



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MARATHON COUNTY

October 2022 Report

*We teach, learn, lead, and serve,
connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with
them in transforming lives and communities.*

4-H – Positive Youth Development

Holly Luerksen, 4-H Program Educator

Jasmine Carbajal, 4-H Associate Educator

- 2022-23 Enrollment is currently open for youth members and adult volunteers. Educators are supporting club recruitment by creating interest flyers and banners, providing 4-H merchandise for open houses, and project engagement materials.
- A 4-H promotional booth at Mexican Independence Day event in Wausau where youth made straw rockets and God's eye and received promotional material. The goal of this effort was to expose Latinx families to 4-H activities, what 4-H is, and promote upcoming 4-H activities in their community.
- A one-time educational session for 4-H youth in Marathon County in 6th grade or older to teach them about resumes, cover letters, interview tips, and to build their application toolbox. Participants also learned about the process and requirements for 4-H trips and awards offered in their county and state.
- A 4-H promotional booth at Schairer's Autumn Acres, LLC for National 4-H Week kick-off event in Marathon County. The goal of this effort was to expose families to different types of 4-H activities, what 4-H is, and promote upcoming 4-H activities in the community.
- Educators are meeting with community partners to understand how we can support community based programs such as after school events, Hmong & Hispanic Network, Marathon City Latinx, and more.
- A bi-weekly email newsletter for 4-H families where they learn about local, state, and national program opportunities and project resources. This effort is designed to increase communication while efficiently utilizing resources.

Agriculture

Heather Schlessner, Dairy Agent

- A statewide webinar series (Badger Dairy Insight) for dairy farmers, employees, industry representatives promoting the latest research based information.
- A hands-on workshop for North Central Technical College (NTC) agriculture students where they met with Extension agriculture educators to learn about management for corn production, corn silage harvest, and storage in Wisconsin. The goal was to educate the NTC students on proper procedures to determine proper ensiling moisture for corn silage and important management practices to economically benefit livestock producers who may ask for their recommendations in their future career.
- Planning for a survey of QuickBooks users in collaboration with other educators that are part of the North Central Extension Risk Management Education grant. The goal of this effort is to identify what areas of training are needed in QuickBooks, so those producers can have a better financial understanding of their farming operations.



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- Planning for an Artificial Insemination course for dairy and beef producers. The goal of this effort is to provide cattle producers with the skills they need to breed cattle so that they can breed their own cattle and are not dependent on breeding companies.
- Planning for bi-annual Midwest Manure Summit for farmers, managers, agronomists, engineers, nutrient management consultants, manure haulers, consultants, and other agri-business professionals. The goal of this effort is to teach individuals the latest, unbiased, university-based research on manure handling technologies, so that they can improve environmental sustainability and increase farm business viability.
- Preparation and submission of a grant to study the success or failure of passive immunity in young calves, specifically comparing the care of replacement dairy heifer calves to their male and crossbred counterparts destined for the beef market.

FoodWise

Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator
Gaonou Thao, FoodWise Educator

- Monthly nutrition/food demo series for Hmong women participating in a domestic abuse support group where participants taste new foods and learn healthy ways to prepare them. The purpose of this program is to improve the quality of their families' diet and increase their ability to manage their food resources.
- Monthly nutrition/food demonstration for adults with limited incomes where participants learn to improve the quality of their families' diet and increase their ability to manage their food resources. The goal of the lessons is for participants to increase eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grains and increase their willingness to try or prepare new foods.

Horticulture

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

Gaining Ground Garden is a therapeutic horticulture program that serves justice involved individuals with court mandated community service hours and individuals within the drug court program. Participants gained basic horticulture skills that can translate into green industry vocations, while working through the UW-Madison Extension Health and Well-being Institute Behavioral Health Program curriculum, Highlights of Taking Care of You (adapted for justice involved audiences). The HTCY curriculum introduced participants to emotional regulation skills which they practiced while working in the gardens. Participants shared that they were able to use these skills in difficult situations outside of Gaining Ground program time, in particular, responding rather than reacting during group therapy discussions. One participant shared how he looked forward to caring for plants. "It's going to give me something to look forward to. Knowing that it's growing because I'm taking care of it. I'm going to remember my hands patting down the soil. It's going to give me something to think about, help me keep my mind off other things."





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Projects in the 2022 growing season included maintaining the Extension Teaching Garden at 212 River Drive. The Gaining Ground crew also worked at the women's sober living home at 1311 3rd St, adding raised beds for vegetables, strawberries, and raspberries, a perennial herb garden, and improving the perennial beds in the landscape. Beds were also added to the ATTIC Services facilities for cut flower production in 2023. To date, participants have reported 240 hours of community service through the Gaining Ground program in 2022.

Additional Highlights

- A virtual program for members of the UWSP Continuing Education LIFE (Learning is FoEver), where participants learned best practices for reduced risk lawn care. The goal of this program is to increase awareness and knowledge of resources to address environmental contamination and pollution due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments.
- An interactive web based class for novice gardeners with limited resources, where participants learned about the resources available to Wisconsin gardeners, including diagnostic services. The goal was to increase awareness and knowledge of resources to address environmental contamination and pollution due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments.
- An online course for consumer audiences (home gardeners) where participants learned fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management. The goal is to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills, improve the productivity / health of gardens and landscapes, and to implement gardening practices that have a positive impact on the environment.
- Planning for the bi-annual 2023 Midwest Manure Summit conference for farmers, consultants, engineers, and other agribusiness industry professionals. The goal of this effort is to show innovation, research, and solutions in handling dairy manure in an environmentally and financially sustainable manner so that farmers can protect the environment and community.
- A therapeutic horticulture program (Gaining Ground Garden) for Marathon County residents with court mandated community service hours, where participants learned gardening skills to increase the use of positive self-management practices (self-care and wellbeing activities).
- A social media outreach campaign for consumer gardeners in Wisconsin, where Facebook and Instagram users engaged with Extension resources, including the UW-Madison Extension Horticulture Topic Hub publications and YouTube videos. This effort is designed to increase awareness and knowledge of resources to address environmental contamination and pollution (due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments).
- Planning for a multi county educational program series for community gardeners. The goal of this effort is to increase gardeners' knowledge, promote best gardening practices and provide university based resources to community gardeners, which improves the health and productivity of their garden plots.

Natural Resources

Kris Tiles, NRI Program Manager



- An outreach program ('Learn About Your Land') for private woodland owners, where participants learned about timber harvests and sales, assistance with their woodlands, and how to plant and maintain trees. This effort is designed to increase private woodland owner engagement with their land and professional foresters.

Upcoming Programs

- 4-H Open Enrollment – Contact Holly Luerssen at holly.luerssen@wisc.edu
- FoodWise Healthy Eating Series – Contact Gaonou Thao at gaonou.thao@wisc.edu

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