



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DANE COUNTY

## September 2022 Summary Report

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 prerecorded radio show/podcast episode for farmer-listeners of WBEV in Dodge County and on Extension's webpages to provide a research- and farmer-based perspective on winter cover crops in order to make informed decisions about how cover crops fit into their farming system. (Will Fulwider, Michael Geissinger)
- Planning for a research trial at Arlington Agricultural Research Station in partnership with Erin Silva's lab evaluating row spacing for a relay cropping system of soybeans planted into standing wheat. The goal is to evaluate the benefits and best approach to relay cropping for Wisconsin farmers currently using the system as well as a demonstration for those interested in adopting the practice on their farms. (Will Fulwider)
- A fall field day for the 'Farmers for the Upper Sugar River' group to view nitrogen rate test strips and cover crops seeded after winter wheat, paired with education on nitrogen use efficiency and soil health benefits of cover crop mixes. The goal was to encourage the adoption of conservation practices, and increase knowledge on high risk time periods for nitrate leaching, a water quality concern. (Chelsea Zegler, Will Fulwider)
- Preparation for an on-farm research trial collaborating with farmers in Dane and Dodge County, including the Dodge Co. Farmers and Biological Farmer Friends watershed groups. The goal for this research is to estimate the nitrogen credits farmers can get from multi-species cover crop mixtures after wheat in order to incentivize farmers to diversify their crop rotations by adding wheat and take advantage of the growing window to plant cover crops that can reduce their inputs for the following corn crop. (Will Fulwider)
- On-farm research project evaluating performance of corn and cover crops when establishing covers into standing corn through inter-seeding. The goal is to provide data for analysis of inter-seeding performance across farms in Wisconsin and provide field day demonstrations to show farmers how to get better establishment of cover crops for the winter. (Will Fulwider)
- An on-farm research project investigating the maximum returns to nitrogen through incremental applications of nitrogen in strips, replicated across a study field. The information gathered will help Dodge and Dane county farmers in reducing nitrogen rates and maximizing profitability from their corn crops as well as reducing nitrate leaching, runoff, and nitrous oxide emissions. (Will Fulwider)
- Support of the Farmers for the Upper Sugar River events and planning meetings, helping the producer-led watershed group to bolster rigor of on-farm research projects through connections with ongoing research at UW-Madison and connecting their educational efforts with the resources of the University, including reaching out to Extension specialists for research updates or to present at events. (Will Fulwider)
- A research 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 through Extension publications and presentations and will serve as supporting data for a grant proposal, if significant results are found. (Will Fulwider and colleagues)
- An e-newsletter for farmers and Ag organizations that provides timely, research-based updates on growing and farm management practices with a focus on sustainable production and improving profitability. (Will Fulwider)

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- A registered apprenticeship for beginning organic vegetable farmers where experienced producers provide hands on training and educators provide classroom instruction to build production skills for new growers and improve employee recruitment and retention for experienced growers. (Claire Strader, Julie Dawson)
  - A series of training sessions for diversified organic vegetable farmers to learn about labor management techniques to improve employee satisfaction and retention on small-scale vegetable farms. (Claire Strader, James Versweyveld)
  - Convening a new Midwest Vegetable Growers Network for farmers and technical assistance providers where we identify and meet the needs of vegetable farmers serving direct markets and focusing on organic practices. The purpose is to increase the success of vegetable growers. (Claire Strader)
  - A series of field days for diversified organic vegetable growers where they visit farms to learn about high tunnel techniques, cover crops, rice production, and organic weed control. The purpose of this program is for farmers to learn from each other and improve their production practices. (Claire Strader)
  - Planning for a conference for organic vegetable growers where they learn about crop production and farm management practices in order to improve the viability of small farms serving direct markets. (Claire Strader)
  - An on-farm research project to study the use of living aisles and no-till planting strips to mitigate the impacts of intense rain events. The results 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. (Claire Strader, Julie Dawson)

