

## 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.

Crop, dairy and livestock producers make key management decisions every day based on challenges related to markets, weather and farm goals. It is important for them to have access to up-to-date information and opportunities to help them choose production methods that help them achieve their goals. As a result, the Regional Ag Updates newsletter is prepared and e-mailed to approximately 900 ag producers, agency staff and agribusiness consultants that support farmers. In the winter months, the newsletter is sent monthly, with issues every two weeks during the crop production months. This newsletter shares field trial opportunities, timely management updates and tools to support production decisions, along with UW Extension and partner event opportunities. This newsletter consistently has a 40% open rate and one recipient shared the importance of having upcoming local and statewide events listed in one place. It further has become a great partnership tool between Extension and local producer led watershed groups, land and water departments and state agencies. This effort creates a greater awareness of resources available to support their farm production goals.

- A field study in collaboration with other Extension crops educators as part of the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program that is designed to identify optimum Nitrogen rates in a corn cropping system that utilizes dairy manure. Results from this trial will help improve commercial nitrogen management and farm profitability. (Liz Gartman)

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Community Development provides educational programming to assist leaders, communities, and organizations realize their full 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.*

*Kevin Struck, Community Development Educator*

- Kevin was invited to plan commission meetings in two towns to discuss zoning options for two landowners who each had development proposals for land uses that were not clearly addressed in the zoning ordinance regulations. In both cases, innovative solutions were worked out that will allow the landowners to optimize the use of their property without violating any ordinance or negatively impacting neighbors.
- Artificial intelligence has made a lot of headlines recently. Kevin decided to determine how accurately a custom-made artificial intelligence program would respond to questions about zoning regulations in a local town. He created a “Zoning Ordinance Assistant” using OpenAI’s GPT Builder and tested it using a variety of zoning questions, refining the program as needed to continue improving its accuracy. A program like this added to a town website could eventually help users such as landowners and real estate professionals obtain answers to most zoning-related questions in a user-friendly manner without having to interrupt local officials with phone calls and emails.



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

**APRIL 2024 REPORT**

## 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.*

*Alicia Utke-Becher, Human Development & Relationship Educator*

- A 1-hour session for a Sheboygan County senior social center where older adult participants learned strategies to make budgeting adjustments when income and expenses change. The goal of this program is to increase knowledge about budgeting and living on a fixed income.
- A 1-hour Money Smart Wisconsin Big Read program for Clover Bud Participants, involving listening to the Big Read, interactive reflection, and creative expression through hands-on activities centered on money concepts: saving, spending, donating, investing, and distinguishing needs from wants. The goal was to enhance financial literacy among young learners, empowering them with essential money management skills.
- An in-person, 2 hour, 6-week program for caregivers of adults with chronic illness where participants learn the skills for reducing personal stress, changing negative self-talk, improving communication, setting limits, dealing with emotions, and making tough caregiving decisions. The goal is to enhance participant's overall wellness and equip them with tools to navigate challenging moments, ultimately fostering resilience and support in their caregiving journey benefiting both the caregiver and care recipient.
- Wise Wisconsin, 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.

## 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 Tarjeson, 4-H Youth Development Educator

- A workshop in Forest County for older youth leaders to increase knowledge of and skills using parliamentary procedure, civic engagement, and understanding of county government to enable participants to engage in civic action more comfortably.



4-H members and adult volunteers must work in groups to make decisions throughout the program. Most often, members use parliamentary procedure to do this. However, we rarely teach our members how this is done! I led a three-hour educational session to teach the purpose and the basics of parliamentary procedure, especially the process of managing motions. Six youths and one adult participated and increased their skills in parliamentary procedure. After the workshop, one of the adults thanked me for including the youth and told me her kids were making motions the whole way home.

- Supporting 4-H youth and adult leadership in the Sheboygan County 4-H Horse and Pony project by mediating conflict and coaching decision-making during project meetings and programs, which increases youth engagement in the program.

Increased tension and conflict among adult volunteers prompted my increased presence and coaching through conflictual situations. I have attended committee meetings, project member and family events, and facilitated mediation and agreement between adult leaders. As a result of my presence, coaching, and mediation, the Horse and Pony project has experienced stronger engagement at the subcommittee level, increased communication between adult leaders, and stronger engagement of youth leadership within the project as reported by youth participants, the Area Extension Director, and adult project leaders. As program quality increases through spark exploration, increased belonging, and positive developmental relationships, youth engagement in the 4-H program increases, leading to an increase in the thriving trajectory of youth.



## 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*

- Providing technical assistance, education, and resources to community members about food preservation safety. This service aims to prevent food borne illness through improper home canning practices.
- Facilitating the Sheboygan County Public Health Department’s community health action team meetings in April, May and June. These meetings will bring community members and organizations together to develop the next 3-year plan to address nutrition and physical activity in Sheboygan County.
- Providing technical assistance as a new member of the Sheboygan County Head Start/Early Head Start’s Health Advisory Committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide oversight of the various health areas that impact Head Start children and their families.

Sarah Tarjeson  
*4-H Youth Development Educator*

Liz Gartman  
*Regional Crops Educator*

Jayna Hintz  
*Area Extension Director*

Kevin Struck  
*Community Development Educator*

Amanda Miller  
*FoodWise Coordinator*

Tammy Zorn  
*Support Staff*

Alicia Utke-Becher  
*Human Development & Relationships Educator*

Janeth Orozco  
*FoodWise Educator*

Emily Jensen  
*Support Staff*

Cassi Worster  
*Area Marketing Specialist*