



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
WOOD COUNTY



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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**University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension Wood County**

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# UW-MADISON EXTENSION

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES *with* THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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## Agriculture & Horticulture »

Our network of researchers, outreach specialists, and local educators are on the leading edge of creating practical solutions for livestock and crop production in addition to farm and labor management. We provide customized guidance, business planning assistance, and industry knowledge for what today's agricultural operators are facing.

## Community & Economic Development »

Businesses, governments, and organizations succeed through development from Extension educators and specialists. We provide education for elected officials to understand their roles and responsibilities in helping communities thrive. We offer businesses the direct technical assistance and connection to support structures they need to help them succeed. Our rural entrepreneurship program identifies ways for businesses to overcome challenges and take advantage of unique opportunities.

## Health & Well-Being »

We're supporting positive change for families through physical and mental health programs in addition to structural improvements needed to make the healthy choice the easy choice. Our physical fitness classes and mental health training equips people with the tools they need to lead healthy, active lives. We provide public health resources and tools for community action. We provide guidance on systems changes for food security and food access.

## Families & Finances »

Reinforcing family connections, financial knowledge, and strong relationships is at the heart of Extension's programming. We support learning and emotional bonding by building literacy skills in justice-involved families. We guide community and individual development across lifespans. We teach financial security through rent planning and budget management.

## Natural Resources & Conservation »

We work at the crossroads of communities, natural resources, and agriculture to protect our environmental assets and guide resource management. We support individual and regional water-well testing along with education to address safe drinking water. We educate farmers, businesses, and communities on safe practices to ensure access to plentiful, sustainably managed sources of food, water, and energy.

## Positive Youth Development & 4-H »

Community-led 4-H programs deliver quality activities and leadership opportunities that are leading to engaged, energized, and informed young people across the state. 4-H is a movement — in Wisconsin, 98% of our 4-H members are inspired to make positive changes in their communities. They're developing leadership skills, building connections, and finding what topics spark their interest.



# Agriculture

*Matt Lippert, Agriculture Educator*

## Forage Production Important for Wood County Farm Profitability

In 2021, due to low production margins, agriculture programming focused on efficient forage production, feed management and alternative forage crops. For the first half of the year programming was virtual and in collaboration with other Extension educators statewide. During the fall and winter, programming continued virtually with the addition of some outdoor activities.

During the year, Matt focused on alternative forages (eg., winter annuals such as rye and triticale or a variety of summer annuals, cocktail mixes of legumes, warm and cool season grasses) as well as improving production from traditional forages such as corn silage.

Data was collected locally as part of a state-wide collaboration to establish potential yields, quality and cow performance on winter forage and summer cocktails. Zoom webinars on these topics were presented, articles in state magazines, and fact sheets on the Extension Topic Hub are still being completed as this effort is ongoing.

A pasture walk was held and focused on improved forage quality in pastures utilizing interseeded annuals and legumes to improve established pastures. Not only do these methods improve pasture quality and yield but there are conservation benefits of an improved, denser pasture sward. We collaborated with Land and Water Conservation department to promote the availability of a quality no-till drill available through their office.

In addition to the forage quality emphasis there were other activities related to agricultural production. An online training for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) workers was held with 96 attendees. The training helped workers understand the terminology and life experience of dairy farmers so that they may better develop assistance for disabled dairy farmers.

In July 2021, a webinar series, “Heart of the Farm Coffee Chats”, for women in agriculture was held. Members learned about a successful farm business that offers a full range of dairy products, from pasteurized milks and creams, to kefir (liquid yogurt), ground beef, ice cream, local butter, and an extensive line of cheese. This program was designed to help mitigate social isolation due to COVID-19 through connecting with other participants.



*Host farmer at Pasture Walk.*



# Agriculture

## Youth Dairy and Livestock Programs are Back

A recognition/scholarship program was organized to recognize local high school seniors for their leadership and skills development in agriculture. The Outstanding Senior program is intended to encourage youth to consider a career in agriculture and complete education/training in the field. This program was held with Marshfield Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

A program for youth involved with dairy projects (quiz bowl) was held where they learn about dairy cattle and their management and prepare them for a possible future career involving dairy production.

