



This monthly summary report highlights some of the programs and projects that Extension Educators in Dane County are currently working on as well as upcoming events. If you would like more information on any of the programs mentioned here, please contact us or visit our [website](#).

Carrie Edgar, Director

Agriculture

- A research project to serve as a case study & pilot project, surveying the impact of copper sulfate footbath materials application via manure on soil and alfalfa copper concentrations and alfalfa quality and productivity on eastern Wisconsin dairy farms. Results of the project will be disseminated widely through Extension publications and presentations and will also serve as the supporting data for a larger grant proposal, if significant results are found.
- An on-farm research project that will study the use of living aisles and no-till planting strips to mitigate the impacts of intense rain events. The results of this study will be used by diversified vegetable producers to improve the productivity of their organic vegetable farms while reducing soil erosion and effects on water quality.
- A summit for farmer serving organizations working on farm stress and mental/behavioral health, where participants learned what local organizations are doing to impact connections and better utilize mental health resources.

Community Development

- A monthly meeting with food council members where we address pressing issues related to the food system in Madison and Dane County in order to strengthen and support the local food system.
- Planning for a food system study where leaders and policymakers will learn about food system needs. This effort is designed to inform development of policies and programs to address food system needs.
- Partner on a produce incentive program for FoodShare participants to improve access to produce incentives so that more people can receive more healthy food, which also supports local growers.
- Planning for continued development and expansion of the Anderson Farm County Park community/market garden site in collaboration with Rooted; Anderson Park Friends, Inc; and Dane County Parks. The goal is to provide land access for community members to grow food, so that they improve their food security and economic livelihood.
- An educational presentation on public input processes, followed by planning meetings with the Stoughton Sustainability Committee to discuss a resident survey and public input processes that will inform the committee as they make recommendations to the Stoughton Common Council.
- Collaborative design, with community partners, of a neighborhood leadership training series to encourage more resident connection and engagement in building better neighborhoods. The purpose of this effort is to reinvigorate neighborhood and community organizations in southwest Madison through skill building and networking.
- Developing relationships with organizations working on climate change initiatives in Dane County, in order to understand the work already ongoing in this area, and to get a sense of the challenges these organizations are experiencing. The purpose is to build a roadmap for how Dane County Extension can develop and deliver programs related to climate change, through education, facilitation, convening, and building organizational capacity.
- Support to the Dane County Broadband Task Force with planning of monthly meetings, survey development, and design of public input strategy. The Broadband Task Force is working to better understand broadband gaps in access and affordability, and to work with municipalities to secure funding for improved infrastructure development.
- Support to the Organizational Effectiveness Committee of MOSES Madison to develop processes that will enhance communication, collaboration, leadership development, and member engagement.

Health and Wellbeing

- Monthly educational sessions and training for pediatric residents that describe school nutrition programs and policies that mitigate food insecurity among children from low-income families, and provides resources and training to expand pediatricians' understanding of food insecurity among their patient population and actions they can take.
- Participation in a monthly, multi-sector coalition (Dane County HealthWatch) that advocates for underserved populations on issues relating to access to coverage and quality health care services, with particular emphasis on populations in which health disparities are particularly prevalent.
- A 6 week series for teens in an alternative high school setting where they learned basic cooking skills, safe knife handling skills, food safety principles, label reading and choosing healthy alternatives in recipes. The goal is to build confidence in the kitchen and empower teens to make healthy choices by teaching them the skills needed to prepare nutritious recipes on their own.
- A 6 week virtual nutrition education series for elementary age youth where they learn the importance of choosing from the five food groups and how to create snacks without the need for a stove or oven. The goal is to help youth make healthy choices the easy choices and improve their overall dietary habits at a young age.
- A 9 week virtual nutrition education series, (Eating Smart Being Active) offered to Dane County SNAP eligible residents where they learn healthy lifestyle choices, food preparation, food safety, food resource management and physical activity. The goal is to improve healthy eating and physical activity habits for caregivers and their children.
- Responded to a Dane County newspaper editor on an article about Dane County food insecurity and the pandemic by providing in-depth information about food insecurity and providing context to the programs available (internal and external to Extension) to promote access to healthy food, nutrition education, and food assistance programs.
- A concurrent session for National Extension Health Outreach conference attendees, where these items were highlighted: the process for turning research into action, and the creation and implementation of the WeCOPE positive coping skills curriculum mental health program. This effort will provide other extension professionals across the U.S. best practices for turning university research into educational programming that supports mental health.
- Planning for the development and distribution of electronic/print resources for parents/guardians and professionals who work with youth in 5th grade to early adulthood. The goal is to provide information and tips, so that adults are equipped to support the social emotional and mental well-being of youth in the midst of a continuing pandemic.

