

Agriculture

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

A program for youth livestock producers where they learned about beef, sheep and swine feeding and nutrition standards. Through this program, youth can better understand how to raise and feed quality meat products.

A youth livestock nutrition and care workshop was held on Saturday, March 19, 2022. Area youth with an interest in livestock were invited to a two hour session at the Colfax Fairgrounds. The event was sponsored by Synergy Cooperative and no registration fee was charged. A panel of professionals spoke at the event, including Lynette Miller of Purina Animal Feeds, Lyssa Seefeldt of Extension Eau Claire County, and Jerry Clark, Extension Chippewa County. Edwards Show Pigs and J/K Charolais Ranch provided animals for the session. A total of 25 people (youth and their families) from five counties attended the workshop and increased their knowledge on the basic nutrients to feed their livestock, property frame size and care of their animals, and manure credits and disposal best practices.



Pictures of Wantoch's daughter with the animals at the Youth Livestock Nutrition and Care workshop on March 19, 2022.

- A series of meetings with farm businesses where they learned about farm succession planning, preparation of farm financial information, and factors affecting their business transition. The purpose of these meetings is to help farmers make informed decisions for their business and improve the success of their farm business transition.
- 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.
- A training for people who use pesticides to produce an agricultural commodity on property they or their employer owns or controls, where participants learn to safely apply restricted-use pesticides. The goal of this program is to increase personal safety of employees and farmers who use pesticides.
- Updating and adapting 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 training session for manure applicators and farmers where participants learn to apply manure safely and accurately to keep themselves safe and protect the environment.

Community Development

Addison Vang | Community Development Educator

April was an exciting month for professional development and programming. I was able to attend the Wisconsin's Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP-WI) hybrid conference. The first part of the conference was in person in Rothschild, Wisconsin. Being hired during the pandemic, I have only been able to meet Extension colleagues over zoom so it was great to finally meet in person. One notable virtual session is Placemaking 101, a community strategy to create a place where people want to live, work, and play. JCEP was a great experience to finally meet in person and to learn about what others are doing in Extension.

The HMoor/Hmong Farm Financial Workshop (in collaboration with DATCP, Groundswell, Compeer, NRCS, and the Wisconsin Hmong Chamber) in Eau Claire and Sun Prairie was held this month with an overall good turnout. The workshop presented on how to qualify and



apply for farm and business loans, and the USDA Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) grant. I was able to present to these farmers the services Extension can provide and as a resource available in most counties. Many HMoob (Hmong) farmers expressed interest and were engaged in the presentation. They also expressed their appreciation of the workshop being presented by HMoob professionals in the HMoob language.

- Planning a statewide conference to support a Hmong economic development summit. The goal is to build a network of underrepresented entrepreneurs and business owners to learn and support one another.
- A workshop for people in local government, organizations, and businesses, where participants learned how to find and research a grant and how to successfully complete a grant proposal or application to enable them to apply for a grant to fund activities and projects of their organization.
- An educational program for underserved Hmong Farmers, where they learn how to complete financial documents and learn of financial resources to support their farm businesses. The goal is to reduce challenges and barriers to support and/or expand underserved farm operations with introduction of financial practices and increased knowledge to access financial resources.

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | FoodWise Coordinator

Nancy Fastner | FoodWise Educator

Joy Weisner | FoodWise Educator

Jael Wolf | FoodWise Educator

Our team has been quite busy in classrooms across the area now that all schools and teachers are ready for in-person programming once again.

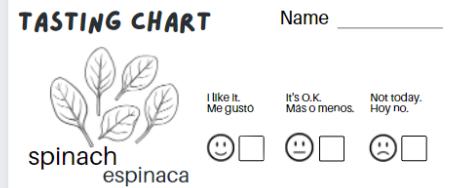
Being responsive to younger youth who speak English as a second language is important to us. One example, we use materials that can help bridge the gap in developing language skills such as this Tasting Chart. We hope you say "me gusto" as well to veggies like spinach!

Sandy is in conversations with multiple food pantries to discuss having options for culturally responsive foods for Hmong/Hmoob and Latino/Hispanic families. Stepping Stones Food Pantry in Menomonie and West Cap Food Pantry/ Distribution Center in Boyceville are two pilot pantries working on this initiative. Sandy and Jael also visited Feed My People Food Bank to discuss availability of relevant foods and received a tour of their expanding facilities.