Matt Lippert also worked with local farmers to provide cattle for a dairy judging event, Area Animal Science Day, to be held in Marathon County for 4-H youth across the state. Youth learn about dairy animals and gain practice in decision making and evaluation. This was a special effort as the pandemic had shut this program down for two years.



*Corn silage harvest.*

## Partnerships, Webinars and Articles Extend Our Reach

Matt Lippert participated in a group that offered a webinar for farm owners/operators, herd managers, calf managers and feeders, employees, and agri-business professionals where they learned the latest research in calf and heifer growth development to increase their awareness of the importance of pre-weaned calf rumen development and heifer maturity post-weaning and the impact it has on overall heifer health and productivity.

Milk quality was stressed at a discussion at the virtual Mid State Technical College spring farm tour where participants learned about successful mastitis management and specifics of how these factors are applied at the Marshfield Agricultural Research Station. Mastitis is one of the largest health management issues for dairy farmers and affects milk quality payments for their milk, longevity of cows in the herd, humane treatment of cattle, overall milk production, drug use, hygiene, and worker environment.

Matt also wrote an article for farmers reading the local Extension agriculture newsletter and a statewide agricultural newspaper about the value for dairy producers of participating in the Dairy Margin Coverage Program from USDA-Farm Service Agency. The goal is to encourage producers to participate in this risk management program by helping them see the value for them in participation.

Moving away from livestock and dairy production, a soil health demonstration for farmers was used to show how management affects the microbial activity in decomposing organic matter and overall soil sustainability. The goal of the demonstration was to help farmers visualize the differences in soil activity and for them to understand the importance of soil health. This program involved area county Farm Bureau organizations.

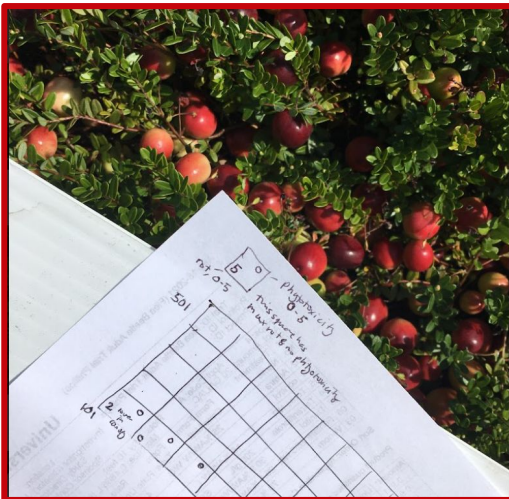


# Cranberries

Allison Jonjak, Cranberry Outreach Specialist

## Cranberry Outreach Specialist Programs Grow in 2nd year

Wood County is the top cranberry-producing county in North America, so it is a natural fit to have Cranberry Outreach Specialist Allison Jonjak locally based. In her second year with Extension, her role is to keep a tight feedback loop between cranberry growers in all 18 counties, and cranberry researchers at UW-Madison. Her efforts combine education, outreach, and field trials to keep Wisconsin's cranberry best-in-the-world.



Phytotoxicity evaluations during a fungicide screening trial in August 2021.



Soil Health pilot sampling at a cranberry marsh in City Point.

## SUPPORTING WISCONSIN CRANBERRY GROWERS

**502**

Copies of the Cranberry Crop Management Journal were distributed bi-weekly April through September

**578**

Attended Virtual Cranberry Educational Events

**1060+**

Viewed Virtual Cranberry Video Interviews



# Cranberries

## Virtual and In Person Outreach

After an entirely virtual 2020, growers requested to keep up the frequency of meetings that was able to be established thanks to Zoom, while returning to having larger cornerstone meetings (such as the Summer Field Day) in person to maintain networking. This “best of both worlds” allows timely programming that growers don’t need to travel to learn from, while still keeping face to face relationships flourishing.

