



This monthly report highlights a few of the programs and projects that Extension Educators in Dane County are currently working on as well as upcoming events.

## **Agriculture**

- Development/revisions of the bilingual Dairy Workers Training Skills modules for dairy employees where they will learn principles of and how to do each task on the farm. This effort is designed to support them in doing their daily tasks more confidently and efficiently while maintaining employee safety and animal welfare.
- Planning for the 2022 Organic Vegetable Production Conference. This producer-initiated conference is designed for advanced growers and attracts participants from throughout the Midwest and beyond.
- Two on-farm research projects for diversified vegetable producers looking at the use of living aisles and no-till planting strips to mitigate the impacts of intense rain events on organic vegetable farms.

## **Community Development**

- Pilot testing and revision of a new workshop for economic development professionals about working more effectively with entrepreneurs of color. The purpose of this program is to improve the quality and relevance of economic development services provided to BIPOC business owners.
- Planning support to the Dane County Broadband Task Force (an effort of the Dane County Board of Supervisors) that consists of assisting with planning meetings, identifying educational speakers and resources, and implementing a needs survey. The Task Force is charged with identifying and addressing gaps in broadband availability.
- Planning for a Community Garden Summit for Dane County gardeners in collaboration with community partners and public library staff. The goal of this effort is to teach participants food gardening and community building skills, so that community gardens will have sustained success, provide food access, and a sense of community.
- A monthly meeting with the Dane County Food Council members to address issues related to the food system in Madison and Dane County in order to strengthen and support the local food system.
- A monthly meeting with food systems partners where we address issues related to regional agriculture and food sovereignty in order to increase land and market opportunities for local growers.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

- 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.
- Monthly sessions and training for clinical pediatricians that describes FoodWise school nutrition programs and policies that mitigate food insecurity among children from low-income families, and provides resources to expand pediatricians' understanding of food insecurity among their patient population. The purpose of this effort is to connect clinical pediatricians and their patients with the resources Dane County FoodWise offers.
- A presentation to the Equity in Public Health class in the UW-Madison Master's of Public Health program. The goal of this presentation was to inform students of the inequities within the food system and the efforts to increase access to healthy, affordable food for Dane County residents with limited incomes.

## **Natural Resources**

- A monthly meeting with Environmental Council members where we discuss issues related to natural resources in Dane County in order to protect and enhance the environment in the community.
- Development of an online composting training where participants learn how to compost and teach others in their community about composting.
- Submission of an application for a summer intern to assist with the development of an online compost course.

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## Horticulture

- A session for those considering becoming Master Gardener Volunteers to increase understanding of the volunteer responsibilities and roles as well as the benefits and opportunities for personal growth in becoming a volunteer.
- Planning for a pilot gardening class series (Green Thumb Gardening Spring and Summer Series) in consultation with the Extension Teaching & Learning Specialist. The audience will consist of online and on-site participants who are members of the public as well as aspiring Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) and will feature a broad range of horticultural topics that will qualify those wishing to become MGVs.
- A monthly meeting with the Dane County Tree board to address community forestry issues and protect trees as a valued community resource.

## Human Development & Relationships

- A homebuyer readiness program for low income families who were denied access into the Habitat For Humanity Homeownership program. We use financial education workshops and coaching to help the families overcome barriers to ultimately be accepted into the program.
- Individual coaching for vulnerable low income families where participants gain valuable knowledge and skills needed to manage their finances in a very tough financial situation. This effort is designed to enhance the participants' ability to reach a financial goal.
- Planning for the 2022 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site is underway and will be held at the South Madison UW Partnership space on South Park Street in Madison.

## 4-H & Positive Youth Development

- Support and coaching for adult volunteers supporting the 4-H Community Club program.
- Weekly By Youth for Youth (BYFY) meetings where students learn and identify issues, develop a call for proposal process, engage in decision making and make recommendations for funding youth led projects.
- Monthly Youth in Government (YGP) meeting where student representatives participated in community building activities and engaged in discussion on current topics.
- Ongoing support for adult and youth volunteers, providing them with resources and strategies to develop STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) events and activities, where those not familiar with STEAM or the 4-H program will learn more about positive youth development and related skills. The goal is to spark interest in 4-H project areas and build connections with community members.
- 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.
- A series of meetings for a committee of high school youth (By Youth For Youth) where they learn about County and City programs for youth, and identify issues and funding priorities to be supported by County and City grants. The purpose of this effort is to provide an opportunity for youth to identify and support with funding, projects developed and implemented by youth to serve youth.

## New FoodWise Nutrition Educator



On January 3rd, Emily Randerson began as a new Nutrition Educator for Dane County. Previous to this role, she was a club manager for Anytime Fitness in Madison for over two 2 years. In this role, she managed operations of the club and personally trained in a small group setting. Emily has a degree in Health Promotion/Wellness and over 4 years of experience creating health and wellness programs. Emily shared, "I am excited to bring my experience to teaching youth and adults on living a healthier, happier life."

Emily can be reached at [randerson.emily@countyofdane.com](mailto:randerson.emily@countyofdane.com) or 608-224-3694

## Upcoming Events

- [Pesticide Applicator Training](#) – Training for those wish to receive certification in Wisconsin.
- [Green Thumb Gardening – Winter Vegetable Series](#) - A wide variety of vegetable themed gardening classes for both experienced and beginning gardeners.
- [Retirement Planning Today](#) - A course that teaches how to keep more of what you earn and make your money work harder for you in retirement.
- [Aging Mastery Program](#) - Build your own personal playbook for aging well. This fun, innovative program empowers you to take key steps to improve your well-being, adds stability to your life and strengthen ties to your community.
- [Organic Vegetable Production Conference](#) - This producer-initiated conference is designed for advanced growers and attracts participants from throughout the Midwest and beyond.
- [Green Thumb Gardening – Spring Series](#) - The practical knowledge to keep your home garden thriving! Dane County Extension educators and local horticulture experts will provide in depth and accessible information for everyone from the novice to the experienced gardener.
- [Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Short Course](#) – A series of workshops with the latest science based information for green industry professionals.
- [Wisconsin Master Naturalist Training](#) - Three training opportunities offered in Dane County to become a Master Naturalist in 2022.
- [View More Events](#)

## Dane County Staff

Gabriella Balza <i>Youth Development Educator</i>	Javiera Gonzalez <i>Clerk (Bilingual)</i>	Michelle Probst <i>Natural Resources Educator</i>
John Bedigian <i>FoodWise Support Staff</i>	Sandy Jensen <i>Deputy Director</i>	Emily Randerson <i>Nutrition Educator</i>
Jess Guffey Calkins <i>Food Systems Educator</i>	Lisa Johnson <i>Horticulture Educator</i>	Taylor Seale <i>Community Youth Development Educator</i>
Zulema Cruz-Hinds <i>Nutrition Educator</i>	Venkata Karri <i>Nutrition Educator</i>	Holly Simon <i>FoodWise Curriculum Coordinator</i>
Lisa Curley <i>4-H Extension Educator</i>	Sharon Lezberg <i>Community Development Educator</i>	Claire Strader <i>Organic Produce Educator</i>
Carrie Edgar <i>Area Extension Director</i>	Claire Mance <i>Healthy Community Coordinator</i>	Chip Thompson <i>Clerk</i>
Will Fulwider <i>Regional Crops Educator</i>	Deb Neubauer, <i>FEC Director and Human Development Educator</i>	Chelsea Zegler <i>Agriculture &amp; Water Quality Educator</i>
Jackie Gehin <i>FoodWise Administrator</i>	Aracely Portillo <i>Nutrition Educator</i>	