

CHIPPEWA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & EXTENSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 5, 2024
CHIPPEWA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, RM 302
7:45 AM

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Kari Ives	Chippewa County	District 21, Chair	Present	
Matthew Peterson	Chippewa County	District 10, Vice-Chair	Present	
Joel Seidlitz	Chippewa County	District 9	Present	
Pamela Guthman	Chippewa County	District 2	Present	
Timothy Goettl	Chippewa County	District 6	Present	

3. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public wishing to be heard.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Joel Seidlitz, District 9
SECONDER:	Matthew Peterson, District 10, Vice-Chair
AYES:	Ives, Peterson, Seidlitz, Guthman, Goettl

1. Approve the agenda
2. Approve the Minutes

Agriculture & Extension Committee - Regular Meeting - Oct 3, 2024 7:45 AM

3. Schedule Next Meeting Date - February 6, 2025, 7:45 am

5. REPORTS

1. Area Extension Director Report - Kristen Bruder
Area Extension Director informed the board since the budget has been passed the contract has been signed and she will provide a copy of the partnership agreement with the committee. She also introduced Ryan Serry as the Regional Livestock Educator.
2. Extension Educator Reports
Each educator covered the information in the attached reports.

Crops and Soils - Jerry Clark

Agriculture & Extension Committee

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Chippewa County Courthouse, Rm 302

December 5, 2024
7:45 AM

Community Development - Garret Zastoupil

Health and Well-Being - Sandy Tarter and Hillarie Roth

Horticulture - Margaret Murphy

Human Development and Relationships - Jeanne Walsh

Positive Youth Development - Jordan Blue

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

7. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

8. ADJOURN

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Joel Seidlitz, District 9
SECONDER:	Timothy Goettl, District 6
AYES:	Ives, Peterson, Seidlitz, Guthman, Goettl

CHIPPEWA COUNTY
AGRICULTURE & EXTENSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 3, 2024
CHIPPEWA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, RM 302
7:45 AM

1. CALL TO ORDER

County Clerk, Jaclyn Sadler, called the meeting to order as the Chair and Vice-Chair were absent from the meeting. The three County Board Supervisors chose Supervisor Seidlitz to run the meeting.

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Kari Ives	Chippewa County	District 21, Chair	Absent	
Matthew Peterson	Chippewa County	District 10, Vice-Chair	Absent	
Joel Seidlitz	Chippewa County	District 9	Present	
Pamela Guthman	Chippewa County	District 2	Present	
Timothy Goettl	Chippewa County	District 6	Present	

others present in room 302 were Kristen Bruder, Jerry Clark, Amber Gilles, Garret Zastoupil, Sandy Tarter, Hillarie Roth, Margaret Murphy, Jeanne Walsh, Jordan Blue and Jaclyn Sadler

3. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public wishing to be heard

4. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Timothy Goettl, District 6
SECONDER: Pamela Guthman, District 2
AYES: Seidlitz, Guthman, Goettl
ABSENT: Ives, Peterson

1. Approve the agenda
2. Approve the Minutes

Agriculture & Extension Committee - Regular Meeting - Aug 1, 2024 7:45 AM

3. Schedule Next Meeting Date - December 5, 2024, 7:45 am

5. REPORTS

1. Area Extension Director - Kristen Bruder

Area Extension Director, Kristen Bruder, reported to the committee on the status of the Livestock position. The final interview will be held tomorrow and there is only one candidate. Bruder also reported on attending the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Conference; where she worked the Extension booth on Monday and Tuesday.

Agriculture & Extension Committee

Minutes

October 3, 2024

Regular Meeting

Chippewa County Courthouse, Rm 302

7:45 AM

2. Extension Educator Reports

Each Educator provided the committee an update on their specific areas. Please see attached report for details.

Crops & Soils - Jerry Clark

Jerry Clark spoke on the success of Farm Tech Days and the Rural Event Center at the event. He also spoke on a nitrate research project that is being conducted in Chippewa County. Jerry spoke on the educators speaking to 700 5th graders in Chippewa County in September.

Community Development - Garret Zastoupil

Garret Zastoupil highlighted 4 items he has been working on recently. He has done "strengths" training with Chippewa County Public Health Leadership team, meeting with EMS Leaders to discuss the status of healthcare in Chippewa County, met with 4H Leadership to discuss Strategic Planning and working with the Bloomer Senior Center.

Health and Well-Being - Sandy Tarter and Hillarie Roth

Sandy Tarter and Hillarie Roth spoke on upcoming programming now that the school year has started. They are also working with Romeis Apartments on "Seniors Eating Well". They provided an update on the Monday Market at the Y.

Horticulture - Margaret Murphy

Margaret Murphy informed the committee that she is still receiving a lot of gardening questions and the fall is a time where she receives a lot of insect questions. Margaret is participating in the "Age Your Way" program at CVTC on October 18. She is also working on closing the community gardens for the winter before or by October 31.

