



Agriculture

Jerry Clark | *Regional Crops & Soils Educator*



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

An outreach education and public relation effort for farmers where farmers increased awareness of extension resources to connect and build relationships and improve their lives and farms.

(Partnered with Jeanne Walsh)

Program Spotlight

A field event for farmers, agronomy professionals, and students where participants learned soil nitrogen management strategies to minimize nitrogen application rates to increase farm profitability and protect groundwater resources.

(Partnered with Lindsey Rushford)

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. The Red Cedar Demonstration Farm provides an opportunity for on-farm research and experiential learning into the impact of nitrogen management. The Red Cedar Demonstration Farm is a collaborative effort between the Dunn County Land and Water Division, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, and the UW-Madison Division of Extension Dunn County. A nitrogen management and water quality field day was held to inform farmers of nitrogen management strategies and results of Dunn County groundwater quality monitoring. The field day also highlighted how strip tillage impacts nitrogen management and efforts of farmers to adopt the practice. Speakers and topics include, Lindsey Rushford, Extension, On-Farm Nitrogen Optimization Coordinator, "What we have learned through NOPP"; Tryston Byrer and Andy Benson, Dunn County Farmers, "The benefits of strip tillage", and Jerry Clark, Extension, Regional Crops and Soils Educator, "Local on-farm nitrogen research results." Forty-five participants attended the field day. A post-event evaluation indicated 95% of participants increased their knowledge about nitrogen application and management. The evaluation revealed 97% of participants increased their knowledge of the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Project. Ninety percent of participants increased their knowledge of strip tillage and the benefits of protecting soil erosion.



UW-Madison Division of Extension Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Project Coordinator, Lindsey Rushford, provides examples of nitrogen management research projects across Wisconsin.

Agriculture

Vacant | *Regional Livestock Educator*



Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Regional Horticulture Educator*



A field event for 5th grade students where participants learned about pollinators, native plants and invasive plant issues. The goal of this effort is to provide awareness about the importance of pollinators and their conservation.

A presentation on the benefits of sharing space with plants with a focus on plants in the classroom for the 2024 Family and Consumer Sciences Education and WI DPI Childcare Conference at UW Stout where participants learn and discuss indoor gardening strategies and ideas for incorporating plants in classroom lessons. This effort is designed to encourage gardening with interior plants with strategies to engage students in plant-based activities.

Coordinating and co-instruction of the optional Lab component of the fall 2024 Foundations in Horticulture online course that will provide an opportunity for course participants to dig deeper into important horticulture concepts and apply what they learn through interactive activities.

Program Spotlight

A presentation on how gardening can help us age with vitality for UW Eau Claire Honor Students where participants learn and discuss the mental, physical and social benefits we gain through interacting with and cultivating plants. This effort is designed to illustrate how gardens can be a source of high-quality nutrition, provide opportunities for exercise at any age, and add to personal and community well-being (*Partnered with Andy Heren & Melissa Burke*)

This program was in response to a request from a UW Eau Claire Instructor within the Public Health and Environmental Studies Dept. who offers a class on aging with vitality for honor students. The instructor reached out for a class on gardening and to discuss ways gardening helps us stay vital. Offered a brief PowerPoint with overview of the health and wellbeing benefits of gardening followed by a discussion with students with examples of how gardening has supported us provided by me and other Extension colleagues who are avid gardeners.



Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | *Regional Community & Leadership Development Educator*



Continuing one-to-one conversations with constituents 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 partners 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



Participation in Building Nourishing Pantries training. This effort expands understanding of how positive and adverse experiences affect individual and community relationships to food and health, principles of trauma-informed approach and how to apply it to pantry work, and the role food pantries have in supporting community food security. FoodWise invited UW Stout student Manayal Suhail to join them in a tour of Stepping Stones Food Pantry where she will support the pantry with walk-by education this fall.

Ongoing support to the Monday Market at the Y offering added Market Match tokens and Rideshare vouchers to FoodShare families, Eau Claire Downtown Farmers Market-Market Match Program, and Menomonie Farmers Market. Contribute to monthly meetings and arranged flutter flags to be funded by the state FoodWise Farmers Market team for our local farmers markets. This effort helps expand healthy produce consumption and food security to local families.

Outreach to 45 agency partners/programming sites across Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties to review and reaffirm our collaboration, offer opportunity for feedback, develop new relationships, sign FY25-27 FoodWise agreements, and coordinate teaching events for youth and adult nutrition lessons.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

September 2024 Report

A series of strength training sessions (StrongBodies) for adults in the community, where participants engage in regular, progressive strength training and health education to improve their physical and mental health, and enhance social connectedness.

Program Spotlight

A 4-lesson series at Affinity House, a residential care treatment program, covering MyPlate, food waste, gut health, reading nutrition labels, meal prepping, and understanding sugar content in drinks. This effort helps women to plan and prepare healthy meals while learning to stretch their food dollars.