Virtual programming has included monthly Virtual Brown Bags, Virtual Spring Mini-Clinic, and several Wisconsin Cranberry Research and Education Foundation meetings. The Cranberry Crop Management Journal continues in its regular emailed delivery. In-person programming has included the 2021 Summer Field Day, the Research Round Table, as well as several site visits, nutrient management planning trainings and pesticide applicator trainings, and field trials.

A highlight of the 2021 outreach year was the Research Round Table. While this meeting generally gives growers a forum to discuss their biggest tactical issues so that researchers can plan projects that address the most pressing concerns, this year the scope expanded. The morning served the classic purpose of acute questions and tactical process clarification, and the afternoon was spent in groups of 8, discussing the most important unmet needs for the cranberry industry in the coming 20 years. These strategic needs were compiled and will be used to guide future hiring (on behalf of WSCGA as well as UW-Madison and USDA), along with program development.

Despite the 2021 crop producing a below-average number of barrels, the cranberry industry remains strong, and grateful in their partnership with Wood County and UW-Madison Division of Extension for the community-building, agronomic information supplying, and boots-on-the-ground field research that the Cranberry Outreach Specialist program provides.



*Cranberry Summer Field Day Mini-Clinics on a cranberry marsh in Cranmoor.*



*Pesticide Applicator Training at Wood County River Block, attended by 56 cranberry growers.*



# Community Development

Nancy Turyk, Community Development Educator

## Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition Initiates Project to Inform Groundwater Management

In recent years, Nancy Turyk has provided support for the six-county Central Sands Groundwater County Coalition (CSGCC).

Through unanimous support by all of the county boards, these counties came together to develop a common approach for the improvement and protection of groundwater/drinking water for the health of residents, visitors, and local aquatic ecosystems.

During this time, Turyk helped the group develop a list of actions and resources needed to implement better groundwater/drinking water management and sampling strategies. The CSGCC recognized that decades of water quality and other data have been collected, many studies have been conducted, and groundwater models have been developed, yet the information had never been packaged together in a meaningful way for use by county staff.

To obtain the time of a qualified professional hydrogeologist to help with this effort, Turyk worked with others in the CSGCC to develop a proposal which was successfully funded by Wisconsin's Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Using these funds, Dr. Carla Romano, a post-doctoral research assistant was hired to assist with the compilation, assessment and interpretation of existing nitrate and neonicotinoids (a type of pesticide) well water data in the Central Sands region of the state. Dr. Romano began working on the project in early September 2021. Over the next 14 months, Dr. Romano will meet with county, state, and federal staff to compile the existing information. Periodically, public outreach will occur to obtain input and share information.

In the CSGCC, Wood County is represented by Bill Leichtnam (County Board Supervisor), Sue Smith (Health Department Director), Rachael Whitehair (Extension Natural Resource Educator and Shane Wucherpfennig (County Conservationist).

## CLEAN SWEEP HIGHLIGHTS

9,777

Pounds of household materials collected

882

Pounds of agricultural materials collected

200

Vehicles participated in the event

***Clean Sweep is an annual event for Wood County residents to safely dispose of hazardous waste. The purpose of this effort is to keep items out of local water sources in order to ensure a healthier community.***





# Community Development

## Wood County Rural Economic Development Plan

Over the last year and a half, Community Development Educator, Nancy Turyk, worked with Wood County staff and supervisors along with numerous county organizations and individuals to develop Wood County's first-ever Economic Development Plan. After unanimous approval by the Wood County Board in early April, the Economic Development Plan will now act as a guiding document for the county with clear economic development priorities to be executed over the next five years. The collaborative process used during the development of the plan has facilitated connections and coordination among key individuals and organizations within the county. These connections will undoubtedly help efforts to grow the regional economy and strengthen the quality of place in Central Wisconsin.

