



Extension Dunn County Monthly Highlights October 2020



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Agriculture



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Extension educators are partnering with agencies, organizations and others to provide education, resources, and support to Wisconsin farmers, ag service professionals, mental health, and healthcare providers to mitigate farm stress and reduce suicide risk in rural communities. Ongoing economic conditions continue to take a toll on Wisconsin's farm families and others in local communities in the state's ag service and supply sectors. These conditions have led to many concerns about the high levels of farm stress, health concerns, and increased suicide risk.

Since 2019, Extension has focused resources on farm stress education which can be accessed through the Resilient Farms, Families, Businesses & Communities Resource Center (<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/farmstress>). These focused efforts positioned UW to leverage efforts for two newly funded projects. UW-Madison Extension specialists and educators are partnering with DATCP's Wisconsin Farm Center to focus on farm financial management and future planning through a newly funded multi-state project. The Wisconsin team joins Extension services and other organizations in the Midwest. This effort, the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center, is supported through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grant. Wisconsin joins the University of Illinois and Illinois Extension who will lead the 12-state collaborative. Over several years, the **\$7.2 million award** will create and expand statewide access to financial, stress management, and mental health resources for farmers and other stakeholders. Wisconsin will receive over **\$400,000** to provide education and support to Wisconsin farmers, ag-related businesses, mental health, and healthcare providers to mitigate farm stress.

As a project member, I will be assisting with the development of a financial planning facilitator's curriculum during year one. The curriculum will be based on a team concept that centers on the farmer and includes key stakeholders and advisors in the meetings as the farm evaluates its financial situation by answering three questions: 1. Where is the farm now? Where do we want it to be? How do we get there? The curriculum will be piloted in year two with five farms. Additional Extension educators and ag professionals will be trained to utilize this curriculum in year three. More information at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/news/2020/10/28/farmer-health-and-well-being/>

Horticulture



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Horticulture Outreach Specialist (Area 5), Diana Alfuth and I began our Master Gardener online prep class. This class is not a certification class but instead a prep course for those interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer. It will prepare individuals to enroll in the newly required online onboarding class, which will be available this winter. We have 29 people participating in the prep class. About half of the participants are from Area 6 including from Menomonie.

I've been asked by the Master Gardener State office to serve on a committee to identify strategies to help new volunteers stay better connected to their local Master Gardener programs. The need for this is a result of new volunteers currently being trained through an online format instead of in-person classes. One approach we will be taking locally to support connectivity between new volunteers and existing Master Gardener programming is to offer a mentorship program.

I am also working with area Master Gardeners to transition their spring gardening seminars from in-person events to virtual events.

Yard and garden questions continue to come in. Recent inquiries have included questions on trees, yellow-bellied sapsucker damage and prepping gardens for next spring.

Continuing with professional development, I attended the National Extension Master Gardener Coordinator virtual four-day conference. Conference presentations included discussions on how to evaluate the impact of Master Gardener projects, how to keep volunteers engaged in a virtual environment and how to increase diversity and inclusion in the Master Gardener Program. I recently completed a four-week learning circle on leadership using the book Dare to Lead by Brené Brown. I will begin a learning circle on expanding access that will focus on race, ethnicity, and gender.

Youth, Family, & Community Development

Health & Well-Being



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FY21: FoodWise partner agreements are returning with interest in virtual programming. We will continue to outreach and provide virtual support for partner families. This month FoodWise and Dunn ADRC hosted UW Stout Dietetic Intern Kaitlyn Niebur. This collaboration offers interns experience in working with community nutrition education. You will see her article on Keeping Your Winter Plate Colorful in an upcoming Dunn County News.



Joy Weisner

Strong Bodies (SB): Our Tuesday/Thursday series participation has grown to over 300 registrants statewide, 125-130 attendees daily, 37 from Dunn County. Kaitlyn joined our SB nutrition chats and led conversations on food

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safety and labels. We also invited our Mayo partner to speak on stroke prevention this month with our SB participants.

Parent Lessons: WIC virtual classes from the Cooking Matters curriculum will be offered monthly starting in November. This is a great way to do outreach into our at-risk community. New participants will receive a gas card and be encouraged to try the recipes we will discuss. Topics are Peaceful Meals along with Healthy snacks utilizing fruits/veggies and WIC foods.

Stepping Stones Food Pantry: Nancy has ongoing contact with the pantry and offered virtual connection with clients in need of cooking /budgeting resources. She will provide recipes and food safety handouts for the pantry to share as needed. Nancy also provided them with turkey thawing and cooking guidelines to add to their turkey distribution.

Sandy worked with Catherine Emmanuelle, and Jeanne Walsh to launch our Area 6 Expanding Access Learning Circles. This will be a space for personal growth and understanding on race, ethnicity, and gender equity. Two groups (Asian/Asian American and Hispanic/Latinx) are convening for the next couple of months.

