



Agriculture



Jackie McCarville, Regional Dairy Educator
Jordyn Sattler, Crops & Soils Educator
Kimberly Kester, Livestock Educator

- **Dairy Heifer Reproduction Data Collection**

Planning for a dairy heifer reproduction data collection and survey project in collaboration with UW-Madison Department of Animal and Dairy Science faculty and graduate students. The goal is to assess current management practices and identify areas for improvement. Raising replacement dairy heifers is a significant and rising cost to dairy farms, and poor reproductive performance only adds to rearing costs. (Jackie)

- **Focus on Forage Webinar Series**

Planning for a four session Focus on Forage webinar series for forage growers and agriculture consultants in collaboration with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the US Dairy Forage Research Center. The goal is to provide research based forage management solutions to improve forage quality and meet producer goals. (Jordyn)

- **School for Beginning Beef Production - "Setting Production Goals for the Beef Herd"**

A live online presentation for beginning beef producers about setting goals for herd performance, economic viability, and product marketing to achieve continuous improvement (45 participants). (Kim)

- **School for Beginning Beef Production - "Replacement Heifer and Dam Selection"**

A live online presentation for beginning beef producers about phenotypic and genotypic criteria for selecting foundational cows and replacement heifers that will be productive members of the beef herd (40 participants). (Kim)

- **YQCA Training**

A training for youth who are raising animals to learn more about animal welfare, character development, and food safety. The goal of this training to help youth better understand the importance of raising ethical animals while promoting agriculture. (Jackie)

- **Meat Goat Cohort - "Preparing for Kidding"**

An online webinar/discussion for goat producers in Wisconsin and Iowa to increase knowledge, analyze production systems, collaborate and network, and create and implement strategies to improve efficiency and productivity (11 participants). (Kim)

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- **Badger Dairy Insight (BDI)**

A webinar for dairy owners/operators, livestock haulers, custom calf raisers, and agriculture professionals, where participants learned what calf raisers, transporters, and owners are doing to improve calf health during transport and what needs to be enhanced to improve the overall health of calves, which directly impacts the calf's growth and production as an adult. (Jackie)

- **Soil Erosion Article - WI Shopper**

An article for crop producers to learn about the impacts of soil erosion on nutrient loss from fields on economics, soil health, and the environment. With this information, producers have a better understanding of how soil loss affects their farm, and will be more proactive in preventing erosion in the future. Crop fields are especially prone to soil loss from crop fields in the winter when they may be bare, or have less plant biomass to protect them from conditions that cause soil erosion. The nutrients being displaced from fields can be harmful to the environment, and also cause financial burden to the producer when they have to pay to replace those nutrients. As a result, producers will be more aware of soil loss happening in their fields, know how to identify risk factors, and mitigate those risk factors in future years by adjusting their cropping systems to incorporate more conservation practices. (Jordyn)

- **Wisconsin Amish Shopper Article - "Preparing for Poultry"**

A regular column that rotates between Livestock Educator, Dairy Educator, and Crops & Soils Educator in the Wisconsin Amish Shopper newspaper, which reaches Amish and Mennonite families in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. January: "Preparing for Poultry" - Breed/hybrid selection, brooding, and young bird nutrition. The monthly articles reach Amish and Mennonite agricultural producers who may not otherwise have access to our online resources. It also created an avenue to promote our face-to-face events in this community. The Livestock Educator has seen an increase in phone calls from Amish producers inquiring about livestock issues. (Kim)

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Community Development



Victoria Solomon
Community Development Educator

Green County Leaders

The fifth session of Green County Leaders was held in Monroe and focused on Leadership and Public Engagement. The day started with a session on county government, learning from county board leadership and county department heads. From there, participants learned about issues and opportunities facing municipalities and school districts. Participants also explore ethical leadership and learned about the justice system.

Participants shared the following responses to the question "What were the 2-3 most important lessons, ideas, or perspectives that you will take away from this session?"



- "There are so many groups that need help. We need to jump in!"
- "Volunteer as much as possible."
- "My job is hard and this community is amazing. We have so many leaders that care."
- "I think this session was really important because I don't think people realize how much local government plays into the workings of Green County. We are lucky to have great people."
- "I just really valued this session because it was filled with concepts/areas I was not familiar with."
- "Be proactive in your community and realize that all situations go hand in hand."