The plan focuses on initiatives for bettering the quality of life and economic development. They include:

### **Establishing Wood County as a vibrant and diverse community to live, grow, work, and play by:**

- Ensuring robust technology infrastructure exists throughout the county for residents and businesses. Includes broadband, internet, and cell coverage.
- Developing a plan to address the housing needs throughout Wood County.
- Developing a branding strategy to let others know that Wood County is a vibrant and diverse community to live, grow, work, and play.
- Supporting Central Place initiatives to provide one site that promotes arts, cultural assets, and entertainment in Wood County.
- Developing a combined countywide outdoor recreational trail/boat access/beach map to increase use and attract tourists and new residents.

### **Developing a diverse and sustainable economy in Wood County by:**

- Establishing an entrepreneurial "ecosystem" in Wood County.
- Transforming the economic development network to a collaboration economic development group.

### **Complementary Initiatives**

- Implementation of the following initiatives were identified to be critical to successful economic development in Wood County but will be led by the County independent of the REDI planning team.
- Update the Wood County Comprehensive Plan.
- Improve health outcomes by complimenting the Wood County Health Improvement Plan.
- Improve health, equity, and resilience and reduce expenses by implementing the Wood County Energy Plan

This effort was funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development and supported by Purdue University's Center for Regional Development & Extension Community Development and economic development specialists at the UW-Madison Division of Extension.



# Horticulture

*Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator*

Wisconsin is facing many environmental challenges due to over use of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments (USFWS, 2000, Meftaul et al. 2020, DATCP, n.d.(b)). Proper pest management techniques can lead to less fertilizer and pesticide use (UW-Madison, n.d.) leading to reduced likelihood for environmental contamination and pollution (UGA, 2020). As Wisconsinites' become more aware and knowledgeable of how to reduce overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments, it is likely that some people will adopt practices that reduce pollution. Overtime, sustained reductions of environmental contamination and pollution will improve aquatic and terrestrial ecological functioning in the environment.

## Foundations in Horticulture

Horticulture educator, Janell Wehr, with a team of Extension educators, implemented the online Foundations in Horticulture (FIH) course during the fall of 2021. This was the second year FIH was offered. Statewide, 385 participants learned fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management (IPM). At the end of the course, nearly 99% of respondents self-reported that they will change how they garden in the coming year from previous years because of something learned in FIH.

In September of 2021, a follow-up survey was sent to the course participants from 2020 to assess the impact of FIH. 88% of respondents stated they had changed how they gardened because of what they learned in FIH. In particular, students indicated changes in their decision-making in the areas of plant selection, soil fertility, and pest (insect, disease, and weed) management.

Survey respondents also indicated changes to where they find gardening information, increasing use of University/Extension sources by nearly 87%. Respondents' comments included that they would plant more pollinator-friendly plants, will use IPM strategies to manage insects and diseases, and will use fertilizers differently to meet the needs of specific plants.

## HORTICULTURE OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

22

Virtual Outreach Programs

416

Total Participants

81%

of participants in Managing Weeds in the Garden stated they would change at least one gardening technique

90%

of participants in Growing Veggies in Small Spaces understood key factors when choosing cultivars



# Horticulture

## Adult Outreach Programs

To meet the educational needs of local communities, Horticulture Educator Janell Wehr developed free, virtual outreach programs designed to reach novice and experienced gardeners alike. The following are examples of the 22 virtual programs delivered.

In **Planting the Vegetable Garden**, participants learned sound planting techniques for seeds and transplants. *Participants stated as a result of the program, they were more confident in their ability to direct sow seeds in their gardens.* 28 participants/ 2 programs

In **Managing Weeds in the Garden**, 74% of participants reported as a result of the program, they understood how to use cultural and mechanical weed management techniques. *81% of the participants reported that they would change at least one gardening technique going forward and 78% of participants stated they understood appropriate methods to manage annual and perennial weeds as a result of the program.* 42 participants /2 programs

