

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

An informational article for forage growers, dairy producers and agriculture consultants where guidance surrounding optimum corn silage management practices were shared along with an update on the new corn silage data visualization tool. Through this article, stakeholders can learn more about optimum corn silage management and how this new Extension tool can help create a harvest plan to maximize corn silage forage quality.

- The University of Wisconsin Madison Division of Extension has a long history of partnering with cooperatives, feed dealers, growers, forage councils and consultants to offer a network of silage dry down events across the state to help growers monitor whole plant moisture.
- Efforts were made during the 2024 growing season to find a way to allow growers to use the data in real time, resulting in the Corn Silage Harvest Management Tool. Creation of the tool was one step in the data visualization process.
- The next step was to make growers and consultants more aware of the tool and how it can fit into their corn silage harvest plan. This article shared some of the key management steps when harvesting corn silage and outlined how growers can use the tool to dig into the data from their region of the state. The Wisconsin State Farmer has a broad reach across Wisconsin in print as well as online.

A presentation during the scheduled Badger Crop Connect series where I provided basic corn silage management recommendations from our UW Madison specialists and shared our new Corn Silage Harvest Management Tool. Through this presentation, I demonstrated how stakeholders can effectively use the tool to help plan their individual corn silage harvest to ensure appropriate whole plant moisture to meet forage quality goals.

- Our Extension research and data collection efforts are a key part of our job, but just as important is the outreach to share how stakeholders can use this work on their farms everyday.
- As part of the Badger Crop Connect Corn Silage episode, there was room to share the work we have done on the new Corn Silage Harvest management tool.



AGRICULTURE CONTINUED

- As a response to the opportunity to share, I created a presentation that outlined important corn silage harvest metrics that growers should employ to ensure harvest timing that allows for proper forage fermentation, along with the methods used to develop our Corn Silage Harvest Management tool, and how to use the tool to plan their harvest.

Dairy

Manuel Peña, Regional Dairy Educator

A radio interview for a Fond du Lac local radio station, for farmers and agricultural industry persons, where I took advantage to talk about the ongoing needs assessment and promote the Bilingual Calving Management Practices Workshop which will happen on the 28 and 29 of August.

Dairy Farmers use a variety of sources to get information, including radio. This conversation focused on the upcoming Bilingual Calving Management Practices Workshop. Providing this information in a public media metric allows people who may be underserved or unaware of Extension agriculture programs to learn more about the types of programs offered and allows them to engage in the programs that meet their needs. This improved outreach allows Extension to serve clients that are outside of our normal means of contact.

An article for farmers and farm workers, where we explained the different types of fiber in a dairy diet and how they affect milk production, to help them better understand fiber as a key nutrient, interpret lab reports, and identify nutrition-related issues at the feed bunk, leading to improved overall farm performance.

We created this bilingual article in response to a common knowledge gap observed on dairy farms regarding the nutrients in cow diets and their impact on milk production. Many farmers and workers lacked access to clear, practical information on how to interpret fiber values from lab reports and apply that knowledge on the farm. This effort aimed to improve understanding of fiber as a key nutrient, helping farm teams make more informed decisions to support cow health and feed efficiency. We developed a bilingual educational article tailored to both farmers and farm workers, focusing on the role of fiber in dairy cow diets. We ensure technical accuracy and present the information in an accessible format for a wide range of readers. The article explains types of fiber, their impact on milk production, how to read fiber values in lab reports, and simple ways to assess fiber on-farm. Since it is an article its outcome cannot be determined yet but our goal was to bridge the communication gap and provide practical tools that could be immediately applied in daily feeding management.

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

The Hmong Planning AHEAD (PA) series supported 15 older Hmong adults in Sheboygan County with culturally responsive education on end-of-life planning. Participants gained knowledge, shared personal perspectives, and identified steps for future planning while voicing cultural values and concerns.

