



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

TAYLOR COUNTY



ANNUAL HIGHLIGHT REPORT

2023



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UW-MADISON EXTENSION

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES *with* THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

2023 was another highly productive year for the Taylor County, University of Wisconsin – Madison Extension office. Extension Taylor County provides a wide variety of impactful programming through county-based educators in Agriculture, 4-H, Community Development, and FoodWise nutrition education. During the year, a FoodWise Administrator covering several counties including Taylor and a FoodWise Educator also serving the county were hired and began educating low-income audiences. Programming continued to receive a high degree of support from the Extension office program assistant.

In addition to numerous office contacts/visits, over 14,000 educational contacts were made in 2023, about 6,000 more than 2022. Another approximately 20,000 educational contacts were made through a regional livestock management newsletter that is in part developed by the Taylor Agriculture Educator.

Extension statewide continues to develop and conduct programs in 72 Wisconsin counties. In Taylor County, Extension has existed for over a century. It continues to be a successful partnership between county government and the university, with both making investments in support of Taylor communities. Approximately 60% of Agriculture, 4-H, and Community Development educator salaries and fringe benefits in 2023 were paid by UW-Madison. The county contributed the remaining amount (\$93,000), as well as in-kind office space, and technology support. Another estimated \$64,000 in federal SNAP-Education grant dollars supported Taylor Extension’s FoodWise programming. Collaborating with other community partners and volunteers, the programming Extension offers also provides access to a vast University of Wisconsin knowledge and information base.

We continue to appreciate the ongoing support of the Taylor County Board of Supervisors, its Agriculture and Extension Education Committee, and the public. Collaboration with other county departments and not-for-profit organizations in Taylor communities strengthens Extension’s effectiveness and helps to direct programming efforts.

We look forward to serving Taylor County in 2024 and beyond. If you have any questions about our programs or suggestions for improving them, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please see the contact information and 2023 programming highlights in this annual report. Thank you!



Area Extension Director





Agriculture

Sandy Stuttgen, Ag Educator



Agriculture in Wisconsin

In 2023 Sandy responded to 82 agricultural inquiries during phone or email conversations by providing research-based information. She followed up these conversations by mailing printed materials. She provided agricultural information industry via:

- a Spring newsletter that was mailed to 754 households.
- two postcard mailings to 1,125 households each time.
- Taylor County Extension online newsletter that reached 214 dairy and beef producers multiple times throughout the year.
- Facebook posts to Extension Taylor'd Ag, UW Madison Extension Agriculture, and the North Central WI Cattlemen's Association.
- Planning Emergency Livestock Transport Response online newsletter information that reached 57 statewide first responders multiple times.
- Articles for the *Wisconsin Agriculturist Magazine*, *WI State Farmer* newspaper, and WI Cattlemen's Association and North Central WI Cattlemen's Association newsletters and the UW-Madison Division of Extension Livestock website.
- Interviews with Medford's K99 radio, and WI Public Radio.

BQA, PELTR, AI and Beef Workshops

Sandy provided her presentations, publications, factsheets, and videos at: **Beef Quality Assurance (BQA)** certifications for 41 producers.

Planning Emergency Livestock Transport Response (PELTR):

Hybrid trainings in October for eight participants in Wausau, nine in Bonduel and 13 in Barron. Sandy taught the online portions at all locations and the in-person portion at Wausau.

September presentation to build awareness of PELTR with 28 county emergency managers (including Taylor) to explain the benefits of the PELTR course for local communities at the WI Emergency Management Association Conference in Stevens Point.

February tabletop display and multi-deck livestock trailer tour for 80 high school students and 200 adult attendees to increase their knowledge about livestock trailer response planning and to promote enrollment in PELTR during the WI Emergency Services Association Conference in Green Bay. Local EMS personnel attended.

BY THE NUMBERS

Ag Inquiries

82 community members

Beef Workshop

24 attendees

Cattle Feeder Workshop

87 attendees

Artificial Insemination

28 attendees

Planning Emergency Livestock Transportation Response (PELTR)

30 attendees—trainings
308 building awareness

BQA Certifications

41 producers



Agriculture

AI Trainings in October and April for 28 local participants. Spanish interpreters helped with simultaneous translation for two participants in the October class. The AI course received the 2023 National Finalist recognition for a Learning Module from National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA).

Beef Workshops:

An October field day with a farmer-led watershed group - led a biosecurity discussion that included implementing herd health programs and correct injection placement with 24 attendees.

