



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Agriculture



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Since 2013, I have been a panelist for the Agrivision column featured in the monthly Wisconsin Agriculturist magazine. Farmers submit questions to the editor that are then answered by three panelists - a loan officer, a farmer and myself. Each monthly edition features two questions and corresponding answers. The magazine has a print readership of 28,000, monthly email blast of 2,500 and is available online at <https://www.farmprogress.com/wisconsin-agriculturist>. Extension educators are looking for new avenues to share our programming efforts, which led me to explore podcasts. A podcast is a digital audio file that a user can download to a personal device or listen to from a streaming application or podcast service. I am working with Extension Educational Technology Services to create the “[AgriVision Podcast with Extension Educators](#)” and using SoundCloud to distribute the podcast series. I am collaborating with fellow colleagues to record the question and answers that I have submitted for the Wisconsin Agriculturist over the past seven years. These audio files are 5-8 minutes and cover a variety of farm management related topics. We hope to have the podcast series published soon on the Extension Farm Management Program website and available on Apple and Google podcasts.

Horticulture



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As we move toward season’s end, I am answering harvest-related questions from gardeners. This year, we are seeing several physiological disorders with tomatoes including fruit cracking (learn more at <https://chippewa.extension.wisc.edu/2020/08/26/3713/>). Tomatoes top the list for being the most popular garden crop. I was recently asked to give a brief presentation on tomatoes to two FoodWise StrongBodies groups. I’m also getting questions about apples, trees, garlic, and soil nutrients.

Dunn County Master Gardener Volunteers continue to work to decrease food insecurity during the COVID 19 pandemic. In partnership with the Dunn County Jail, Master Gardeners have had a food donation garden at the jail since 2010. Though it is expected that this year’s total pounds of produce will not come close to last year’s total, they are still able to provide the community with fresh, healthy produce through the Stepping Stones food pantry.



Youth, Family, & Community Development

Health & Well-Being



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We continue to work on adaptation of lessons to virtual to be ready for fall lessons if requested by agency staff.

Virtual Lessons

- Menomonie Boys and Girls Club: Joy and Pamela joined with youth Monday, August 17th, for a virtual nutrition lesson. We introduced the kids to MyPlate and demonstrated a healthy snack. The kids loved the lesson and made a snack of their own as they watched Joy from her home, step by step. We are hoping to do more virtual lessons with them this fall.
- Strong Bodies: Ongoing through September 24th. All Area 6 FW staff participating in leading exercises and the nutrition lessons following. Sandy is working with the state to set up another series starting October 6 - December 17.
- Provided a Cooking Matters sponsored virtual class with parents and children to incorporate more fruits/veggies into meals/snacks.
- Ongoing- Video Review and Video Creation workgroups: Area FW staff to join in to review what videos are existing nationwide to add to virtual lessons and potential creation of new videos for our state.
- Ongoing-Strong Bodies/Virtual Nutrition Curriculum Workgroup: all Area 6 FW staff leading or participating with this statewide group to define our online SB curriculum.
- Healthy Weighs (pantry lessons), Growing Healthy Kids, Serving Up My Plate 3rd/4th grade; Show Me Nutrition 2nd grade: All Area FW educators participating to bring curriculum to a virtual setting.

Professional development: FoodWise staff continue with professional development opportunities as able including the following this past month:

- Area 6 Dare to Lead workgroup on developing leadership skills

Human Development & Relationships



Stephanie Hintz
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It has officially been half a year since the start of the shut down. Wow! With that said August brought was another month that flew by and was full of my regular programming and activities including but not limited to:

- Supporting Health Dunn Right community health coalition to continue to bolster community collaboration, reduce redundancy in programming, and leverage funding and resources.
- Facilitating a professional development opportunity for Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire Extension employees based on the Dare to Lead and group learning curriculum by Brene Brown to help strengthen our communication and leadership skills.

- Hosting the Parents Forever. This class is held once a month and so far has had nothing but positive feedback from parents.

