



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
MARATHON COUNTY

# December 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 Luerssen, 4-H Program Educator

Jasmine Carbajal, 4-H Associate Educator

### **Marathon County 4-H Fall 2022 Recap**

The Marathon County 4-H educators, Holly and Jasmine, were busy this fall 2022 offering a variety of educational programs and outreach to a diverse range of audiences in the county. Two partnerships that were strengthened this fall were with the Hmong & Hispanic Communication Network (H2N) and the Growing Great Minds (G2M) Out of School Program. Thanks to these partnerships, 4-H has been at various outreach events with the Latinx community (H2N) and expanding what 4-H looks like for kindergarten through 13<sup>th</sup> grade in our local community (G2M).

Local 4-H Clubs also benefited from one-on-one educational sessions by inviting the educators to their monthly club meetings. One of those clubs was Badger 4-H Club where Jasmine made sugar skulls and taught about the Day of the Dead holiday with the members. This was an activity that Jasmine was also able to share at Hawthorne Hills Elementary in Wausau at their monthly Family Night for November. Another big program hit this fall was 4-H Foodie. Participants of 4-H Foodie have loved engaging in cooking and learning about MyPlate during these monthly sessions. Tostadas, Flatbreads, and Tamales are some of the foods 4-H and non-4-H youth have been able to make during the Foodie classes.

The first week of October we celebrated National 4-H Week by doing a kick-off event at Schairer's Autumn Acres, LLC. This event was able to expose families to different types of 4-H activities, what 4-H is, and promote upcoming 4-H activities in the community. Goosechase was also used for a digital scavenger hunt competition between 4-H clubs/families in Marathon County. We were able to gain an AmeriCorp 4-H Program Assistant that has helped with Take & Learn boxes, weekend programming, and social media and program communication to expand the reach of Marathon County 4-H. The Marathon County 4-H team has had a busy fall 2022 and is excited to keep engaging Marathon County youth into 2023!





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- VIP training for new 4-H volunteers where they learn about Extension, risk management, 4-H policy, and ways to work with youth to become effective, informed, and engaged 4-H volunteers working with 4-H members.
- A monthly publication for families new to 4-H, where youth and adults received regular resources to understand 4-H and the opportunities that exist in order to feel connected to Extension programs and the 4-H community.
- An informative and interactive session at the 2022 All Colleague Conference by 4-H educator, Jasmine Carbajal, for Extension staff that did not grow up in 4-H and wanted a deeper understanding of what 4-H is, types of projects 4-Hers do, and opportunities where 4-H staff can work with other Extension departments to increase relationships in mutual communities.
- An informative and interactive session at the 2022 All Colleague Conference by 4-H educator, Jasmine Carbajal, for Extension staff to learn about the program Juntos and how it builds community and promotes equity and inclusion. Participants engaged in a hands-on puzzle activity and deep dialogue about Juntos and Latinx communities across various Wisconsin counties.
- 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 Schlessler, Dairy Agent

Heather is heading to Madison. Heather's presentation made an impact at the All Colleague Conference, she was asked to return to Madison this summer with her AI program. Heather and her colleague, Sandy Stuttgen, Agriculture Educator in Taylor County, have worked tirelessly to help dairy and beef farmers throughout the Midwest improve their herds population. Congrats Heather!



- Creating instructional videos for dairy and beef farmers to aid in artificial insemination programs used on their farms. The objectives of the videos are to help visual learners by reinforcing the topics taught during the Artificial Insemination Course that aims to improve success of artificial insemination programs on dairy and beef farms.
- Planning farmer biosecurity preparedness with Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) emergency services and animal health officials to improve economic sustainability for dairy and livestock producers following a foreign animal disease event.
- Planning for a dairy/ livestock production meeting for women farmers. The goal of this effort is to educate women farmers on various production methods, so that they can keep their farms profitable or implement new enterprises to keep their farm profitable.



