



Agriculture

Vacant

- University of Wisconsin Extension educators from three different institutes and multiple counties collaborated to have an interactive educational display at the annual state event for agriculture producers, Farm Tech Days. The goal of this effort was to raise awareness of farm stress, provide hands-on materials, and share resources available to the agriculture community.

"I attended FTD 2022 in Clark County. I was interested in the alternative plots on display at the UW-Extension education area. The persons in the tent were very helpful ... and sent me a detailed species of each plot and how it could be used on our farm. It was educational and helpful to advise my family as we farm into the future."

-Local Farmer

Community Development

Addison Vang | *Community Development Educator*

- Promotion of a tour of a small farm who used grant funds to purchase a high tunnel to support their farm businesses, with a focus on an audience whose first language is HMoob. The goal is to reduce challenges and barriers to underserved farm operations on the use of and awareness of financial resources to purchase a high tunnel.
- Planning a statewide conference to support a Hmong economic development summit. The goal is to build a network of underrepresented entrepreneurs and business owners to learn and support one another.

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | *FoodWise Coordinator*

Nancy Fastner | *FoodWise Educator*

Joy Weisner | *FoodWise Educator*

Jael Wolf | *FoodWise Educator*

Menomonie Boys and Girls Club: FW staff join youth weekly to discuss MyPlate, each food group, and why they are important. Youth enjoyed tasting a broccoli/pea salad, veggie stir fry and fresh salsa and chips the past few weeks.

Sandy offered information on our Summer Activity Passport to over 100 families at the Ludington Guard Band Tuesday evening show. Also planning to attend National Night Out with the Menomonie Police Department for more promotion.

Interns Aya and Libby have been helping to create recipes available for the Menomonie Farmers Market EBT table.

- Multiple educational events at the Menomonie and Chippewa Falls Farmers Markets with WIC families. The goal of this effort is to support parents on the benefits of children eating healthy foods, provide information on the WIC vouchers and SNAP/EBT token programs, and promote families to try more produce and fresh foods at the market.
- A collaborative effort with Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions to promote our 2022 Summer Activity Passport. This effort helps promote community engagement in summer activities that promote increased physical activity, increased fresh produce access and consumption, and stress reduction as action steps to reduce chronic diseases.
- Collaboration with Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chippewa Valley-Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, and Menomonie in providing a summer garden nutrition education series. This effort will introduce youth to gardening, promote fresh produce, and provide opportunity for youth to increase produce consumption.
- Monthly meetings with the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions. This effort helps guide the action teams in providing community awareness and activities concerning healthy food access, food security, and increased physical activity for local families.



- Monthly Steering Committee meetings with the executive leadership of the Chippewa Healthy Improvement Partnership and Health Dunn Right during which organizational needs are reviewed and discussed. The purpose of this effort is to help the organization identify a strategic direction in order to more effectively guide its action teams including the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams.
- Collaboration with local agencies to create sustainability and promotion of the farmers markets token and match programs. This effort enables FoodShare participants to utilize their benefits in purchasing market foods while supporting increased vendor sales.
- A series of virtual strength training sessions for older adults where they improve strength, balance, and flexibility. This effort helps them to stay healthy and socially connected with other seniors throughout the state.

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Horticulture Outreach Specialist*

Registration is now open for Growing and Caring for Plants in Wisconsin: Foundations in Gardening (formerly called Foundations in Horticulture). This is an online introductory course where participants learn key concepts for selecting, growing, and maintaining plants in Wisconsin. This course utilizes [Integrated Pest Management](#) and [Plant Health Care \(PHC\)](#) frameworks, which promote:

- yard and garden maintenance techniques that reduce pesticide and fertilizer overapplication leading to the reduced likelihood for environmental contamination and pollution
- encourages plant selection that can reduce invasive plant species
- promotes pollinator habitat

This is an approved learning opportunity for individuals interested in the Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program. Visit <https://bit.ly/3ANdrMV> for more information. I will again be a lab instructor for the optional labs offered in this course.

Master Gardeners Dave Weaver and Andy Heren together with me developed a local radio show, Gardening in the Valley. The show features Master Gardeners who discuss a timely garden topic. The show premiered in February. It airs at 7:30 a.m. on 96.3 FM WHYS the first Saturday of each month. You can also listen at whysradio.org. On August 6, listen to Master Gardener/Master Naturalist, Sue Crisp, talk about pollinators and native plants. September 3 features Master Gardener, Jeannie Chromey, who will discuss planting fall bulbs.

The 6-week youth garden programs that I do in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club and FoodWise at the River Heights Elementary School and the Chippewa Falls Community Garden will be finishing up in mid-August. Through hands-on activities, youth garden programs:

- encourage kids to be life-long gardeners
- teach best practices in the garden
- connect kids to the natural world (e.g., learning about pollinators)

I am currently serving on two Search & Screen Committees

- Master Gardener Coordinator – This is a state position that provides leadership for the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program. We are discussing final candidates
- Area 6 AED – completed preliminary interviews – final candidate interviews are scheduled for August 23

Horticulture inquiries are keeping me busy. Questions continue to cover a wide range of topics including lawns, fruit, plant ID, invasives, shrubs, flowers, landscaping, vegetables, insects, pruning, emerald ash borer, trees, soil sampling, caterpillars, woodpeckers and snakes.