Additional comments included:

- "Really enjoyed it. Just so much to learn and take in."
- "Another great session! Always prompted good reflection on wanting to be more involved but not over-commit."
- "Jail tour was eye opening."
- "As always - very eye-opening and informative about how you can help and the needs of the county and community as a whole."

As additional follow-up:

- One participant decided to run for office as a result of this session; they will be in the election for Monroe Council.
- As follow-up from the December session, nonprofit leaders shared that a number of GCL participants reached out to them after the December session to see how they can get involved with the nonprofit organizations.

Youth Development



Ellen Andrews
4-H Youth Development Educator



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GREEN COUNTY

4-H Shooting Sports: Bigger and Better Learning Opportunities

The focus of all 4-H programs is the development of youth as individuals and as responsible and productive citizens. The Green County 4-H Shooting Sports Program is an excellent example of youth developing both content and life skills. Youth learn marksmanship, the safe and responsible use of firearms, the principles of hunting and conservation ethics. The activities of the program and the support of caring adult leaders also provide young people with opportunities to develop self-control, responsibility, goal setting, resiliency, and more. While the Green County 4-H Shooting Sports project has been a strong program with a wide variety of disciplines for many years, it had long suffered from a low retention rate among younger members in the gun disciplines and decreased in participation across disciplines during the COVID pandemic.



4-H Youth Development

Three years ago, our 4-H Shooting Sports volunteers identified several opportunities to improve the program, in order to provide the youth a better-quality experience. The volunteers started by finding an indoor location for Air Rifle and Air Pistol practices. No longer did kids have to shoot in the rain or cold, but it also allowed the clinics to move earlier in the year, before state competitions begin. The volunteers also separate the clinic and fair shoot, allowing more time for instruction and practice. Next the volunteers worked with community partners to raise the funds necessary to add BB Guns as new discipline to the Air Rifle program. The BB Guns are physically a lot easier for the younger 4-H Shooting Sports members (Gr. 3-5) to handle, and therefore youth tend to experience a lot more success and develop more self-confidence. Finally, the volunteers added an additional safety orientation for all first and second year 4-H Air Rifle & BB Gun participants. This does not eliminate the need for a safety orientation review at each shooting sports clinic, but gives youth another opportunity in a more comfortable setting to learn about how to safely handle a gun, the different shooting positions, and what to expect at the shooting sports clinics.

The Green County 4-H Shooting Sports program is growing and thriving because of the dedication of volunteers, community partners, staff and families. Providing a more developmentally appropriate experience for our younger youth has resulted in a better retention of participants and greater engagement in other shooting sports disciplines. The changes made have resulted in an over 500% increase in participation in our gun disciplines since 2022. To address this drastic increase in participants, 4-H staff and volunteers have worked together to recruit more adult volunteers to become trained as shooting sports leaders. The volunteers now offer 10 different line times over 4 days to accommodate the nearly 100 youth who have registered to participate in BB gun, Air Rifle or Air Pistol. The volunteers have also solicited over \$9,000 in donations over the last two years to add and update equipment to meet the needs of this growing program. Even the additional mandatory safety orientation has been well received by parents and youth, with an astounding 100% participation by the 60 first and second youth participants this past month.



4-H Youth Development



FoodWise



Maggie Milcarek, FoodWise Coordinator
Julia Harman, FoodWise Educator



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FoodWise Mini Grant Applications

Planning for 2025 FoodWise mini grant applications. Connecting with current partners in Iowa, Grant, and Green and Lafayette Counties to determine interest in and capacity for applying for grants for food gardens. At this time, five partners are interested in applying for garden grants this year: 1) Meridian Housing Group Dodgevilla Apartments in Dodgeville (Iowa), 2) Soul Food and Livingston Community Improvement Corporation Emergency Food Pantry in Livingston (Iowa/Grant), 3) Family Promise of Green County in Monroe (Green), 4) Lafayette County Housing Authority Riverview Apartments in Blanchardville (Lafayette), and 5) Juda Elementary School in Juda (Green). The FoodWise Coordinator will write the grants and work with partners to develop a budget, workplan, sustainability plan, and educational opportunities.

Radio recording

A monthly nutrition education radio spot for WEKZ 95.5 in Green County. This month focused on the health benefits of the tradition of eating Black-Eyed Peas and greens for New Year's Day. The purpose of the effort is to encourage healthy eating habits and promote Extension as resource in the community.

FoodWise

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