



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

JULY 2025 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.*

Truong Tran, Human Development & Relationship Educator

- In July, the Sheboygan County Extension launched a fully enrolled class series of Powerful Tools for Caregivers to support adults caring for loved ones with chronic health conditions. This six-week, evidence-based program began on July 16 and runs through August 20, with weekly in-person sessions held at the Extension office.

This session is offered in partnership with the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and includes valuable support from local organizations providing meals for caregivers during the class. The weekly 1.5-hour sessions help participants build skills to manage stress, communicate more effectively, set healthy boundaries, and navigate challenging caregiving decisions.

By the end of the program, caregivers are expected to report improvements in stress management, communication, and confidence in their caregiving role. Evaluation surveys will be conducted to assess changes in caregiver self-efficacy and access to local resources. Early engagement suggests participants are finding the in-person format and added community support especially valuable.

- Sheboygan County Extension recently completed Hmong Planning AHEAD, a series designed specifically for Hmong community members. Grounded in research, this end-of-life planning program empowers individuals to make informed decisions about important topics such as health care preferences, financial matters, funeral arrangements, and legacy planning. The program's goal is to ease future burdens on families by fostering open communication and thoughtful preparation.

Offered in partnership with **Hmong Café**, a total of **15 Hmong adults** completed the program, engaging in conversations that are often sensitive but deeply important within the context of family and tradition.

Participants expressed appreciation for the practical tools, culturally respectful approach, and the opportunity to plan in ways that align with their values. Many reported beginning conversations with loved ones and gaining greater confidence in navigating local resources available in Sheboygan County to support their planning.

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 field day for forage growers, dairy producers, agency staff and agriculture consultants where participants learned about ongoing forage research projects, were updated on upcoming technologies, and engaged with Extension specialists and educators on a variety of forage focused topics. The goal of the event was to share relevant data, management recommendations and novel forage technologies to improve forage production on Wisconsin farms.



Forage production has not been a key focus of statewide programming in Extension. The importance of the dairy and livestock industries in the state require that we focus programming on improving the quality of forage across the state, while investigating novel forage options like cover crop and annual forages. A collection of Extension specialists and researchers from the USDA Dairy Forage Research center collaborated to provide updates on the research they are engaged in or wrapping up related the agronomic considerations of forage production along with the animal performance benefits of incorporating different forage species into diets. A rotation of field stops showcasing this research was planned for the morning of the field day, with flash talks highlighting novel technologies, grazing management and opportunities for growers to engage with researchers and Extension educators. Evaluation results are still being compiled.

“It was a great event. We were thrilled to be a part of it” “Thanks for hosting this event! I liked the conversations around N management in regards to cover crops.” “Great field day. Looking forward to next year” “Cover crop breeding efforts are important to support.”

A stop on the Clean Farm Families Poker Run event for local growers where we discussed opportunities for growers to engage in the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program, Insect Pest Trapping network and reporting, and slug monitoring. Further, we shared the new Bovinoticias newsletter and information regarding AgriAbility and the Wisconsin Farm Center. The goal of this effort was to share opportunities to join Extension on-farm efforts and build relationships between state and local educators and growers.

- The Clean Farm Families Producer Led Watershed group hosts events over the course of the year, and while planning their annual Poker Run





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AGRICULTURE CONTINUED

determined that showcasing some Extension programs would be a good fit for those attending the event.

- The Ozaukee County Demo Farm network joined the effort to monitor slugs and armyworm/cutworm moths over the growing season. As part of the planning effort, we determined that sharing these efforts with representation from our pest management program would make sense. Additionally, we have several Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program sites in Ozaukee & Washington Counties, and this event allowed us to discuss some of the preliminary results from those projects and share the opportunity for growers to participate in their own NOPP projects. The new bilingual dairy newsletter Bovi-noticias was a good addition to our stop, as several Spanish speaking dairy employees attended the event.
- Approximately 42 growers, agency staff, consultants and farm employees attended the event.

Dairy

Manuel Peña, Regional Dairy Educator

Bovi-noticias is a collaboration between Educators on the Dairy team and Farm Management team. This bilingual (English & Spanish) newsletter was designed to support dairy farms and their employees. This publication delivers accessible, research-based information in both English and Spanish, aiming to, (1) provide relevant, practical insights for workers, managers, and owners, (2) Increase awareness of the “why” behind practices to encourage employee understanding and enhance engagement of dairy teams, and (3) Serving as a resource for team meetings, facilitating discussions between management and workers, and fostering problem-solving.

The Wisconsin dairy industry faces ongoing challenges and opportunities related to optimizing animal health, productivity, and farm efficiency. While owners and managers often possess strong foundational knowledge, a need exists for easily accessible, research-based information tailored to the diverse workforce directly involved in daily dairy operations. This includes employees responsible for animal care, feeding, and other essential tasks. Language barriers can further complicate the dissemination and understanding of best practices. Recognizing this need, a collaborative effort between Dairy and Farm Management Extension Educators has resulted in the development of Bovi-noticias, a bilingual (English and Spanish) e-newsletter. This publication aims to bridge the information gap by providing relevant, practical insights and explaining the rationale behind key practices, ultimately fostering a more informed, engaged, and efficient dairy workforce, leading to improved animal well-being, enhanced resource utilization, and increased farm profitability.

Planning for a spreadsheet tool for dairy producers and consultants. The goal is to help producers understand the value of managing inventory and to be able to use the spreadsheet to account for loss and varying qualities of feed, and storage methods so that they can better plan and manage feed inventories. Feed is the largest expense on a dairy farm, accounting for about half of all input costs.

Older tools developed for feed inventory management focused heavily on storage in tower silos. Today many different storage systems including bunkers, piles, balage and dry hay may be utilized. A new tool needs to be developed. Currently a tool developed by the beef program is the best we have available and it needs to be updated for dairy specific considerations.