July Farm Technology Days - created the tabletop display about veterinary syringe care (poster and factsheet), proper injection technique (poster) and vaccine handling (poster).

February Cattle Feeder Workshops - created and or presented *Facilities Enable Feed Yard Health* (PowerPoint) for 87 attendees at three locations statewide. The location involving Taylor County beef producers was at Country Aire in Stratford.

Sandy's Invited Presentations:

Farm Operating Agreements for a Farm LLC at the July Farm Succession online meeting.

Handling Compromised Cattle and Euthanasia, Marshfield Agriculture Research station staff in May.

Published Research

R. Sterry, M. Akins, Borchert, B. Halfman, S. Stuttgen, H. Schlessler, A. Bjurstrom, A. Kohlman, T. Ihde, M. Lippert, D. Marzu and A. Cauffman. *Management of the Resulting Calves on Wisconsin Dairy Farms*. ISSN 2158-9429. Journal of the National Association of County Agriculture Agents (NACAA). December 2023. Volume 16, Issue 2. She presented this work as a poster at the 2023 NACAA Conference.

Guilherme L Menezes, Tiago Bresolin, William Halfman, Ryan Sterry, Amanda Cauffman, Sandy Stuttgen, Heather Schlessler, Megan A Nelson, Aerica Bjurstrom, Guilherme J M Rosa, Joao R Dorea. *Exploring associations among morphometric measurements, genetic group of sire, and performance of beef on dairy calves*. Translational Animal Science, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2023.





Community Development

Michelle Grimm, Community Development Educator



Organization and Leadership Development

Broadband, Leadership, and Tourism

Broadband The importance of electronic communications has been increasing exponentially for businesses, organizations, and individuals. For Taylor County to thrive economically and socially, it is important for all citizens to have access to high speed internet. Michelle continues to be a resource to the Taylor County Broadband Committee.

- Support the Taylor County Broadband committee by facilitating information and resources from the statewide BEAD grant to the county.
- Monitor the upcoming grants at the Federal and State level to keep the county informed of the opportunities.

Non-Profit Leadership & Organizational Training Program

Through trainings we foster collaboration and a culture of co-creation with peer learning and network building.

Michelle along with other Extension educators offered a winter, spring and summer **Wisconsin Non-profit Connect to Learn Series**.

Attendance on average ranged from 10 to 15 per session from nonprofits around the state. The team developed session curriculums, agendas, marketing materials, and facilitation guides for the educators teaching the program. All this content will be available for future statewide Extension teams wishing to conduct the program. A template for email blasts was also created to better market the program statewide. A course calendar and organizational page were also created and released during the year.

Michelle also engaged in curriculum development for and delivered portions of the **Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership** for the state library association focusing on legacy/mission statement development.

Know your Community Partnering with Taylor County Health Department & Aspirus of Medford

Michelle has been partnering with the Health Department and Aspirus on the **Know Your Community** project to educate the public about underserved and minority populations in Taylor County. The focus of the project in 2023, one Michelle helped to develop, was to present information on how to help foster a sense of belonging for those within the county who are part of a minority or underserved group.

BY THE NUMBERS

Strong People/Strong Bodies

- 5 locations
- 108 attendees
- Gilman~17
- Goodrich~13
- Medford a.m.~17
- Medford p.m.~11
- Rib Lake~22
- Online~28

Non-Profit Leadership Program

10-15 attendees per session

Community Garden

15+ gardeners
300# of food donated

From the **Getting to Know Your Community** series...

Supporting Healthy Aging

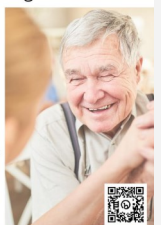
Attend this free session to learn more about the local services and programs available for you & your loved ones as we age.

Tuesday, May 2, 2023
In-Person or Online!

Repeated sessions held at 11AM and 1PM at NTC-Medford Campus.
Free lunch served at noon.

RSVPs requested online at
<http://bit.ly/3o8VeFk> or to 715-748-1420.

Brought to you by Commission on Aging, Health Dept., Aspirus Medford, ADRC, Human Services, Stepping Stones, Extension Taylor County, Northcentral Technical College, & other community partners. Funded generously through WI DHS and Aspirus Medford Community Benefit.



Help shape future **Getting to Know Your Community** sessions!

What do you want to know more about? Power of attorney, dementia care, falls prevention, avoiding scammers, internet safety, mental health, reducing social isolation, end of life planning, or are there any other ideas we may have missed? Give us a call at 715-748-1499!

