



Agriculture

Jerry Clark | *Regional Crops & Soils Educator*



Sign up to receive the Extension in the Valley agriculture and horticulture e-newsletter [HERE](#).

Program Spotlight

As a relatively new crop in Wisconsin, research continues to be needed with industrial hemp. Interest in growing the crop waxes and wanes as fiber and grain processing is still needed. On-farm research with industrial hemp for fiber and grain provides valuable data for new and existing hemp farmers. Substantial variety and agronomic differences exist when selecting varieties and management. Four industrial hemp on-farm field research plots were implemented. Plans are to investigate eighteen fiber and grain or dual-purpose varieties to measure fiber and grain yield and quality. The planting date study will investigate four planting dates across two varieties for both grain and fiber production. Planting dates are early-May, mid-May, early-June, and mid-June. The fertility study will investigate nitrogen application rates at 50, 100, 150 pounds per acre and with a zero rate across two fiber and grain varieties. A tillage study is also planned to investigate the influence of tillage and no-till methods on fiber and grain yield. These research projects were funded by a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Partnership grant and a NIFA SAC grant in partnership with Michigan State University, University of Illinois, and Purdue University. Future plans include using the data in presentations, workshops, development of fact-sheets, and topic hub articles. A refereed journal publication is planned following data collection, hopefully published in 2025.

Agriculture

Vacant | *Regional Livestock Educator*

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Regional Horticulture Educator*



A program on herb gardening for the public where participants learned how to grow select culinary herbs. This effort was designed to encourage people to garden with herbs and create a garden that both stimulates the senses and provides fresh herbs to add healthy, low-calorie flavor to meals. Extension based information on cooking with herbs was included.

Provided garden articles published in *Extension in the Valley*, a tri-county monthly newsletter that focuses on Agriculture and Horticulture news, where participants learned about harvesting summer fruit in the garden, disorders of tomatoes, and soldier beetles. Links to



UW Madison Extension factsheets on relevant concerns were also provided. This effort is designed to keep participants connected to current horticulture matters. *(Partnered with Jerry Clark & Amber Gilles)*

A pollinator-based garden activity at Area 6 (Dunn, Chippewa, & Eau Claire) County Fairs for the public where information on pollinators and their conservation was provided. This effort is to encourage individuals to adopt gardening practices that support pollinator habitat and health throughout the year.

A garden program for youth where participants learned about what garden plants need to grow successfully and how each part of the plant has an important function. This effort was designed to help kids become more engaged with the plants they are growing with better understanding of how plants work and how best to tend them.

An activity for youth where participants engaged in pollinator-based activities and games to learn more about pollinators and how to support them. This effort was designed to increase awareness about the importance of pollinators and their conservation.

Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | *Regional Community & Leadership Development Educator*



Continuing to focus on housing education. Attended a Shared Equity Training Program in Richland Center to develop expertise in Community Land Trusts, Deed Restricted Housing, and Cooperative Housing models to build lasting, affordable housing. Attend education with Dunn County Housing Team members.

Continuing to meet with local stakeholders including Dunn County philanthropy, libraries, municipal leaders, and others.

Analyzed and prepared data for Luisa Gerasimo and the Housing Action Team related to affordability in Dunn County.

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter
FoodWise Coordinator



Joy Weisner
FoodWise Educator



Jael Wolf
FoodWise Educator



Hillarie Roth
FoodWise Educator





Planning for a teen nutrition series in collaboration with Northwest Journey, a day treatment program for children and adolescents offering comprehensive intervention and preventative services aimed at preventing out-of-home placements, transitioning back from placements, and creating family stability.

A 5-lesson series with Menomonie Boys and Girls Club youth at Menomonie Middle School in collaboration with the Extension Horticulture Educator. This effort integrates nutrition education with gardening and aims to increase exposure to fruits and vegetables by tending a garden, help youth learn parts of the plants, and provide tasting of a variety of fruits and vegetables. Ten youth tried fresh peas, blueberries, and cucumbers in July.

A 5-lesson series with Menomonie Boys and Girls Club Youth 2nd and 4th graders at River Heights Elementary in collaboration with the Extension Horticulture Educator. This effort integrates nutrition education with gardening and aims to increase exposure to fruits and vegetables by tending a garden, help youth learn parts of the plants, and provide tasting of a variety of fruits and vegetables. July tastings included fresh peas, blueberries, and cucumbers. Staff commented that they and the youth are learning a lot in this series.



Youth show off their creation of Caprese Skewers

Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*



A 6-week program, WeCOPE, for adults where participants learn 11 self-care and coping skills. The goal of this effort is to reduce stress and symptoms of depression, increase positive affect, and improve healthy behaviors. *(Partnered with Margo Dieck from Extension Eau Claire)*

I taught Parents Forever in person to several fathers who are going through divorce and were court-ordered to take the class. These men lacked good internet connection or digital skills and

needed to have an in-person class. One father needed an accessible classroom, so I was glad our conference rooms are easy to get to. Over the course of four hours, these dads learned skills to prioritize the parent-child relationship and better communicate with their co-parent. This program is designed to increase child well-being and reduce parental conflict during family transitions.