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

Hosted an educational event for food pantry operators within the Sheboygan County Food Bank network. The purpose of this presentation is to help food pantry workers better understand the Safe and Healthy Food Pantries toolkit and various tools on food safety and nutrition.

A number of studies have shown the association between food insecurity and chronic diseases, like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and hypertension. Many of these chronic diseases are preventable with good nutrition and physical activity. Food banks play an important role in providing the food that families need. Healthy food donations include providing more fresh, locally sourced produce, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables, protein sources (like tuna and beans), whole grains, and staples to cook at home instead of eating out.

The Safe and Healthy Food Pantries Project is a toolkit of resources for food pantries to assess and improve both the nutritional quality of food provided and the food safety practices. FoodWise presented to about 25 food pantry staff and volunteers at the Sheboygan County Food Bank's quarterly networking meeting. These meetings are held to provide networking and education for the 19 food pantries that operate in Sheboygan County with support from the Sheboygan County Food Bank.

As a result of the presentation, staff and volunteers have been made aware of the resources and tools that exist to improve food safety and nutrition. They were provided with the resources needed to make positive changes at their food pantries. The Sheboygan County Food Bank staff have prioritized this as a need to improve in the future and will work closely with the individual food pantries that want to make changes. <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/safehealthypantries/>



4-H

Sarah Feider, 4-H Program Educator

In June, a group of 44 youth attended Washington D.C. through a Herb Kohl Grant. This group traveled via Coach bus to various areas all over Washington D.C. including the following:

- Pentagon Memorial
- Arlington National Cemetery
- Library of Congress
- Capital
- Holocaust Memorial Museum
- MLK Memorial
- Korean War Veterans Memorial
- Vietnam Veteran Memorial
- Lincoln Memorial
- World War II Monument
- White House
- Smithsonian Institute
- Smithsonian National Museum of African American History
- Washington Monument



Students provided reflections after each visitation. Below is a reflection from one youth:

While the heat was a definite drawback from the overall experience, the entire trip was a wonderful time full of learning and fun. The capital tour was a unique experience that I really enjoyed, especially speaking with 4-H alumni who lived and worked in DC. They helped me understand better what type of work they did in the capital, how it suited them, where they could go from their current position and more. It helped me realize the many different career paths that could be found in government. Throughout the trip I learned much about US history and the government. By seeing all the monuments for different wars and historical figures I was able to better understand the tragedy and great deeds that have shaped America. One of the most interesting things of the trip was seeing all the beautiful architecture, statues, and ornate paintings. Architecture is something that has always fascinated me, but I haven't had much experience in seeing the older more impressively built buildings and monuments. Being able to experience that was one of my favorite parts of the trip. I also really enjoyed Arlington Cemetery and the WWII monument because two of my grandparents served in WWII and I enjoyed seeing how soldiers like them were honored.

All of the museums we visited were impressive with extra emphasis on the holocaust museum which was both horrifying because of the atrocities done and very informative for the same reason. Having read some books centered on the holocaust like Night and Diary of Anne Frank, I knew of what happened but seeing things like the display of shoes or the Arbeit Mach Frei sign really drove home the point that this had really happened and that real people had actually endured such atrocities. Not all the trip was learning, however, during the long hours on the bus and at mealtimes I was able to make many new friends and have a great time joking and laughing and playing games. Overall, the only detractors to the trip were the long hours on the bus and the insufferable heat, neither of which have a solution. - Annabelle

In June, 4H Americorps members attended Fountain Park Fun Fest. Here, families learned about what 4H has to offer and played games and got their faces painted.

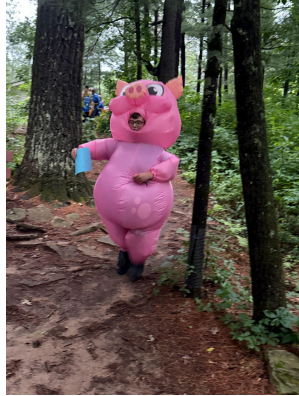
398 families visited the 4H stand where flyers to sign up for 4H and information about our upcoming Day Camp for youth in grades K-3 were distributed.



In July, 104 adult staff, youth staff and campers attended Basecamp at Upham Woods in the Wisconsin Dells. This trip is an annual trip, but included more youth campers than the year previous. This year's camp included the counties of Sheboygan, Manitowoc and Calumet.

Campers experienced lots of activities including the following:

- Campfires
- Songs
- Skits
- Friendship
- Flag raising/lowering
- Swimming
- Crafts
- Archery
- Nature
- Canoeing
- Cookie Decorating
- Fishing
- Water Carnival
- Dance Party
- Yoga



New adult volunteer Reilly stated, "I had a great experience while I was a camper and counselor. Now the opportunity came up to come back as an adult and I'd like to help give the new campers a great experience like I had".

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.

Diana Hammer, Positive Youth Development Educator

A situational analysis of youth empowerment opportunities and gaps in Sheboygan County so that program priorities can be determined for 2026.

Diana Hammer started on June 9 as Sheboygan County's half-time Positive Youth Development Educator. The role is focused on centering youth voices in spaces where young people and adults work together. The first priority is to meet with youth and the adults who care about them to learn more about the strengths and opportunities for youth empowerment programming. In her first three days, Hammer met with Extension colleagues to learn more about their roles and their partners who may also work with youth, participated in the county input session where youth-serving organizations shared about their goals and concerns, and scheduled meetings to visit those leaders at their sites. She also began Extension's Positive Youth Development training for new educators. By carefully listening to a variety of perspectives on youth empowerment, Hammer will be able to determine where to direct her efforts for maximum impact.

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