



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
OUTAGAMIE COUNTY

IMPACT REPORT



January 2023 - May 2024



A WORD FROM THE AREA EXTENSION DIRECTOR

"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

Walt Disney

Over the past year the University of Wisconsin has celebrated its 175th Birthday. There have been many changes since the first graduating class of two individuals received their diplomas. One thing that has not changed is the curiosity of Extension Educators as they work within their communities to meet the local needs using research-based solutions and best practices.

In our report you will see the paths that our educators forged to address needs in our community. Financial education in our jails, connecting entrepreneurs of color to resources to help their businesses grow, and Adulting 101- key skills for soon to be adults, are just a couple of the efforts our team has implemented or expanded this year.

In the "Looking Ahead" section you will see what our team is "Curious" about. We are constantly seeking ways to use data and knowledge gained from the Land-Grant Universities across the nation to solve problems and improve our communities.

Thanks for taking a look. To keep up to date with Outagamie Extension programs and events, sign up for our newsletters <https://bit.ly/ExtensionForecast> and follow us on Facebook at ExtensionOutagamieCounty.



CHRIS VIAU

AREA EXTENSION
DIRECTOR

PARTNERSHIPS AT WORK

- The Landscape Professionals Conference was held in partnership with Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association and Fox Valley Technical College. Over 100 participants from area municipalities and green industry employees took part in the one-day training intensive. The 2024 conference featured a new format focusing on hands-on learning.
- The Human Development and Relationship Educator is part of the Fox Cities Money Smart Committee. The committee is made up of a variety of representatives from community organizations and businesses who are working to increase financial literacy in the Fox Cities area. They work year-round to promote Money Smart Wisconsin events that typically take place annually in April.
- The Healthy Communities Coordinator helped secure grant funding for People of Progression to establish a garden to grow food for their program participants and clients. This partnership created an accessible source of fresh vegetables for people experiencing food insecurity.
- FoodWise worked with Lincoln Elementary School in New London to fund and implement student wellness initiatives promoting Wisconsin-grown fruits and vegetables, physical activity and drinking water.
- FoodWise was invited to provide input on the development of the new Food To Grow exhibit at the Building For Kids. FoodWise has also been part of the programming offered as part of the exhibit.
- FoodWise started a professional alliance called the Fox Valley Network for Well-being. This group of well-being-focused organizations and community members meets every other month to share program updates and local resources with the goal of maximizing community health, equity, and well-being.
- The Entrepreneurs of Color Spotlight (EoC Spotlight) continues to grow in successful partnership with Appleton Public Library and the ColorBold Business Association. The EoC Spotlight empowers entrepreneurs of color in northeast Wisconsin, highlights their business journey and strategies and invites viewers to interact and learn. In 2023, we can report: 1) Growing support in being awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region and two community sponsorships; 2) Increased visibility by partnering with Blueprint365 that has amplified the Spotlights by writing articles and linking to the videos; 3) Expanded the audience by over 200% on the accessible and interactive Facebook platform, reaching over 4,000 people in 2023!

- Worked with the Village of Greenville's Land Stewardship Committee on annual grant reporting, a public-facing presentation that gives an overview of Keeping the Green in Greenville, and did outreach to Greenville landowners about the Wisconsin Farmland Protection Partnership Program. With three interested landowners, the goal is to protect over 100 acres of farmland in Greenville beginning in early 2025.
- Outagamie County 4-H is supported by 160 adult volunteers who put in 8,551 hours of related volunteer service at a value of \$29.97 per hour, our adult volunteers are worth \$256,273.47.
- Youth enrolled in Outagamie County 4-H have opportunities to volunteer in their communities. Of the 541 youth in the program, there have been 4,010 volunteer hours recorded with a total value of \$120,179.70.
- Adulting 101 is successful because of amazing planning partners like the Outagamie County Youth and Family Services (including the Independent Living Program and Foster Care) and Wisconsin Innovative and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program at FVTC. Additionally, guest speakers and presenters give great variety to the program including UW-Oshkosh Admissions, FVTC Financial Aid, FoodWise, VPI, Local 400 and Outagamie County Public Health.
- Youth Development Outreach Programs are grateful for the partnerships with local libraries that hosted them most recently, including Kimberly and Appleton.
- The Outagamie Forage Council provided financial and volunteer support for the annual Breakfast on the Farm sponsored by the Outagamie County Dairy Promotion Board. The group uses proceeds to reach 1,600 4th grade students through the Adventures in Dairyland Program to teach the process of how food goes from the field to their table.
- The Outagamie Forage Council partnered with Abts Lely Center, Beck's Hybrids, Dairyland Seed Company and Vanderloop Equipment Inc. to host a Regional Summer Twilight Meeting in August. This event provided 94 farmers and agricultural professionals representing 12 different counties unbiased, research-based information to manage the severe and ongoing drought impacts on their 2023 corn silage and alfalfa crops ahead of fall harvest. Participants indicated they had increased their knowledge of how to assess uneven corn stands to identify the best time to begin harvesting their corn silage to maximize yield and quality with an average of 4.84/5.0. Participants indicated they would apply the strategies discussed on their own farm or with clientele they serve 4.76/5.0.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