Human Development and Relationships - Jeanne Walsh

Jeanne Walsh updated the committee on some of the programming she is involved with. The "re-entry" program in the jail has been turned over to Alison Lebakken and now Jeanne is working on bringing the "Rent Smart" programming to the jail. She is still continuing the "Rent Smart" program at Hope Village. She has partnered with the Bloomer Library on a "Planning Ahead" series for seniors and 20 people are signed up for the program.

Positive Youth Development - Jordan Blue

Jordan Blue has been identifying partnerships with different youth organizations and the 4H program. He also had conversations with Our Nawakwa, former Girl Scout Camp, on using the camp for all youth organizations. A big focus has been on enrollment for 4H and the upcoming 4H year. There will be a 4H Open House at the Northern Wisconsin Fairgrounds on Saturday, October 26th from 12 pm to 4 pm.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

No business items.

7. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

8. ADJOURN

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Oct 3, 2024 7:45 AM (Consent Agenda)

Agriculture & Extension Committee

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Chippewa County Courthouse, Rm 302

October 3, 2024
7:45 AM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Timothy Goettl, District 6
SECONDER:	Pamela Guthman, District 2
AYES:	Seidlitz, Guthman, Goettl
ABSENT:	Ives, Peterson

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Oct 3, 2024 7:45 AM (Consent Agenda)



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
CHIPPEWA COUNTY

Extension Chippewa County

October 2024 Report

Crops & Soils

Jerry Clark | Regional Crops and Soils Educator

To view the Extension in the Valley, E-Newsletter, [Click Here](#).



A presentation for agronomy students from Auburn University where students engaged in discussion about hop, barley, and beer production to increase understanding how these crops and products are managed in Wisconsin. Total Reach: 9 Auburn University students and advisor.

A presentation for the Wisconsin Science Festival and Badgers on Tap series where participants engaged in discussion about Malting Barley Research for the Craft Brewing Industry to increase understanding of applied barley production research and farm profitability. Total Reach: 53 Badgers On Tap participants.

A clinic for students where students learned forage feed and nutrition analysis recommendations and the nutrition impact on dairy cattle and type and structure of dairy cattle to improve forage and feeding practices and increase dairy production efficiency and improve farm profitability. The goal of the program is to increase knowledge and understanding of the importance of forage and feeding impact on dairy animals. Total Reach: 153 students 6 teachers. (Collaborated with Amber Gilles & Jordan Blue)

A field event for 5th grade students where participants learned about conservation issues and careers to increase student awareness about the importance of conservation. Total Reach: 654 fifth grade students 55 teachers, parents. (Collaborated with Margaret Murphy & Jordan Blue)

A soil health training for new and mid-career agronomists, where participants learned about soil health principles to better support farmers as they adopt conservation practices. Total Reach: 14 county and federal agency conservation staff and private sector agronomic consultants attended the Sept 13 session in Star Prairie.

An on-farm research study for farmers, agriculture industry and agency professionals where manure application and nitrogen credits will be evaluated to better understand the effect of corn yield to validate current nitrogen rates and manure credits for corn production and protect ground and surface water quality. Total Reach: 7 farms across Wisconsin are participating.

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Attachment: October 2024 Monthly Report (8686 : Extension Educator Reports)


Extension

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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

The Wisconsin Land and Water Association provides a Fall Tech Tour for conservation professionals to learn about conservation practices and strategies to protect soil and water resources. I was invited to present information to the conservation professionals about my local research on industrial hemp and nitrogen management on corn. I also presented information about the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot project. Corn growers continually face many production challenges including low grain prices, high input prices and regulatory pressure to minimize nutrient losses to the environment. Nitrogen management figures prominently into these challenges with questions surrounding selection of nitrogen fertilizer rates. I presented data on how on-farm research in Chippewa and Dunn counties has attempted to help answer questions to nitrogen rate application. The Chippewa County Fall Tech Tour was attended by 53 conservation professionals from across Wisconsin. I presented information on how industrial hemp has been reintroduced into Wisconsin and about production practices to successfully grow industrial hemp for fiber and grain. The plot tour explored variety trials, nitrogen rate effectiveness, and planting date influences. Discussion also centered on how industrial hemp can fit into existing cropping systems and its potential as a conservation crop.

Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | Regional Community Development Educator



A survey for residents of Bloomer, WI, where participants provided information on the senior center, desired programming, and operations. The survey data will support decision-making related to the center's goal of reengaging community members following a decline in participation since the COVID19 pandemic.