Thank You



Community Development

Focus early in the year was on educating residents about the local LatinX population. Other programs that Michelle helped to design and implement were a senior fair and suicide.

The Community Economic Analysis for Rural Wisconsin Communities (CEA-RWC)/Design Gilman pilot program is a joint effort between the University of Wisconsin, the Division of Extension, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to bring a structured community economic development strategic planning program to a set of rural Wisconsin communities.

Agribusiness and Agriculture-Related Opportunities

Community Garden and Farmer's Market

Working with these groups in the Community Garden provided fresh produce to food pantries. As a result, we have food pantries that are able to offer fresh produce to their clients. Though the amount of food was difficult to tabulate, more than **300 pounds** of food was donated. Extension obtained a \$4,000 grant from Indianhead Community Action to replace the beds. Michelle purchased materials, including wood. She also arranged to have the wood not yet used for the project to be stored by the county maintenance department.

National Resourced Development and Protection Issues

Including Recycling and Clean Sweep

Michelle worked with the Taylor County recycling authority to inform the public about recycling opportunities. As part of this effort, she worked with the Taylor County Recycling & Solid Waste Department to host the Taylor County Clean Sweep. Taylor County held two events, one in Medford and one in Gilman.

- 696 participants at the electronics and appliance pick up in Medford and Gilman. This increased considerably from recent years.
- 3,767 florescent tubes
- 704 TVs or monitors, up from last year.
- 356 old appliances
- 48,111 pounds of miscellaneous electronics, up from last year.
- 11,990 pounds of hazardous waste was collected.

StrongPeople/Strong Bodies

Sessions are offered in-person at four locations throughout Taylor County and online. This series of strength training sessions for older adults improves their strength, balance, and flexibility, so they can stay healthy and socially connected. Michelle works with all the volunteer instructors so they become current with training requirements and to make sure they have the resources they need to teach in-person classes.



Wisconsin 4-H

Julie Diepenbrock, 4-H Educator



4-H Club Activities



The 7 Community 4-h Clubs in Taylor County involved their members in a variety of activities during 2023. A sample of those activities included **Poplar Grove** in Gilman hosted the Gilman County Dairy Breakfast as their fundraiser, made fruit bags for Meals on Wheels as a service project, held a Rabies clinic, and had a demonstration on a pet hedgehog as one of their educational programs. **Diamond Lakers** in Lublin hosted a Rabies Clinic for the community, decorated the Post Office window for National 4-H week and maintained their Little Library. Medford's **Countrysiders** handed out 4-H pencils, brochures and candy at the Harvest Days Parade, collected canned goods for Trick or Treat for the Hungry, and provided activities for youth at the Discover 4-H Day at Huey's Hideaway. **Liberty** enjoyed bowling in February, decorated a local business window for National 4-H Week, and created a Bulletin Board at the Extension office. **Little Farmers** worked on a booth and sign for the county fair, and worked on various fair projects. **Little Whispers** went ice skating, won 4th place on their Maple Fest float, had an even larger grilled cheese contest, and helped with Bell ringing at Christmas. **Thrifty-Go-Getters** enjoyed an escape room and helped wrap Christmas gifts for the Giving Tree program. All of these activities help build positive relationships with adults and other youth as well as leadership skills.



Partnerships



MAMS After School CLC & Summer School Middle school youth learned about LEGO Robotics, 3Doodler Pens, Sewing, and Foods and Nutrition through hands-on activities. STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) projects and traditional 4-H projects empower youth to live independently and to develop more fulfilling lives.

Huey's Hideaway Summer 4-H Club Over the course of 12 weeks, 24 youth learned about the 4 Hs (head, heart, hands, and health) through participating in a variety of 4-H project activities designed to strengthen and support youth's mental, physical, and emotional health.

BY THE NUMBERS

Membership

~ 179 Youth Members
 ~ 38 Adult Volunteers
 Enrolled in 7 Taylor County 4-H Community Clubs

Top Projects

- Art - Drawing & Painting
- Swine
- Photography
- Beef
- Crops & Vegetables
- Poultry
- Cloverbuds
- LEGOS
- Foods & Nutrition
- Self-Determined

Youth and adults participating in the over 200 4-H activities or events in Taylor County (many youth and adults are counted more than once due to participation in multiple activities)

~ 1653 youth participants
 ~ 915 adults participants
 For over 4500 hours of programs helping youth build skills for life.