In **Growing Veggies in Small Spaces**, participants learned how to choose cultivars for gardening in small spaces, general intensive gardening techniques, and were introduced to basic concepts of square foot, straw bale, and vertical gardening. As a result of the program, *90% of participants reported they understood key factors to keep in mind when choosing cultivars, and 100% reported they now understood how to appropriately water container plants. 100% of participants also reported they would change at least one aspect of their gardening techniques going forward.* 13 participants/2 programs



## Youth Outreach Programs

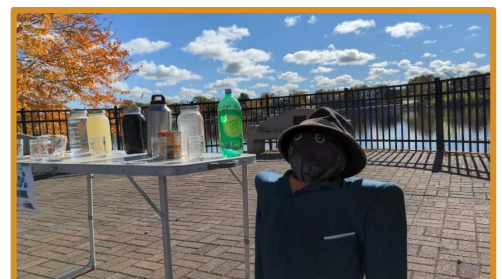
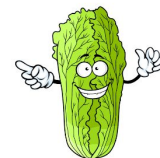
- **Lettuce Be Different**

Wood County 4-H Youth learned the importance of variation within plant species and compared different types of lettuce plants.

- **Inspector Cabbage and the Big Reveal at Science by the River Festival**

A demonstration booth was available for the general public and families. Janell worked to cultivate curiosity and science literacy by demonstrating cabbage juice as a pH indicator.

## Lettuce Be Different





# Health & Well-Being

*Kelly Hammond, Program Coordinator; Hannah Wendels, Nutrition Educator*

## **StrongBodies Successfully Brought Back to Wood County**

To kick off the fall education season, FoodWise partnered with the South Wood County YMCA to bring the StrongBodies program back to Wood County.

StrongBodies is a series of classes that include regular strength training exercises to improve strength, balance, and flexibility so participants can stay healthy and socially connected.

A few years ago, StrongBodies had a major presence in the community when classes were held in Wisconsin Rapids.

After years of success the program took a break. Upon my hire in 2019, it was a goal to build relationships and find a space to hold these classes again. After many community conversations, we were able to plan a StrongBodies class, held from September through November. We had a wonderful turnout where participants reported having improved strength and balance and learned about their nutrition and healthy eating habits. We already have a series planned for spring 2022 due to the high demand of wanting to continue the program!



*Wendels with StrongBodies class participants*

## **First Ever Stockbox Program in Wood County**

Wood County held its first successful Stockbox program in November 2021, with additional monthly distributions scheduled for the entire 2022 year!

Stockbox, also known as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, provides a free 30 pound. box of supplementary healthy and nutritious food to low-income seniors every month. In early fall of 2021, Extension/FoodWise, the Wood County Hunger Coalition, South Wood Emerging Pantry Shelf (SWEPS), and the ADRC of Central Wisconsin met with the Hunger Task Force, who provides the stockboxes, to share what the program is all about. After discussing the logistics as a team of local partners, we decided this was a great fit for our community and the need to provide healthy and nutritious food to low-income seniors is here. We wanted to take action and pilot this program in Wood County - one of the first northern counties in Wisconsin - to lead the way for our surrounding counties to do the same.



# Health & Well-Being

At our first distribution in November, we had 70 people receive a box of food, free of charge, to take home with them to supplement their own groceries or make healthy meals with the items provided in the box.

Bringing programs like Stockbox to Wood County is so important. By providing healthy, shelf-stable foods to low-income seniors, we can all work to improve the health status of these individuals in Wood County.



*An example of items included in a Stockbox*

## Return of In-Person Nutrition Education in the Classroom



*Wendels and Penny Schmitt, Portage County FoodWise Educator, providing a virtual nutrition lesson*

In-person nutrition education in the classroom was brought back during the summer and fall of 2021! FoodWise Nutrition Educator Hannah Wendels provided 2 5-week series of nutrition education in-person in the 5th grade classrooms at Grove and Howe elementary schools. Wendels also provided a 5-week virtual series to our other school partner, Mead Elementary. She had conversations with each building's principal and 5th grade teacher to determine how FoodWise and Extension could support

them this academic year. Our FoodWise team took the time over the entire course of this pandemic to provide multiple options to the schools based on their needs and what their situation was like at any given point in time. FoodWise provided in-person lessons, virtual interactive lessons, and prepared virtual indirect education lessons to be available at the ready for whatever they decided.

