



**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**



*Positive Youth Development prepares the youth of today to become the effective, empathetic adults of tomorrow. Our research-based youth enrichment programs like teens in governance build youth and adult capacity and partnerships that help both sides grow. 4-H clubs, camps and after-school programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to develop an understanding of themselves and the world.*

**4-H**

*Sarah Feider, 4-H Program Educator*

A 4-H Project Day for youth, ages 5-17, where participants took part in hands-on projects to learn or enhance a skill.

Many of our leaders and parents have indicated that they do not have the capacity or skill to teach certain projects/skill to their youth. To allow for learning or enhancing new skills, several projects were set up for youth to participate in based upon their interest. Many youth reported positive experiences with the projects they participated in. The project day also allowed older youth to teach younger youth.



**Testimonials:**

“The teacher was clear and concise and provided a great amount of opportunity.”

“I chose the (Great) rating because it was fun I wanted to have more opportunities.”

“The class and techniques are what I was hoping for.”

“Had fun. Made some cute cookies and learned some good things.”

Art Day for youth, where they worked on creating and exploring abstract art to explore an area of interest.

Art in Sheboygan County is an area that is historical popular when showing at the County Fair. Currently, there isn't a project for art specifically. This day allowed youth to come and create a piece of art hosted by a local artist. I reached out to a local artist and organized three dates for youth to participate at our local campus. I purchased all necessary materials and set up the space. I was at each event talking with and engaging youth.





## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS



*The Extension Institute of Human Development & Relationships provides the tools Wisconsinites need to thrive as well-rounded, capable individuals and families. We support families in caring for each other in ways that promote growth and understanding. Our programs promote aging-friendly communities, coach effective parents and help families put technology, mindfulness and financial awareness to use.*

*Truong Tran, Human Development & Relationship Educator*

In March, we completed the 2025 Wise Wisconsin Winter Series, a virtual learning series for older people and professionals working with older people that connects individuals in meaningful ways by providing opportunities to learn, share and grow together. The goal of the program was to provide knowledge and resources on topics that help participants enrich their lives while building in opportunities for learning from others and sharing their own experiences to build a sense of connection to others virtually. Topics vary each year and are selected to meet both of our program outcomes of increasing knowledge and skills around self-care techniques and increasing social connection. Educators and specialists from around the state teamed up to provide this series.

Older people have an increased risk for social isolation and loneliness because they are more likely to suffer the loss of family and friends or a spouse, live alone or have chronic illnesses that isolate them in their homes. Older populations, including immigrants, LGBTQ, minorities, or victims of elder abuse, and adults living with disabilities are at an even greater risk. Some people may also feel a sense of loneliness even if they are surrounded by family and friends. Social isolation and loneliness can greatly affect mental and physical health. Individuals that are socially isolated and lonely have a 50 percent increase in dementia risk, four times the risk of heart failure resulting in death, 57 percent higher risk of emergency room visits and 68 percent increased risk of hospitalization. These individuals are also at an increased risk for depression, anxiety and suicide. The COVID-19 Pandemic has heightened the risk of social isolation and loneliness for individuals already at risk. Being socially connected to others greatly improves mental health and overall well-being. In response, Extension educators developed a virtual series to help connect people through learning together. We were intentional about creating opportunities for participants to engage during each session and connect and share with one another to enhance learning and social connectedness. Topics were selected to support self-care, coping, personal growth and social connection. Participants learn self-care and coping skills which increase their ability to respond to stressful life challenges and transitions. In addition, participants feel more socially connected to others and that they receive the skills and knowledge to connect more with others. Being more connected to others leads to feeling more connected to community and a better sense of belonging which increases social connection and reduces the negative impacts of social isolation and loneliness.



## AGRICULTURE



*If it happens on a farm or in a field, the Extension Institute of Agriculture works with you to achieve better results. Our innovative dairy management programs range from genetics to farm and business management. Extension researchers work hand-in-hand with row crop, forage and fresh produce growers to provide best practices for every aspect of the growing phase. We also advise communities on using sustainable practices to create inviting spaces free from invasive species.*

### Crops

*Liz Gartman, Regional Crops Educator*

A regional agriculture newsletter for Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, Washington and Ozaukee county agriculture producers, industry representatives and agency staff that provides timely crop production updates, dairy and farm management resources and upcoming agriculture events. The goal is to create awareness of Extension programming and research in the region and maintain a connection between UW and the ag community.

