

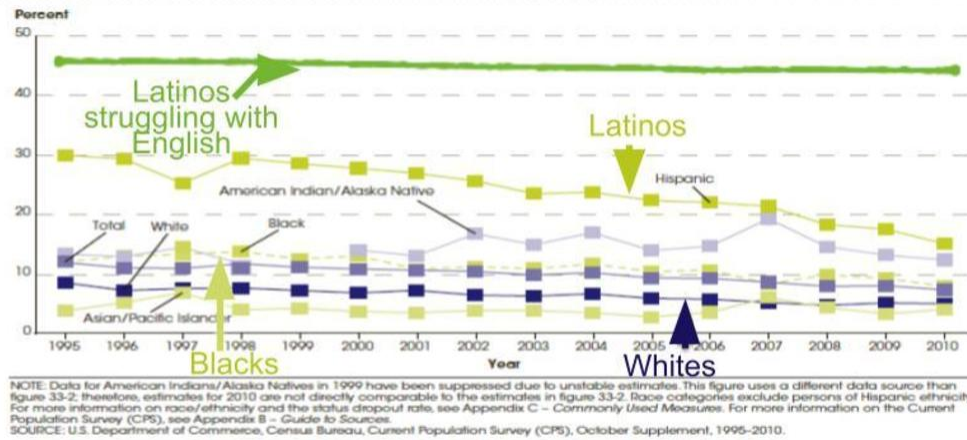


NEWS FROM EXTENSION

UW-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION WOOD COUNTY



Dropout Rates in the U.S.



Wood County 4-H Brings Juntos Program to Marshfield

by Laura Huber, Wood County 4-H Program Educator

Did you know that Latino youth struggling with English have the highest school dropout rate in the country? See above graphic.

Dropping out of high school impacts both the individual and the community. Those impacts include lower median income, higher unemployment rates, poor health, higher crime rates, and lower tax contributions among others. (source: National Center for Education Statistics)

Fifteen years ago, the Juntos 4-H program was created by NC State University Extension to help improve educational outcomes for Latino youth. Juntos means "together" in Spanish. This program takes a multi-faceted approach to help improve educational outcomes for Latino youth. The program includes a family engagement series, Juntos 4-H clubs, mentoring, and on-campus experiences. Since then, Juntos has grown to include programs in 16 states, including Wisconsin.

After nearly two years and a couple of false starts, Wood County 4-H successfully graduated its first Juntos participants in December 2022! One family participated in this first program. While one family may sound like a drop in the bucket, this is really a monumental success. North Carolina's first Juntos program started with just one family, too. This small program will

help build trust and credibility between the Latino community and Extension Wood County.

You may ask if Wood County even needs a program like Juntos. The answer is YES! From 200-2017, the Hispanic population in Wood County grew by 211%. Marshfield School District student enrollment is 5% Hispanic/Latino. District staff reported that they've seen a higher-than-expected increase in English Language Learner students over the last two years. Those students have had lower levels of English language proficiency than expected. In the past, ELL students tended to translate information for their parents. That isn't possible when the student is struggling with the language, too.

At graduation, the participating family told us that the 6-week Juntos program has a great impact on his daughter and their family. His daughter realized that she understands English much better than she thought, and that she felt too shy to try. She became more confident in herself, especially at school. He said, "She found her spark."

What's next for Juntos in Wood County?

We are excited to partner with Mid-State Technical College and UWSP to get youth and their families on campuses. The date will be set after Jasmine completes a program for Latino youth at Marshfield High School this spring.

Programs for Middle School families and High School families will be offered in the fall of 2023 to keep the momentum and the learning going.

The success can largely be credited to Jasmine Carbajal and the strong support of the Immigration Action Team at First Presbyterian Church in Marshfield. Jasmine is a bilingual Mexican-American with a passion for excellent educational programming. The Immigration Action Team is a community of people dedicated to serving immigrant populations in the greater Marshfield area.



Beef X Dairy Crossbred Calves

by Matt Lippert, Agriculture Educator

“Dairy semen sales have slumped to a 17 year low as more farmers start raising cattle for beef instead.” Dairy Herd Management Magazine

“...year-end report showed that Beef x Dairy sales totaled 8.5 million units, an increase of more than 30% over 2020.” Hoard’s Dairyman Magazine

What has happened is many of today’s best dairy cows are now bred to female gender selected semen. Sorted semen has a 90% accuracy of delivering heifer calves. Cows have become more fertile as well. Where once every dairy replacement heifer was needed, now many dairy cows are better suited to produce beef x dairy crossbred calves. These calves, surplus to the dairy are more valuable than straight-bred dairy calves. Often more than twice as valuable when sold off the dairy farm at about a week of age. There is a steep learning and adaptation curve going on. Are some dairy x beef calves better performing (better feed yard efficiency, faster gain, better meat quality) than others? Can I do things to guarantee a better price for these crossbred calves? Can I use any old Black Angus bull, or are some superior for crossing with dairy cattle?

This development makes the beef industry more sustainable as drought in the West depopulates beef herds and creates more need for Wisconsin Beef x Dairy calves.

While Extension didn’t create this exciting trend, we did encourage it. Also we have led the way to educate that for dairy producers to continue to capture extra value from their surplus calves, they need to do things to let cattle feeders know they are providing a consistent and superior product, through practices we teach about.

Articles in magazines, newsletters, topics at workshops, interviews on TV and radio and guest appearances of Beef x Dairy Calves at Farm Technology Days this year were all carried out by Wood County Extension Agent Matt Lippert. In my last Extension Update I talked about paired housing of calves, a new way to help calves socialize, perform better and a more humane practice. We were able to use the same calves to demonstrate all of these topics: Beef x Dairy,

paired housing, humane dehorning. We also presented the findings at World Dairy Expo In Madison Alliant Center in early October.

Links to articles on this topic:

<https://livestock.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/11/Beef-on-Dairy-Sire-Selection-07-16-19.pdf>

<https://livestock.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/11/dairy-beef-survey-white-paper-Final-4-4-2019.pdf>

Upcoming Programs

- **4-H Leadership Day** | Saturday, January 21 - 9:30-2:30 | Vesper Community Center
- **4-H Foodie: Chinese New Year** | Saturday, January 28 - 2-3:30pm | First Presbyterian Church
- **4-H Rocks** | Tuesday, January 31st - 6-7pm | Let's Create
- **StrongBodies - Weight Training & Healthy Eating Class** | Tuesdays & Thursdays - January 31 - April 20 9:00-10:15am | Nekoosa Community Center
- **Rent Smart** | Friday, February 3 - 9:30am-12:30pm | McMillan Memorial Library
- **Rent Smart** | Friday, February 10 9:30am-12:30pm | Everett Roehl Public Library

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