



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

May 2022 Report

Agriculture

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

June is a perfect time to explore Dunn County and learn more about our local dairy industry! The 27th Annual Dunn County Dairy Promotion Breakfast will be held on **Saturday, June 11th from 7 am to 11 am at Breezy Haven Farm near Sand Creek/Bloomer area**. Check out the website (<https://www.dunncountydairypromotion.com/>) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/dunncountydairypromotion/>) for more information. Website and social media sites are maintained by Extension. The annual dairy breakfast is hosted by a Dunn County dairy farmer each year and is coordinated by the Dunn County Dairy Promotion Committee. The Committee was formed to give the public a better understanding of agriculture and dairy farming and to allow the community to spend a few hours on a dairy farm. Extension assists with promotion of the event as well as working with the committee to ensure agriculture and dairy education is provided to all attendees. Funds from the breakfast support year-round outreach efforts, such as chocolate milk at local walk/runs, blood donation drives and UW-Stout athletics teams. The Dunn County Dairy Breakfast is supported in part by the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, a nonprofit organization funded by dairy farmers that promotes the more than 600 varieties, types and styles of Wisconsin Cheese and other dairy products from America's Dairyland. The June Dairy Month promotion and website (<https://www.wisconsinmilk.org/dairymonth>) features dairy recipes and listings of the many dairy breakfasts and events that you can attend all summer long.



- A monthly column in WI Agriculturist magazine for farmers and Ag professionals, where readers learn about farm management and available Extension resources. The purpose of this effort is to improve farm business decision-making.
- 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.
- An article for Dunn County News readers where they learned about how farmers are preparing for the 2022 growing season. This outreach effort is designed to provide advice on crop planting and management decisions for 2022.
- A community event (Dunn County Dairy Promotion Breakfast) where attendees learned about dairy farming in Dunn County through attending an on-farm breakfast, enjoying dairy products, and community conversations. This effort is designed to bring awareness to the importance of dairy farming in the county and the state of Wisconsin.
- An article for Dunn County News readers where readers learn about efforts during June Dairy Month to provide nutritious dairy products and celebrate local Dunn County dairy farmers.

Community Development

Addison Vang | *Community Development Educator*

- 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.



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Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Horticulture Educator*

My update is short and sweet this month. We kicked off the gardening program at Riverview Heights Elementary School by planting six raised beds. We planted a variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers including tomatoes, peppers, onions (for a salsa garden), carrots, muskmelon, watermelon, zinnias, marigolds and sunflowers. This is a 6-week garden program with the Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley Menomonie Center. Kids will learn best practices in the garden through hands-on activities. The goals of this program are to teach kids how to food garden, connect them to the natural world and promote life-long healthy eating habits (in partnership with FoodWise). Classes will be Wednesday afternoons beginning on June 22.

I'm busy answering yard and garden questions. As with past years, the inquiries cover a range of topics. In May, I fielded questions on trees, fruits, lawns, landscaping, insects, groundcovers, soil nutrients, soil temperature, invasives and plant ID.

Dunn County Master Gardeners are hard at work getting gardens planted and programs underway. One such garden volunteers have supported for many years is at the Dunn County Veterans Memorial where every year volunteers create a beautiful display.



From the 2021 season

- 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.

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | *FoodWise Coordinator*

Nancy Fastner | *FoodWise Educator*

Joy Weisner | *FoodWise Educator*

Jael Wolf | *FoodWise Educator*

May was busy with FW educators finishing up school programming. We offered an area Head Start lesson for parents to encourage them to have their children help them in the kitchen. Only a few families took part but they enjoyed sharing information with each other..along with receiving recipes, a kitchen tool, and a Walmart gift card to purchase produce.

Boys and Girls Club: summer programming is soon here (see Margaret's section for details). FoodWise staff will provide fun nutrition education activities and food tastings each week for the youth.

StrongBodies: We finished our spring series with all of the FW staff taking part in leading exercises and nutrition lessons. The summer series starts June 14th - August 4th. Tues/Thurs at 9:00 am. Registration link is here:

Stepping Stones Food Pantry: FW is helping to support their Grow-A-Row project to meet the needs of Hmong and Hispanic families. Local gardeners can help by donating tomatoes, mint, onions, peppers, tomatillos, bok choy, cabbage, lemongrass, green onions, eggplant, cilantro, and garlic.