Throughout all of 2021, FoodWise reached students in the classroom from preschool to fifth grade and reached additional youth and teens through cooking classes with the after-school program at the Wisconsin Rapids Area Boys and Girls Club.



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# Human Development & Relationships

*Jackie Carattini, Human Development & Relationships Educator*

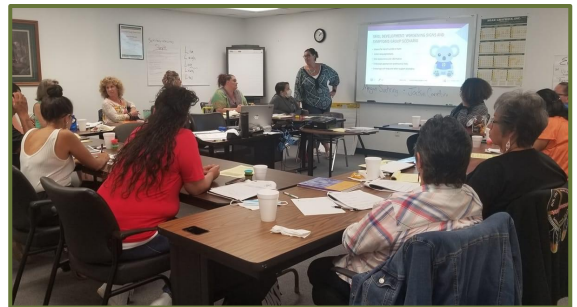
## Boosting Skills for Service Providers

Extension supports Wood County and Central Wisconsin community service providers in helping their clients set and achieve financial goals, build emergency funds, effectively manage credit, pay down debt and maximize income.

### *Financial Training*

One in three Wisconsinites is struggling to afford necessities such as housing, food, clothing and transportation. Across our state close to 600,000 people live below the federal poverty level and an additional 1.3 million Wisconsinites live in a household that struggles to cover basic household expenses. Locally, 32% of Wood County households are considered ALICE households. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed. The ALICE Report is a means to define and understand the individuals and families working hard but not earning enough to afford basic living needs. Many individuals and families turn to social service agencies for public assistance and other forms of support. This puts social workers, case managers and other helping professionals on the frontlines of supporting Wisconsin's most vulnerable populations. When they meet with clients, they often have teachable moments during which they can add discussions on critical financial topics. However, these professionals don't typically receive training on financial coaching or education.

In response, Extension developed and delivered a variety of training programs for professionals who address poverty in their work. The recently created Encouraging Financial Conversations (EFC) program is a six-session course providing those in helping professions with tools and resources to coach their clients on financial problem solving, goal setting, spending plans, saving, building credit and managing debt, maximizing income and protecting themselves from scams, fraud, and identity theft.



*Participants in Carattini's EFC program*

Through the EFC course, participants showed statistically significant improvements across several outcome areas. They felt more comfortable working with clients on financial matters: they were more prepared to bring up a financial topic with their clients, and they understood the role they can take in working with clients on financial concerns. About one third of the participants reported that they spend more time working with clients on financial topics than they did before the course.



# Human Development & Relationships

Many EFC participants also took Extension's Rent Smart train-the-trainer courses. Rent Smart is a six-module course that helps those with blemished rental histories find and keep safe and affordable housing. Train-the-trainer curricula provided case managers with skills and resources to help their clients secure housing. Helping professionals who work with children and their parents also participated in Money as You Grow, another train-the-trainer course in which they learned how to use guides that accompany 29 money-themed children's books highlighting sound money management skills.

## *Positive Coping Strategies to Reduce Stress*

Stress is a part of daily life, but when we face continuous challenges without relief or relaxation between those stressors, stress can become chronic and toxic. The effects of stress can lead to physical and emotional diseases, causing a burden on our health care system as well as personal problems that can otherwise be avoided if we can learn better stress management. While the pandemic had a substantial IMPACT ON ALL Americans, for some the impact has been more negative than others.