### **Community Development**

- Developing a Dane County food system concept paper for food system stakeholders in collaboration with Food Plan work group members. The goals of this effort are to facilitate understanding of the food system and build resources, support, and funding so that the food system can be strengthened. (Jess Calkins)
- Meetings convened for state and county partners to strategize on collaborating to support BIPOC and immigrant food producers. This effort is designed to pool partners' funding and resources to maximize opportunities, support, and assistance offered to under-served food producers. (Jess Calkins)
- Planning initiative for growers, food producers, and school food service staff in collaboration with UW-Madison and community organizations to expand access to farm-to-school market opportunities and improve school food service worker labor conditions, in order to increase equity in school food operations. (Jess Calkins, Lindsey Farnsworth)
- Planning for a pandemic food system study for partners, where food systems leaders and policymakers will learn about food system needs. This effort is designed to inform development of policies and programs. (Jess Calkins)
- Planning for continued development of the Anderson Farm County Park community/market garden site in collaboration with Rooted; Anderson Park Friends; and Dane County Parks. The goal is to provide land access for community members to grow food to improve food security and economic livelihood. (Jess Calkins)
- Planning for a produce incentive program for FoodShare participants in collaboration with City of Madison, Public Health Madison Dane County, Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin, and Willy Street Grocery Co-op. The goal is to improve and enhance access to produce incentives so that more people can receive healthy food, which also supports local growers. (Jess Calkins)
- A weekly meeting with local food policy council leadership to address issues for the councils to consider for policy and planning recommendations to improve and strengthen the local food system. (Jess Calkins)
- A monthly meeting with food systems partners to address issues related to regional agriculture and food sovereignty in order to increase land and market opportunities for local growers. (Jess Calkins, Claire Mance)
- 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. (Jess Calkins)
- A nine-month program (Local Government Leadership Academy) offered statewide for elected officials, department heads, directors, managers, and other local government leaders where they develop skills of effective leadership, including relationship-building, communication, decision-making, and vision. The purpose of this program is to help local government leaders develop professionally while also improving the overall function of their local government, thus increasing their capacity to provide quality services. (State specialists)

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## Health and Wellbeing

- Leading a Strong Bodies physical activity 8 week training series for older adults to improve strength, balance, and flexibility and help individuals develop regular physical activity routines into their lives. (Emily Randerson)
- FoodWise Dane County Team held an Open House for community partners to meet new staff, learn about curriculum and delivery models, and plan for the upcoming year. The goal was to strengthen partnerships and develop new ones as we rebuild in-person teaching settings. (Jackie Gehin)
- Planning meeting with a dietitian for a local grocery chain to explore opportunities for partnership and identify programs where collaboration will result in expanded access to programming and increased awareness of services available to audiences with limited incomes. (Claire Mance, Jackie Gehin)
- The first in a series of meetings with a food pantry partner to explore strategies from the Safe and Healthy Food Pantry Project toolkit as they prepare to reopen their facility for the first time since the onset of the pandemic. The goal is to identify and implement changes that offer shoppers expanded healthy food choices and reflect their dietary preferences. (Claire Mance, Emily Randerson)
- A coalition of 50 public and private organizations working together to monitor and improve traffic safety and identify opportunities for traffic safety initiatives in Dane County. The goal of FoodWise participation in this coalition and its Pedestrian Crash Work Group is to understand the safety risks that limit engagement in active transportation, and identify strategies to increase residents' access to walking and its related health benefits. (Claire Mance)