(Garret Zastoupil)

Planning for a training that is designed to help adult leaders in the Chippewa County 4-H Leaders Association understand their purpose and the impact of their roles. Collaborating with Garret Zastoupil, a Community Development Educator, the goal is to strengthen the leadership team, attract new members, and facilitate the restructuring of the association's by-laws. This effort is focused on creating a more cohesive and effective leadership group that can drive the organization forward. (Collaborated with Jordan Blue)


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Provide a leadership role in the founding and operation of the Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative. Extension is working closely with a cooperative board of local civic and business leaders to move forward on constructing a new hospital and related clinics. The goal of the cooperative is to create renewed healthcare access in a region adversely impacted by the recent closure of two closed hospitals and 19 clinics, to preserve nearly 1,400 high paying jobs, and to support local economic development efforts and to support the local tax base. (Location type: Geography Served) Total Reach: Meetings with, and presentations for, 15 county boards and county administrators Meetings with, and presentations for, 5 cities and villages Weekly meetings with nine civic and business leaders and four physicians serving on the board of the Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative Regular media outreach to a region with 120,000 people through local television stations and the Eau Claire Leader Telegram Weekly communications with 160 physicians affiliated with the Oakleaf Physicians Network Monthly outreach to federal and state healthcare policymakers Cooperative Membership of 500 community residents (Collaborated with: Bill Oemichen,, Karl Green, Kristen Bruder)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

I was approached by the Director of Chippewa County Public Health, Brittnay Fortuna, to provide StrengthsFinder training to her team. She took over her role in the last year and the team has had significant turnover. She is looking for tools and strategies to help build a positive team culture. I met with Brittnay to further discuss the needs, and what her intended outcomes were. I developed a two part workshop for the whole staff. Originally, Brittnay requested a one-off workshop with the leadership team to discuss Strengths. However, this ended up being a two-part session. I conducted background research using Gallup, Dare to Lead, Harvard Business Review, and MIT Sloan Journal of Management to help craft these sessions. The programming is ongoing, as the second session with the whole staff will be in December 2024. The overarching goal was to build a greater sense of teamwork, develop a positive organizational culture, and integrate strengths-based approaches to leading and collaborating with one another. The specific outcomes of the program were:

1. Define their Top 5 strengths and apply their Top 5 to their professional and personal lives
2. Explain their basement and balcony strengths and reflect upon situations in which one or both appear
3. Describe and critique the positive psychology theory behind the Strengthsfinder Assessment
4. Explain what they bring and need, as individuals, to their teams based on their personal Top 5


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5. Describe the distribution of Strengths among their work teams and interpret this distribution as it relates to teamwork
6. Develop strategies, based on the collective team's strengths for how to achieve team goals over the next quarter

Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | FoodWise Regional County Coordinator

Hillarie Roth | FoodWise Chippewa & Dunn Educator



A 6-week nutrition education series for 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders at Downsville Elementary to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, food safety, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

A 6-week nutrition education series for 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders at Lake Holcombe Elementary to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, importance of handwashing, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

A 6-week nutrition education series for Kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd graders at New Auburn Elementary to learn about the colors of MyPlate foods, importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

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A 6-lesson nutrition education series at Romeis Apartments. This effort will help residents to focus on the importance of balanced eating with a reduction in sodium, utilizing foods they have on hand, money saving strategies for grocery shopping, and the importance of physical activity.

Participation in Building Nourishing Pantries training. This effort expands understanding of how positive and adverse experiences affect individual and community relationships to food and health, principles of trauma-informed approach and how to apply it to pantry work, and the role food pantries have in supporting community food security.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

Chippewa Falls did not have a Farmers Market FoodShare EBT/Market Match program and so in 2022, partners in our local CHIP Chronic Disease Prevention Action Team got together to figure out where we could establish a new farmers market to offer this important program. The YMCA answered the call and the first farmers market to offer an EBT/ Market Match program to support FoodShare families in Chippewa Falls was developed- Monday Market at the Y. There were some lessons learned from the growing pains of the first year (2023) which included tech issues with the EBT machine, WIFI accessibility in the parking lot, searching for vendors to sign up, helping our Hmong vendors to understand about the market and EBT program including the newer WIC voucher online and Senior voucher systems, finding sponsorship of the Market Match, and outreach to FoodShare families in learning about our program. The 2024 season included the following improvements and expansion of the EBT/Market Match program:

- Increased EBT sales to \$321.
- Increased Market Match tokens given out to \$291.
- Secured sponsorship funding for the Match program.
- Secured funding from Mayo Health System to offer free Rideshare tokens to individuals at low income apartments, transitional housing for homeless, community free meal site, and local food pantries.
- Created and distributed better signage and flyers throughout the area.
- Participated in supporting the GusNIP Nutrition Incentive Initiative and received a flutter flag from state FM funding.
- Developed a Monday Market at the Y Facebook page to increase social media marketing.
- Completed FoodWise direct education at the market for WIC families.



