



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DUNN COUNTY

# October 2021 Report

## Agriculture

Katie Wantoch | *Associate Professor and Agriculture Agent, Specializing in Economic Development*

For farmers, the best way to learn how to identify, evaluate and manage farm management risk and practices is for them to apply what they've learned to real-life farming scenarios. This fall, I investigated farm management research on whole farm analysis and case studies. I utilized this research in updating the Bella Acres dairy farm case study and financial information, as well as the creation of the Johnson Ranch livestock and Pride Vegetables farm case studies and financial information. All these case studies will be utilized in the Farm Pulse Financial Management online curriculum.

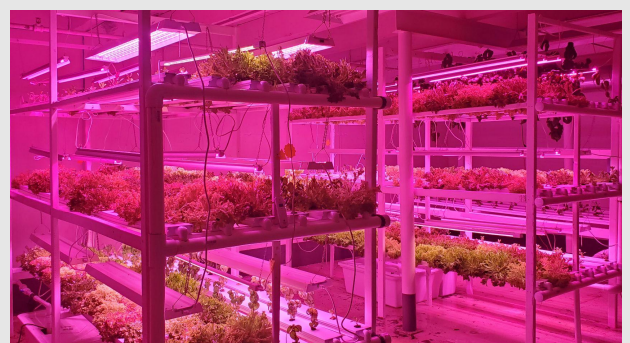
This project will address farm financial management education which would consist of updated UW Extension financial and strategic management curriculum materials to include new risks and format, relevant to the needs of Wisconsin's farmers. Participants will utilize the knowledge gained from this curriculum in evaluating their financial situations and assist them to think strategically about their future business plans. The online Canvas course is being drafted with an anticipated completion date in December and project kickoff in January. More information on the curriculum will be posted to <https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/programs/farm-pulse/>.

- Updating and adapting of a financial management curriculum for beginning, female, and other farmers into a more relevant format for use in-person, stand-alone educational videos, and an on-line course. This curriculum will assist farmers in identifying strengths and weaknesses of their business to assist them in making decisions that will improve their farm profitability.
- A study to better understand the use of whole farm case studies as the unit of analysis for research in farm management economics. Results from this study will assist in the development of case studies for online farm management curriculum.
- A podcast series, AgriVision, for farmers and ag professionals, where UW Extension educators answer Farm Management questions and share knowledge and expertise on how farmers can improve their farm management skills.
- Development of financial planning curriculum for farmers and agribusiness professionals. This effort was designed to increase financial decision-making capacity and reduce stress levels.

## Community Development

Addison Vang | *Community Development Educator*

This month I connected with Chippewa Valley Produce, LLC, a local community supported agriculture (CSA) and indoor farm, that has also been acting as a middle man aggregating local produce and selling to local retailers. Learn that some of the produce suppliers included Hmong small farmers from the Chippewa Valley region. A tour of the indoor farmer located in the City of Eau Claire was complete. The tour concluded with discussion of Chippewa Valley Produce applying for the DATCP Specialty Crop Block Grants to





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support a project to build the capacity of underserved farmers in the Chippewa Valley. Supported with getting letters of support and reviewing the grant materials for submission.

- Continue to connect with local organizations, individuals, and educators around community development with a focus on community food systems and broadband.
- Outreach to Hmong farmers at the Eau Claire Downtown Farmers Market to get letters of support for Chippewa Valley Produce grant proposal.
- Attended two Extension programs as an observer. The first program is called Elevando Wisconsin providing a simultaneous dual language in English and Spanish to support personal and community leadership skills and network across Wisconsin. The second is Nonprofit Peer Learning Program providing a peer network of nonprofits for ongoing support, mentorship, resource sharing, and collaboration. Both programs are virtual.



## Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Horticulture Outreach Specialist*

During October, I continued to field yard and garden questions. Soil testing, apple issues and wildlife questions topped the list.

I am in the process of reviewing children's gardening curriculum to compile gardening activities that can be used by Extension staff and Master Gardener volunteers at youth gardens starting next spring.

For professional development, I attended the Toward One Wisconsin Conference and a webinar entitled Climate Change and Indigenous Ways of Knowing.

