



### 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*

A regional agriculture newsletter for Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, Washington and Ozaukee county agriculture producers, industry representatives and agency staff that provides timely crop production updates, dairy and farm management resources and upcoming agriculture events. The goal is to create awareness of Extension programming and research in the region and maintain a connection between UW and the ag community.

Crop, dairy and livestock producers make key management decisions every day based on challenges related to markets, weather and farm goals. It is important for them to have access to up-to-date information and opportunities to help them choose production methods that help them achieve their goals. As a result, the Regional Ag Updates newsletter is prepared and e-mailed to approximately 900 ag producers, agency staff and agribusiness consultants that support farmers. In the winter months, the newsletter is sent monthly, with issues every two weeks during the crop production months. This newsletter shares field trial opportunities, timely management updates and tools to support production decisions, along with UW Extension and partner event opportunities. This newsletter consistently has a 40% open rate and one recipient shared the importance of having upcoming local and statewide events listed in one place. It further has become a great partnership tool between Extension and local producer-led watershed groups, land and water departments and state agencies. This effort creates a greater awareness of resources available to support their farm production goals.

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#### **Dairy**

*Manuel Peña, Regional Dairy Educator*

A newsletter for farmers, managers, employees and agribusiness professionals in collaboration with the Eastern Wisconsin Dairy Herd Improvement Cooperative that informs the reader of upcoming UW Madison Division of Extension programs, provides key crop and dairy management updates and includes timely production articles.



- A partnership between the Eastern Wisconsin Dairy Herd Improvement Cooperative and Extension results in a newsletter mailed to 300 current dairy producers in Eastern Wisconsin.
- The newsletter shares results from the cooperative's milk testing and allows local Extension educators to share key activities, events and articles that focus on improving management related to crops and dairy cattle.
- The newsletter is directly mailed to approximately 300 dairy producers every two months, and the targeted information drives dairy producers to engage with Extension programs and educators.

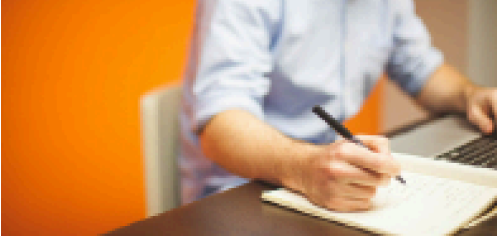
A series of in person and virtual meetings with UW Madison - Extension colleagues, producer led conservation groups, such as the Clean Farm Families, and Farm Service Agency partners like Zoetis, Compeer financial, ColoQuick,, agriculture industry contacts and crop producers where we discussed opportunities for partnerships, ag community needs and programming gaps, to be able to develop an accurate needs assessment, that will lead to accurate programing that benefit all the different parties of the dairy industry in the region.

A workshop "Calving Management and Neonate Care in Dairy Cattle" for all the individuals that are involved in parturition, and calving management in dairy farms. We are creating an in person and bilingual event where participants will learn and reinforce their knowledge about obstetrics, care and support in the calving pen, neonate care and colostrum management, and how to maintain the success in the maternity areas. Through this effort we will increase the knowledge and good practices related to the earliest stage of life in dairy cattle, which will represent an increase in herd health, work safety and farm profitability.

A workshop "Dairy Feeder School" for all the individuals with a link with the formulation, mixing, and/or delivering of feedstuff for dairy cattle. We are creating an in person and bilingual event where participants will learn and reinforce their knowledge about feed safety, feed management, transition cow health, and the economics of feeding. Through this effort we will impact animal health and milk production efficiency, by improving the use of resources such as, feed ingredients, time and labor leading to an increased farm profitability and waste reduction.



### 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. In short, the Community Development Institute plants and cultivates the seeds for thriving communities and organizations.

#### *Paul Roback, Community Development Educator*

A strategic thinking session for the board and staff at Riveredge Nature Center where we discussed the organization's mission and vision statements, and strategic themes. The intent of the session is to clarify the organization's purpose and a shared understanding of achievable steps to realize their vision.

The executive director of Riveredge Nature Center, a local nonprofit, contacted Paul to facilitate a process that would engage the board and staff in a discussion of the organization's mission and vision statements, and strategic themes. Riveredge Nature Center's mission is "to support conservation through education that awakens curiosity, engages the body, and explores connections to nature for all people." This discussion was an opportunity for the board and staff to provide input on the current strategic direction of the organization, ask questions, and identify any next steps that would help ensure their continued success. Paul facilitated a two-hour strategic thinking session for 16 board and staff members. The opening activity allowed participants the opportunity to reflect on and share why they are engaged with Riveredge Nature Center. Paul facilitated conversations on the organization's mission and vision statements, and the organization's four strategic themes. This allowed participants the opportunity to share what excites them about each, as well as ask any questions they may have had. As a result of this facilitated conversation, participants agreed that they need to revise and update the organization's vision statement, identify and define strategic values, and make minor updates to the strategic themes. From evaluation (N=16), 100% of participants agreed that discussing the mission statement helped clarify their role as an organization and 87% agreed that discussing the vision statement assisted them in understanding the general direction for their organization's future. Additionally, 87% agreed that discussing strategic themes helped them understand the priorities that assist their organization in working towards achieving its vision. Overall, participants evaluated the facilitation of the workshop as a 4.3 on a 5-point Likert Scale (1=poor and 5=excellent). One participant commented that it is "always helpful to have an objective facilitator" and another commented "well done. Not too imposing, but induced discussion."



## 4-H 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.*

### *Abi Quinlan, 4-H Program Educator*

This month's focus is on strengthening county-level engagement by attending multiple 4-H club, group, and committee meetings, providing county-wide program updates and building relationships, as well as informal conversations with both adult volunteers, youth leaders, and community partners. These interactions will guide planning for future programming and enhance support for volunteers and youth participants. (Abi Quinlan)

Through increased county-level engagement and intentional relationship-building with 4-H youth and volunteers, Abi Quinlan is laying the foundation for a more youth-driven program in Ozaukee County. Youth who currently hold leadership positions are asked why they are participating, ways they would like to be engaged, tools and resources they feel are important for their success, and opportunities they see for the county. By prioritizing youth voice in programming decisions and exploring strategies to improve retention, future 4-H initiatives will be more responsive to participant needs. These efforts are designed to create stronger connections, lead to higher retention rates among older youth, and result in a more engaged 4-H community that continues to grow and evolve.

**We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.**

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