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- Purchased all the vendor produce at the end of market with Farmers Market funding and distributed at the Agnes' Food Pantry.
- Developed vendor evaluations and follow-up discussions will be ongoing.

We will continue to work towards expanding this EBT/Market Match initiative. The following FoodShare client quote sums it up best: "I'm so happy to receive these extra tokens for veggies"!

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | Horticulture Regional County Educator

To view the Extension in the Valley, E-Newsletter, [Click Here](#).



An activity for seniors where individuals engaged in a nature-based craft. This effort was designed for participants to take part in a hands-on, festive activity as crafting along with other such hands-on activities has been shown to help enhance cognitive function, boost creativity and provide an opportunity for positive socialization. Total Reach: 24

An activity for people living with dementia and their care partners where individuals engage in a seasonal, nature-based craft. This effort is designed for participants to take part in a hands-on, festive activity that encourages the use of fine motor skills, stimulates the senses, boosts creativity and provides an opportunity for positive socialization. Total Reach: 8

A program to Hmong Elders where participants learned about basic soil characteristics and soil testing. This effort was designed to share information on garden soil basics to help grow healthy plants and how UW Madison Division of Extension can aid in attaining resources and interpreting soil test results. Total Reach: 15

A UW Madison Division of Extension table at a WI Dept of Corrections staff wellness fair where participants learned about health and wellness programs offered through Extension including horticultural resources and programming that illustrates how gardens can be a source of high-quality nutrition, provide opportunities for exercise at any age, and add to personal and community well-being. Total Reach: Approximately 25



Human Development and Relationships

Jeanne Walsh | Human Development and Relationships Educator



A 6-session course for renters where 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 this, those with negative rental records and those new to renting are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public supports. Total Reach: 6 Workshop participants and 20 jail partners 250 men and women incarcerated at Chippewa County Jail via flyers and portal media.

A 6-session course for renters where 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 this, those with negative rental records and those new to renting are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public supports. Total Reach: 52 Hope Village guests, their families and Hope Village mentors/administration.



Participation in the development of a draft of the 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement plan with the Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership. The goal of this plan is to identify community health priorities for the next three years and create community-led goals for actionable change.

Individual financial coaching for Hope Village participants. Guests living at Hope Village identified individual financial goals and made plans to reach them. Individuals were able to print out and learn about their credit reports. Efforts will provide guests with financial knowledge and sustainability.

A Real Colors© professional development training for all Chippewa County Public Health employees. Participants were able to learn more about themselves and coworkers, and experience how utilizing a colleague's different strengths not only improves their team dynamics but provides a common understanding for working through areas of conflict. This effort will help provide team collaboration and positive relationships.

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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

The average American tenant is “cost-burdened” (paying 30% or more of income toward rent) for the first time in United States history. According to the 2022 State of Home Affordability in Wisconsin report, 65% of renters in the state pay more than 30% of their income on housing and 37% of renters spend more than 50%/month (among renters who earn less than \$50,000/year). The report also indicates that many renters don't earn enough to afford the average rental unit. The hourly wage needed to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom Wisconsin home is \$18.56. Minimum wage in the state is \$7.25. The shortage of homes relative to demand (for both rentals and those for purchase) is -52,615. The lack of affordable housing availability makes it difficult for a community to attract and retain workers.

Extension's Rent Smart course provides participants with knowledge and skills that can help them find and keep safe and affordable housing that meets their needs. The six-session course features lessons on: * Determining what they can afford to pay for rent * Checking out the rental property and landlord * Application process * Understanding who's responsible for maintenance, repair, and care * Communication skills * Rental agreements. The Rent Smart program also offers a train-the-trainer course for community service providers so that they can use the curriculum to help their clients meet their housing needs. Rent Smart is designed to help participants find and keep safe, affordable, and quality rental housing. Among Rent Smart survey respondents in 2023, 86% said This class will help me obtain appropriate housing in the future. 100% of respondents said This class will or might help me keep housing in the future. We know from follow-up surveys that 9 out of 10 respondents who moved since completing the course report that the new housing is safer, more affordable, and/or better quality. In 2023 Rent Smart train-the-trainer survey results, 95% of community service provider participants feel moderately or definitely able to help clientele sustain housing once it's acquired (compared to 59% before). When residents have reliable housing that they can afford and landlords have responsible tenants, communities benefit through having a stable workforce.

Attachment: October 2024 Monthly Report (8686 : Extension Educator Reports)



Extension

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October 2024 Report

Positive Youth Development

Jordan Blue | 4-H Program Educator

To view the Chippewa Chatter, E - Newsletter, [Click Here.](#)



Collaborating with volunteers and youth leaders to plan a Livestock Education Program for Chippewa County 4-H members, aiming to create a program that equips participants with essential skills and knowledge, ultimately fostering responsible livestock ownership and contributing to the broader agricultural community.