- Viburnum Leaf Beetle (VLB) has been officially confirmed in Outagamie County. The first established infestation of VLB was detected in Wisconsin in 2014, and it has now been confirmed in 15 Wisconsin counties. This invasive pest can cause significant destruction of viburnum shrubs and is particularly damaging to native viburnums.
- Telephone calls and emails answering food preservation and food safety questions continued throughout the year. Pressure canner testing also took place for many local residents.
- Twenty-nine participants successfully completed Reentry Ready: Focus on Finances at the Outagamie County Jail. This program provides incarcerated individuals reentering communities with the resources and knowledge to choose financial products and services, track income and benefits, pay bills, save money, budget and get through the month, deal with debt, understand credit, and protect their money.
- The Rent Smart course was taught in multiple schools. Participants learn how to find and apply for rental housing, understand their responsibilities as a renter, how to communicate effectively with their landlords, and manage housing expenses. Through teaching this in partnership with high school classes, young people are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public support.
- Emails, telephone consultations, and personal conversations continue, as the Horticulture Educator assists the public to understand horticulture best management practices related to gardening, pest and weed management, assistance with diagnosing insects, weeds and plant disease, fruit & vegetable production, landscaping and pollinator habitat.
- Twenty people participated in “Backyard Gardener” horticulture classes. This is a 13 week, in person gardening training course that was held in tangent with Winnebago County Extension. The focus of this class was to learn the essentials of horticulture to become a more successful and well-rounded gardener, with an emphasis in integrated pest management.
- Nutrition education for English as a second language for families and individuals was offered throughout the year. Multiple events were held for the ELL Club through the Appleton Public Library, and a lunch & learn series was offered to clients of Partnership Health. A tour of the Downtown Appleton Farm Market was given and was completely in Spanish.
- Nutrition education for youth and families was offered at local elementary schools and at UWO Head Start locations (in person and virtual options). Nutrition education took place during the school day and in afterschool programs.
- Summer nutrition garden education took place at the Appleton Boys and Girls Club and at Ledgeview Nature Center in Chilton, WI. Attendees learned about the parts of the plant we eat and how to cook with them.

- The Community Development Educator piloted a very well-received Introduction to Plain Language training, in partnership with UW-Madison's Cultural Linguistic Services and Division of Extension. The training provides strategies for word choice, font selection, grammar use, user testing and more to help communicate quickly and effectively with both native and non-native English speakers. Due to the pilot's success, we will offer the same training in June of 2024.
- Eighty-seven people participated in the Planning AHEAD program which was taught at seven locations in Outagamie County and online. Planning AHEAD is an end-of-life planning program for individuals of all ages that focuses on estate planning, financial changes, advance directives, grief, choices in end-of-life care, and options for funeral planning.
- The Human Development and Relationships Educator is part of a statewide team teaching an online webinar series called Money Matters Live. Access to financial education on managing debt and credit is critical to financial health for low and middle income Wisconsinites. To help improve the financial capability of these residents, a specific Money Matters Live program was created on credit and debt.
- Participants with the Fox Valley Memory Project at the Thompson Center on Lourdes were able to learn about container gardening. After a short presentation and demonstration, participants were able to get their hands dirty and put together a small tabletop container garden.
- One hundred and twenty-three youth in the Fox Cities who attend programming at the local Boys & Girls Clubs participated in Money as You Grow. In this program youth participants learn basic money concepts including goal setting, prioritizing needs and wants, solving problems, making decisions and self-control. Through this, they lay a foundation for financial security and contribute to positive financial management in later life.
- Thirty-three individuals participated in two 10-session programs of Aging Mastery (AMP). AMP is a comprehensive education and behavior change program that empowers older adults to enrich their lives, improve their well-being and strengthen ties to their communities. During the program, participants set goals for positive actions in many aspects of their lives such as exercise, nutrition, finances, advance care planning, community engagement and healthy relationships. Several guest speakers from the local communities in the Fox Valley share their experiences and expertise with the group during the program.
- Horticulture Headlines covered a variety of seasonal topics throughout the year to area gardeners, offering seasonally pertinent information on a monthly basis.
- The Horticulture Educator is part of a statewide Horticulture Webinar Team. This team focuses on generating concise programs for gardeners of any level to join via zoom.
- In February, Outagamie County 4-H hosts Family Learning Day for youth to explore new project areas that they are interested in. This year 64 youth attended and chose from 14 different sessions.

