



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.

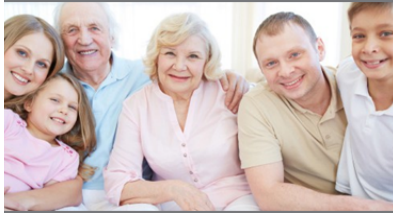
Dairy | Manuel Peña, Regional Dairy Educator

A train the trainer safety toolbox program for farm operations, safety consultants, educators, and instructors where they find materials to lead or support agricultural safety training by following an interactive guide and adult-learning principles to encourage participation, ownership, and responsibility, while encouraging a Safety Culture. (Location type: Home Office) Total Reach: 27 Participants of the pilot sessions. (Manuel Pena)

- This program was developed in response to feedback from dairy producers who expressed a need for practical, on-farm training to reduce injuries and accidents and maximize animal performance. In response, we designed this effort to deliver targeted, farm-based education focused on real-world scenarios and immediate application, with the goal of improving worker safety, animal welfare and profitability. The bilingual Forward Farm Safety Toolbox is based on solid research and is designed to help agricultural operations create a strong safety culture. This foundation supports long-lasting behavior changes and ongoing leadership support for safety. The toolbox includes a hands-on training tools that helps farms, consultants, and instructors lead training sessions using a 20-40-40 model: 20% learning, 40% exploring, and 40% solving. This approach makes safety training more interactive than traditional presentations. Using adult-learning principles, it encourages participants to take ownership and responsibility. The added learning materials further support a workplace where safe behaviors become part of everyday farm life. This whole approach was tested in a pilot session to get feedback from the people who would be using it. Through pilot testing with farmers, participants reported improved understanding of workplace risks and identified specific changes they could implement immediately, such as safer animal handling, and tractor safety practices and clearer communication protocols among employees. Feedback from the pilot also helped refine the training to better align with different farm conditions, increasing its relevance and usability. This work contributes to broader societal goals by promoting safer agricultural workplaces, reducing the risk of injury, and supporting the well-being of farm employees.



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.

Kirtis Orendorff, Community Development Educator

I presented at the Sheboygan County Municipal Clerk's meeting on demographic data sources that are available to the public, including the US Census Bureau's online database, the Applied Population Lab's GetFacts web page, and the Sheboygan County Planning Department's GIS online maps. Live demonstrations of accessing this data were conducted (Kirtis Orendorff)

- At the March Sheboygan County Clerk's meeting, discussions were held regarding where the role of the Community Development Educator could best provide research and educational materials to the group. The two immediate needs identified were data collection and comprehensive planning checklists. Data sources and collection methods was selected as the first topic to be addressed. I created a slideshow presentation and instructional guides for each of the 3 data sources I determined to be most important for the clerks to bring back to their municipalities. As mentioned, those 3 sources were the US Census online database, APL/GetFacts, and Sheboygan County GIS online maps. The goal of this presentation and educational material preparation is to ease the burden of comprehensive plan development for municipalities in Sheboygan County. Having access to these data sources should shorten the time spent on the initial development stage of the comprehensive planning process, as less time will ideally be spent "spinning their wheels" when trying to find data sources to identify issues and develop goals and strategies within the plan.



Positive 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

Preparation and planning for youth staff in grades 8-12 who will be counselors, leaders and role models for basecamp in the summer of 2026. (Sarah Feider)

- Basecamp at Upham Woods is 4 days where youth run activities, plan events, and keep youth engaged at camp. Youth staff are given time to work collaboratively to make decisions and prepare for this event. 4-H Educators prepared for five in person trainings and planning sessions leading up to camp. Included in the sessions is deciding camp themes, camper choice activities, campfires, and many other traditional programs that take part of camp. Also the 4-H educators go through policies, procedures, and emergency situations with the youth counselors and staff. This is an ongoing effort beginning in February and ending in July. Over the course of these five meetings, youth are gaining teamwork skills, building relationships, making decisions based on collaboration from the group as a whole.



An embryology program for fifth-grade students, where participants incubated eggs, followed the chick life cycle, and engaged in activities like candling and labeling egg structures. Through this effort, students strengthened their knowledge of biological systems and built foundational STEM skills through experiential learning. (Sarah Feider)

- Youth are curious and interested in life cycles, this program offers an interactive and engaging way for youth to learn about a specific animal and watch it grow. The 4-H Chick Quest program has been an excellent curriculum to reach the needs of teaching youth about food, animal science and agriculture. It also provided an excellent opportunity to partner with a local youth organization. Youth learned about the incubation environment, care for incubating eggs, chick development stages, egg science (parts of the egg), the hatching process and baby chick needs. It also gave me the opportunity to talk about 4-H and what our program offers.