FoodWise educators took part in a statewide StrongBodies training in Neillsville. Nancy is on the leadership team as a facilitator. Joy joined as a review for changes added to the classes and Jael will be trained for the first time.

Jael completed the 21 Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge and the Mental Health First Aid for Youth training. This training is designed for adults working with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan (ALGEE) for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Join in on the celebration! The Menomonie Library plans to have a grand opening of the Storywalk ® at Lakeside Park on May 25th at 10:30am. This project was supported and funded through the Health Dunn Right-Chronic Disease Prevention Team with grant from the Community Foundation.



- A series of virtual strength training sessions for older adults where they improve strength, balance, and flexibility. This effort helps them to stay healthy and socially connected with other seniors throughout the state.
- A 6-week nutrition education series to 1st graders in Augusta Elementary where students engage in language arts while learning about eating healthy, being active, and the importance of handwashing. The goal of this effort is to help students explore, identify, and taste new fruits and vegetables.
- A 6-week nutrition education series to 2nd graders in Parkview Elementary. The goal of this effort is to help youth to learn about the importance of MyPlate and eating five food groups, proper hand washing, and physical activity,

- A 6-week nutrition education series to 3rd graders at Augusta and Flynn Elementary 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 6-week nutrition education series to 4th graders at Halmstad Elementary to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, role of nutrients, physical activity, and creating healthy snack options. Following lessons, students are encouraged to choose a goal to try more fruits and vegetables at each meal.
- A series of meetings with local food pantries to support and promote the pilot of providing culturally responsive food availability for Hmong/Hmoob and Hispanic/Latinx families.
- Collaboration with local agencies to create sustainability and promotion of the farmers markets token and match programs. This effort enables FoodShare participants to utilize their benefits in purchasing market foods while supporting increased vendor sales.
- An Extension table at a wellness fair hosted by a local university where the public, students and other community organizations were able to stop by to learn about what Extension has to offer the public.



Extension Educators spent time at the UW-Stout Wellness Fair

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | Horticulture Outreach Specialist

As the horticulture educator in Chippewa, Dunn and Eau Claire counties, I am well-positioned to support the use of environmentally-sound horticultural practices by educating the public directly and through local volunteers in the Master Gardener Program. Horticulture programming also has positive impacts on food security and personal and community well-being.

Wisconsin faces many environmental challenges such as pollinator decline, climate change and environmental pollution due to over use of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments. Teaching horticultural best practices can play an important role in helping address these challenges at both a local and statewide level. For example, our outreach on proper plant selection can reduce invasive plant species and provide habitat for native pollinators. Education on proper pest management techniques can lead to less pesticide use leading to reduced likelihood for environmental pollution.

Some of the ways we are currently meeting the needs of the community include providing research-based and unbiased information to yard and garden questions. Despite the wintery weather, questions are coming in regularly with recent ones pertaining to spring lawn care, trees, weed management, soil testing and how to start vegetable gardening.

This spring, I have provided several in-person programs for community groups including the Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education (HCE)-Dunn County as well as worked with a state-based committee to develop a statewide mini webinar series. The series started in February and was well received with over 700 people registering for each of the first three webinars that focused on fruits. Our next bundle of talks focuses on best management practices in the yard and garden throughout the growing season. The presentations include:

- Best Practices for Watering Yards and Gardens - Tuesday, May 10, 12:00 p.m.
- Strategies for Identifying and Managing Insect Pests - Wednesday, May 18, 12:00 p.m.
- Strategies for Identifying and Managing Plant Diseases - Tuesday, May 31, 12:00 p.m.

The webinars are free but registration is required. You can register and view recordings of talks at <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/mini-webinars-for-gardeners/>.

New for 2022, I am doing a youth gardening program with the Boys and Girls Club and FoodWise educators at River Heights Elementary school. We are doing a six-week program starting in June. This program will provide an opportunity for hands-on learning that teaches kids how to food garden while learning best practices in the garden.

Dunn County Master Gardener Volunteers are also busy preparing for a full season of garden programs, which includes their continued work at the Dunn County Jail Garden. In 2021, this program donated 3465 pounds to the Stepping Stones



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Food Pantry. Other programs include working with Lower Chippewa Invasive Partnership to educate and eradicate invasive plant species; working with the Urban Forestry Board to provide education and advice on best practices for Dunn County urban tree landscape & urban forestry ordinances and sharing best gardening practices at community events such as the UW Stout Wellness Fair and Menomonie High School Wellness Night and throughout the summer at the Menomonie Community Garden.