An educational workshop for local school students, where they participated in hands-on conservation activities and learned about environmental stewardship.

I led the energy station, teaching students about renewable energy sources and energy conservation practices. Through this effort, students gained a deeper understanding of conservation practices and their role in protecting natural resources, fostering a sense of responsibility and engagement with environmental issues in their community. (Collaborated with Jerry Clark)

Planning for the 2025 Area Six STEM Partnership Development for 4-H youth in collaboration with UW-Stout STEM Programming. The goal is to explore future collaboration opportunities and provide youth with hands-on STEM experiences, so that participants can enhance their skills in science, technology, engineering, and math, fostering innovation and preparing them for future academic and career success.

Planning for the Area Six 4-H Speaking and Demonstration Festival for 4-H youth in collaboration with local 4-H Educators from Eau Claire and Dunn County. The goal is to provide participants with opportunities to develop public speaking and demonstration skills by presenting topics they are passionate about. This helps youth build confidence, improve communication, and practice leadership, contributing to their personal and professional growth.

Planning for a 4-H Open House for prospective members, current members, and their families in collaboration with local 4-H clubs and community organizations. The goal is to showcase 4-H programs, activities, and opportunities, so that attendees can learn more about the benefits of 4-H involvement,

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engage with existing members, and ultimately increase participation and community support for the program.

The launch of the Livestock Education Project for youth, where we outlined the goals, outcomes, and work of the project. Through this effort, we gained momentum and improved conflict resolution, communication, and the continuous picture of the project.

A 4-H Educational Experience Interview Night for youth, where they connected with community members and practiced interview skills to enhance their confidence and preparedness for future job opportunities.

A House Plant Workshop for youth, where they explored their sparks in horticulture while partnering with a local floral shop. Through this effort, the youth gained hands-on experience and knowledge in plant care, fostering a deeper appreciation for horticulture and inspiring potential career interests in the field. (Collaborated with Amber Gilles)

4-H Open House for youth, where they built interest in the 4-H program, engaged in discussions with current volunteers and participants, and explored the various opportunities available in 4-H. Through this event, the youth gained valuable insights into the 4-H community, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging future participation. (Location type: Both) Total Reach: 50 4-H Members, Volunteers and Non-Members 2000 views of the 4-H Open House Promotional Video (Collaborated with Amber Gilles)

Planning for Youth Programs for youth who are unhoused in collaboration with Hope Village. The goal is to provide engaging and supportive programs for youth experiencing homelessness, so that they can gain valuable skills, build a sense of community, and improve their overall well-being.

Partnering with Our Nawakwa to bring together youth development agencies, we're exploring ways to connect, share ideas, and find collaborative opportunities in program delivery. The goal is to introduce Camp Nawakwa to youth-serving organizations through two new initiatives: a showcase day to invite the community to discover local youth development programs, and a program designed to familiarize youth with Camp Nawakwa's offerings.

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A series of club leader meetings focused on identifying growth areas, opportunities, and challenges within the group. Through these discussions, we outlined action steps to help the clubs move forward effectively and build capacity.

"It's been so wonderful meeting you and getting to know you. You've already made such a heartfelt impact on the program, and it's clear how much you genuinely care. Thanks to your efforts, my kids are more excited than ever to stay in 4-H and participate. The feedback from my daughter about camp this year was the best I've ever received, which means so much to me. Even parents who haven't met you notice the positive energy you bring! Your communication is outstanding, and I can't wait to see what you'll achieve in the future. I especially appreciate how you value each club's input—no one has ever asked for my thoughts on improvements before. You've already made such a difference in such a short time, and I feel incredibly lucky that our community has you. Thank you so much for all that you do, even with such a busy schedule!" - Feedback From Club Leader

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

We recognize that not all youth have access to transportation, which limits their ability to participate in our programs. This gap in accessibility means many young people miss out on valuable opportunities for personal growth, community involvement, and educational development. To address this need, we are planning an initiative to provide after school club programs directly within local school districts. By collaborating with the Chippewa County 4-H AmeriCorps Member and local school districts (Cornell, Chippewa Falls, New Auburn, and Lake Holcombe), we aim to reach community youth where they are. This effort is driven by the necessity to find innovative ways to reach new, more, and different members of our community. Our goal is to reach a total of 100 youth and increase membership in the Chippewa County 4-H program. By doing so, we hope to foster a stronger, more inclusive youth community and ensure that all young people have the opportunity to benefit from programming offered by the 4-H and UW-Extension. To address the identified needs, we developed a plan to implement after school club programs directly within the local school districts. This approach ensures that youth who lack transportation can still participate in positive youth development programming.

Attachment: October 2024 Monthly Report (8686 : Extension Educator Reports)



Value Added Programming

Investment in Chippewa Extension brings additional resources.

