



Agriculture

Jerry Clark | *Regional Crops & Soils Educator*



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

A field event for farmers where participants learned alternative weed management strategies to reduce herbicide resistance risk and increase farm profitability.

Program Spotlight

A field event for farmers where participants learned management strategies to limit nitrogen application rates to increase farm profitability and protect groundwater resources. Groundwater quality is a major concern in Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire counties. Use of nitrogen in agriculture production fields is often needed for higher crop yields. Application of additional nitrogen and above-average rainfall can increase the risk of nitrogen moving to groundwater. A nitrogen management and water quality field day was held as part of the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program to inform farmers of nitrogen management strategies. The field day also highlighted how groundwater moves and how field surface management leads to impact on groundwater. Participants learned about nitrogen application and management and how different nitrogen management strategies impact groundwater. A post-event evaluation is planned to determine if changes in nitrogen management has occurred. Speakers and topics include, Dr. Steven Hall, Extension Water Quality Specialist, UW-Madison, Department of Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences, "Understanding nitrogen movement and lysimeters"; Lindsey Rushford, Extension, On-Farm Nitrogen Optimization Coordinator, "What we have learned through NOPP"; and Jerry Clark, Extension, Regional Crops and Soils Educator, "Local on-farm nitrogen research results."

Agriculture

Vacant | *Regional Livestock Educator*

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Regional Horticulture Educator*



A UW-Madison Extension horticulture information booth at the Chippewa County Farm Technology Days for the public where participants had the opportunity to ask horticulture questions and take-home information on current pests and diseases, native plants and the beneficial impacts of plants and gardening on our health and wellbeing. This effort was to raise awareness of the services and information available to the public through the regional and state horticulture programs. *(Partnered with Amber Gilles & Jerry Clark)*



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

August 2024 Report

An activity for families where participants engaged in a field walk through a native prairie to explore signs of animal usage of the habitat and to learn about a native prairie ecosystem. This effort was designed to increase awareness about the importance of native prairies and the community of fauna they support.

A garden program for youth where participants learned about herbs, how to grow them, what value they add to the garden and how they can be used as a sensory experience. This effort was designed to help kids become more engaged with growing plants that both stimulate the senses and provide the family with fresh herbs to add healthy, low calorie, flavor to meals.

Program Spotlight

A lunchtime tour of a native plant demonstration garden for the public where participants had the opportunity to explore the garden, ask questions and take-home information on native gardens and pollinators. This effort is to encourage individuals to include native plantings in their home landscape and adopt gardening practices that support pollinator habitat and health throughout the year. (*Partnered with Melissa Burke*) The demonstration garden was created in 2023 at the request of the Dunn County Facilities & Parks Director. The garden was in spectacular bloom this summer and we wanted to showcase the plantings and encourage people to explore the garden, take home information on native plants and pollinators and ask questions. I receive increasing inquiries from homeowners about adding native plants or creating a native prairie garden in their landscape and wanted to provide an opportunity for people to see native plants that would work well in a home landscape, discuss why native gardens and the ecosystem benefits they offer are important.

Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | *Regional Community & Leadership Development Educator*



Attended Farm Technology Days and met with a variety of stakeholders exhibiting at the event, including the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association.

Continuing one-to-one conversations with Stakeholders including local government officials, nonprofits, and community development organizations to identify community needs and opportunities such as downtown development, childcare, and housing.

Collaborating with UW-Madison stakeholders to pursue a USDA Grasslands 2.0 Grant titled *Getting to Clean Water in the Red Cedar: Economic Development Through Collaborative Landscape Design*.



Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter
FoodWise Coordinator



Joy Weisner
FoodWise Educator



Jael Wolf
FoodWise Educator



Hillarie Roth
FoodWise Educator



Completed a 5-lesson series with 10 Menomonie Boys and Girls Club middle school youth 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. Staff feedback included, "Please keep this up. It's great for the students and staff".

"After participating in this program I've noticed members talking more about healthy alternatives. They are always excited when FoodWise comes"
-Boys and Girls Club Staff

Completed a 5-lesson series with Menomonie Boys and Girls Club Youth- 40 2nd/3rd grade students and 39 4th/5th grade students 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. Staff commented that they and the youth learned a lot in this series, "Students love doing taste tests and seeing what food was brought to sample", "The hands-on activities were great to get the students involved and engaged", "Students seem more excited to try new foods. Overheard students talking about what nutrients they get from their foods when they are at lunch."



Youth are shown harvesting carrots.

