



NEWS FROM EXTENSION

UW-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION WOOD COUNTY



Harvesting, Fall Recaps and Preparing Data

by Allison Jonjak, Cranberry Outreach Specialist

The harvest months of September and October passed quickly for cranberry growers and for the Cranberry Outreach program. From hand-harvesting research trial plots to providing cranberry information to local media outlets, the DNR, and local tour groups, every day is filled with cranberry research and outreach.

As the dust settles after harvest, growers begin preparations for winter. Allison Jonjak processes the data from research trials for publication and direct grower outreach. She

also plans the Research Round Table, at which growers and industry stakeholders gather to share their challenges and needs with researchers. UW-Madison researchers then plan their research programs and grant proposals to meet these urgent grower needs.

November and December will each feature a Virtual Brown Bag meeting—November's focusing on fuel storage, quality, testing, and safety, and December's highlighting out of state research being done on plant physiology. Planning is also underway for the annual Cranberry School, held in January 2024, which will include a Pesticide Applicator Training along with the culmination of research presentations from the prior year. The Cranberry Screening Program (most of Allison's research falls under this project) will present results at Cranberry School, as well.

Conservation Management Through the Lens of Social Science

by Anna James, Natural Resources Educator

Conservation management practices and projects are generally driven by data collected in the field. For example, a conservation practitioner can collect a water sample from runoff in an agricultural field and can determine the amount of phosphorus leaving said field. Based on the results of the water sample, the practitioner can suggest conservation practices to reduce the amount of phosphorus loss from the field. This approach to conservation management seems like a surefire way to implement practices to reduce pollution, but what if the owner/operator of the agricultural field in our example doesn't believe that the field is losing phosphorus or even refuses to implement the suggested practices?

Effective conservation management should not only value quantitative data collected in the field but also social science data that displays the awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity, and behaviors of people within the priority conservation area. This kind of social science data can be referred to as social indicators. Social indicators can be valuable resources that provide practitioners with important information for planning, implementing, and evaluating conservation practices. Had the conservation practitioner in the example considered social indicators, they might have approached the situation with more education and outreach about phosphorus runoff before promoting implementation, or suggested a practice that was both suitable for the owner/operator interests and the land management needs.

Anna James along with Extension colleague, Guolong Liang, created a social indicator survey after recognizing the need for social indicator data to help inform implementation efforts of the 14-Mile Watershed 9 Key Element Plan. Data collection has been conducted through one-on-one interviews with agricultural producers in the watershed. A 23-question survey was used to structure the interviews, but open conversation was promoted. Anna

and Guolong plan to use this process to build relationships with producers, to inform future UW-Extension education and outreach programs, and to advocate for the conservation and education needs of producers in the 14-Mile Watershed. The project is currently in the data analysis phase, but Guolong and Anna hope to share final results in early 2024.

To learn more about social indicator planning and survey methods, visit https://iwr.msu.edu/sidma/Info/pdfs/SI_Handbook_v4_02012012.pdf

Upcoming Extension Programs

- **4-H: Juntos** | Marshfield | Thursdays through December 7
- **4-H: VIP Training** | Marshfield Public Library | October 19 5:30-7:30pm
- **4-H: Art Exhibit** | New Visions | October 23-January 5
- **4-H: Teen Winter Camp** | Rosholt Lions Camp | February 16-18
- **Extension Horticulture: Growing Adenium (*Desert Rose*)** | November 14
- **Planning AHEAD** | via Zoom | Jan.15, 22, 29, Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26 11a-12:30pm
- **Rent Smart** | McMillan Library | December 1 - 9:30am-12:30pm
- **Rent Smart** | Marshfield Public Library | December 8 - 9:30am-12:30pm
- **Sowing Success** | McMillan Library | 12 Sessions September - November
- **StrongBodies** | Nekoosa Community Center | T & Tr through Dec. 21

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