



Agriculture

Jerry Clark | *Regional Crops & Soils Educator*



Sign up to receive the Extension in the Valley agriculture and horticulture e-newsletter [HERE](#).

A field event for farmers and industry and agency professionals where participants viewed and learned the benefits and challenges of inter-seeding alfalfa with corn silage to increase seasonal forage production, soil conservation, and farm profitability.

An on-farm research study for farmers, agriculture industry and agency professionals where manure application and nitrogen credits will be evaluated to better understand the effect of corn yield to validate current nitrogen rates and manure credits for corn production and protect ground and surface water quality.

Program Spotlight

Farmers are seeking alternative crops to add to their corn and soybean rotations to minimize crop inputs. A field event was held to discuss winter barley and winter rye production practices. An on-farm research project is being conducted to evaluate winter barley varieties. Farmers learned about agronomic recommendations and marketing opportunities and challenges with production of winter barley. Discussion focused on planting dates, seeding rates, crop protection, and harvest to produce quality barley for the malting industry. Information was provided about winter rye and winter barley as cover crops, and grain production was also discussed. Twenty-two varieties are being evaluated as part of an on-farm research project. Regional educators leading discussion were Becky Brathal - Barron, Pierce, and St. Croix counties and Jerry Clark - Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties. All farmers indicated they increased their knowledge of growing winter barley and management of winter rye. A news story was developed from the field event.



UW-Extension agriculture educator Jerry Clark shows off a test crop of winter barley. A test plot with a variety of winter barley and winter rye has been planted to see which strains will produce the best yields and qualities.

Agriculture

Vacant | *Regional Dairy Educator*



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

June 2024 Report

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Regional Horticulture Educator*



A UW Madison Extension booth at a free event to promote June Dairy Month and National Pollinator Week for the public where pollinator-based information was provided for participants to learn the value of creating ecological niches in their landscape, allowing urban areas to support a host of different insect pollinators. This effort is to encourage individuals to adopt gardening practices that support pollinator habitat and health throughout the year. *(Partnered with Andy Heren)*

An article on the ruby throated hummingbird published in the Extension in the Valley, a tri-county monthly newsletter that focuses on Agriculture and Horticulture news, where readers learned landscaping ideas to support hummingbirds, plus received links to current garden and pest topics as well as upcoming events. This effort is designed to keep participants connected to current horticulture matters. *(Partnered with Amber Gilles and Jerry Clark)*

A program to create clay pot birdbaths for people living with dementia and their care partners to create a space to view backyard birds. This effort offers hands-on experience to encourage the use of fine motor skills, offer a sense of fulfillment, stimulate the senses and connect participants to nature.

A tour of a native plant pollinator garden and a native plant rain garden for the public where pollinator and native plant information was provided for participants. This effort is to encourage individuals to adopt gardening practices that support pollinator habitat and health throughout the year.

Planning a 5-week garden program for youth. The goal of this effort is to teach best practices in the garden through hands-on activities, promote cultural connections with plants, instill life-long healthy eating habits and to foster connections to nature.

Program Spotlight

In response to requests from FoodWise Nutritional Educators: provided a 25-minute virtual program on growing vegetables in containers to address a need to provide outreach on small space gardening for those with limited space, time or mobility. Provided a virtual presentation to address best practices for container gardening, vegetable selections that work well in containers and provide background on the physical, mental and social benefits we receive through gardening to encourage people of all aged to incorporate gardening into their lifestyle. There was a Q&A session after the presentation, plus I provided links to resources for more information. *(Partnered with Sandy Tarter & Mary Hoeft-Leithold, La Crosse County)*



Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | *Regional Community & Leadership Development Educator*



I attended the Rural Partners Network Workshop in Rothschild to learn more about opportunities and best practices for collaborative community economic development. The day featured panels on issues such as housing, small business development, and grant writing. I

attended alongside Human Development and Relationships Educator Luisa Gerasimo and Dunn County Director of Human Services Paula Winter, and we had opportunities to discuss ongoing needs and collaborations in the county. *(Partnered with Luisa Gerasimo)*



Colleagues interested in increasing rural housing gather for a photo at the Rural Partners Network Workshop, in Rothschild, Wisconsin on June 13, 2024.

