



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
TAYLOR COUNTY

Taylor County Sept/Oct 2025 Highlight Report

Extension Mission: *We teach, learn, lead, and serve, connecting the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.*

Community Development/Strong Bodies

PROVIDES EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING TO ASSIST
LEADERS, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS REALIZE
THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

MICHELLE GRIMM, EDUCATOR



Michelle Grimm –
.8 FTE CDI
.2 FTE Strong Bodies
Coordinator

Simplified Action Planning: Webinar (October 29, 2025)

Taylor County Community Development Educator will be leading the Simplified Action Planning Webinar. Participants will learn a simple action planning tool that they can use to think strategically about their organization's priorities. Using the action planning tool, nonprofit leaders can reach consensus on what their organization needs to focus on, explore what will help and could impede their progress, and identify the most important and actionable activities to reach their goal. Once they know how to use the action planning tool, they can use it repeatedly to help their organization be nimble during times of uncertainty and change. They can also use it when your organization is stuck and feeling overwhelmed. This program is available to all residents/non-profits across the state.



Scenario Planning: Webinar (November 12, 2025)

The Taylor County Community Development Educator will be co-facilitating an upcoming Scenario Planning Webinar, designed to equip local leaders, organizations, and community partners with tools to navigate uncertainty and plan for the future. Scenario Planning is a strategic method used by organizations to anticipate potential future developments and create flexible, long-term plans. Rather than predicting a single outcome, this approach helps participants explore a range of plausible futures—allowing them to prepare for change, adapt to challenges, and seize emerging opportunities.

During the webinar, participants will be introduced to an easy-to-use scenario planning tool that can be applied in a variety of settings—from local government and nonprofits to business and community coalitions. The session will include hands-on activities, real-world examples, and guided discussion, making it accessible and practical for both new and experienced planners.

The Taylor County Community Development Educator brings valuable expertise and a collaborative spirit to this effort, helping participants think creatively and strategically about the future of their communities. Her role in co-facilitating this session reflects her ongoing commitment to building local capacity, fostering innovation, and supporting resilient community development.

Feed Summit (October 27-28, 2025)

Wisconsin is home to a vibrant and growing community of food and farming entrepreneurs—and the FEED Summit is the only statewide conference dedicated specifically to supporting those in the ideation and early start-up phases of their business journey.

Designed for aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs, the FEED Summit offers a mix of educational workshops, networking opportunities, and expert-led sessions that cover the essential building blocks of launching and sustaining a successful food business. From navigating regulations and accessing capital to branding, marketing, and scaling operations, participants leave with actionable insights and connections that help turn ideas into thriving enterprises.

A key contributor to this impactful initiative is Taylor County Community Development Educator, who plays a vital role on the statewide planning team. Grimm brings a deep understanding of rural communities and community-based food systems, helping shape the Summit's content to reflect the real needs and opportunities facing Wisconsin's small food businesses. Her leadership ensures that the programming is not only relevant but also inclusive and accessible to entrepreneurs from all corners of the state.

2025 FEED Summit

Food Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development (FEED)
October 27 – 28th, 2025
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

The only statewide conference in Wisconsin for early-stage
Food and Farming Businesses.



Agriculture

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND
DECISION-MAKING TOOLS TO FARMERS AND
AGRIBUSINESSES.

SANDY STUTTGEN, EDUCATOR



Sandy Stuttgen – Faculty
.8 FTE

Save a Calf, Save a Cow

The Taylor County Agriculture Educator played a key role in developing and facilitating the 'Save a Calf, Save a Cow' Workshop, working collaboratively with fellow educators across the region. 'Save a Calf, Save a Cow' is a hybrid (virtual and in-person) series of workshops for dairy (including Hispanic dairy workers) and beef producers. It was held in September 2025.

The objective was to provide knowledge and techniques that enhance cattle caretakers' confidence in preparing cows for calving, obstetric procedures, and newborn calf care—all aimed at supporting health and reproductive programs essential to farm economic sustainability. Plans are underway to repeat these workshops in the spring of 2026.

Participants included 19 dairy producers (eight of whom were Hispanic workers) and 19 beef producers. Ninety percent of respondents identified the session Stuttgen taught using the obstetric model as the most useful component of the hands-on session. Written feedback highlighted positive experiences with positioning the calf in the obstetrics model, the use of chains, the Madigan squeeze technique, and esophageal tube feeder application.



Stuttgen explains how to place chains on the calf's legs during a Save a Calf, Save a Cow workshop.

Cow-Calf Fall Forage Twilight Meeting

Thirty beef producers attended the September Cow-Calf Fall Forage Twilight Meeting. Their feedback showed they gained knowledge in several areas: heifer selection by 1.7 points, dewormer resistance (taught by Stuttgart) by 1.4 points, soil sampling and understanding the pasture soil report increased by 1.3 points, and hay sampling and understanding forage reports by 1.0 points. **When asked what strategy they plan to use because of what they learned during this meeting, 40% chose soil sampling, 40% chose hay sampling, and 10% plan to apply dewormer knowledge.**



Parasite Patrol Plus Workshop

On Saturday, October 18th, fifteen small ruminant producers attended the Parasite Patrol Plus workshop facilitated by Stuttgart. **The object of this workshop was to teach participants practical methods for managing parasites,** including how to perform fecal egg counts and FAMACHA scoring, in order to enhance animal health and reduce economic losses.