In response, Extension taught a variety of stress management techniques and mindfulness to adults, adolescents, and those in helping professions. In Wood County our courses "WeCOPE", "Highlights of Taking Care of You", and "Learning to Breathe" taught skills that increase positive emotion, helped participants recognize emotions and helped them develop healthy coping skills for dealing with stress. All three curricula were aimed at making participants more aware of the mind-body connection and helped them better regulate their emotions as a means of better managing and reducing stress and promoting well-being. The Wood County Human Development and Relationships educator provided those in helping professions with the tools they need to create positive coping strategies.

Participants responded that we helped them learn more about how stress affects their body, thoughts, and emotions, and how using different coping strategies can help them cope with stress. They also reported that by using the various coping strategies and skills they learned through these programs they were better able to cope with stress. Participants in the WeCOPE program reported practicing a variety of skills more frequently; 89% of participants reported that the skills they learned during the program helped them cope with stress.



# Natural Resources

*Rachael Whitehair, Regional Natural Resource Educator*

## Supporting Central Wisconsin Communities with A Watershed Approach

Central Wisconsin communities continue to face surface and groundwater quality challenges due to a combination of current land use practices and geologic characteristics of the landscape. An effective method to addressing soil, water, and habitat concerns is the use of a watershed approach. The watershed approach is a framework for managing natural resources that focuses on building capacity among public and private stakeholder efforts to address the specific resource concerns affecting communities.

The outcomes highlighted to the right are the result of Extension's support of watershed group efforts that took place in 2021 throughout the Central Basin of the Wisconsin River. These watershed groups are both community and farmer-led by nature. They consist of a volunteer-based membership and a group-appointed advisory structure. Extension's role is to support these groups in the development of their vision and mission and facilitate progress toward soil and water quality goals.

## Science By The River: A Wisconsin Rapids Science Festival

New to Wood County, Science By The River was an interactive, STEM-focused experience for the community of Wisconsin Rapids and surrounding areas. This single day event featured an educational walking trail along the River Walk with 6 interactive STEM-focused stations and 4 water-focused tap talks throughout the day at B's Taphouse.

23

watershed events throughout the Central Sands Region - focusing on soil and water quality and education regarding conservation-based agricultural practices - with planning and facilitation assistance from Extension

19

Natural Resource-focused presentations given throughout the year

4

Ongoing farmer led or watershed group partnerships

12

Ongoing partnerships/projects actively supported in the Central Sands Region

235

Youth and adults reached through Natural Resource presentations





# Natural Resources

Designed to increase interest in science-based education and discovery learning amongst families and youth, there were over 100 participants at this year's event. This event was facilitated by Extension in partnership with the Wisconsin Rapids Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, McMillan Library, Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools, George Mead and Sandhill Wildlife Areas, Wisconsin DNR, B's Taphouse, and the South Wood County Historical Museum.

## Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative

The CSGCC is a six-county collaborative including Adams, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Waushara, and Wood. The CSGCC is working to address the current and emerging human and environmental health challenges of groundwater management in this region. Beginning in 2020, the CSGCC received funding from DATCP to conduct a groundwater quality gap analysis. Project objectives are to: understand current groundwater conditions by evaluating existing data and reports; identify areas where data exists and is missing; develop a sampling strategy to collect water quality information across the counties in the Central Sands region; and develop strategies to inform residents using private well water about the need for routine drinking water testing and what to do if water test results are unsafe for consumption. Extension led development of the outreach plan and serves as a key member of the communications committee to ensure stakeholders are well informed of project reports and outcomes.



Visit the [WGNHS Projects Website](#) or the [CSGCC Landing Page](#) to learn more about the project.

## Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo

The Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo is a revival of the 'Healthy Soil, Healthy Water' workshops held in 2016 through 2018. The planning committee is made up of farmers, university staff, watershed group representatives, agency staff and agricultural and natural resource specialists. This ongoing event helps to address specific barriers Central Wisconsin farmers are experiencing when it comes to achieving financial stability and weather resiliency through the adoption of Best Management Practices. Extension heads this effort as facilitator, speaker coordinator, and event host. The 2021 event featured a virtual winter learning series of seven presentations given by local agriculture and natural resource specialists with 506 registrants.