- Planning for a regional summit for agricultural professionals, health care workers, and mental health care workers in collaboration with various community partners depending on the region of the state. The goal of this effort is to bring health care workers, mental health care workers, and agricultural professionals together to discuss resources and potential gaps in providing care to farmers relating to farm stress so that we can identify what gaps exist and how to fill these gaps with resources from across the state.
- A training for emergency response personnel in the Planning for Emergency Livestock Transportation Response (PELTR) course where they learned how to respond to incidents involving livestock trailers. The purpose of this program is to increase the effectiveness of emergency planning and the preparedness of local emergency response agencies.
- A statewide webinar series (Badger Dairy Insight) for dairy farmers, employees, industry representatives promoting the latest research based information.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## FoodWise

Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator  
Gaonou Thao, FoodWise Educator

- A 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.
- A 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 their intake of fruits, vegetables and whole grains and increase their willingness to try or prepare new foods.





## Horticulture

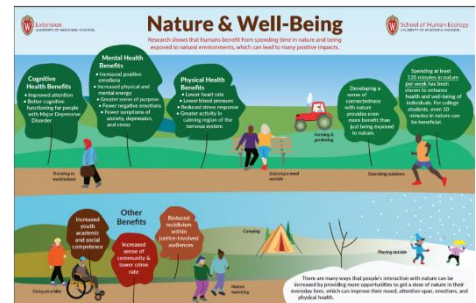
Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

### Fulfilling the Wisconsin Idea with Social Media

Marathon County Extension horticulture educator, Janell Wehr, presented with a team of other county-based horticulture educators at the All-Colleague Conference earlier this month. The team shared how they have expanded the outreach in social media, informally educating and driving social media users to the Extension Horticulture Program website, a resource with best gardening practices and information to reduce pesticide use and increase pollinator habitats. This past year, the Horticulture Program Facebook page grew into the largest social media outreach platform in Extension, more than doubling its followers. In total, our content reached nearly 1.3 million people this year. We know that when people gain knowledge, understanding, or experience a change in attitude that a proportion (not all) of them will implement that knowledge or understanding or attitude change into new behaviors or practices. It is critical that we meet audiences 'where they're at' because adults have agency and will decide for themselves what they want to learn. With social media, the horticulture program is reaching Marathon County residents where they are at. Check out their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinGarden>.

### Connecting Wisconsin's Natural Resources with Human Health and Well-Being

Janell also presented a poster with another team of colleagues from multiple institutes and specialists within Extension. Extension educators recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the value of nature to the people of Wisconsin, especially during difficult times, and see an opportunity for a coordinated, evidence-based approach. A team of cross institute educators, faculty, and students has been working to survey Extension programming and existing research in this area through a Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Seed Grant. They shared the findings of a colleague survey and literature review as well as shared tools (e.g., an infographic and a lay summary of research) to communicate the findings and discuss the next steps in this project.



- An in person horticulture course where Marathon County Master Gardener Volunteer Trainees learn the fundamental principles of integrated pest management based gardening. The goal of this course 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 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.
- 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 evaluation of a DNR Non-point source grant funded program in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources, which is intended to inform DNR on how the grant program could be improved through changes in grantee interactions with grant program staff and resources, and potential structural changes.

## *Upcoming Programs*

- 4-H Programming – Information at [marathon.extension.wisc.edu/projects/programs/](http://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/projects/programs/)
- Strong Bodies – Virtual Strong Bodies Winter 2023 Session – register at <https://go.wisc.edu/Onik0z>
- FoodWise Healthy Eating Series – Contact Gaonou Thao at [gaonou.thao@wisc.edu](mailto:gaonou.thao@wisc.edu)

Jason Hausler  
*Area Extension Director*

Janell Wehr  
*Horticulture Educator*

Kathy Johnson  
*Administrative  
Assistant*

Heather Schlessler  
*Dairy Agent*

Mallory McGivern  
*FoodWise Administrator*

Holly Luerksen  
*4-H Program Educator*

Gaonou Thao  
*FoodWise Educator*

Jasmine Carbajal  
*4-H Associate Educator*

Kris Tiles  
*NRI Program Manager*