Extension Small Ruminant Specialist Carol Ihde demonstrates how to perform FAMACHA scoring during the Parasite Patrol Plus



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Wisconsin 4-H

TAYLOR COUNTY 4-H HAS OVER 200 YOUTH AND ADULTS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN LEADERSHIP AND LIFE SKILLS.

JULIE DIEPENBROCK, EDUCATOR



UW-MADISON EXTENSION



Julie Diepenbrock -
.5 FTE

After School Programs

This fall, the 4-H Educator has been presenting monthly 4-H After School Programming at the Gilman Public Library, Medford Area Elementary School, Medford Area Middle School, Stetsonville Elementary School and has expanded to Rib Lake at Grandma's Care. September Programs were LEGO Robotics, and October was 3Doodler Pens. At the Gilman Library youth are learning to make quick and easy foods. On September 22, 15 youth learned to make deviled eggs and October 20 was mini pizzas. **These activities expose youth to 4-H projects including STEM and Foods and Nutrition.**



National 4-H Week (Month)

The first full week of October 5-11 coincides with the beginning of the 4-H year. Many 4-H members and volunteers are enrolling in 4-H and choosing their projects for the year. Clubs are having their first meeting, electing officers, and planning activities (learning, fun, and service) for the year ahead.

We are in the process of starting a new 4-H Club in Rib Lake. This is an exciting new opportunity to reach different youth and families!! It is a collaborative effort with the 4-H Educator and key volunteers.

To celebrate National 4-H Week and Promote Taylor County 4-H, some Taylor County 4-H Clubs put up window decorations (Damm's, Stetsonville Library, Tractor Supply, and on Highway 13). The 4-H Educator recorded a spot to be played on the radio, taught after school programs, delivered displays that our Administrative Support created to the Westboro and Rib Lake Library (Kelly had delivered the displays to the Medford and Stetsonville Libraries), flyers went home through the Gilman school, and the 4-H Educator co-led a session with Michelle Grimm on tree identification at the Rib Lake School Forest Day. Later in the month, we held Discovery Day at Huey's Hideaway where we had Make and Take Activities along with Pet and Learn Activities. Some of our 4-H members made a float for the Harvest Days Parade and handed out 4-H info along with some candy. The YLO (Youth Leaders Organization) hung flyers about Trick or Treat for the Hungry then collected non-perishable items to deliver to the Food Pantries. All of these activities lift up the 4-Hs and provide young people throughout the county with the opportunity to lead, serve, and build positive relationships with adults and other youth.





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Extension Taylor County's Primary Partnering Organizations

- Huey's Hideaway Children's Museum
- Northcentral WI Cattleman's Association (NCWCA)
- Federation of Taylor County 4-H
- Medford Farmer's Market
- Taylor County Tourism
- Taylor County Department of Health
- WI Beef Council
- Equity Livestock Marketing Association
- FFA Colby High School
- ICAA Taylor County Food Pantry
- Taylor County Public Libraries
- Gilman School District
- Rib Lake School District
- Taylor County Fair Board
- Medford Area Public Schools
- Taylor County Solid Waste & Recycling Committee
- Taylor County Fair Board
- Taylor County Unit of WI Towns Association
- Taylor County Broadband Committee



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Office Administration



OFFICE MANAGER – KELLY PHILLIPS

Support

Beyond administrative duties, Phillips provides on-going support to the educators at the Taylor County Extension Office. During the months of September and October Kelly provided coordination and support for the following programs: 4-H Email Blast, Newsletter, local library displays and 4-H awards coordination/orders and video, NCWCA Newsletter, Ag workshop sign-ups, AG informational emails, display for Senior Health Fair, Fall Strong Bodies updates and registrations, 2026 PAT Updates, Budgets and Finance meetings, County Wellness Committee meetings, website and flyer updates. Moreover, she administered a range of services offered, including program registrations, horticulture and agriculture inquiries and research, and general questions that may or may not be related to the services of Extension. Just in the months of September and October, Phillips has assisted over 70 Taylor County Residents via the phone, e-mail, and office drop-ins. She plays an important role connecting community members with UW resources and research.

Professional Development

As Phillips provides strong administrative support, she strives to continue building and developing the needed skills to utilize best practices and resources. She is also committed to supporting other administrative professionals and serves on a statewide committee that organizes professional development opportunities for administrative professionals around the state. Phillips recently attended PAT Training for the upcoming 2026 season as well as PDF's and the Big Breakup Workshop. Phillips continues to seek the latest and greatest tools to assist in her daily job responsibilities.



AREA EXTENSION DIRECTOR – AMBER REHBERG

(Taylor, Price, Lincoln, Florence, Forest, Oneida, & Vilas)

Hosted a joint Staff Development Day for Area 3 and Area 4, focused on team building, professional growth, and strengthening cross-area collaboration. This gathering was intended to support staff as they navigate transitions and explore new opportunities for programming. In partnership with FoodWise staff, efforts were made to inform community partners about the end of the program and worked with staff to organize program materials and ensure they are shared with community partners and agencies. Also brainstorming with counties to explore new position possibilities that could help sustain and expand health and well-being education in light of the FoodWise program elimination. The goal is to ensure that Extension continues to meet local needs with innovative, responsive programming. Working through Extension's Annual Review process with all educators and finalizing FY2026 Budgets and Contracts. As always, please reach out with any question or concerns to amber.rehberg@wisc.edu or 715-784-1540.