To access recorded learning series sessions, visit the YouTube channel at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvn\\_JGp2Mygif1HZ\\_i8J-OQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvn_JGp2Mygif1HZ_i8J-OQ)



# Wisconsin 4-H

Laura Huber, 4-H Program Educator

## 4-H and the Seven Seas Summer Camp

Summer camp is an experience during which youth make new friends, explore their world, and try new experiences in a safe and supportive place. For



One group of campers

older youth, summer camp

is an experience that allows them to build their leadership and work readiness skills as camp counselors. Wood County 4-H was determined to make a safe and meaningful camp option available in 2021.

Wood County 4-H joined Clark and Marathon 4-H'ers to offer a series of day camps at North Wood County Park in July 2021. Campers enjoyed traditional camp activities like arts & crafts, canoeing, water exploration, and teambuilding group games.

Here's what some campers said was the most important thing they learned at camp:

- "That I can make new friends"
- "Be yourself"
- "To appreciate the environment more and to just let go and have fun."
- "Not to panic in rain"

Counselors said these are the most important lessons they learned:

- "Stay positive no matter what."
- "How to be a good counselor. I know how to lead groups, stay on task, and be fun but safe."
- "How to be a good leader and role model."

Summer camp 2021 was an AWESOME experience enjoyed by 97 campers, 15 counselors, 5 adult volunteers, and 3 Extension staff!

521

youth members in grades K-13

112

adult volunteers

15

4-H clubs

3

project-based 4-H groups

8042.5

Hours of volunteer service

\$229,532.95

Value of volunteer time\*



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\*[https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt\\_state\\_2021/](https://independentsector.org/resource/vovt_state_2021/)



# Wisconsin 4-H

## Youth-Adult Partnership Training and Development

Laura Huber, Wood County 4-H Program Educator, focused on the importance of strong Youth-Adult Partnership in 2021.

4-H takes a learn-by-doing approach. What does that mean? You might call it hands-on learning or experiential learning. Experiential learning focuses on the learning *process*, not on getting the “right” answer. It includes **doing** the thing, **reflecting** on what was done, and **applying** the lessons learned in broader context.

Caring adult volunteers are a critically important part of experiential learning. They support and encourage young people throughout the learning process. Adults identify the strengths of young people and challenge youth to step out of their comfort zones. As youth build experience, they are encouraged to take on more responsibility and greater leadership. Youth and adults form a team to help youth become the best they can be. This teamwork is called Youth-Adult Partnership.

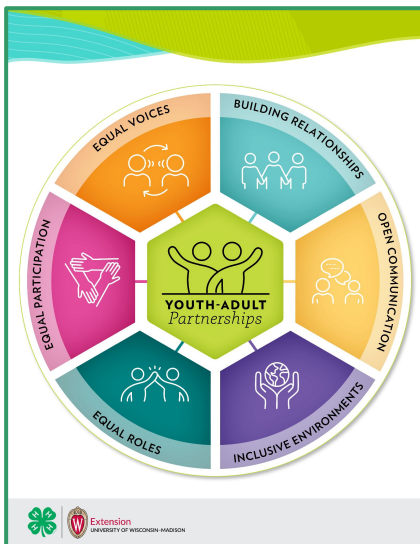


*Participants in 4-H Leadership Day*

Youth-Adult Partnership can be hard to achieve. On December 4, Huber hosted 4-H Leadership Day.

Youth and adults joined forces to learn how to make their 4-H clubs the best that they can be. Lessons included putting the FUN in 4-H, using curriculum for education, and training leaders their responsibilities. Youth led several activities and did a great job demonstrating how capable young people are!

Huber also helped plan and lead a statewide training called Learn Together: Lead Together Youth-Adult Partnership. This training was held virtually in November with over 300 attendees. These attendees learned how to develop trusting relationships, how to overcome barriers, and how to make small changes to have big impacts on local 4-H experiences.



*Youth-Adult Partnership Model*

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# Extension

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