Nutrition lesson to teens at Northwest Journey, a community-based day treatment program offering therapeutic support services for children, adolescents, and families transitioning back to the community from out-of-home placements. This effort helped teens understand the importance of healthy eating and provided time for them to make and eat a healthy snack.

An in-person nutrition lesson at the WIC office for parents and caregivers where they learned about introducing young children to fresh foods available at the farmers markets and sampled fresh snap peas. This effort helps families to try healthy, local foods and encourages them to explore the local farmer's market.



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Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*



A series of planning meetings with county partners, Wellness Ambassadors, and our local United Way to prepare to offer Dunn and Pepin County residents and workplaces a fall morning to volunteer, or receive help from volunteers. A website, sign up forms,

sponsorship forms, a press release and a host for the volunteer breakfast have been arranged.

“By participating ... and sharing all your great ideas, experience and insight, you help us find those elusive best practices and share that input with the rest of our communities.”

- Partner from a Federal Agency working on Housing in WI

Planning for a co-facilitated session for co-parents on the topic of traditions and routines for children and families that will be held in November. The program manager and the co-facilitators met several times to discuss evidence for the slide deck and to add a new slide to better explain routines. This course is a part of the Resilient Co-Parents annual class offering.

A program (Making Reading Memories) for families involved in the justice system where parents in jail are video recorded reading storybooks, which are then shared with their children at home. The goal is to reduce the trauma of separation, strengthen family relationships and at the same time increase children's exposure to books and reading.

Program Spotlight

Planning by the Housing Action Team, a group of concerned citizens, local businesses, county service agencies and nonprofits to increase availability of housing in our region in order to increase affordable and safe housing options (*partnered with Garret Zastoupil*). This group came out of several recent Community Health Needs Assessments and has been meeting to educate itself and the community about the need for more homes in our area since 2019. A housing needs assessment was released in 2022 showing that Dunn Co. is short over 3000 units. The group has developed several working committees to focus on education, advocacy and marketing. The goal of these groups is to help local representatives, county agencies, and developers understand the need for action, the options that are available to them today and the resources that can be tapped to make progress in the near future.



Positive Youth Development

Zachary Rozmiarek | *4-H Program Educator*



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

An event was held at the Red Cedar Speedway for all 4-H members and their families where they spent time bonding, and exploring their sparks to feel more

connected to the Dunn County 4-H community. They participated in a preparty with snacks donated by Ellsworth Creamery, went on the track to say the 4-H Pledge, and had a separate section to themselves.



4-H members went on the infield to say the 4-H pledge.

An educational booth was held at the Dunn County Fair for 4-H'ers and fair goers. Participants were able to learn about agriculture, do hands-on activities and receive information about 4-H. Through this effort, youth explored their sparks and were introduced to the 4-H program.



A Cloverbud showing her "pet" chicken, Reid.

A Cloverbud Stuffed Animal Show was held at the Dunn County Fair where youth who cannot show live animals had the opportunity to practice showing with their stuffed animals. This gave them showmanship experience, and helped to boost their confidence with talking to judges.

Planning has begun for a Project Discovery Day for 4-H'ers and families interested in 4-H. The goal is to allow youth to explore different types of projects so they can find their spark and get guidance for signing up for projects. It will also allow families who are exploring 4-H to get a sense of what is available.

At Farm Technology Days, 4-H Program Staff and AmeriCorps Members from Pierce, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties teamed up to host an engaging promotion event for Chippewa County youth and beyond. Attendees participated in hands-on learning activities, sparking curiosity and excitement while building connections with local 4-H programs. This event was a fantastic opportunity to inspire new membership and strengthen the 4-H community. *(Partnered with Jordan Blue, April Daniels, & Rachel Hart-Brinson)*

A day camp series where youth who completed grades 3-5 tried new things, made new friends, and built relationships with summer interns and 4-H Educators. This effort provided the opportunity to build belonging in the 4-H program across Area 6. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Jordan Blue)*



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A Cloverbud Day Camp Series where 4-H members and non-members were invited to participate in day camps located in each of Area 6's counties. This series provided an opportunity for youth who completed grades K-2 to make new friends, try new things, and build relationships with summer interns and 4-H Educators. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Jordan Blue)*

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

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

OCTOBER
10

Day of Caring

United Way of St. Croix & Red Cedar Valleys
Volunteer or Sponsor!
uwvalleys.org/dayofcaring



OCTOBER
17

Learn About 4-H

Informational Zoom
7:00pm
<https://go.wisc.edu/r428z0>

NOVEMBER
2

4-H Project Exploration Day

9:30am-Noon
<https://go.wisc.edu/r428z0>