1. Contact your local Extension office or agronomist for assistance with identification.
2. If Palmer amaranth is suspected, a specialist can visit the site and make a visual confirmation.
3. Record the location, including GPS coordinates if possible.
4. Work with specialists to develop an appropriate action plan.

Early detection and quick action are key to preventing Palmer amaranth from becoming a widespread problem in Montana

Source: Seipel, T. et al. 2025. "Palmer Amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*)" Montana State University Extension. https://extension-store.montana.edu/assets/publications/montguidepdfs/mt20201lag_palmer_amaranth_rev04.25.pdf



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406-322-8035

Gardening in Montana Workshop

October 6th

Ace Civic Center | 5:00- 7:00 pm

Join us to learn what can still be planted in Montana, how to grow herbs indoors and outdoors, and ways to extend your growing season. We'll also cover preparing your garden for winter, including protecting your perennials and getting your garden beds ready for spring. Plus, enjoy a hands-on herb planting activity to take home!

**Let us know if you plan on coming! RSVP to the Stillwater County Extension Office
Sarah-Jane French | 406-322-8035 or sarahjane.french@montana.edu**

Help Bring the Columbus Community Garden Back!



Did you know Columbus has a community garden? It was started by a group of community members and was successful for several years.

Now, we're looking for a few people or groups who are interested in helping bring the garden back to life. We have some ideas—we just need people willing to help make them happen!

Interested in getting involved or have ideas to share? We'd love to hear from you!

Small Snail, Big Concern: Be on the Lookout

They may be smaller than a dime, but **Eastern Heath Snails (EHS)** can have a significant impact on Montana agriculture, natural resources, gardens, and landscapes. Eastern Heath Snails are non-native terrestrial snails originally from Europe. They feed on a wide variety of plants, including alfalfa, canola, pulses, grains, grasses, trees, shrubs, and weeds. Without natural predators to keep populations in check, they can quickly become established in new areas.

EHS have been identified in Judith Basin, Fergus, Chouteau, and most recently Gallatin County. They prefer dry, grassy areas and are particularly noticeable during hot, dry weather. Unlike many native Montana snails that remain on the ground, Eastern Heath Snails will climb onto vegetation, fence posts, equipment, and other objects in large groups to escape the heat and enter a dormant state.

Why Are They a Concern?

Eastern Heath Snails can contaminate harvested crops and grain, potentially reducing quality or causing products to be downgraded or rejected. They can also serve as vectors for certain parasites and animal diseases that affect livestock and poultry.

How Can You Recognize Them?

Eastern Heath Snails are very small, with a white or light-colored shell marked by brown spiral bands. Their distinctive behavior can also be a useful identification clue. During hot, dry conditions, look for large numbers of small snails clustered on plants, fence posts, vehicles, equipment, or other elevated surfaces.

Help Prevent Their Spread

Eastern Heath Snails are excellent hitchhikers. They can move from one location to another on vehicles, farm and construction equipment, soil, gravel, hay, and other materials.

To help prevent their spread:

- Inspect vehicles and equipment before moving them to a new location.
- Avoid moving soil, gravel, hay, or other materials from an infested area.
- Keep vegetation mowed to approximately five inches or less where appropriate to reduce climbing and massing.
- Remove trash, debris, and other potential hiding places around properties.
- Regularly inspect gardens, fields, rangeland, and landscaping—especially during hot, dry weather.

If you find an Eastern Heath Snail, do not transport it to another location. If possible, crush the snail to prevent further spread and document where it was found. Suspected sightings can be reported through iNaturalist or to your local MSU Extension office, Conservation District, or the Montana Department of Agriculture.

**If you see a suspicious snail, please report it.
Early detection and rapid response are critical
to preventing the establishment and spread
of this invasive species.**

**Stillwater County Extension Office: 406-322-
8035**

**Montana Department of Agriculture:
agr@mt.gov | 406-444-3144**



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How the Stillwater County Extension Office Can Help You

We are your resource for:

- Livestock and Cropping Questions
- Noxious Weed ID and Recommendations
- Plant ID and Disease Diagnosis
- Pest/Rodent Questions
- Drought Management

Items available for check out:

- Water Quality Test Kits
- Forage testing hay probe
- Portable livestock chute and scale

Services we provide:

- Private Pesticide Applicator Licensing and Training
- Forage Nitrate and Analysis Testing
 - For feed analysis, samples are sent to Midew
- Soil Testing
 - The Extension Office uses Midwest Laboratories for soil analysis. Results generally take about 10 days and are sent via email unless requested otherwise
- Ration Balancing for Livestock
- Farm and Ranch Financial Management
- On-Site Consultations
- Conservation Trees (ordered through Montana Conservation Seedling Nursery)
- Water Testing

Have a question? Please reach out to us or come visit us!
406-322-8035 or 431 Quarry Street (West Annex)