Looking towards the Fall season with schools starting back up and people still reeling from the current and impending impacts from the emergence of Covid-19, I am working collaboratively with colleagues across the state to provide more relevant programming to address emerging needs including but not limited to programs to support resilience like Taking Care of You for adults, programs that encourage Social Emotional Skill building like Learning to Breathe for school aged children, programs that promote positive and empathetic parenting like Love & Logic and Triple P, and programs that help develop leadership skills like the Dare to Lead program.

Positive Youth Development



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The end of summer usually brings a flurry of in-person meetings for 4-H. This year it was more like a flurry of emails, calls and Zooms! I hosted 2 Charter Prep info sessions (virtually) and worked with Michelle on getting the County Award Packets updated along with a tweaked Record Book Evaluation process (due to Covid). I worked with the Fair Board and the Meat Animal Project as they consider if they might prefer to be a part of the fair instead of chartered under 4-H.

In August I assisted with a youth led Virtual Learning Community offering on creating a more welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ youth, and I offered my own workshop called “Taming the Voices in Your Head,” which aims to help people change from judger to learner questions when facing a stressor.

The big effort this fall is going to come from Discover 4-H or “4-H in a Box”. Area 6 is going to supply boxes ready to go with six 4-H projects for youth grades K-4 and will support that with virtual and possibly some limited in person activities each week for 6 weeks starting in early October. More on that soon!

Community Development

The Community Development Educator position is currently vacant. Catherine shared updates on the position, including a fresh look at the scope of the position and support from Extension’s Community Development Institute during the 2021 budget deliberations. 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/>.

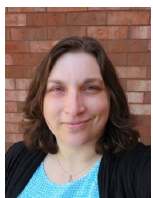
Area Extension Director



Catherine Emmanuelle
Area Extension Director
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I want to thank many committee members who joined our Area 6 Meet & Greet Meeting recently. All of our time is valuable, and we appreciate the time and interest to learn about how Extension employees are adapting and continuing to provide valuable education to equip and transform lives and communities, even in the current COVID-landscape. If you are interested in seeing the meeting, you can access an archived version here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfijfkuQRe0>. Please look for an email the week of September 7th, which will include resources shared from our team for those who are interested in additional Extension resources. We continue to support employees working from home, with limited exceptions to work from the office and/or community programming event, while following local and state public safety guidance. Extension colleagues will continue taking limited furlough days, ending on October 31. At this point I am not aware of additional furloughs, and will communicate if there is information to share. With some employees having school-aged children who have started their fall semester, Extension remains supportive of employees to balance their “parent hat” and “employee hat.” This means flexibility with scheduling. Last and not least, this report may be changing its format in the future. The Dunn County team agreed to help pilot a new format with the state, where we can use our internal reporting to generate a local highlights report. We are still in the pilot phase, and will roll out when ready. It will be a nice change to be able to give our county partners relevant updates and impact reports, while decreasing the amount of reporting for staff. While I have not found the “easy” button, this would certainly fall into the make life “easier,” and that is a good thing! Please remember you are welcome to connect with me if I can be a support or resource to you: catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu or 715-450-0823. My very best to you all.

Support Staff



Michelle Bachand
Support Specialist
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As the temperatures are starting to cool down, minds seem to be in the garden and on the harvest. Our soil probes have made trips out to home gardens and a number of soil samples have been brought in to be tested at the UW Soil and Forage Analysis Lab. Additionally I loaned out our pressure canner for the first time this year to help save the green beans of a client who suffered seal failure on their personal canner.

The support I offer to the educators continues to evolve as their programming does the same. I have done audio editing for Katie’s new podcast and created the transcription for each to ensure ADA compliance, worked to send out program follow-up surveys in both physical and electronic methods, turned paper order forms into fillable documents for electronic completion, been a co-pilot for Zoom meetings to ensure everything runs smoothly behind the scenes, and more.

I have continued to participate in virtual learning opportunities with the weekly Wisconsin Horticulture Update, and Extension’s Tech Tuesday trainings.