



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Agriculture



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2020 has seen many changes. Thankfully crops in Dunn County are much better than this time last year! Precipitation was abundant and cool weather created an environment where crops struggled to reach full maturity in 2019. It's very much the opposite this year and it looks like many farmers will have corn that is "knee high by the Fourth of July!" Hopefully the timely rain and warm weather continues throughout the growing season so farmers can limit the stressor that results from the risk and uncertainty created by weather.

June was a month of review and planning. Federal and state programs were rolled out to support farmers that may have been affected due to the coronavirus pandemic. I took time to review the details for these programs, assisted in creation of materials to share with farmers, and compiled those materials into a newsletter and e-newsletter that was sent to Dunn County producers and agribusinesses. I have assisted several businesses with calculations and documentation to complete the applications for these support programs.

I have also been working on adapting presentations from in-person workshops for use by educators and the public. Despite working remotely, Michelle has been able to assist me with video editing and closed captioning of my first recorded presentation, "Working with Your Lender." This video series, article and Powerpoint will be posted on the Extension Farm Management Program website (<https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/>).

Horticulture



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The changes in lifestyle brought on by COVID-19 have created a surge in gardening and landscaping activity especially with first time gardeners. The horticulture team continues to create virtual programming for gardeners of all levels. Recent programs that members of the Dunn County Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) have attended include presentations on gardening for pollinators, growing potatoes and how to protect yourself against ticks. I'm currently working on creating virtual presentations on common garden pests for area Master Gardener Volunteers.

I continue to support MGVs by keeping them informed of Extension-related programs/news and online opportunities for continuing education. I have also worked with Dunn County MGV groups to transition them from face-to-face meetings to meetings via Zoom. Recently, MGVs were permitted to go back to no-contact gardening activities. We must submit a Program Guidance Approval request before embarking on the activity. To date, I have submitted five requests for Dunn County projects, all of which have been approved. These Master Gardener led gardens help manage natural areas, improve community greenspace, and provide education.

Part of the surge in gardening activity has been an increased interest in food gardening. This generated some media attention early on and I was contacted by a

couple of local newspapers to comment on the topic: VolumeOne Magazine: https://volumeone.org/sites/homegarden/articles/2020/04/29/35974_gardening_is_cheaper_than_therapy_and_you_get and Leader Telegram: - https://www.leadertelegram.com/country-today/country-life/gardening/gardeners-look-forward-to-opening-of-community-plots/article_0ec5f0b1-fa13-5b70-8ddf-636f703d5716.html.

I continue to answer horticulture inquiries via email and phone. Since the gardening season began, I have received an estimated 130 inquiries throughout the four counties I serve. Questions are about trees, vegetables, fruit, lawn care and plant IDs. I work with clients on submitting photos in lieu of physical samples for diagnostic and ID help. As many of the plant ID questions concern invasive species, I attended a virtual training by the Lower Chippewa Invasives Partnership Inc. (LCIP) to be able to participate in their Invasives Monitoring Program. Participating in the monitoring program will aid in strengthening my skills at invasive species identification and creates a working relationship with LCIP to help map both invasive species and critical native species in our area.

Youth, Family, & Community Development

Health & Well-Being



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Let's start with Some Good News! Our Chippewa, Dunn, & Eau Claire FoodWise FY21 budget and plan of work was approved at the state level. For the past three years we have had to adjust FTE's and programming to accommodate a significant budget reduction each year... thankfully, not for FY21! The state budget is being sent to the federal level and we are awaiting approval by October 1st.

Virtual Lessons

- Nancy and Sandy took on the challenge to teach Strong Bodies virtually throughout the state. Pamela will join leadership this summer. We are working on outreach locally and will begin a new series starting July 7th. For more information and registration link, go to <https://dunn.extension.wisc.edu/2020/06/24/online-strongbodies-classes/>.
- Cooking Matters is a national program that WI FoodWise is piloting to parents with young children. We are now scheduling virtual lessons throughout our area with WIC partners and Augusta Elementary parents..
- Curriculum workgroups continue. We are having statewide discussions on developing online lessons, videos, and activities in anticipation of continued virtual classroom education in the fall.
- Staff is connecting with Boys and Girls Clubs in the Chippewa Valley to see how we can collaborate and be a resource to their participants this summer.

FoodWise staff continue with professional development opportunities that include but not limited to the following:

- Interstate meetings with University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Iowa State SNAP-Ed colleagues on multiple topics including recruiting, self care, equity and disproportionate impact, and planning virtual lessons.
- Technology training-developing zoom and virtual lesson presentation skills
- Area 6 Dare to Lead workgroup on developing leadership skills- lead by Stephanie Hintz.

Human Development & Relationships



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June flew by and was packed with continuing my progress and programs by shifting program delivery methods and addressing emerging needs for example:

- Two Parents Forever programs were held this month to help accommodate the needs for families. The monthly Parents Forever program continued to be held on via zoom with positive feedback from participants. One participant said “*I wish we would have taken this class before we had kids*”.
- The Highlights of Taking Care of You program in collaboration with the Menomonie Co-op has officially launched with 100% full registration, we are providing tools for self care and offer local resources for residents in need of additional support.
- The Mindful Moments online learning series is weekly in collaboration with Heath Dunn Right called the Greater Good Toolkit, where participants can learn science-based practices for creating a mindful life. Over 300 people have viewed this series in full. This is developed as another way to provide free, relevant, and resilience strengthening programming to our Dunn County community.
- The Health Dunn Right community health coalition is in the process of slowly re-energizing the other actions teams and for the moment sunsetting the Covid-19 Action Team.