Human Development & Relationships



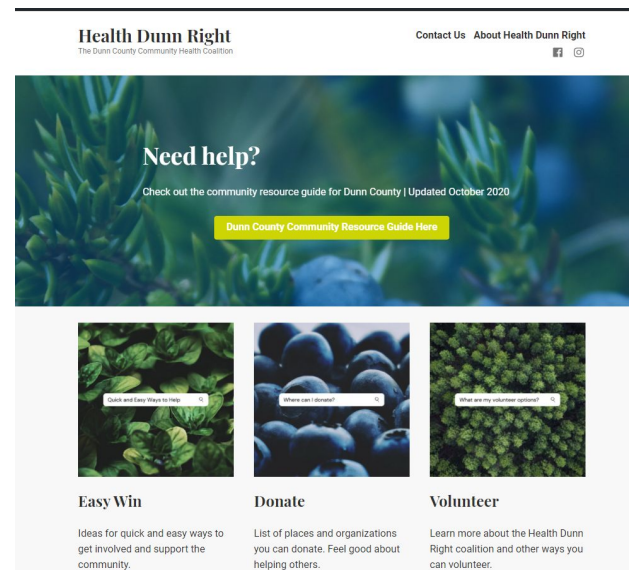
Stephanie Hintz
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The Parents Forever class this month was another success despite the current situation in the world. 100% of the attendants reported they felt this class provided them with information that would be useful in their life. One parent commented “this information is good for parenting in general” noting the workbook will be a useful resource for parenting in the future.

In Health Dunn Right, we are in the process of revamping the website to make it more user friendly and easily navigable. We are hoping to collaborate with a web developer to help us make a centralized and searchable website for all local resources in Dunn County. The website is still being developed but feel free to explore our progress on the website here:

<https://healthdunnright.org/>

Other projects include developing a virtual adaptation of the youth mindfulness curriculum titled Learning to Breathe, participation on a



statewide initiative to develop an anti-racist mission statement for the Division of Extension, developing Bite-sized Love and Logic Resources in various format to accommodate reading levels and learning styles to be published in November, launching a local newsletter for Healthy Happy Relationships, and sharing a free online program for Micro Mindfulness Tools Series.

Positive Youth Development



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October has been a rollicking ride. I spent a lot of time supporting my club leaders as they tried to **figure out how to meet** in person while following state and local guidelines. Several clubs were able to meet this month using the out of doors and social distance, as well as all other safety guidelines. Due to Covid 19, and lack of broadband, many of our clubs have not been meeting at all. This has created a sense of loss for many of us.

Wisconsin 4-H colleagues are hard at work creating more virtual offerings to share with everybody. **Fall Forum** (normally a youth-adult retreat in Green Lake) has over 490 signed up for November 6th and 7th's first ever virtual conference. I will be presenting two times on Saturday, and youth from a state committee I serve on are also presenting.

October is **charter season**. Did you know that 4-H clubs in Dunn Co. are considered non-profit entities under the UW Board of Regents? Each club has to turn in a plan for the coming year, as well as sharing their financial documents from the past fiscal year. Michelle and I then track each piece of the charter application and in November I will begin filing 990s with the IRS on each club's behalf, and uploading all pertinent documents to a state database. This is a necessary but time-consuming task for staff and volunteers alike!

Discover 4-H/4-H in a Box is going GREAT. We have had over 100 youth participate in weekly Zoom activities led in rotation by myself and my colleagues in EC and Chippewa 4-H. The night I demonstrated how to make a windsock we got to see kids running wild in the soft sunset glow of fall, trailing their windsocks and whooping with joy! We are getting many thank you notes and adorable pictures after each Thursday's session.

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

Support Staff



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The Fall edition of the Agriculture newsletter was distributed this month and included the annual Rental Rate survey postcards. The results of the survey will be recorded through the end of the year for Katie to summarize into a final report. If you are a landlord or renter of non-irrigated farmland and would like to participate in the survey, you can complete the survey online at <https://bit.ly/rentalrate>.

October marked the start of the 4-H year and a new enrollment system. There have been a few software hiccups along the way, but the State 4-H team is working hard to implement the fixes for issues that arise and take feedback that we are offering from the local level for program functionality. Enrollment for the year opened on October 1st and as of October 30th we had 97 members and volunteers enrolled despite the system glitches!

A budgetary update; the second invoice for payment of the educator fees was received and submitted for payment. Due to the vacant Community Educator position and the furlough days instituted by UW-Madison, there was a savings of \$11,540 from what was budgeted.

Area Extension Director



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We begin our last few months of the year, which believe it or not includes planning already for next year. Extension employees continue to primarily work from home due to Covid-related safety precautions, and primarily do virtual programming. UW-Madison announced additional furloughs for employees between January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021, depending on salary, employees will take between 3-5 days off during that time period. Our leadership is working really hard to mitigate the unknown financial challenges, retain employees, and continue to program in partnership with our local partners, like Dunn County, during these challenging times. The last two years we've had an in-person all-program conference, which can't happen this year. Instead, we are transitioning to 3 virtual conference meeting dates in December. Like everyone, Extension continues to innovate and adapt to our current world.