



*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**

- A gardening activity for Marathon County 4-H youth, where participants potted up annual flowers and learned how to care for the plants over the growing season. This effort was designed to cultivate science literacy skills in Marathon County youth.
- A hands on activity with multiple area Cub Scout packs, where participants learned the benefits of pollinators while making seed bombs. This effort was designed to cultivate science literacy skills in Marathon County youth.
- A series of three virtual trainings for adult advisors preparing for Summer Academy, focusing on policies and procedures to keep youth safe while in custodial care on the Madison campus.
- A camp staff training program for 4-H youth in grades 8-13 and adults where participants received training in leadership, creating welcoming environments, & providing purposeful youth development programming. Through the training they become intentional, safe, and effective leaders for the Lincoln, Marathon, and Wood 4-H Summer Camp.
- A partnership between Marathon County 4-H and Wausau School District's Growing Great Minds (G2M) program has been growing since 2022. The goal of the program is to expose local youth in elementary school to various organizations in their community and different program areas. During this particular session, 4-H associate educator Jasmine Carbajal, led a group of five youth in learning the basics of engineering and construction. Youth brainstormed what they thought makes a tower/building strong. The participants constructed towers with spaghetti and marshmallows emphasizing the need for a strong base and practicing their creativity.
- A local Boy Scout den leader reached out to 4-H associate educator, Jasmine Carbajal, to ask for her help in teaching four Boy Scout members about the basics of food safety (Clean, Separate, Cook, Chill), basic kitchen skills like knife safety, and cooked a meal to practice common cooking methods (boiling, sauteing, baking, simmering, foil-cooking, and caramelizing). 75% of participants reported learning something new. 100% of participants tried something new. All the participants agreed and strongly agreed that they would apply what they learned in their life. Three of the participants found the information useful. When asked what specific thing the youth learned in this activity that they would use/again they said caramelize fruit/pears and make rice.
- A Marathon County 4-H Leader expressed her passion for sewing and wanted to lead a sewing workshop to get more youth involved in sewing. 4-H associate educator, Jasmine Carbajal, was able to set up the Sewing Basics workshop at a local high school thanks to her partnership with the Family and Consumer Sciences. This partnership allowed for having a larger number of participants since the classroom had ten sewing machines available. Ten youth registered and nine youth showed up. Out of the nine youth, eight of them self-identified as Latinx. The Latinx families that participated were very grateful that their children could learn a very important life skill such as sewing and that they felt welcomed. All participants made simple coasters to practice basic sewing stitches and they learned the basics of a sewing machine.





- A science-learning day (Science Expeditions) where 4-H youth from Lincoln, Marathon, and Wood counties visited UW-Madison and increased their knowledge through hands-on science, technology, engineering, and math activities. The goal was for youth to increase their interest in STEM, learn from college students and staff, and experience a college campus.



## Agriculture

### Heather Schlessor, Dairy Agent

Heather spent time this past month preparing her new lab space for her upcoming research projects. Starting July 1<sup>st</sup> Heather will collect blood and milk samples for two research projects. In the first project, Heather measures the serum total protein of calves aged 1 – 7 days. The goal of the project is to determine if there are differences in colostrum feeding practices between heifer, bull, and crossbred calves. In the second project, Heather will collect milk samples from all four quarters to determine the presence or absence of *Prototheca Bovis*. *Prototheca Bovis* is an alga recently found to cause mastitis in bovines. However, due to its slow-growing nature, it has previously been undiagnosed. Heather will utilize special agar that inhibits other mastitis pathogens from growing and optimizes the growth of *Prototheca Bovis*.

Heather is wrapping up her survey of veterinarians and farmers regarding their use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for pain management in cattle.

Heather is still collecting surveys on the educational needs of QuickBooks users. The second mailing of a paper survey was just completed. Surveys also went out via social media and county/ state newsletters.

Lastly, Heather recently completed another Artificial Insemination Course. While most participants were from Marathon, Clark, and Taylor Counties, we also had a few from southern Wisconsin and Illinois.



- Compromised Cattle Care and Euthanasia Training for UW-Madison agriculture research station staff.
- A study to better understand the prevalence of *Prototheca Bovis* Mastitis on dairy farms in Wisconsin. Results from this study will help Extension Educators provide tailored education to the farmers of Wisconsin on this type of mastitis.
- A study to better understand when veterinarians prescribe pain medications to cattle. Results from this study will help Extension educators tailor their educational efforts to the needs of veterinarians.
- A study to better understand how farmers utilize pain management drugs in their cattle. Results from this study will help Extension educators better understand how farmers decide to use pain management drugs and help them to tailor their educational efforts around farmers' needs.
- A study to better understand farmers' educational needs regarding using QuickBooks. Results from this study will help Extension educators tailor their QuickBooks training to the needs of QuickBooks users.



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
MARATHON COUNTY

# May 2023 Report

## FoodWise

### Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator

FoodWise is hoping to hire a new full-time Marathon County Nutrition Educator, and in the meantime, Nutrition Educators from other counties have pitched in to support scheduled programming in Marathon County. In April, Portage County Educator Penny Schmitt taught a class featuring whole grains and label reading. Wood County Educator Hannah Wendels and Clark County Educator Thalia Mauer came to Marathon County to teach the nutrition education Healthy Eating Series offered to SNAP-eligible residents in May.