A series of four Focus on Forage webinars for forage growers, livestock producers, agency staff and agricultural consultants where research-based forage management solutions are shared to optimize forage yield and quality to improve overall farm profitability.

- Forage production is an important segment of crop production in Wisconsin and helps to support the livestock and dairy industries in the state. Meeting forage quality and forage yield goals of producers is a key metric to profitability on these operations.
- The Focus on Forage planning team brainstormed timely forage topic ideas and generated a four session series - Focus on Alfalfa Companions, Focus on Corn Silage, Focus on Forage Cover Crops and Focus on Alfalfa Toolbox. The educators then identified Extension specialists, Educators, and researchers that could discuss the impact of these management recommendations to forage growers. Each webinar was one hour long, featured three to four speakers and allowed time for participants to ask questions related to their operations.
- The four webinar series averaged 111 participants per session, which is an increase from the 2024 series. We are currently collecting post event survey data.



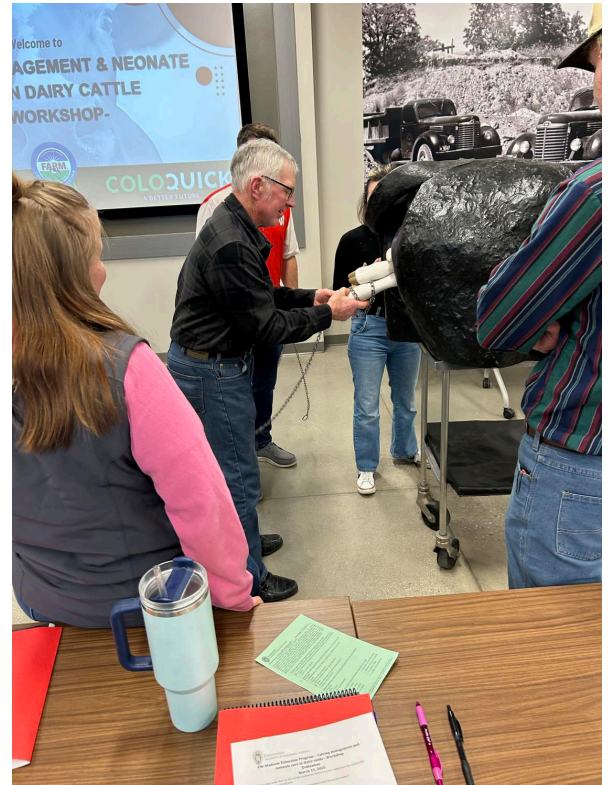
**AGRICULTURE CONTINUED**

**Dairy**

*Manuel Peña, Regional Dairy Educator*

A workshop “Calving Management and Neonate Care in Dairy Cattle” for all the individuals that are involved in parturition, and calving management in dairy farms. We created an in person and bilingual event where participants learned and reinforced their knowledge about obstetrics, care and support in the calving pen, neonate care and colostrum management, and how to maintain the success in the maternity areas. Through this effort pretended to increase the knowledge and good practices related to the earliest stage of life in dairy cattle, which should represent an increase in herd health, work safety and farm profitability.

Local dairy producers from Fond du Lac county, have expressed a strong interest in improving their calving management practices to enhance herd health and productivity. This workshop, “Calving Management Practices and neonate care” was developed in response to these needs, aiming to provide dairy producers with the recent research based information. We addressed a program in Spanish and English to discuss topics such as calving preparation and assistance, neonatal care and colostrum management, disease prevention, nutrition and feeding, protocols and recordkeeping and data management. This program had a lecture session in the morning and Hands-On demonstration,



where attendees had the opportunity to practice calving events on a cow model along with learning guidelines for calving management practices, record keeping and colostrum quality. With the development of this program, we provided great tools to farmers and workers to: Improved understanding of calving management practices Enhanced ability to recognize and address health problems Improved skills in colostrum management and feeding Increased confidence in handling calves Increased adherence to recommended protocols Improved recordkeeping and data management Enhanced commitment to animal welfare Increased willingness to participate in ongoing training and education.