I am excited about working with a new hydroponic unit that is housed at the Chippewa County Extension office. Currently, we are growing greens that are donated to food recipient organizations. Our first crop resulted in 7 pounds of leafy greens. Being that leafy greens weigh no more than a whisper, that's a lot of greens. The plan is to explore opportunities to partner on research/educational projects.





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- A guided nature hike for the public where participants learned how to identify native trees and invasive species to increase their knowledge and aid them in making better decisions about managing their own landscapes.
- Master Gardener Volunteer Mentorship Program for new volunteers where established volunteers help familiarize them with local volunteer service projects and help acclimate them as they begin their volunteer service. This effort is designed to increase volunteer retention and their involvement with community horticulture projects.
- Planning and redeveloping an online course about Wisconsin horticulture for consumer audiences (home gardeners) and those interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer. This effort is designed to increase learners' decision-making and problem-solving skills to improve the productivity and health of gardens and landscapes, while also expanding access to new underserved audience members.
- An online webinar series for participants in the Foundations in Horticulture course where participants interact with UW Madison and Extension staff and specialists to learn fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills, improve the productivity and health of gardens and landscapes and implement gardening practices that have a positive impact on the environment.
- Five sections of an online Lab component for the 2021 Foundation in Horticulture (FIH) course participants were held where participants applied what they learned from the FIH course through interactive activities. This effort is designed to encourage best horticultural practices in Wisconsin for better environmental outcomes.
- Planning for a statewide webinar series consisting of multiple online webinars for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about various horticultural topics. The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge, awareness and adoption of horticultural practices addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin (pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution).

## Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | *FoodWise Coordinator*

Nancy Fastner | *FoodWise Educator*

Pamela Warren-Armstrong | *FoodWise Educator*

Joy Weisner | *FoodWise Educator*

FoodWise staff are happy to be back to in-person programming!

Menomonie Head Start 4K are loving lessons with moving to songs and tasting fruits and vegetables. Masks are being worn but one little girl just couldn't go without seeing Joy's smile so she asked to just have a quick look!

Pamela and Joy have started 1st and 3rd grade lessons at River Heights Elementary. First graders engage in stories with our Reading for Health lessons. Each lesson applies an interactive read-aloud format with a discussion that relates reading content to the child. They can relate to characters that experience some of the same emotions they might when trying new foods. Third grade youth start to learn the importance of fruits and vegetables on their growing bodies along with getting encouragement for increased physical activity.

We've also begun a new StrongBodies series at the Shirley Doane Senior Center. Over 50 residents registered and so two classes were opened. We welcomed local residents Marvin and Rhonda Whitman as new



StrongBodies leaders for the Center.

Nancy has created another video to help Stepping Stones Food Pantry guests utilize common pantry commodities. The chicken and rice dish looked delicious and demonstrated how to make a MyPlate meal!

Sandy and the Market Match Organizing Team presented on developing and implementing a farmers market double FoodShare token program statewide as part of a Local Food Systems focus to WI Local Government Education attendees.

- A 7-week wellness series (WeCOPE) for adults where participants learn different strategies that support awareness of mind-body connection. The goal of this effort is to offer skills to decrease stress and increase positive emotions of participants.
- An 8-week series for older adults in Menomonie where participants improve strength, balance, and flexibility. This effort is designed to help individuals stay healthy and be independent in activities of daily living.
- A 4-week series for 4-K/ Head Start youth at Menomonie Head Start to learn about fruits, vegetables and keeping their bodies healthy. These lessons use color, music, and exploration of the senses to teach children that healthy eating and physical activity are FUN!
- A 5-week nutrition education series for 3rd graders to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, and how to read a nutrition facts label. Following lessons, students are encouraged to choose a goal to try more fruits and vegetables at each meal.
- A 5-week nutrition education series to 1st graders where students engage in language arts while learning about eating healthy, being active, and the importance of handwashing. This effort will help students explore, identify, and taste new fruits and vegetables.
- A video for individuals who use a local food pantry that demonstrated how to utilize pantry foods in a recipe. The goal of this effort was to encourage pantry participants to have a broader selection of foods followed by an increased consumption of a wide variety of healthy foods available to them.