- Planning and revising an online course for consumer audiences (home gardeners) where participants learned fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management. The goal is to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills, improve the productivity / health of gardens and landscapes, and to implement gardening practices that have a positive impact on the environment.
- A 6-week garden program for youth at the Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley Menomonie Center where they learn best practices in the garden through hands-on activities. The goals of this program are to teach kids how to food garden, connect them to the natural world and promote life-long healthy eating habits.
- Planning for a statewide webinar series for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution. The goal of this effort is to increase adoption of horticultural practices addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin.



Checking the cucumbers, River Heights Elementary School Garden club

Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*

July has been a month of learning as I take on a new role in Extension. So far I have read a number of academic books, completed a facilitators training and begun a community needs assessment to introduce myself to potential partners and find out what kind of support/programming our area Dunn needs.

I began implementing the Making Reading Memories program, which the jail programs coordinator wishes to see continue for incarcerated parents and their children.

I also met with the Community Foundation of Dunn County to discuss beginning a universal childhood savings account (Youth Forward Wisconsin) for all children born in our county. I addressed a giving circle on the same topic and talked about how to build hope for the next generation.

Health Dunn Right has offered me a number of committees on which to serve, so I plan to attend several upcoming meetings.

The Clerk of Court gamely accepted a walking meeting to discuss the court's needs. I had a good meeting with the director and several advocates at the Bridge to Hope and invited a family advocate to attend my July offering of Parents Forever, a 4 hour co-parenting class. Meetings will continue to be set and I will formulate a report when I have completed the assessment. Our state program coordinator is working with me to choose several other evidence-based core programs to offer the community.



A selection of children's books for the Making Reading Memories program at the Dunn County Jail.

"Thank you so much for joining us at Hope Builders... You are an awesome presenter: clear, enthusiastic, and thoughtful... Looking forward to talking more about children's savings accounts. I'm delighted our professional paths are converging again!"
- Local Community Development Foundation Staffer

"Many families go through the court process and deal with custody transitions. The Parents Forever course is great for learning about these different transitions that each person faces. Co-Parenting can be very difficult and with all of these changes happening all at once it is great that the course starts with focusing on taking care of yourself because you cannot pour from an empty cup. I definitely recommend this course to educate families and help them along with the transition process."
- Local Crisis Center Advocate



Extension

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DUNN COUNTY

July 2022 Report

- Planning for universal childhood savings accounts in collaboration with the Dunn County Community Foundation. This Youth Forward Wisconsin program helps families and youth build savings for post-secondary options while more deeply engaging local nonprofits, educational institutions and employers in the well-being of children and parents.
- A series of meetings with partner organizations, agencies and regional nonprofits for the purpose of a community needs assessment focused on how Extension Dunn County can serve local needs in the area of human development and family relationships education.

Positive Youth Development

Vacant

Luisa, who was formerly in this position, offered to help check in youth projects during several days at the fair. Michelle Bachand was able to step in and attend the fair board meetings in order to support some of the fair's needs this summer. Extension set up a booth in the community building with coloring activities, to help youth and the public understand the wide variety of service offered by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension.

Support

Michelle Bachand | *Support Specialist*

This month I worked on a variety of activities, some of which include:

- Preparing for the Dunn County Fair by attending Fair Board meetings, assisting youth with Fair Entry questions, printing Fair superintendent handbooks, and posting updates on Facebook.
- Creating and distributing a Dunn County Fair special edition Clover Courier.
- Working with the 4-H Volunteer Award Committee Chair to organize and prepare for the 4-H Distinguished Member Ceremony that is on the final day of the fair.
- Distributing the Farmers Out at the Fair season passes and food stand gift certificates to 75 local farmers before the fair and drawing winners for the 40 door prizes from the 78 registrations.
- Creating 300 buttons and printing postcards for the Chippewa Valley Summer Activity Passport.
- Editing and captioning two Agriculture case farm videos.
- Completing annual cybersecurity training through UW-Madison Division of Extension.
- Completing the FY23 Budget information spreadsheet.
- Preparing for 4-H end of year awards by updating the 4-H record book packet that kicks off the start of record book judging season in August.
- Reviewing the 4-H Annual Financial Reports that are required of 4-H chartered clubs and groups as they are submitted.

Area Extension Director

Jason Hausler | *Interim Area Extension Director*

- 4-H Position recruitment has been extended to ensure a great candidate pool. We are optimistic to have someone in the position by the middle of September/early October.
- Working with the Ag Institute Director on what the future staffing plan is for Dunn County.
- Continuing to work with the County Manager on the potential opportunity for an "Extension Hub", utilizing the previous Facilities space in the county house.
- Preparing for the County Budget meeting on August 13th.