End-of-life planning is a sensitive but critical issue for Hmong families. Research indicates that proactive planning can reduce family stress, enhance communication, and ensure that wishes are honored. However, cultural values, language barriers, and discomfort with topics like finances and grief often prevent Hmong elders from engaging in planning conversations. Community leaders identified a need for culturally grounded education that acknowledges these beliefs while offering trusted information. Sheboygan Extension collaborated with community partner Sheboygan Hmong Café to deliver a pilot version of Hmong Planning AHEAD in a culturally respectful way. The program integrated storytelling, small-group discussion, and bilingual support to foster engagement. Sessions were designed with sensitivity toward Hmong traditions, emphasizing family decision-making, respect for cultural beliefs about grief, and guidance on when to seek professional assistance for legal and financial matters. Evaluation data: • 6 participants reported they learned enough to begin planning • 10 indicated they would begin conversations with family about their health and financial wishes. • 12 participants said they would share with friends what they learned.

Sheboygan Extension collaborated with its local county ADRC to educate 12 older adults in a rural village on a presentation about key aspects regarding end-of-life planning. Using adapted glossary materials, participants learned about future decision-making concepts in an interactive manner. Several expressed interest in learning more, highlighting the community's readiness for expanded Planning AHEAD programming.

End-of-life planning has been identified as a need across Wisconsin, with many older adults lacking familiarity with essential terms, processes, and resources. This gap can create stress for families and missed opportunities for individuals to make informed decisions. To address this, Sheboygan Extension sought to expand Planning AHEAD programming in Adell Wisconsin by introducing participants to key concepts in an accessible, interactive way. In collaboration with the ADRC, Sheboygan Extension delivered an educational session for twelve older adults. Glossary terms from the Planning AHEAD program were adapted into an interactive activity designed to make difficult concepts—such as advanced directives, hospice, and power of attorney—more approachable. The session emphasized



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

AUGUST 2025 REPORT

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS CONTINUED

both understanding terminology and encouraging reflection on personal planning. Participants reported increased understanding of end-of-life planning terms and expressed interest in learning more. Several signed up for follow-up opportunities, showing readiness for deeper engagement in Planning AHEAD programming. This approach not only built awareness but also demonstrated that interactive learning can make challenging topics less intimidating. These outcomes support broader community goals of reducing stress for families, encouraging proactive decision-making, and expanding access to Extension's evidence-based planning resources.

Sheboygan Extension collaborated with their local county ADRC to educate twenty older adults in a presentation on key aspects regarding end-of-life planning. Using adapted glossary materials, participants learned about future decision-making concepts in an interactive manner. Several expressed interest in learning more, highlighting the community's readiness for expanded Planning AHEAD programming.

End-of-life planning has been identified as a need across Wisconsin, with many older adults lacking familiarity with essential terms, processes, and resources. This gap can create stress for families and missed opportunities for individuals to make informed decisions. To address this, Sheboygan Extension sought to expand Planning AHEAD programming in Howards Grove by introducing participants to key concepts in an accessible, interactive way. In collaboration with the ADRC, Sheboygan Extension delivered an educational session for twenty older adults. Glossary terms from the Planning AHEAD program were adapted into an interactive activity designed to make difficult concepts—such as advanced directives, hospice, and power of attorney—more approachable. The session emphasized both understanding terminology and encouraging reflection on personal planning. Participants reported increased understanding of end-of-life planning terms and expressed interest in learning more. Several signed up for follow-up opportunities, showing readiness for deeper engagement in Planning AHEAD programming. This approach not only built awareness but also demonstrated that interactive learning can make challenging topics less intimidating. These outcomes support broader community goals of reducing stress for families, encouraging proactive decision-making, and expanding access to Extension's evidence-based planning resources.

Sheboygan Extension collaborated with their local county ADRC to educate nine older adults in a presentation on key aspects regarding end-of-life planning. Using adapted glossary materials, participants learned about future decision-making concepts in an interactive manner. Several expressed interest in learning more, highlighting the community's readiness for expanded Planning AHEAD programming.