## Horticulture

- Planning for the 2022 online Landscape and Grounds Maintenance Short Course (LGMSC) for green industry professionals to gain knowledge to increase business profitability and adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies to reduce use of pesticides. (Lisa Johnson and colleagues)
- An online session of Green Thumb Gardening for the general public to learn about selecting houseplants, proper cultural techniques including repotting, fertilizing, watering and propagation techniques, common pests and diseases, and how to manage these for more success in growing and maintaining houseplants. (Lisa Johnson)
- Guest on Garden Talk radio show on Wisconsin Public Radio answering a wide variety of gardening questions from the public and providing recommendations using research-based information to empower listeners to sustainably manage their gardens and landscapes in an environmentally friendly manner. (Lisa Johnson)
- A thank you and recognition event for Master Gardener volunteers who maintain the Dane County Extension Teaching Garden. More than 40 MGs put in approximately 2000 hours each year maintaining the garden, which is used for demonstration and education by the Horticulture Educator during the growing season. (Lisa Johnson)
- An online class for Master Gardeners from Fond du Lac County about spring-blooming bulbs, including general bulb care, bulbs that resist rodent damage, bulb flowers that help support early season pollinators, species selection for different environmental situations and bulbs that perform well in Wisconsin's climate and soils. (Lisa Johnson)
- An online class in the Green Thumb Gardening series for adults where they learned about soils and increase understanding of how healthy soils are part of a healthy ecosystem. (Lisa Johnson)
- A series of online video trainings for Master Gardener Volunteers who respond to gardening and plant diagnostic questions, to help ensure research-based guidance is provided. (Lisa Johnson and colleagues)
- An online webinar for where participants learned about how to properly transition outdoor plants to the indoor environment and grow them successfully. (Lisa Johnson and colleagues)
- A monthly meeting with community garden partners to address issues related to community gardening in Madison and Dane County to improve and increase food growing opportunities for residents. (Jessica Calkins, Lisa Johnson,)
- 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 addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin. (Lisa Johnson and colleagues)

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## Human Development and Relationships

- Planning for the 2023 Volunteer Income Tax Site to serve individuals and families (Clare Dahl)
- Planning meetings with community partners to schedule future financial literacy trainings. (Clare Dahl)
- Planning for Fall sessions of Retirement Planning Today to assist participants in defining long term goals. (Clare Dahl)
- A series of seminars and discussion groups for parents of children between 0 and 12 years old, where participants learned how to manage common behavioral and emotional problems, and developmental issues, to improve communication, reduce stress, and gain skills in effective discipline. This effort was designed to build positive parenting skills and improve parent child relationships. (State colleagues)

## Natural Resources

- A presentation for the Sustainable Leadership Collaborative in Dane County that focused on food waste and composting programs the City of Madison, Dane County Waste & Renewable and Extension are doing to educate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food waste. (Michelle Probst)
- A public input session for the City of Stoughton's Sustainability Committee where participants were able to provide feedback and ideas on ways to make Stoughton more sustainable. The results of this effort will be incorporated into the City of Stoughton's Sustainability Plan (Michelle Probst, Sharon Lezberg)
- A virtual workshop for members of a nonprofit organization, Wisconsin EcoLatinos, where participants learned about the environmental benefits of composting and how to build their own compost pile. The goal was to inform participants on ways to reduce their carbon footprint and combat climate change (Michelle Probst)
- Development of a program where Dane County youth learn about our environment and climate change through art and discuss action steps individuals can take to mitigate climate change. (Michelle Probst, Taylor Seale)
- Development of an online composting training where participants learn how to reduce food waste in their home and compost and teach others in their community about composting. (Michelle Probst)
- Two brochures for gardeners about invasive species and alternative plants to use in the garden with a goal to end the use of regulated plants, reducing their spread into natural areas and waters. (Jeanne Scherer, state specialist)
- A day trip for 6th graders from Badger Ridge Middle School in Verona to learn about team building, archery, fishing, and Blackhawk Island. The purpose was to bring together classmates from different elementary schools and teach them about overcoming challenges. (Upham Woods staff)
- A day trip for Sun Prairie Central Heights Middle School 7 & 8 graders where they took classes in archery, canoeing, ecology, and a service project to foster teambuilding and learn about the environment. (Upham Woods staff)
- An overnight field trip for Madison Country Day School 8th graders including classes in teambuilding, ecology, and recreation to build appreciation for the environment and how to conserve it. (Upham Woods staff)