"I want to keep on bettering myself so I can eventually be able to have better relationships with others."
-Parents Forever Participant



Program Spotlight

In Wisconsin, conservative estimates suggest that nearly 90,000 children have experienced the incarceration of a parent with whom they live. Parental incarceration is associated with increased risk of negative outcomes for children, including impacts on behavior, academic success, and health. To date, few strategies exist to support relationship maintenance among parents in jail or prison and their children. Extension’s Family Engagement and

Relationship program partners with local correctional facilities, including jails and state prisons, across Wisconsin to provide the evidence-informed Making Reading Memories program for parents while they are incarcerated. The Making Reading Memories program is offered in cooperation with the Dunn County Jail. The program includes parent coaching about child interaction, dialogic reading with an Extension educator, and the opportunity for the parent to record themselves reading a book to their child. The child then receives the video recording and the book, and the caregiver of the child receives resources related to family communication during parental incarceration. As a result of the Making Reading Memories workshop, most parents feel closer to their children, and most parents feel more confident reading to their children in the future. Parents report enjoying focusing on their children during incarceration and feel a sense of connection to their families. Most caregivers of the children who receive the videos and respond to our follow-up survey report that the videos helped their children stay connected to the parent in jail or prison. Most children have a positive reaction to the video, display positive emotions while watching the videos, and enjoy receiving the book. About half of caregivers even report reading more often with their children following receiving the video, book, and educational handouts. The impact of the Making Reading Memories program is important because parent incarceration can have profound impacts on child well-being and the parent-child relationship. The Making Reading Memories program improves communication and connection between parent and child during incarceration, mitigating the impact of forced separation and ambiguous loss within the family.

“I had never heard of anything like this before. Inmates are not the only ones undergoing punishment while incarcerated but this is one positive way to ease negative impacts that incarceration has on children and families. This is such a wonderful program. I can't imagine a better opportunity for inmates and children.

We just wanted to say thank you so much!”

- Co-parent of a child with an incarcerated father

Positive Youth Development

Zachary Rozmiarek | 4-H Program Educator



The July Clover Courier can be viewed [HERE](#).

Educational activities were presented by the 4-H Educator, 4-H Assistant, and Intern, to youth attending the Colfax Free Fair. They participated in a variety of activities where they learned about art, gardening, and physics. They also made connections to the Dunn County 4-H program and the adults that work within the program.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

July 2024 Report

A three-day series of Cloverbud Day Camps with different locations and topics to provide the most access to young people. These day camps were a way for youth in grades K-2 to try new things, make friends, and build relationships with Extension Educators and summer interns. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Jordan Blue)*



Two summer interns and six Day Camp participants in the Wilderness Explorers Cloverbud Day Camp. All have paper explorer hats on.

A three-day Day Camp series for 3-5 graders with themes of Game Makers, Lego Mechanics, and Tie-Dye Funk. This day camp series was to provide participants with opportunities to explore topics they were interested in, practice making friends in a safe environment, and also build relationships with Extension Educators and summer interns. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Jordan Blue)*

A practice was held for the Cloverbud Stuffed Animal Show where Cloverbuds practiced showing stuffed animals to prepare them for the show during the Dunn County Fair.



4-H Program Assistant, Ann Lee, helping youth with their projects.

A Painting Project Day was held for 4-H members where they learned different painting techniques and created a painted quilt that can be used to promote 4-H. *(Partnered with Ann Lee & Melissa Burke)*

A Fishing Project Day was held for 4-H members where the youth learned parts of a fishing pole, learned and practiced how to cast, made a pocket fishing kit, and fished in Lake Menomin.

Area Extension Director

Kristen Bruder | *Area Extension Director – Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties*



Please reach out with questions and ideas. The role of the AED is much like the department head in the county. Below is a brief overview of the role of AEDs: Extension fully invests in Area Extension Directors (AEDs) who oversee an area. These administrative positions are responsible for partnership management, staff development, financial management and program coordination.

Through the many interactions the AED has with county partners and local educators, the AED develops a solid understanding of the local needs and county priorities and helps to align Extension educational programs to ensure the programs address county needs. Educators also communicate local needs to their programmatic Institutes which collectively identify opportunities to address statewide needs.



UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST
13-15

WI Farm Tech Days

Hosted at Close Farms &
the Country Fest Grounds

9am-4pm Daily

<https://www.wifarmtechdays.org/>

OCTOBER
10

Day of Caring

United Way of St. Croix
& Red Cedar Valleys

Volunteer or Sponsor!

uwvalleys.org/dayofcaring



OCTOBER
8
through
NOVEMBER
12

Raising a Thinking Child

Learn how to help children develop
decision-making skills. Tuesday classes:

9am-10:15am or 6pm-7:15pm on Zoom

Register at: go.wisc.edu/Y30451