Chronic Disease Prevention Action Team supported projects: Have you stopped by the StoryWalk at Lakeside park? Even though our May 25th kickoff celebration didn't happen quite as we had hoped, 10 families braved the rain to walk the trail and enjoy activities hosted by our Menomonie Library. We are also working to implement the Summer Activity Passport again this year. More details to come!

Congratulations to Joy in celebrating her 15 year work anniversary this month!



- 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.
- A virtual nutrition education session in collaboration with the Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Head Start parents. The goal of this effort is to help parents of young children share and discuss ways to make healthy snacks and create mealtime harmony.
- Collaboration with Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chippewa Valley-Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, and Menomonie in planning a summer garden nutrition education series. This effort will introduce youth to gardening, promote fresh produce, and provide opportunities for youth to increase produce consumption.
- 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.
- Monthly meetings with the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions. This effort helps guide the action teams in providing community awareness and activities concerning healthy food access, food security, and increased physical activity for local families.
- Monthly Steering Committee meetings with the executive leadership of the Chippewa Healthy Improvement Partnership and Health Dunn Right during which organizational needs are reviewed and discussed. The purpose of this effort is to help the organization identify a strategic direction in order to more effectively guide its action teams including the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams.
- 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.



*Strong bones is paying off!
30# bag of dog food.
I couldn't even pick up this bag a year ago!*

Positive Youth Development

Luisa Gerasimo | 4-H Program Educator

May was a month of meetings and planning for summer 4-H fun. We trained 18 teens to be camp counselors and spent a lot of time getting ready for June 6-9th at Kamp Kenwood on Lake Wissota. This will be our first year camping as Clark-Dunn-Eau Claire and for EC and Dunn it will be a first time at this facility. LOTS to do to get ready including: setting the schedule for each day with cabins and color groups, making sure we have a nurse, life guards, cooks and chaperones. Figuring out which counselor should be in charge of which activities and how to manage outdoor activities and camp fires. I was also involved in hiring and training two new college interns who will work with EC and Dunn counties in June and July.

During May I interviewed several times for the Human Development and Relationships Educator role and met with Stephanie Hinz and other area educators. I was very happy to find out I was selected and will begin my new role after we wrap up summer camp in mid June.



"Luisa, I appreciate everything you have done for me and for Building Bridges this year and previous years. You have been so helpful and such a joy to work alongside. Continue being awesome and making a difference in your next adventure."

- Organizational partner

"Thank you for helping me in times of need. Love you!"

- Afterschool club youth



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Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo will be transitioning to the Human Development and Relationships Educator role the week of June 13th. Luisa brings Extension experience, a masters degree in Leadership, trauma informed care experience, and strong community relationships to this new role serving families and the local community. Her first Parents Forever Class, for co-parenting families, will be in mid July after she wraps up her facilitator training through the University of Minnesota Extension.

Support

Michelle Bachand | *Support Specialist*

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

- Preparing first draft of FY23 budget.
- Finalizing 2021 Annual Report.
- Serving on the search and screen committee for the Human Development and Relationship educator position.
- Assisting with planning for the Area Extension Director and 4-H Educator transitions.
- Creating a 4-H STEM project kit check out system.
- Assisting the 4-H Leaders Council with 2022 Plat Book fundraising efforts.
- Processing and sending numerous soil samples to the UW-Madison hygiene lab for testing as gardening season kicks into high gear.
- Attending the County Officials Workshop.
- Coordinating with the Agriculture Agent to plan upcoming summer events.
- Podcast and video edits and captioning.
- Website and social media updates.

Area Extension Director

Jason Hausler | *Interim Area Extension Director*

The Area Extension Director position for Area 6, Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties, is currently vacant. A search for a full time Area Extension Director will be underway summer 2022. Dunn County will be covered in the interim by Jason Hausler who is the Area Extension Director for Area 7: Clark, Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties. Prior to serving as Area Director, Jason served as the Dunn County 4-H Youth Development Educator from 2011 until 2017. He can be reached at jason.hausler@wisc.edu or 715-533-8006.