Facilitation of regular monthly meetings of the Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition, where partners meet to discuss ways to implement a ten-year comprehensive watershed management plan, plan events, assess activities, update each other on work being done, and formulate new ways to collaborate. Total Reach: The partners represented at the meetings every month average about 11 in number per meeting (usually 10-12 meetings per year depending on partner availability). The various activities that all these partners engage in are not all tracked for contact information. But between field days, outreach events, one-on-one contacts with producers, and other activities, contacts are likely in the thousands. (Daniel Zerr)

Facilitation of regular (every other month) meetings of the Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership, where partners meet to discuss ways to implement a ten-year comprehensive watershed management plan, plan events, assess activities, update each other on work being done, and formulate new ways to collaborate. Total Reach: The partners represented at the meetings every other month average about 12 in number per meeting (6 meetings during the year held in Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec). The various activities that all these partners engage in are not all tracked for contact information. But between field days, outreach events, one-on-one contacts with producers, and other activities including the annual Red Cedar River Conference, contacts are likely in the thousands. (Daniel Zerr, Becky Brathal, Kelsey Hyland)

Preparation and planning for a conference for waterfront property owners and watershed professionals where attendees learn about shoreline management practices, aquatic invasive species, ecology, capacity considerations for lake associations, tools to approach resident and tourist conflict, and other topics relevant to the water resources of northwest Wisconsin. The goal of this effort is to enable behavior change and connect professionals to each other and new resources, leading to improved water quality in northwest Wisconsin. (Sarah Brown)

A 1.15 hour workshop for older adults focused on social isolation and loneliness, where participants learned strategies to mitigate the negative impacts. Through this effort, older adults are better equipped to improve their social well-being and mental health. Total Reach: 60 Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Club Members (Alicia Utke-Becher)

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A 12 week series of strength-training sessions (StrongBodies) for older adults where they learn and practice strength-building exercises along with nutrition and health education. The goal of the sessions is for participants to improve strength, balance, and flexibility to stay healthy and socially connected. (Bridget Rongner, Julie Yezek)

Participation in the development of a draft of the 2025-2027 Community Health Improvement plan with the Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership. The goal of this plan is to identify community health priorities for the next three years and create community-led goals for actionable change. (Margo Dieck)

Area Extension Director

Kristen Bruder | Chippewa, Eau Claire and Dunn Counties



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Crops & Soils

Jerry Clark | Regional Crops and Soils Educator

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An on-farm study to better understand the effect of nitrogen application rates on nitrogen cycling and corn yield. Results from this study will help corn growers in that they can implement and adapt N management practices to optimize economic return, improve efficiency of N fertilizer resulting in more sustainable corn production and farm profitability.

Partners and farmers in all three counties I serve have identified nitrate in groundwater as an issue in their county. An Adaptive Nitrogen Management on-farm field research plot was implemented. This research attempted to address the challenges to questions surrounding selection of N fertilizer rate, use of pre-plant nitrate and pre-sidedress nitrate tests, crediting nitrogen from manure and other on-farm nutrient sources, and how best to use soil health nutrient tools to improve sustainability of nitrogen management practices.

Nitrogen rates applied were 0, 40, 80, 120, 160, and 200 (preplant and sidedress) pounds per acre. Field plots were sampled for preplant nitrate soil tests. Yields were collected and compared to nitrogen rates applied within the replicated plots.

This data from this on-farm research project will be used to help farmers and agronomists with nitrogen management decisions. Data will be analyzed for potential differences between nitrogen application rates.

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Community Development

Garret Zastoupil | Regional Community Development Educator



A survey for residents of Bloomer, WI, where participants provided information on the senior center, desired programming, and operations. The survey data will support decision-making related to the center's goal of reengaging community members following a decline in participation since the COVID19 pandemic.

A four part training for Chippewa County Public Health Department, where staff learned about their Top 5 Talents, Strengths-based coaching and team collaboration, and the positive psychology theory supporting these practices. As

a result of participating in this training session, participants were able to communicate their talents and needs within their work teams, managers were able to individualize their coaching feedback, and the organization built a stronger culture and trust across diverse members.

Provide a leadership role in the founding and operation of the Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative. Extension is working closely with a cooperative board of local civic and business leaders to move forward on constructing a new hospital and related clinics. The goal of the cooperative is to create renewed healthcare access in a region adversely impacted by the recent closure of two closed hospitals and 19 clinics, to preserve nearly 1,400 high paying jobs, and to support local economic development efforts and to support the local tax base. (In partnership with: Bill Oemichen, Karl Green, Kristen Bruder)

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce approached the local Community and Leadership Development Educator to facilitate two sessions during this morning's event. They hoped for someone who has expertise in the field to help facilitate so that local organizations could focus on participating. As a result of facilitating, organizations were able to share best practices and opportunities related to building and improving revenue sources. The local educator was also able to hear insights from nonprofit organizations that will inform future programming efforts throughout the area, specifically around developing sustainable revenue models for nonprofit organizations.