Positive Youth Development



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I never would have predicted all the things we did not do this month. That being said, the good work of 4-H and Positive Youth Development is still moving forward,



https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/covid19/files/2020/06/COVID19_PYD.pdf! I offered lots of [links to fun activities](#), <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/home-activities/> to do at home, and I even started a pen pal program with a Minnesota 4-H colleague. I also worked with teen leader Kate W. to create a fun weekly photo contest for our county. Topics for pictures were: Nature, Animals, People and Tell a Story. Check out [our Facebook site](#), <https://www.facebook.com/DunnCounty4H>, to see the excellent submissions! Winners received fun 4-H logo items in the mail, and a bit of fame. Photo credit: River S., age 14, of the Cedarlings 4-H Club. I also sent out handmade and handwritten cards to 254 of our volunteers and their family members. This means I was able to reach over 51% of all our members with a personal note.

As you probably know, much of our in-person programming for summer has been cancelled in order to keep our families safe. ([See FAQs here](#). <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/4-h-faqs-related-to-covid-19/>) That left me trying to help people understand what they could creatively do instead. The [Dunn Co. Fair has revised its junior fair](#) to protect people’s health. A modified fair, without the public, is not something we had a model for. This effort has required a lot of meetings, emails and phone calls to get figured out. WAXX

radio interviewed me and I gave them as optimistic a report concerning summer activities. The 4-H community has been amazingly patient and compassionate as we go through this challenging time together.

The killing of George Floyd also sent shock waves through our lives this month. Youth, parents, colleagues and I have all been grappling with questions of racism and bias. My work with Building Bridges via Eau Claire Hmong Mutual Assistance Association wrapped up this month with a really good discussion on how even people of color can have implicit bias against other folks of color and how to counteract that. I have been asked to serve on a statewide advisory group for 4-H and we are drafting new guidance for our clubs as they look to retain and expand membership this year. As 4-Hers, we pledge our heads, hearts, hands and health to our clubs, our communities and our world. This time of trial and tribulation is a great time to recall that pledge.

Community Development

The Community Development Educator position is currently vacant. No additional updates at this time. Please contact Catherine Emmanuelle with any questions catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu 715-450-0823. For information on Extension's Community Development efforts see <https://extension.wisc.edu/community-development/>, and how Extension is responding to COVID-related work supported by Community Development Educators, see <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/covid19/category/topics/communities/>.

Area Extension Director



Catherine Emmanuelle
Area Extension Director
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COVID-19 continues to inform the way in which we work and operationalize our efforts, and will do so for many months down the horizon. Your local Extension office continues to work together as a team. We meet together as an Area (Chippewa, Dunn, & Eau Claire Counties), have scheduled and impromptu county staff meetings (we are getting to know Zoom and Microsoft Teams very well!), and continue to serve the local needs through Extension programming and partnerships. Statewide, Extension employees are continuing to telecommute, and that continues to be the case for Dunn County colleagues. Colleagues do have the occasional need to go to the office to print, pick up supplies, work with IT, etc. and we support that need. Extension is also thinking ahead of how to prepare for the return of state employees who are based in county offices to the county office. I don't know when or how often that will happen, however we are getting ready and I'm working with support staff on what this looks like. Our goals are the health and safety of employees, and supporting their efforts to continue to teach and serve in Dunn County.

Our colleagues have engaged in meaningful conversations around race and racism in America - and what that means for us as Extension professionals. Extension Dean Martin shared a statement of condemnation of the shameful killing of George Floyd, and lifted up Extension's commitment to inclusion. His statement can be found here: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/news/2020/06/01/condemnation-and-extension-s-commitment-to-inclusion/> As an organization, we are interested in the

long-view and meaningful changes and efforts we can do. Our team has held these discussions with respect, candor, and support for one another as we reflect personally and professionally on our contributions to support communities of color as we continue our work to serve everyone in our beautiful state.

Many state Extension staff are taking their 2nd furlough day in the month of July. They will continue to take occasional furlough days through October. This is part of a campus-wide effort to adjust to the budget reductions due to COVID. The county's fees for the educators will be reduced based on the furlough days, so there will be savings to the county as well.

You may have heard that former Governor Tommy Thompson was named the new UW-System President. Our statewide communications team is working with the UW-Madison campus to help get President Thompson up-to-speed on our work, including the work of Extension! An early communication is being prepared for him, including the work that Stephanie Hintz is doing with incarcerated populations in Dunn County has been submitted to be a part of that initial report. Your Extension Dunn County team continues to be a great example of using research-informed practices to help and lift up the local community.

Please reach out to me on any questions you have. You are always welcome to email me catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu or call my cell 715-450-0823.

Support Staff



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In June I made the transition back to the office while following the County's Safe at Work plan. Being back in the office provided the opportunity to assist Katie with compiling and sending out a summer edition of the Chippewa Valley Agriculture report, <https://dunn.extension.wisc.edu/2020/06/09/summer-edition-of-the-chippewa-valley-agricultural-extension-report/>. This edition includes a variety of information related to assistance programs available to farm businesses impacted by COVID-19.

This month I have also been assisting Katie with a video series project geared towards helping farmers who are working with their lenders during these challenging times. I have contributed by doing the video editing and closed captioning.

I had additional opportunities to continue my professional development related to Food Preservation and Horticulture this month. I took part in Zoom meetings related to Produce Safety, Answering Food Preservation questions, and a weekly Wisconsin Horticulture Update.