I also attend the Rural Partners Network Community Partners Gathering at Beaver Creek reserve to learn more about ongoing efforts to build a recreation economy in our region.

I am planning a fall event in Dunn County to host a community meal and screening of the documentary *Join or Die: A movie about why you should join a club* as part of a broader Extension effort to promote social connectedness across the state.

I am continuing to conduct my needs assessment with local stakeholders through one-on-one conversations.

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter

FoodWise Coordinator

Joy Weisner

FoodWise Educator

Jael Wolf

FoodWise Educator

Hillarie Roth

FoodWise Educator



A 5-lesson series with Menomonie Boys and Girls Club youth at Menomonie Middle School in collaboration with the Extension Horticulture Educator. This effort integrates nutrition education with gardening and aims



to increase exposure to fruits and vegetables by tending a garden, help youth learn parts of the plants, and provide tasting of a variety of fruits and vegetables. *(Partnered with Margaret Murphy)*

A 5-lesson series with Menomonie Boys and Girls Club Youth 2nd and 4th graders at River Heights Elementary in collaboration with the Extension Horticulture Educator. This effort integrates nutrition education with gardening and aims to increase exposure to fruits and vegetables by tending a garden, help youth learn parts of the plants, and provides tasting of a variety of fruits and vegetables. *(Partnered with Margaret Murphy)*

A conference with multiple youth-serving organizations to advance understanding of local data related to youth health disparities, assess data gaps, and available organizations. This effort will contribute to initiatives that address the priority of youth connectedness in our community.

FoodWise provided an in-person lesson at three varying times to Dunn County WIC families. Families learned about introducing young children to foods available at the local farmers market, were offered a veggie tasting, and received their summer market vouchers. Twenty families attended our lessons.

The Menomonie Farmers Market has submitted to have 501c3 status. In addition to offering EBT/FoodShare tokens, they now offer debit and credit purchase availability to the community. Tokens can be used at both Wednesday and Saturday markets and do not expire.

Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*



A state-wide federal workshop for rural partners designed to bring community representatives together to foster progress through community action. The all-day workshop included panel discussions and activities that included actions being taken to foster more and more financially accessible rural housing. *(Partnered with Garret Zastoupil)*

Planning to support efforts to improve managerial skills and reduce stress in county departments. The goal is to offer appropriate Extension programming and workshops in the coming year to improve workplace culture and efficiency.

Program Spotlight

A long-term effort to save United Way in Dunn County: as of April of 2023, I became the VP, and President Elect of United Way of Dunn County at a time when the organization was facing a crisis. The board had to close a center that was meant to give away free household and clothing items. It was also clear we could not support payroll. These difficult decisions left a large gap in support for local nonprofits, but if the community gave up their United Way, the

“Together, we will continue to work hard to create thriving communities where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.”

-Tim Bartels, Dunn County United Way Board President



worldwide organization would not allow us to ever create a new one. For the past year, the volunteer board worked to keep the organization going after all staff were let go. We took on key roles and worked to reimagine how we could better serve our community and to keep an active United Way here to provide support for valued partner organizations. This month, United Way St. Croix Valley and Dunn County United Way announced their intent to merge to form a stronger, more unified force for community impact. As of July 1, 2024, the combined organization will be known as United Way St. Croix and Red Cedar Valleys, serving communities throughout Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties. We now have a full professional staff and will begin to give out grants to local organizations this summer. In July I will be able to step into a board role that does not include helping to run this key nonprofit.