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Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | FoodWise Regional County Coordinator

Hillarie Roth | FoodWise Chippewa & Dunn Educator



A 6-week nutrition education series for 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders at Downsville Elementary to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, food safety, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

"The kiddos are making connections to healthy food, which foods go in each food group, and which foods are sometimes or always food".

"I have seen changes in students' opinions on different foods, more positive opinions or perspectives on new food".

~Downsville Teachers

A 6-week nutrition education series for 1st, 3rd, and 5th graders at Lake Holcombe Elementary to learn about the importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, importance of handwashing, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

"My students are always excited for Ms. Hillarie to come in. They're more aware of food groups"

~Lake Holcombe Teacher

A 6-week nutrition education series for Kindergarten, 1st, and 3rd graders at New Auburn Elementary to learn about the colors of MyPlate foods, importance of eating five food groups, physical activity, healthy habits, and try seasonal fruits and vegetables. This effort will help students explore MyPlate and discover

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why people need to eat food from all five food groups, identify benefits of physical activity, and taste an expanded variety of foods.

"My students are more willing to give different foods a try. They've also become more polite in the lunch line...saying "gross" and "yuck" much less!"

"Students are more aware of what they were eating and if it was good for them"

~New Auburn Teachers

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | Regional Horticulture Educator

To view the Extension in the Valley, E-Newsletter, [Click Here](#).



Attended the UW Madison Division of Extension All Colleague Conference Agriculture Institute meeting where individuals were provided an overview of UW Madison climate related resources and updates on current progress of climate change workgroups. This effort was designed to connect participants to the continued work on issues of climate change.

Provided garden articles in the Extension in the Valley, tri-county monthly newsletter that focuses on Agriculture and Horticulture news where participants can learn about winter care and protection of trees, care and maintenance of holiday indoor plants and storage of winter squash through links to UW Madison Division of Extension factsheets. This effort is designed to keep participants connected to current horticulture matters. (Collaborated with: Amber Gilles, Jerry Clark, Ryan Sterry)

An activity for people living with dementia and their care partners where individuals engage in a seasonal, nature-based craft with fall produce. This effort is designed for participants to take part in a hands-on, festive activity that encourages the use of fine motor skills, stimulates the senses, boosts creativity and provides an opportunity for positive socialization.



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Livestock

Ryan Sterry | Regional Livestock Educator

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This November I moved into the role as the Regional Livestock Educator for Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties. Previously, I served as the Regional Dairy Educator for Barron, Pierce, and St. Croix Counties. I began my Extension career in 2006, starting as the Agriculture Agent in Polk County. Later, I moved to the St. Croix County office, serving as the Agriculture Agent before transitioning to a multi-county role as a Regional Dairy Educator. I received my bachelor's degree from UW-River Falls and my master's degree from UW-Madison.

Over the years my educational programming has included dairy, farm management, and livestock. Examples include projects on corn silage pricing, co-authoring decision-making tools for beef producers, collaborating on the winter Small Ruminant series, and analyzing costs to raise replacement dairy heifers. Recently, my work has focused on dairy and beef reproduction, genetics, and management of beef x dairy crossbred cattle. This past year I was a team member developing Extension programs for the Reproduction Roadshow and Wisconsin School for Beginning Beef Producers.

I look forward to building relationships with farmers in Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire counties. My main office will be in the Extension Dunn County office in Menomonie. At the same time, I value the relationships with producers and professionals in my previous counties and invite them to participate in Chippewa Valley Extension programs. Be on the lookout for winter program dates for Beef Quality Assurance, Producing Quality Beef, and year two of the School for Beginning Beef Producers. We are also collaborating with our Farm Management Specialists to be in the area to discuss Farm Succession in January. I hope to see you there!

An evening virtual program for cattle producers to increase their understanding of a new regulation regarding official identification aiding disease traceability. This management practice influences the biosecurity and economic viability of their farms. Total Reach: 99 registered to attend. The YouTube video is being advertised with our partners listed below and using our Extension YouTube channel, Extension livestock and dairy websites and social media pages.

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Human Development and Relationships

Jeanne Walsh | Human Development and Relationships Educator



A 7-session course that helps adults of all ages to make end-of-life financial, healthcare, and final wishes decisions in order to reduce the stress experienced by survivors and to ensure that their wishes are honored.

A 6-session course for renters where 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 this, those with negative rental records and those new to renting are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public support.

Through phone calls and email, provided support to individuals canning and preserving their food. This effort is to increase food safety and nutritional value of food that is canned or preserved at home.

Program planning with the program director at the Chippewa County Jail. This effort is to prioritize evidence based education and provide programming that meets individual wellness and financial needs and reduces recidivism.

