



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MARATHON COUNTY

August 2023 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

- Partnership with North Central Community Action Program and the Marathon County 4-H Leaders Federation to create a 4-H Program Assistant for 4-H programs. Two 4-H Program Assistants will provide a variety of programs through Growing Great Minds, Marathon County Library, summer camps, travel experiences, and traditional 4-H. The purpose of this effort is to improve program effectiveness and community outreach in the Marathon County 4-H program.
- Partnership with MCHS Public Health AmeriCorps Community Corps program and the Marathon County 4-H Leaders Federation to create a 4-H Program Assistant for 4-H programs. 4-H Program Assistants will provide a variety of programs through Growing Great Minds, Marathon County Library, and traditional 4-H. The purpose of this effort is to improve program effectiveness in the Marathon County 4-H program.

Agriculture

Heather Schlessor, Dairy Agent

- A research-based educational article for dairy and beef farmers and agri-business professionals, where participants will learn about estrus detection and estrus detection aids for cattle. The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge of how to perform this task, its importance, and to provide a resource for employee training.
- Planning and creating videos for agriculturists including youth involved in livestock production where they will learn biosecurity principles in collaboration with the WI Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The goal of this project is to help livestock producers increase their understanding of biosecurity practices that will help them achieve and/or maintain economic viability.
- Planning for development of factsheets/articles, longer publications, and videos on nutrition, genetics, & reproduction topics. The goal of this effort is to increase farmer, nutritionist, veterinarian, and other agribusiness professionals understanding of management of these topics to help improve farm sustainability and economic viability.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MARATHON COUNTY

August 2023 Report

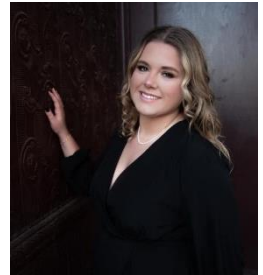
FoodWise

Mallory McGivern, FoodWise Administrator

Michelle Van Krey, Healthy Communities Coordinator

Julia Perock, FoodWise Educator

Welcome to our new FoodWise Nutrition Educator Julia Perock. Julia is serving as the FoodWise Nutrition Educator in Marathon County. She will focus on school education programs, as well as work with families to provide nutrition education. She looks forward to partnering with food pantries to provide nutritional support within the community. She graduated from The University of Wisconsin Stevens Point in December 2022, with a BA in Sustainable Food and Nutrition. Julia is excited to step into this role and provide education about healthy food choices as well as encourage community members to adopt a healthy lifestyle.



- Shared leadership in the Marathon County Hunger Coalition, where emphasis is placed on expanding healthy food access and developing new projects and partnerships that will empower Marathon County families through education and shared resources. The coalition's goal is to increase access to healthy foods in order to achieve health equity for all county residents.
- A quarterly nutrition education series in Portage & 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.

Horticulture

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

- A community of practice for horticulture educators where we explore strategies and resources to expand horticulture education and outreach to underrepresented audiences. The goal of participating in this group is to dig into ways we can locally continue to grow and enhance our horticulture programs to reach more diverse audiences.
- Planning for the creation of a repository of existing horticultural resources in multiple languages for home/community gardeners of all abilities. The goal of this effort is to make this repository accessible on the Horticulture Topic Hub.
- Developing informal learning communities utilizing the Horticulture Program's social media for all Wisconsin gardeners, including underserved populations. The goal of this effort is to provide accurate, practical, and up-to-date information to the public primarily through the topic hub in order to bolster educational outreach efforts in support of addressing the Horticulture Program objectives.



Natural Resources

Kris Tiles, NRI Program Manager

Anna James, Regional Natural Resources Educator

Marathon County has a total of 469,702 forested acres, which accounts for 47% of the land cover. In the state, 57% of the forested lands are owned and managed by family forest owners. In Marathon County, that comes down to over 3,000 landowners making decisions about their woodland. And we know the importance of forest products in this state. Very few landowners have worked with a forester, and fewer yet have a management plan for this important and valuable resource. To help landowners understand the value of their resource and working with a professional, Extension provides classes for woodland owners across the state. This October, classes will be held in Marathon Co. The three classes offered in this series include: conducting a timber sale, managing for wildlife habitat, and family conversations about the future of the woodlands. Classes will be offered both in-person and virtually. For more information on the classes and to register:

<https://woodlandinfo.org/current-events/>.

- Participation in the advisory panel of a local producer-led watershed group for farmers, conservationists, and community members of the Big Eau Pleine watershed, by assisting with planning and facilitating activities geared toward increasing the awareness and adoption of conservation and ultimately water quality of the Big Eau Pleine and Wisconsin River watersheds.

Additional Extension Outreach Programming Occurring in Marathon County

- Participating on the steering team of a collaborative of local farmers and agricultural professionals called a "learning hub," based in a specific geography referred to as the Cloverbelt, focused on increasing grass-based agriculture in the region mainly by the implementation of grazing dairy heifers.
- Participated in pasture walks held in various locations around the state through the 2022 growing season. The goal of these events is to highlight specific methods and solutions that farmers can implement to improve their success in grazing.
- Coordinate the Grazing Management Team at the Marshfield Agricultural Research Station. The goal is to facilitate monthly meetings to make sure all research station staff and scientists are working toward the same goals, and to ensure success of the grazing program at the station.
- Planning for a small ruminant management program for goat producers, typically members of plain faith communities so that they may improve their production practices, profitability and sustainability of their goat management programs.
- An online program (Money Matters) for participants who want to improve their financial knowledge, where they complete 1-12 modules on different financial topics. The goal of the Money Matters modules is to increase participants' knowledge on topics such as credit scores and reports, making a spending plan, what



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MARATHON COUNTY

August 2023 Report

to do when you can't pay your bills, and identifying financial strengths so that participants can apply these skills in the future.

Upcoming Programs

- **4-H Programming** – Information at marathon.extension.wisc.edu/projects/programs/
- **Horticultural Programs** – Information at <https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/horticulture/programs/>

Jeremy Solin
Area Extension Director

Janell Wehr
Horticulture Educator

Kris Tiles
NRI Program Manager

Heather Schlessler
Dairy Agent

Mallory McGivern
FoodWise Administrator

Kathy Johnson
*Administrative
Assistant*

Holly Luerssen
4-H Program Educator

Julia Perock
FoodWise Educator

Jasmine Carbajal
4-H Associate Educator

Michelle Van Krey
Healthy Community Coordinator