Wisconsin 4-H

Stetsonville After School CLC Youth at Stetsonville learned about 4-H through participating in STEM and Foods and Nutrition projects to explore their Sparks (educational and life interests) while also creating a sense of belonging and engagement.

Summer Programming



Taylor County 4-H had 32 campers participate in the **Day Camps** at Wood Lake, Medford School Forest, Diamond Lake, and Stetsonville. Day Camps help both 4-H and non-4-H youth improve their mental health through spending a day outdoors and participating in healthy activities and games that help develop new positive friendships.

Library Programs Our summer intern, and Julie presented a program at each of the 5 public libraries in Taylor County. Through these activities, youth learned that while we all have differences, we have many similarities and can develop friendships and be kind to those who are different from us.

Taylor County Fair



The Taylor County Fair is a highlight for many 4-H families since it gives 4-H members a chance to showcase what they have learned and accomplished throughout the year. The fair is a special opportunity for youth to exhibit their projects, work in the Food Stand and or the Pizza and Soda Stand, and/or sell their animals in the Taylor County Market Animal Show & Sale (MASS). These activities help youth spend time creating positive relationships with their peers and adult leaders and create a sense of belonging.

Other Opportunities



There are many other opportunities for our 4-H members throughout the year, including:

- Annual Leadership Training
- Fun Night at Perkinstown
- Senior Scholarships
- Northwoods Premiere
- Project Meetings
- Educational Travel Experiences
- Showmanship Clinics
- Sparks Days
- Taylor County 4-H Family
- Bowling & Awards





Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives

FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles, and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community, and systems levels.

Achieving More Together

UW-Madison Division of Extension works alongside the people of Wisconsin throughout urban and rural communities to deliver practical educational programs where people live and work. In Taylor County, FoodWise historically partners with qualifying schools' after-school programs, Head Start programs, food pantries and other community based settings to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities.

Community Impacts

Terri Kolb began as FoodWise Administrator in early 2023. We explored the options for hiring a Nutrition Educator and a full-time shared position between Lincoln and Taylor Counties was created. Shara Allen was hired and started in September. Shara began preparing for her educator role in the fall by networking with partner agencies, shadowing other educators, and learning about FoodWise curriculums.

We engaged with staff and partners that FoodWise has historically partnered with to establish relationships and begin discussions about working together in FY24. In 2024, we will be working with Head Start, food pantries, older adult programs and in other community settings.



BY THE NUMBERS

Whether people are healthy or not is affected by systems, policies, and environmental factors.

8.1% of county residents experience limited income and low access to a grocery store.[^]

9.5% of county residents use SNAP benefits to purchase food for themselves and their families.*

\$64,000— the approximate amount of FoodWise grant dollars devoted to supporting Taylor County FoodWise nutrition education in the 2023-2024 fiscal year

[^]County Health Rankings

* WI Dept of Administration and WI Dept of Health Services

Helping Individuals, Families and Communities make the *Healthy* choice the *Easy* choice.





Inspiring Collaborations

FoodWise has been participating in a number of Taylor County health related coalitions and networks. Many of the goals and strategies of these groups are in direct alignment with the FoodWise program. Our plan for 2024 includes collaborating to:

- increase equitable access to nutritious foods throughout the community by addressing barriers to utilizing local nutrition resources and food systems.
- strengthen and enhance food support systems to provide nutritious food options for low income individuals. This will involve assessment and development of an improvement plan for healthier options in one setting and promotion of underutilized food resources.
- improve life skills that promote healthy nutrition through education and connection for youth and low income individuals.

Multi-level Program Efforts

FoodWise has been partnering with a number of local organizations to explore the Stockbox program of the Hunger Taskforce of Milwaukee. A Stockbox is a box of healthy foods that Hunger Task Force provides for low-income older adults free of charge. Each box contains nutritious items including rice, cereal, juice, beef stew, pasta and vegetables. In our neighboring Lincoln County, about 90 boxes are distributed each month to Lincoln County residents. Between October 2022 and September 2023 the value of the food distributed was \$27,485. We know the need is great in Taylor County as well.

In 2024, we plan to work with the Commission on Aging, and the ADRC of Taylor County to recruit more partners to support this effort. Our intent is to build on this distribution of monthly boxes of staple foods program to also include multi-level efforts such as nutrition education in the form of recipes and promotion of other food resources as well as direct nutrition education lessons.





Extension

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