A multi-session course for women renters in the Chippewa County Jail, where 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 this, those with negative rental records and those new to renting are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public support.

Individual financial coaching for participants in Recovery Court. Individuals learn about, set, and celebrate completing their financial goals. This effort is to increase financial stability.

A workshop on developing spending plans for guests at Hope Village. Guests are able to learn about and identify their personal fixed, variables, debts and income categories, to balance their budget and pay their bills on time. The effort is to strengthen individual financial knowledge and skills.

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Positive Youth Development

Jordan Blue | 4-H Program Educator

To view the Chippewa Chatter, E - Newsletter, [Click Here.](#)



Planning for 2024-25 Camp Counselor Trainings, interviews, and volunteer development for youth camp counselors in collaboration with 4-H leaders and volunteers. The goal is to equip counselors with leadership, teamwork, and planning skills, so that they can create a safe, engaging, and memorable camp experience while developing their own life skills.

Planning for a New Family Orientation event for new 4-H families in collaboration with program staff, volunteers, and current 4-H families. The goal is to provide an introduction to the 4-H program, its values, opportunities, and expectations, so that families feel welcomed, informed, and empowered to engage in their child's 4-H experience. This will strengthen family involvement, foster a sense of community, and set the stage for long-term participation and success within the 4-H program.

Planning for the 2025 Tri-County Speaking and Demonstration Festival for 4-H youth, including Cloverbuds, in collaboration with Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire County 4-H programs. The goal is to help youth develop communication skills, share passions, and boost confidence through speeches, demonstrations, and interpretive readings, so that they build essential life skills and inspire others in a supportive environment.

Planning for a revitalization of the award and recognition system for Chippewa County 4-H in collaboration with adult leaders, youth members, and program staff. The goal is to update and streamline the recognition processes, so that the community can better celebrate achievements, foster motivation, and enhance youth engagement across program areas. This will strengthen the sense of accomplishment, inspire continued participation, and create a more inclusive and impactful system for all involved.

Planning for a project discovery day, Clover College, for youth in grades K-5 in collaboration with Chippewa County 4-H leaders and volunteers. The goal is to introduce youth to various 4-H projects


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through hands-on activities, so that they discover their interests and sparks, building excitement for future 4-H participation. (Collaborating with: Amber Gilles)

Planning for a seasonal-themed Cloverbud meeting for youth in grades K-2, focusing on creative arts and winter-themed STEM exploration. The goal is to foster creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking, so that participants build foundational life skills in a fun and engaging environment.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

The November Cloverbud meeting, *Thankful Harvest*, was developed in response to the need for young 4-H members to engage in age-appropriate activities that build foundational social-emotional skills and encourage positive community values. Cloverbud programming provides an essential introduction to 4-H for younger youth, helping them build confidence, creativity, and teamwork skills. The theme of gratitude was selected to align with the season of Thanksgiving, fostering a sense of appreciation and reflection in participants. In response to the identified need, the *Thankful Harvest* Cloverbud meeting was designed to provide hands-on, age-appropriate activities that centered on gratitude and community awareness. Participants engaged in storytelling to explore the concept of thankfulness, created themed crafts to express their appreciation, and participated in team-building games that encouraged collaboration and kindness. These activities were intentionally chosen to build social-emotional skills while introducing participants to the values of 4-H in a fun and welcoming environment. The *Thankful Harvest* Cloverbud meeting helped participants build gratitude, teamwork, and a sense of belonging through creative activities and group collaboration. This program supports broader goals by fostering empathy and kindness, contributing to the development of thoughtful, community-minded youth.





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Value Added Programming

Investment in Chippewa Extension brings additional resources.

Our Extension broadband team was invited to present for the economic development professionals and elected officials during their one-day broadband summit. The presentation recapped highlights from the day-long Rural Economic Development Summit held in March of 2023. The presentation allowed attendees to review data in economic, employment, and housing areas that are impacted by the expansion of broadband in their communities. (Brittany Beyer, John Parrish)

Participation and membership in the United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley's (UWGCV) Health Advisory Council, which consists of community leaders and local professionals with expertise and/or interest in health, with particular focus on the top issues identified in the Community Health Assessment. The Advisory Council's guides impact efforts in the Chippewa Valley by identifying community needs and supporting efforts to achieve the UWGCV Bold Goal. (Margo Dieck)

Preparation and planning for a conference for waterfront property owners and watershed professionals where attendees learn about shoreline management practices, aquatic invasive species, ecology, capacity considerations for lake associations, tools to approach resident and tourist conflict, and other topics relevant to the water resources of northwest Wisconsin. The goal of this effort is to enable behavior change and connect professionals to each other and new resources, leading to improved water quality in northwest Wisconsin. (Sarah Brown)

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