- Planning for a statewide webinar series for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution. The goal of this effort is to increase adoption of horticultural practices addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin.

Human Development and Relationships

Vacant

The hiring process for the Human Development and Relationships position is ongoing. For information on Extension's Human Development and Relationship efforts, see <https://extension.wisc.edu/family/>

Positive Youth Development

Luisa Gerasimo | 4-H Program Educator

After getting iced out in March – Dunn, EC and Chippewa county 4-H programs managed to find a new date (April 1!) new judges and a new venue for our annual Tri-county Performing Arts Festival. The result was worth the work; clubs performed plays and individuals and groups competed in music and speaking to an enthusiastic audience.

We hit the FRONT PAGE of the Dunn Co. News on 4.27! 4-H online art classes for grades K-12, with art ed students at UW-Stout over the course of several months, have resulted in some fine art! In order to share this with the public, there will be a student art show in Heritage Hall from April 30th through May 9th. Art education students in the National Art Education Association will judge the submissions.

Twenty teens have been selected to be summer camp counselors at the first ever (we think) Clark-Dunn-Eau Claire 4-H summer camp at Kamp Kenwood on Lake Wissota. Last Sunday, our first in-person training was well-attended. It is clear that these teens cannot wait to have a camper call them “counselor!” After bad weather canceled our 2019 camp, and Covid hit in 2020, and with the necessary move to a day camp last year, we are ready to get back to our traditions.

New guidelines from our state offices now allow youth to sign up for their choice of 4-H community clubs, project clubs, after school clubs, military clubs or special interest clubs (which may only meet for a short period of time or a season). Locally, two of our chartered project clubs have voted to accept single interest members who only want to do horse or dog projects. Families and children are busier than ever, so finding a way to help people experience 4-H is very important right now. Please let me know if you have any questions about 4-H!

- A festival day in which youth showcase talents in music, speech and drama for Chippewa, Eau Claire and Dunn County 4-H youth. Our goal is to promote/build respect, confidence, and determination.
- A UW presentation (Badger Talks Investing 101) for an afterschool club for Hmong youth where they learned about stocks and the stock market. The goal of this program is to build community through 4-H activities, mindfulness moments, and goal setting activities.
- A six session series of art classes for 4-H youth in three counties where families tap the energy and enthusiasm of UW-Stout art education students to learn creative art techniques while connecting with other youth in a virtual setting.
- Ongoing support for an afterschool club for Hmong youth, which builds community through 4-H activities,



This was amazing. Thank you so much for organizing. The play we saw was better than what we've seen at the Children's theater.

mindfulness moments, and goal setting activities. The goal of this effort is to support youth mental health and to keep youth connected to their peers and caring professionals.

- Planning for four camp counselor training sessions and finalization of the camp staff manual in collaboration with other county 4-H educators. The training and materials will prepare 20 youth to assist at the upcoming summer camp in early June.

Support

Michelle Bachand | *Support Specialist*

This month I worked on a variety of activities, some of which include:

- Serving on the search and screen committee for the Human Development and Relationship educator position.
- Website and social media updates.
- Reviewing 4-H enrollment reports to track demographic and enrollment trends.
- Celebrating 4-H Volunteers during National Volunteer week with mailings and social media posts.
- Creating Horticulture contact information handouts.
- Assisting the 4-H Leaders Council with 2022 Plat Book fundraising efforts.
- Working with Finance and Facilities to purchase 4 office doors with savings identified due to the Human Development and Relationship educator transition.
- Meeting with the IT department for our 2023 enterprise IT cost information.
- Attended training about marketing and Extension branding.
- Attended CVTC's annual Learn | Grow | Lead conference to help elevate the skills needed to provide support more effectively.

Area Extension Director

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

Hello and welcome and/or welcome back to CRTC. We are excited to be working with you and sharing more about our partnership with the county and the university. We will have an "Extension 101" so-to-speak at our first committee meeting, and will be the first of many conversations of how/where/what/why we work together.

In hiring news, we are having our final interviews for the Extension Dunn County Human Development & Relationships Educator on Wednesday, May 4. We hope to have the new educator in place by early June. We are excited to continue growing our team and look forward to the new talent to fill this important role. Here is my contact information – please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to connect outside of our committee meetings. catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu 715-450-0823. See you soon!