Affinity House is a Lutheran Social Services residential care facility that offers women comprehensive substance use treatment. They requested FoodWise to share information that will add health and wellness to their recovery. FoodWise offers a 4-lesson nutrition education series quarterly on a range of topics that include but not limited to utilizing MyPlate nutrition principles, gut health, food waste, stretching produce, meal prepping, reading nutrition labels, understanding sugar in drinks and impacts on health. In summer 2024, FoodWise supported the residents planting a garden and subsequent lessons included that produce as able. Each class involved a taste test and offered recipe preparation based on participant voting during the last 3 lessons. Many residents engaged in both the lessons and in planting the garden. This effort helps to support the learning of food resource management in the harvest, preparation, and storage of garden produce. Participants learn of the impact good nutrition has on their health which supports them in the recovery process from substance use. They also are more knowledgeable about stretching their food dollars when living on their own.

Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*



Planning for a six-week lunch and learn WeCOPE series in order to be prepared to offer the program state-wide in May and June, so that participants can learn how to connect with their positive emotions and reduce overall stress. *(Partnered with Margo Dieck)*

Planning for a health-focused summit where local citizens and those already volunteering with Health Dunn Right teams will come together to create next steps for the coalitions and teams working on health concerns in Dunn County. The goal of this summit is to inspire the community to tackle the top five health needs that surfaced in a recent Community Health Needs Assessment.

Program Spotlight

A year-long effort to change zoning ordinances to allow Accessory Dwelling Units in Dunn County, in order to increase housing options, especially for families, those with disabled young adults, and for elders. This effort finally paid off with unanimous passage of ADUs in R2, R3 and all Agricultural areas of the county.



September 2024 Report

Past and present Community Health Needs Assessments have shown that the community is very concerned with the lack of appropriate housing for its citizens. Dunn County is short on all kinds of housing and the gaps between those that need homes and what is available continue to grow. Citizens regularly asked why they were not allowed to build a “Granny Flat” above their garage or a tiny home on their lot. The county formed a working group (as one of Health Dunn Right’s teams) to address concerns over lack of housing in the county. The Housing Action Team has been meeting regularly for over 5 years to study the problem and to offer solutions. It has helped the county sponsor a comprehensive housing study and has regularly given input to county committees that are working on issues that impact housing. The Housing Action Team is now co-led by myself and Paula Winter, the Director of Human Services for Dunn County.

“Exciting news regarding the ADU's in Dunn County!!!! Great work the housing team and county has done!
- Director of a local nonprofit

Positive Youth Development

Zachary Rozmiarek | *4-H Program Educator*



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

A County-Wide Kickball Game was held for 4-H members and their parents. This event allowed the youth to bond with other youth throughout the county as well as participate in a family event.



Youth and parents pose of a photo after the Kids VS. Adults kickball game.

An activity was presented to the Colfax Comets 4-H Club where they learned about SMART goals and set goals of their own. The members learned what a goal is and what makes a good goal. Then they brainstormed different goals for their club and voted on their favorite. This gave them ownership of the goals and made them feel more connected as a 4-H club.

Partnership development with Our Nawakwa in order to explore day camp and winter overnight experiences located at the Nawakwa camp property in Cornell, WI. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson, Jordan Blue, & Seth Harrmann)*

Planning for the Area Six Speaking and Demonstration Festival for 4-H youth in collaboration with local 4-H Educators. The goal is to provide participants with opportunities to develop public speaking and demonstration skills by presenting topics they are passionate about. This helps youth build confidence, improve communication, and practice leadership, contributing to their personal and professional growth. *(Partnered with Rachel Hart-Brinson & Jordan Blue)*



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

September 2024 Report

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.

Program Spotlight

Planning for the 2025 Area Six STEM Partnership Development for 4-H youth in collaboration with UW-Stout STEM Programming. The goal is to explore future collaboration opportunities and provide youth with hands-on STEM experiences, so that participants can enhance their skills in science, technology, engineering, and math, fostering innovation and preparing them for future academic and career success. This effort was prompted by the success of previous Area Six STEAM Days and the identified need to offer more in-depth STEM experiences for youth. By partnering with local universities like UW-Stout, we aim to provide opportunities for youth to explore STEM fields through hands-on activities and campus experiences, helping them envision future academic and career pathways. Partnering with partners will allow for us to have larger reach with staff from UW-Stout. As this is a planning phase for the 2025 Area Six STEM Partnership, specific outcomes and impacts have yet to be realized. However, our goal is to achieve several key impacts: Enhanced STEM Engagement, Career Exploration and Strengthened Community Ties.

Value Added Programming

Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties

A Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL) presentation for Great Rivers Consortium economic staff where staff learned the aggregated ProQOL scores for each unit and team within the agency and participated in an activity to gather feedback on potential interventions for the agency. The goal of this effort is to provide staff with understanding of their personal and organizational level of compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction, ask questions, and brainstorm solutions to improve professional quality of life where they work. *(Margo Dieck)*

A study to better understand the geology of part of southwestern Dunn County. Results from this study will help the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and county officials make informed land and water use decisions. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) reviews a large number of high capacity well requests in Dunn County, but there is not sufficient geologic mapping for them to assess the requests. The Wisconsin Geological Survey is mapping part of Dunn County and providing three-dimensional interpretations on the distribution of geologic units. A geologic map with accompanying cross sections will be completed and submitted for publication in early 2025. *(Eric Stewart, Anna Fehling, & Esther Stewart)*



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.

Please list upcoming events here:

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>