**Testimonials:**

*English participant:*

“I really enjoyed today. It was very well organized with good information. I thank you very much!”

*Spanish participant:*

“Que todo fue muy interesante y la informacion fue muy valiosa. Gracias por considerarnos (comunidad latina) en las capacitaciones que ofrecen.”

## FOOD SECURITY, HEALTHY EATING, AND HEALTHY LIVING



*FoodWise advances healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for families with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels. FoodWise reaches individuals and families through local community partners by providing nutrition classes in-person and virtually, indirect education (newsletters, etc.), and social media/marketing. FoodWise is an obesity prevention program that addresses policy, system and environmental changes through local and state public health efforts.*

*FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).*

*Amanda Miller, FoodWise Coordinator*

March is National Nutrition Month®, so what better time than now to start becoming healthier through healthy eating and physical activity. National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education campaign created every year in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. It began as a National Nutrition Week in 1973 and became a month-long observance in 1980. It focuses attention on the importance of making healthy eating and physical activity choices. The 2025 theme for National Nutrition Month is “Food Connects Us!” Food is a connecting factor for many people. Food connects us to our cultures, others’ cultures, our families and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients are sourced. Health, memories, traditions, seasons, and access can all impact our relationship with food. While these factors influence the foods we eat, the foods we eat also affect our health.

There are many reasons a person may want to start eating healthy and being physically active, including weight loss. But, there are many more benefits to a healthy lifestyle, including feeling better and a reduced risk of chronic diseases. For example, eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of heart disease and may protect against certain types of cancers. Eating a diet high in fiber may reduce the risk of heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes. Every 5 years, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) release the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

For more information, visit Choose MyPlate [www.choosemyplate.gov/](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/), National Nutrition Month® <https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/national-nutrition-month>, and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>.

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Community Development provides educational programming to assist leaders, communities, and organizations realize their fullest potential. We work with communities to build the vitality that enhances their quality of life and enriches the lives of their residents. We educate in leadership development, organizational development, food systems, community economic development, local government education and much more. In short, the Community Development Institute plants and cultivates the seeds for thriving communities and organizations.*

*Barbara Alvarez, Community Development Educator*

A facilitated conversation with nonprofit leaders in Northeast Wisconsin where participants learned how to maximize their use of LinkedIn to promote their organization and activities.

Planning for a community survey to be distributed to low-income families. The goal is to learn more about what their needs are and how the organization can respond through programming, research, and education.

I was approached by the Executive Director of a non-profit organization to assist their Community Needs Assessment process. In this meeting, we discussed how to gather information, survey creation, and distribution. I met with the group, helped them clarify their questions, provided education about best survey practices, and discussed ways to market the survey. Still in process. Have created surveys and will distribute February, March, April and beginning of May.

Planning for a workshop or series of workshops for solar ordinances in collaboration with Bill Oemichen and Jessy Bradish. The goal is to educate local municipalities and the general public so that they can make informed and empowered decisions about solar energy in their communities.

We have had several community members and municipality officials with questions about solar ordinances and their options. Barbara gathered contact information from people interested in this topic and met with Bill and Jessy to determine what educational efforts would make sense for Sheboygan County. We are planning 2 workshops about solar ordinance contracts and model agreements in March and potentially the RESET program later in 2025.

Planning for a survey for 85+ volunteers of a local non-profit in collaboration with their non-profit leadership. The goal is to better understand succession planning and volunteer opportunities in order to develop a strategic plan to present to the board so that the organization can be sustainable long into the future.

I was approached by leadership of a non-profit about assistance with their strategic plan process. They want to create a plan for succession planning for volunteers. I helped them create a survey and develop a timeline of gathering information so that they can present to their board in mid-August. I will help them with listening sessions, analyzing survey data, and developing an action plan.

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