Participants learned about healthy lifestyle choices, food preparation, food safety, food resource management and physical activity. The focus of May's class was healthy drinks and education around sugar consumption. The goal of the series is to improve healthy eating and physical activity habits for Marathon County residents.

- A nutrition education series in Marathon County utilizing the Feeding for Healthy Eating curriculum for adults with young children as part of the Children's Wisconsin LEAP (Learning Essentials about Parenting) program where they learn about incorporating healthy eating habits into the family routine, including family meals and eating more fruits and vegetables. The goal of this effort is to encourage healthy eating behaviors at home.
- A monthly nutrition education series offered to SNAP-eligible residents, where participants learn healthy lifestyle choices, food preparation, food safety, food resource management and physical activity. The goal of the series is to improve healthy eating and physical activity habits for Marathon County residents.

## Horticulture

### Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

Gaining Ground is a therapeutic horticulture program in conjunction with ATTIC Services community service and drug court in Marathon County. Participants with court mandated community service hours garden Sunday mornings throughout the growing season. The season started with the transplanting of the fruit trees at Thomas and Grand to two city parks. Five plums were moved to Pleasant View Park, while 14 apples, pears, and cherries were transplanted at 3M park where they will continue to provide fresh and free fruit for local neighborhoods.

Other Gaining Ground projects for this season include:

- Women's transitional sober living home on 3rd Street. We will continue vocational training as the participants work to enhance the landscaping with perennial and annuals, as well as vegetable raised bed production in two beds.
- ATTIC Services. We will continue to improve the meditation garden as well as grow plants for cut flower production.
- Weston YMCA Community Garden. We will work in these gardens as needed for vegetable production. All harvested plants will be donated to area food pantries.

The Teaching Garden at 212 River Drive will be utilized by a therapeutic horticulture Hmong domestic survivor support group. Participants will utilize the garden, planting and harvesting culturally significant herbs and crops. This group meets monthly, but participants are free to utilize the garden space through the growing season.





- A therapeutic horticulture class (Growing blueberries in containers???) for community members aged 55+ at the Woodson YMCA The Landing, where participants learned raspberry cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting, and maintenance, supporting lifelong learning, healthy wellbeing, and positive socialization.
- A therapeutic horticulture program (Spices of Life) for the general public in conjunction with grief counselors from Wausau Area Funeral Care, where participants learned herb seed starting techniques, supporting positive socialization, and increasing optimism in grieving residents in the Wausau area.
- A presentation (A Berry Good Time!), for the general public hosted by Mosinee School District Community Education, where participants learned raspberry cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting, and maintenance. This effort is designed to increase knowledge of resources to encourage home gardeners' success.
- A presentation (Growing veggies in containers) for the general public hosted by the Marathon County Public Library-Hatley Branch, where participants learned container cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting and maintenance. This effort is designed to increase knowledge of resources to encourage home gardeners' success.
- A presentation (A Berry Good Time!), for the general public hosted by the Marathon County Public Library-Wausau Branch, where participants learned raspberry cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting and maintenance. This effort is designed to increase knowledge of resources to encourage home gardeners' success.
- A gardening activity for Marathon County 4-H youth, where participants potted up annual flowers and learned how to care for the plants over the growing season. This effort was designed to cultivate science literacy skills in Marathon County youth.
- A therapeutic horticulture lesson for Hmong women from the Women's Community (serving survivors of domestic violence), where participants learned how to grow new plants from purchased culturally relevant fresh herbs which supported the learning about propagating healthy plants while supporting positive mental well-being, and positive socialization.
- A presentation for members of the Longfellow neighborhood in Wausau, where residents learned of community science opportunities to learn about and become involved in invasive species management. This effort was designed to increase knowledge of resources available to home gardeners.
- A therapeutic horticulture class (Growing veggies in containers) for community members aged 55+ at the YMCA aquatic center in Mosinee, where participants learned container cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting and maintenance, supporting lifelong learning, healthy wellbeing, and positive socialization.
- A weekly therapeutic gardening program for individuals with court mandated community service where participants develop vocational skills including a foundation in IPM to increase employability and reduce recidivism in Marathon County.
- A hands on activity with multiple area Cub Scout packs, where participants learned the benefits of pollinators while making seed bombs. This effort was designed to cultivate science literacy skills in Marathon County youth.
- A 5 session after school program (Sprout Squad) hosted by Wausau School District G2M at Lincoln School, where 2-3rd grade students learned the specific techniques for plant propagation. This effort was designed to cultivate science literacy skills in Marathon County youth.



## Natural Resources

Kris Tiles, NRI Program Manager

Anna James, Regional Natural Resources Educator

- An in-person retreat for Wisconsin women woodland owners where attendees learned about various woodland management techniques and topics. The goal was to build the confidence of women landowners to make management decisions.
- An online Canvas course, "Your Land, Your Legacy", for private woodland owners, using a combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning tools, to guide families through the legacy planning process for their woodlands.

## Upcoming Programs

- **4-H Programming** – Information at [marathon.extension.wisc.edu/projects/programs/](https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/projects/programs/)
- **StrongBodies** – StrongBodies Spring 2023 Session – Register at <https://go.wisc.edu/71ptii>
- **Horticultural Programs** – Information at <https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/horticulture/programs/>

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