- A webinar series Making Farmland Transition Options Available to Landowners was a collaboration between Extension, the American Farmland Trust, Renewing the Countryside and Groundswell Conservancy. The materials offered alternative ways landowners can transfer their land, protect their legacy and provide opportunities for future farmers, with the goal of raising awareness about land transition options that ultimately protect viable farmland in Wisconsin, and make it more accessible to incoming farmers who are facing multiple barriers.
- Presented at two statewide Equity, Diversity and Inclusion conferences (Toward One Wisconsin and Marketplace) about how to maximize success with entrepreneurs of color by adapting strategic inclusion principles. The training led to greater awareness of the diversity of entrepreneurs in Wisconsin and the barriers they face in starting and growing their businesses.
- A webinar was held for dairy owner/operators, herds managers and employees and agribusiness professionals where they learned how to rethink employee training and onboarding and interactively train employees to move cattle to improve farm business viability, environmental sustainability and food safety while maintaining animal welfare and wellbeing.
- Adult nutrition education was offered at ASCEND and COTS locations.
- 4-H Day camps in June and one overnight camp in August was offered for youth in Outagamie and Calumet counties. In total 100 youth took advantage of these camps, 12 of those were not yet enrolled in the program at that time and two of those 12 did enroll in a community club in the fall of 2023.
- Puertas a tu futuro -Doors to your future - College and Career Exploration Event was held in November. Six school districts represented in over 100 students, 13 exhibitor displays, and over 150 individuals. Students engaged with panelists learning about the multiple paths into their professional careers, as well as engaging with each of the exhibitors in Spanish and in English.
- Authored “Determining the Value of Standing Alfalfa in 2023” white paper which is posted on the UW-Madison Division of Extension Crops and Soils Topic Hub website and is utilized by UW peers statewide.
- Served as a co-lead a second year of statewide data collection on Economic Optimum Nitrogen Rates for winter cereal forage crops. Cereal rye, winter triticale or a mix of the two species were planted and harvested evaluating nitrogen rates of 0, 40, 80, 120 and 160 lbs. N/acre. The impact of N rate on dry matter yield and quality of the forages was assessed. In addition, deep soil nitrate samples were collected to ensure recommendations are economically viable and environmentally sound.
- The Crops and Soils Educator served as a co-lead on the final year of data collection on the Midwest Forage Association Alternative Forages Nitrogen Rate research project. The data collected over this three-year effort will be used to provide supplemental recommendations for these forage crops as none currently exists.

LOOKING AHEAD

- The Human Development and Relationships Educator (HDR) joined a statewide pre-caregiving programming workgroup. This workgroup will be looking to provide educational resources for individuals and families who will become adult caregivers in the future. The focus is on pre-planning so future caregivers can be more prepared.
- In 2024, the HDR Educator will be partnering with Winnebago County Extension to provide financial literacy education at Lawrence University for students who receive financial aid.
- In the Summer of 2024, FoodWise will collaborate with numerous community-based organizations to establish gardens that grow foods relevant to various cultural diets, recognizing the limited availability of these foods in local stores, pantries and markets.
- The Positive Youth Development Educator is working with a committee to create a curriculum focused on Independent Living Skills which is what Adulting 101 teaches.
- The Community Development Educator will continue to build relationships through organizations like the NEW Hmong Professionals and specifically provide land and market-access expertise through involvement with Strengthening Support Systems for WI Hmong/HMoob Farmers and the Farmland Access Hub.
- Field days and other educational events that will occur are in the planning stages in the area of dairy heifer grazing. This management practice can have positive economic and environmental impacts.
- As farmers shift in methodologies of learning, increasing availability of virtual training topics includes Badger Dairy Insight, Farm Management webinars and additional opportunities.
- Outagamie County 4-H will be celebrating 100 years of 4-H in this county in 2025. Festivities will kick off with a one-day basketball tournament and conclude with a dance for all current and alumni 4-Hers. Throughout the year there will be contests for members and history being shared with all.
- Outagamie County 4-H Educator has started to bring 4-H into classrooms during the school day with two different programs. ChickQuest teaches 3rd grade youth all about incubating Chicks through science experiments and the collection of data. Cloverbuds in the Classroom works with Kindergarteners to teach different project topics (Wind, Recycling, Color Theory, and Plants). Both of these programs have reached almost 150 youth who are not currently enrolled in 4-H. These programs will continue into the next school year.
- Received a Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program two-year research grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to evaluate the impact of solid manure and commercially applied nitrogen (N) at various rates on final corn grain yield in 2024 and 2025.
- Harvest of the Month will continue in the classes at Stephen Foster Elementary with the hope of expanding the classes school-wide and eventually district-wide.



Extension

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Extension Education Committee

Debbie VanderHeiden	Chair
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Jayne Heiser	Secretary
Mark Mitchell	Member
Dan Rettler	Member

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