## Human Development and Relationships

Stephanie Hintz | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*

This month I would like to highlight the efforts being made to conduct the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment. I applied to the Undergraduate Research Scholar Program with UW-Madison that matches Research Assistants to various projects across the state based on their skill sets and what they would like to develop. We were matched with Odin Schaepkens, an Economics BS and Pre-Medical Studies student at UW-Madison. He will assist with development, distribution, collection, data analysis, and the dissemination of findings. He has a special interest in learning more about the higher rates (when compared to state-wide data) of families that fall within the A.L.I.C.E. categories in Dunn County. As a reminder, A.L.I.C.E. is an acronym that stands for Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed populations. Feel free to learn more about Odin here on his LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/odin-schaepkens-2505601b3](https://www.linkedin.com/in/odin-schaepkens-2505601b3)

- A 4-hour online class for parents in a legal court case for divorce, placement change, child support or paternity, where they learn about the effects of family transitions on children and how parents can minimize problems for their children through cooperative co-parenting strategies.





- A professional development training is being developed for law enforcement, justice and community partners so they can better understand and interact more effectively with Veterans.
- A program (incorporating Money Matters) for Department of Workforce Development clients where they gained financial skills, and earned a voucher they could redeem when opening a savings account at a local credit union. The purpose of the effort is to improve financial wellbeing and stability of participants.
- A series of newsletters for parents and caregivers where participants learned tips on raising healthy and happy children along with tools for solving common parenting challenges. This effort is designed to support family stability, understanding of child development, and increase resiliency.

## Positive Youth Development

Luisa Gerasimo | 4-H Program Educator

Fall is re-enrollment and re-chartering season, so we have been busy helping clubs get their paperwork in, filing 990s with the IRS, and helping families sign up for 4-H.

In addition to these tasks, I planned a Spooky History event at the Dunn County Potter's Field with Sofi Nelson Doanne and enjoyed meeting with the Small Animal Project. I visited the Colfax Comets 4-H Club to talk about taking cats as a project and showing a cat at a local fair.

This fall I have presented Cloverbud activities at the Boys and Girls Club at River Heights Elementary. This gives me a chance to talk about 4-H, send brochures home in children's backpacks, and have a really great time doing things like using our Wisconsin 4-H Cloverbud curriculum to do an active outside bird flocking and migration simulation.

Planning is now underway for a multi-county International Holiday Baking mini-camp, winter camp, and another Art U online series with the University of Wisconsin Stout art educators.

- The first in-person session for a six-week hybrid "Discover 4-H" program for youth in grades K-4. This program included materials for doing polymer science using the 4-H curriculum, and was taught by 4-H educators in order to provide exposure to new audiences to 4H and build a sense of community connection in our region.
- The second session for a six-week hybrid "Discover 4-H" program for youth in grades K-4 where they learned about tree and leaf science using the 4-H curriculum. The purpose of this program is to provide exposure to new audiences to 4H and build a sense of community connection in our region.
- A program for youth in grades K-4 where they learned about baking and made muffins together in a Zoom meeting. The purpose of this program is to provide exposure to new audiences to 4H and build a sense of community connection in our region.
- A series of meetings with a 4-H graduate to plan a marketing campaign in which a new financial assistance fund will be explained to the county 4-H participants. The local 4-H program has never had a way to help youth who have financial need access projects and activities, so there is a clear need to market this opportunity to clubs, families and youth.



Two 4-H youth enjoying the product of their muffin making class.



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- A series of meetings with partner agency Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association in order to begin the restarting of a shared after-school club for Hmong teenagers. This club supports teens who as they cope with two cultures, domestic violence and sexual assault by providing professional staff, education on prevention and recovery, creative art and STEM activities and access to post-secondary options.
- A series of planning meetings for three county 4-H educators to develop and implement a six-week hybrid "Discover 4-H" program for youth in grades K-4. This program will include all needed materials for doing 6 diverse projects using the 4-H curriculum taught by the educators and volunteers, and will provide exposure to new audiences to 4-H.
- Record Book Evaluation Night for youth and clubs to have their books evaluated in order to encourage and reward good 4-H record keeping. Record books are a tradition going back to the early years of 4-H and allow members to account for expenses, show lessons learned and celebrate successes.



Young boy experimenting with 4-H polymer science blowing a slime bubble.