A hands-on garden-based learning project for 4-H youth, where participants planted seeds, and contributed to designing and preparing a themed garden inspired by Harvey Potter's Balloon Farm to build responsibility, teamwork, and a connection to their community. (Sarah Feider)



- Youth need opportunities to build practical skills and feel connected to their communities through meaningful contributions. This effort responded to that need by creating a hands-on, collaborative project that allows youth to learn, create, and participate in a public-facing community experience. In response to this need, a hands-on, garden-based learning experience was developed for 4-H youth. Youth engaged in planting and caring for seeds in a greenhouse setting, and will participate in painting, preparing, and installing a themed garden space inspired by Harvey Potter's Balloon Farm, culminating in a public opening event. This effort is helping youth build life skills such as responsibility, teamwork, and communication while engaging in meaningful, hands-on work. By contributing to a public garden space, youth are playing an active role in enhancing community resources, supporting informal education, and demonstrating the broader value of youth contributions to community development.

A sparks program for Middle School and High School students where students engaged in various activities throughout the school year to practice something new to them. Through this program, students will have greater implications on their intellectual, social, and emotional self. (Sarah Feider)



- The guidance counselor reached out to me to engage the youth at the school in areas that they were not necessarily familiar with. 4-H was a program that was unfamiliar to all students. In this particular school, the rural students do not or cannot participate in after school activities. Sarah Feider, 4-H Program Educator, partnered with the Sheboygan Area School District to bring 4-H and experimental learning to a new audience. Students engaged in activities through centering youth in the community, building belonging, and learning together - 4-H Core Values.

★ **“Sarah's friendliness, patience, and enthusiasm make 4-H activity time at CHANGE something to look forward to! From Legos to tasty cooking adventures to painting and more, the students benefit from the program, learn from it, and have fun doing so. Sarah's encouragement and positive feedback during the recent painting activity were beyond impressive, and it was wonderful to see the students stretch their imaginations and create masterpieces!” - Mary**



Positive Youth Development | Diana Hammer, Youth Development Educator

Students from three high schools participated in discussions and activities with county employees and elected officials to learn how county government works and affects them. (Diana Hammer)

- Sheboygan County requested Extension's PYD Educator help organize and lead a county youth government day that has been popular here in the past. Diana reached out to all area high schools about the opportunity, and three agreed to participate so their students could learn more about local government and careers. Diana designed and delivered an introductory class ahead of time to Central High School's American Government class. She adapted and expanded the lesson for the three sections of Kohler High's Advanced Placement Government class since they meet for longer class periods. In both schools, she used a Monopoly game customized to Sheboygan County as a teaching tool. On April 28, 29 students (15 from South High and 14 from Central High) attended Sheboygan County Government Day coordinated by the county administrator's office. Students heard presentations and participated in simulations hosted by the county administrator, deputy county administrator, county board vice-chair, sheriff, youth justice workers, circuit court judge, district attorney, planning director, county clerk, county register of deeds, human resources staff, and county treasurer. The American Legion provided lunch. Fourteen students responded to a feedback survey the next week. Out of a 1-5 scale, the average was 4 for:
 - "I learned about potential job opportunities,"
 - "I learned about a part of local government that affects me in my life today."
 - "I learned about a part of local government that might affect me in the future."

The majority stated their favorite activity of the day was the mock trial with Judge Sutkiewicz. They recommend making presentations more interactive next time. This feedback was used to improve Kohler's Government Day on May 18.

- ★ **"The best part of the day was the mock trials and being able to see what the court life is like and being able to see what they do." -Central High Student**



Value Added -*Sheboygan County Community members actively engage in UW -Madison Extension Regional and Statewide Program offerings. Highlights of these programs are shared in this section of the report.*

- A facilitated conversation with nonprofit leaders in Eastern Wisconsin, where participants learned ways to make their organization and its activities more inviting to people of different backgrounds to serve the community and foster support to carry out the organization's mission. (Location type: Geography Served)
- Healthcare in the Digital Age is a workshop for leaders in the Northeastern region of the state (elected officials, community and economic development, healthcare related fields) where participants explore the critical connection between broadband access and improved health outcomes—and how these advancements drive local economic growth. (Location type: Geography Served)

Jayna Hintz <i>Area Extension Director</i>	Sarah Feider <i>4-H Youth Educator</i>	Emily Lamb <i>Support Staff</i>
Manuel Peña <i>Regional Dairy Educator</i>	Diana Hammer <i>Positive Youth Development Educator</i>	Cassi Worster <i>Marketing Specialist</i>
Kirtis Orendorff <i>Community Development Educator</i>		

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming in compliance with state and federal law.