## Positive Youth Development

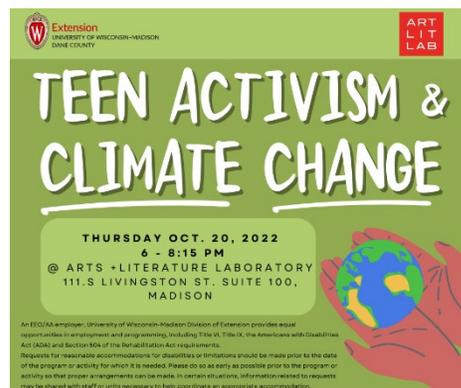
- Collaborated to create activity guides for educators to supplement the Youth Advocates for Community Health guidebook. Efforts included creating, evaluating, and workshopping youth activities surrounding health equity, the social determinants of health, and PSE change for state and nation-wide use. (Taylor Seale and state colleagues)
- Support the City of Madison's Community Development Division by reviewing 22 grant proposals from organizations that provide high school graduation support, GED attainment, pre/post-employment training, employment, career guidance, and work placement for youth who face barriers to gainful employment. (Taylor Seale)
- Discussions and planning efforts with Public Health Madison/Dane County for a collaborative effort for a Tobacco Prevention Youth Coalition in the Warner Park neighborhood with a focus on reaching BIPOC youth. (Taylor Seale)
- Planning phase 2 of the Fitchburg Teen Center community development project and preparing meeting activities before recruiting youth in the Winter 2022. (Taylor Seale, Claire Mance, Joe Maldonado)
- Planning efforts for the upcoming By Youth for Youth (BYFY) 2022-2023 cohort. Efforts include reducing access barriers for youth across Dane County to participate. (Taylor Seale)

- Collaboration with UW Health's Healthy Kids Collaborative for a local youth-centered coalition around LGBTQ+ behavioral health initiatives. Current preparation includes reaching out to existing stakeholders and organizations who are involved in this work. (Taylor Seale)
- Ongoing facilitation and support for youth and adult leaders in Dane County focused on developing 4-H education meetings in project areas related to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math). The goal is to support volunteers in the development of new project area learning. (Lisa Curley)
- Ongoing facilitation and support for 4-H volunteers, providing them with resources and strategies to help them develop education opportunities and ensure youth have authentic leadership roles. (Lisa Curley)
- Providing youth and mentor support for the Youth in Governance program to provide youth opportunities for civic engagement and leadership and to increase youth voice in county government. (Maya Walther and Carrie Edgar)

### Upcoming Events

- Retirement Planning Today
- Green Thumb Gardening – Intro to Insects
- Green Thumb Gardening – Shade and Ornamental Tree Planting and Pruning
- Teen Activism and Climate Change
- Green Thumb Gardening – Fundamentals of Plant Disease
- Green Thumb Gardening – Planning and Techniques for the Organic Vegetable Garden
- FEED Summit
- 4-H Vet Science – Mock Outbreak Scenario

[Click here for more info on upcoming events](#)



### Dane County Staff

John Bedigian  
*FoodWise Support Staff*

Jess Guffey Calkins  
*Food Systems Educator*

Lisa Curley  
*4-H Extension Educator*

Clare Dahl  
*Finance and Life Span Educator*

Carrie Edgar  
*Area Extension Director*

Will Fulwider  
*Regional Crops Educator*

Jackie Gehin  
*FoodWise Administrator*

Edwin Huayta  
*Nutrition Educator Bilingual (Spanish)*

Sandy Jensen  
*Deputy Director*

Lisa Johnson  
*Horticulture Educator*

Venkata Karri  
*Nutrition Educator*

Sharon Lezberg  
*Community Development Educator*

Claire Mance  
*Healthy Community Coordinator*

Javiera Morales  
*Clerk (Bilingual - Spanish)*

Ely Moya Malaver  
*4-H Juntos Coordinator (Bilingual – Spanish)*

Alison Pfau  
*Regional Dairy Educator*

Michelle Probst  
*Natural Resources Educator*

Emily Randerson  
*Nutrition Educator*

Kelsi Salm  
*Nutrition Educator*

Taylor Seale  
*Community Youth Development Educator*

Holly Simon  
*FoodWise Curriculum Coordinator*

Claire Strader  
*Organic Produce Educator*

Phin Ter Thao  
*Nutrition Educator (Bilingual – Hmong)*

Chip Thompson  
*Clerk*

Maya Walther  
*Natural Resources and Youth LTE*

Carla Williams  
*Communication Specialist*

Ze Yang  
*Nutrition Educator (Bilingual – Hmong)*

Chelsea Zegler  
*Agriculture & Water Quality Educator*