Strengthening justice-involved families: Ever wondered about all the families who are surviving the incarceration of a loved one? Wisconsin has a high incarceration rate compared to its neighboring states and almost any democratic country. As of 2023, Wisconsin's incarceration rate was 663 people per 100,000. About half the people in our jail have not been convicted of a crime and are waiting for trial dates or hearings. Having a parent in jail is considered to be a major traumatic event in a child's life. It is harmful to children's development and can create increased risk of poor academic outcomes and behavior problems, as well as long-term issues like poor adaptation to stress, poor social functioning, physical and behavioral health problems, and even early death. Parental incarceration also negatively impacts caregivers' mental health and well-being.

This is why we offer Making Reading Memories in partnership with the Dunn County Jail, where selected parents take a workshop on child brain development and the importance of interactive reading, then pick out books to read and are recorded reading to their children. The goal of the program is to foster strong, responsive relationships between children and their caregivers that can help buffer against the negative impacts of childhood adversity and stress. For most parents, this is their first time taking a parenting class and they typically tell us they love the program because they end up feeling closer and more connected to their families.

"Everything seems spot on, love love love this program!"
-*Making Reading Memories Participant*

Positive Youth Development

Zachary Rozmiarek | 4-H Program Educator



The June Clover Courier can be viewed [HERE](#).

A camp orientation meeting where families could see pictures of what camp will look like and ask questions. We hoped that this meeting would help provide a sense of belonging for participating families and youth and reduce anxiety associated with a sleepaway camp experience. (*Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Seth Harrmann*)



Extension

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DUNN COUNTY

June 2024 Report

An Outpost Camp experience where high school 4-Hers helped lead activities for youth participants in grades 7-9. This event was to provide an opportunity for campers to try new things, work collaboratively, make new friends, and experience sleeping outdoors. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Seth Harrmann)*

4-H Summer Base Camp at Kamp Kenwood where high school 4-Hers helped lead a sleepaway camp experience where youth in grades 3-6 tried new things, made new friends, and participated in a variety of activities. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Seth Harrmann)*

A Fishing Project Day was presented for 4-H members where they learned fishing skills, and were able to fish to increase their knowledge of the sport and grow their interest in the outdoors.

A Lego Project Day was presented for all Dunn County 4-H members where the participants learned new Lego techniques to increase their knowledge of Legos, spark their creativity, and practice their engineering skills.

Program Spotlight

4-H is an integral part of fairs and community events. Event goers need safe, free, and educational opportunities to enrich their lives and give them a better experience. Additionally, youth need a way to make a connection to the 4-H program, so they know it is a youth development option. In response, I planned three engaging, educational activities for the Colfax Fair. The activities highlighted project areas with 4-H. We served 77 youth and adults throughout the event. As a result, they have a better idea of what 4-H is. They also were able to gain knowledge during the fair and have a free, safe activity to participate in.



A group photo of the staff, volunteers, and outpost campers sitting on a picnic table at the group camp site at Lake Wissota State Park. One of the staff is holding up the lime green t-shirt everyone will get.

Value Added Programming

Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties

A study to better understand how farmers and businesses in the organic agricultural supply chain use information on product prices. Results from this study will help USDA Agricultural Marketing Service improve its price collection and publication offerings. *(Stephanie Plaster, Erin Silva, & Katie Wantoch)*



Area Extension Director

Kristen Bruder | *Area Extension Director – Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties*



Please reach out with questions and ideas. The role of the AED is much like the department head in the county. Below is a brief overview of the role of AEDs: Extension fully invests in Area Extension Directors (AEDs) who oversee an area. These administrative positions are responsible for partnership management, staff development, financial management and program coordination.

Through the many interactions the AED has with county partners and local educators, the AED develops a solid understanding of the local needs and county priorities and helps to align Extension educational programs to ensure the programs address county needs. Educators also communicate local needs to their programmatic Institutes which collectively identify opportunities to address statewide needs.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

13

Focus on Fathers

Helping Children Make Good Choices.

6-7pm on Zoom

Register at: <https://bit.ly/46L4nEo>