## Support

Michelle Bachand | *Support Specialist*

In October the second payment towards the Extension 136 contract was submitted. Due to the Educator furloughs the first half of the year and the Community Development position being vacant part of the year, the total contractual payment is \$10,059.85 less than budgeted. As of November 1st, we have 17% remaining in our budget and are on track to be under budget.

Additional activities that I worked on this month include:

- Modifying a Co-Parenting PowerPoint presentation from English to Spanish with translations provided by the Extension Language Access Team.
- Preparing for the Western Wisconsin Ag Lenders conference by drafting the brochure, updating the mailing list, creating the event registration.
- Preparing for the Pesticide Applicator Training by reserving facilities, adding dates to the Extension event calendar, creating the event registration, and recertification notices for applicators with expiring certifications.
- Updating websites with up-to-date information about Master Gardeners and the 2022 Dairy Breakfast.
- Audio editing and transcription of podcast episodes.
- Assisting the StrongBodies session with printing sign-in sheets and creating name tags for attendees.
- Viewing Extension webinars on Open Meetings Laws, Agenda & Minutes, Public Records Laws.
- Purchasing Parenting workbooks, Pesticide Applicator Training manuals, and 4-H and Horticulture curriculum.
- Sending out multiple mailings, including a survey for beef producers, 4-H Leader updates, Western Wisconsin Ag Lenders event brochures, and notices for recertification of Pesticide Applicator Training.



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## Area Extension Director

Catherine Emmanuelle | Area Extension Director – Chippewa, Dunn, & Eau Claire Counties

Our newer colleagues in Area 6 (Yia and Lyssa in Eau Claire, Addison in Chippewa, Dunn, & Eau Claire) and I have started a mini-cohort and started to meet in-person and virtually as we continue to learn about the three counties, state operations, and programming. I've found the informal conversations to be helpful, and great reminders on how each of our different Extension programming shares a common theme – to improve and transform lives through in-community county and university education partnership.

You may have heard that our friend and colleague, Pamela Warren-Armstrong, is retired from Extension after a long career, including her many years as a FoodWise Educator in Eau Claire County. I am working with FoodWise Coordinator, Sandy Tarter, on filling the position. Sandy will be leading the search and screen process, and I'll support Sandy on the administrative side when it comes to hiring the next educator. We are excited that we were able to successfully advocate for a 1.0 full time equivalency (FTE) position, an increase from the previous 0.80 FTE. The new position will also serve as an educator who will teach across Dunn & Eau Claire, and potentially Chippewa County too as needs arise.

From a statewide perspective, you may have heard that our Chancellor, Dr. Becky Blank, will be joining Northwestern University as their president (and first female leader) next year. Dr. Blank has been an incredible supporter of Extension (her parents were county Extension educators). I will miss having her as our champion and wish her the best of luck. You can read more about her announcement in a letter from her here:

<https://chancellor.wisc.edu/blog/some-personal-news/>



The Extension team participated in the Halloween costume contest with “The Spice Girls” costumes!



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## What's Next

- November 30th - December 21st, Tuesday Evenings, 6:30pm, 4-H Cultural Holiday Baking Mini Camp
- December - April, Second Thursday of each month, 6:30pm, Regional Cloverbud Mini-Camp
- January 6th, 9am-3:30pm, Western Wisconsin Ag Lenders Conference: The Agricultural Lenders Conference is designed primarily for Lenders and Agriculture professionals who work with farm clientele.
- February 26th, 4-H TriCounty Performing Arts Festival
- Private Pesticide Applicator Training:

DATE:	TIME:	TRAINING TYPE:	CAPACITY:	PLACE:
Tues, Jan 25	9:00am	Webinar viewing	20	Government Center, Rm 60
Thurs, Jan 27	9:30am	Live training	25	Dean & Sue's, Menomonie
Wed, Feb 2	9:30am	Live training	50	Ridgeland Community Center
Tues, Feb 15	9:30am	Live training	25	Dean & Sue's, Menomonie
Mon, Feb 21	9:30am	Live training	25	Dean & Sue's, Menomonie
Tues, Mar 15	9:00am	Webinar viewing	20	Government Center, Rm 60
Tues, Apr 5	9:00am	Webinar viewing	20	Government Center, Rm 60