Horticulture

- A monthly meeting with community garden coordinating partners to address pressing issues related to community gardening in Madison and Dane County in order to improve and increase food growing opportunities for residents.
- An online webinar for consumer horticulture audiences where participants learned about strategies for identifying and managing plant disease. The purpose is encourage cultural practices to help prevent and to raise awareness of the available resources to help diagnose plant disease.
- An online webinar for consumer horticulture audiences where participants learned about strategies for insect identification and pest management options to encourage proper identification of infestations, encourage plantings that attract beneficial insects and result in reduced chemical controls.
- Planning for a statewide webinar series for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution. The goal is to increase adoption of horticultural practices that address environmental issues in Wisconsin.
- A radio call-in show (Garden Talk) on WPR that engages the public by answering a wide variety of gardening questions. Research-based information from UW-Madison Dept. of Extension is given and resources are provided to empower listeners to sustainably manage their gardens and landscapes in an environmentally friendly manner.
- A session of a dual audience class series ("Green Thumb Gardening") for adults where they learned about soils, soil attributes, pH, nutrients, soil testing and being informed consumers around purchasing fertilizers. The program goal is to enable participants to understand soils and minimize use of commercial fertilizers for growing plants as healthy soils are a large part of a healthy ecosystem.

Natural Resources

- A social media campaign throughout the month of May that informed the Dane County community on actions they can take to protect and enhance pollinator habitat.
- An article for the Dane County Extension [Climate Change Blog](#), with data from the latest WI Initiative on Climate Change Impacts Report. This effort is designed to connect members in the community to the science of climate change and show how climate change is affecting the Dane County community.
- Development of a climate change program for local governments, environmental organizations, and leaders in Dane county to discuss the impacts of climate change on our community, work with decision-makers on strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and empower community members to take action against climate change.
- Development of an online compost course where participants learn to reduce food waste in their home, compost, and teach others in their community about composting. Reducing food waste at the consumer-level is one of the easiest things individuals can do to reduce carbon emissions. This effort is part of a larger effort in Dane County to combat climate change.
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Positive Youth Development

- A research study project designed to better understand the components of youth thriving and positive youth development. Results from this study will be used statewide to make program improvements to increase positive youth development outcomes.
- A monthly workshop for the 2021-2022 Youth in Government Representatives to come together to discuss their experiences in the program so far, to learn more about local county government, and to further develop their leadership skills.
- A monthly, virtual workshop with Dane County 4-H Ambassadors where we focus on a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion topic to discuss as a group in order to implement these topics back into our 4-H clubs as an effort to make these spaces more inclusive.
- A weekly partnership meeting with Centro Hispano's Avanzando program where a cohort of college latinx students meet to create curriculum for a Juntos 4-H mentoring pilot program to launch in the fall of 2022
- Planning for the Youth in Governance Program for 2022-2023 in collaboration with the Dane County County Board. The goal is to promote the program to potential high school youth to apply to be a part of the 2022-2023 cohort.
- Ongoing facilitation support for 4-H Horse and Pony Project volunteers, providing them with resources and strategies to help them develop a plan of action and make sure youth have education opportunities and authentic leadership roles in the project.
- A selection process for 8th-12th grade youth to lead community study and engagement efforts for the development of a new teen center in the King James neighborhood. The purpose of this effort is to engage youth in hands-on learning about asset mapping, photo-voice, and healthy community design efforts.

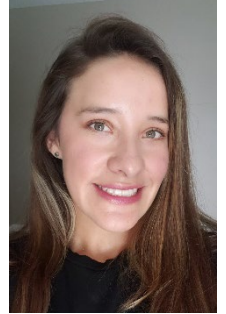
Upcoming Events

- [Nonprofit Virtual Education Series: Tools of the Trade 2022](#) - Free virtual education sessions for nonprofit leaders
- [Youth Tractor Safety](#) – For youth 12-15 to safely operate farm machinery
- [Retirement Planning Today](#) – Define your long-term goals and learn practical information you can apply immediately.
- [View More Events](#)

Staff Highlights

Alison Pfau, Regional Dairy Educator covering Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Rock, and Walworth counties

Originally, from Bogota, Colombia, Pfau is passionate about dairy cattle and the dairy production industry. She earned her animal science degree from National University of Colombia-Bogota in 2017. Pfau recently completed her master's degree in Animal Science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2022, with a focus on research in rumen nutrition and microbiology. She also worked as a manager, herdsman assistant, and certified breeder in northern Colorado, training dairy farm employees in health care, animal well-being, and on-farm accident prevention. Pfau also has experience with dairy animal transport, calf care, administration of medicine, artificial insemination of dairy cows and heifers, and overall dairy operation management.



Maya Walther, Natural Resources Education Intern



Maya Walther is working with Michelle Probst, Natural Resources Educator, this summer to create an online course that will provide in-depth knowledge in compost and waste management. Maya is a full-time student at UW- Madison pursuing a degree in environmental studies and political science. She participates in Campus Leaders for Energy Action Now (CLEAN) which encourages the university to transition to clean energy sources. She is one of the 2022 interns in the Wisconsin Idea Internship Program through University of Wisconsin-Madison's Division of Extension. This high-impact learning experience connects UW-Madison undergraduate and graduate students with Extension-sponsored programs, services, projects, and research efforts statewide allowing students to explore how and why we refer to Extension as "The Wisconsin Idea in Action."

**The Dane County Extension Horticulture Helpline is open to answer your home garden questions
Call 608-224-3721 (9am to 12 pm, May thru Oct) or email horticulture@countyofdane.com**

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