End-of-life planning has been identified as a need across Wisconsin, with many older adults lacking familiarity with essential terms, processes, and resources. This gap can create stress for families and missed opportunities for individuals to make informed decisions. To address this, Sheboygan Extension sought to expand Planning AHEAD programming into a new area by introducing participants to key concepts in an accessible, interactive way. In collaboration with the ADRC, Sheboygan Extension



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

AUGUST 2025 REPORT

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS CONTINUED

delivered an educational session for nine older adults. Glossary terms from the Planning AHEAD program were adapted into an interactive activity designed to make difficult concepts—such as advanced directives, hospice, and power of attorney—more approachable. The session emphasized both understanding terminology and encouraging reflection on personal planning. Participants reported increased understanding of end-of-life planning terms and expressed interest in learning more. Several signed up for follow-up opportunities, showing readiness for deeper engagement in Planning AHEAD programming. This approach not only built awareness but also demonstrated that interactive learning can make challenging topics less intimidating. These outcomes support broader community goals of reducing stress for families, encouraging proactive decision-making, and expanding access to Extension’s evidence-based planning resources.

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.

Sarah Feider, 4-H Program Educator

A library program for kindergarten through fourth grade youth where participants engaged in multiple hands-on activities and lessons over several weeks. The activities done included making French toast, do it yourself coral reefs, oobleck, penny experiments, sharpie art, tissue paper flowers, slime, and thumb print drawings. At the beginning of the sessions, connection activities or games were played such as frogger and statues. Through this program, we connected youth with each other and created a fun event youth were able to look forward to each week. This gave them an opportunity to learn with their hands and truly engage in their own learning.

We were responding to a need in the community to get more youth involved in the 4-H program in Sheboygan County. Our goal is to reach out to youth who are unfamiliar with 4-H or do not have relatives involved in the program. Our response to this situation was to become proactive in creating programs with local libraries in Sheboygan County. We engaged by creating lesson plans and developing hands-on activities for youth to participate in for one hour every week. Our biggest comment on evaluations was that our programming was fun and rated 5+ stars. A specific outcome that we found from these events was youth having more of an interest in 4-H and the opportunities it can bring to them. Some youth even mentioned how they would want to attend the Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Calumet Base Camp in 2026 after hearing about it through us.

A library program put on every week for two hours sometimes with groups of kindergarten through 3rd grade and then other times with 4th through 9th graders. Throughout the course of my service we made French bread, clothespin animals, duct tape roses, paper airplanes, slime, oobleck, cat beds, pom poms, weaving creations, sharpie art, and wood burning. Additionally, we taught youth parliamentary procedure and games as ice breakers. At this library we also did three days camps lasting six hours long. Two of the camps were for younger youth in grade K-3rd where we made sharpie art, breakfast tortillas, painted rocks, bubbles, number painting, invisible ink, and lava lamps. The older youth day camp consisted of tie-dye, pasta, paint by number, science putty, and games. All of this programming taught the youth about different things that they wanted to experiment more with on their own. In other words, this gave them a spark.

We were responding to a need in the community to get more youth involved in the 4-H program in Sheboygan County. Our goal is to reach out to youth who are unfamiliar with 4-H or do not have relatives involved in the program. Our response to this situation was to become proactive in creating programs with local libraries in Sheboygan County. We engaged by creating lesson plans and developing



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY

AUGUST 2025 REPORT

hands-on activities for youth to participate in for two hours every week. Our biggest comment on evaluations was that our programming was fun and rated 5+ stars. A specific outcome that we found from these events was youth having more of an interest in 4-H and the opportunities it can bring to them. Some youth even mentioned how they would want to attend the Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Calumet Base Camp in 2026 after hearing about it through us.

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 the last month, Hammer met with community leaders from Teen Court, United Way, Sheboygan County Health and Human Services, Workplace Literacy, Juvenile Court, American Legion, Family Connections, Sheboygan Outreach Collective, and Mental Health America. She also attended National Night Out and met with Extension colleagues as she continues to learn the role. 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.

Jayna Hintz
Area Extension Director

Liz Gartman
Regional Crops Educator

Manuel Peña
Regional Dairy Educator

Sarah Feider
4-H Youth Educator

Diana Hammer
Interim Positive Youth Development Educator

Amanda Miller
FoodWise Coordinator

Janeth Orozco
FoodWise Educator

Truong Tran
Human Development and Relationships Educator

Tammy Zorn
Support Staff

Cassi Worster
Area Marketing Specialist