

Extension Eau Claire County
Monthly Highlights
February 2020

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Agriculture



Lyssa Seefeldt
Agriculture Educator
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This past month went by swiftly. I got connected with the Breakfast in the Valley committee, helping Land Conservation with their nutrient management meetings, and networking with folks at the Western Wisconsin Ag Lender Conference. Additional time was spent attending local farmer meetings such as the Agriculture Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage meeting with the Farm Service Agency, the Agronomy update, Chippewa Valley Ag Conference with CVTC. I also had the opportunity to be a judge for the Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmer Conference in Chippewa Falls and got to meet some really great farmers from around the state.



Margaret Murphy
Horticulture Agent
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Much of January was spent working with the Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVS). The Eau Claire County Master Gardeners hosted their annual garden seminar, "Ready, Set, Plant..." on February first. It was an all-day opportunity for learning. I opened the event by welcoming everyone and introducing our keynote speaker, Bonnie Blodgett, a garden columnist from St. Paul. I also presented a talk on gardening trends for 2020. In addition, I am working with the MGVS on developing a mentorship program for new Master Gardener recruits. Research supports that having mentors allows new recruits to feel part of the volunteer community much quicker, which helps with retention of volunteers. I am also busy working out the details for our upcoming training that begins March 28, 2020 at the Eau Claire County office (please visit <https://eauclaire.extension.wisc.edu/2020/02/03/master-gardener-training-level-1/> for more information). I have also been invited to participate in a working group to help better define what Master Gardeners can do for continuing education.

Lastly, I am working with MGVS on summer lesson plans for the youth garden at North River Front Park. We received a donation of seeds from Seed Savers to use at the garden and are looking forward to the upcoming garden season.

Community Development



Joseph Malual

Community Educator

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January has been a busy month. I have served in the search and screen committee for Eau Claire Human Development and Relationship Educator, participated in the Emerging Farmers Conference at University of Minnesota Continuing education, attended Peer Mentor training in Madison, as well as attending Wisconsin Farmers Union Annual Conference in Rothschild Wisconsin where I have the opportunity to meet farmers and hear their concerns and needs. During these events, I learned a great deal and made important connections that will enhance my programming in Eau Claire County. Also, I have been working with Eau Claire Local Food First team in exploring grant opportunities for developing infrastructure for community-based food systems in the county.

Health & Well-Being



Sandy Tarter

FoodWise Coordinator

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Sandy served on the Search and Screen Committee for Eau Claire Human Development and Relationship Educator. We are happy to welcome Yia Lor to our Extension family.

Sandy was busy with community meetings including Eau Claire Workforce Resource Partner meeting, working with EBT/Market Match programs, local coalition workgroups, FoodWise webinars, end of year Extension reporting, and creating FY19 FoodWise Impact reports.

Eau Claire Area Hmong Elders group has invited Sandy to present on food safety and nutrition in February.



Joy Weisner

FoodWise Educator

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Joy and Pamela have an action packed schedule for February. Mondays are spent in Augusta at the Elementary School teaching nutrition lessons in 4K, 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade classrooms for the next seven weeks. Each week they bring a fruit or vegetable taste that reinforces the key concept of the nutrition lesson. It's a great way to introduce new fruits and vegetables to students.

They are wrapping up a nutrition series at ECASD Prairie Ridge Early Learning Program. The four week program from "Color Me Healthy" includes lessons on exploring fruits and vegetables along with fun songs about moving our bodies! Eighteen classrooms with 17-18 students in each classroom have been reached through the 4 week nutrition series.

They are also teaching 1st graders at Longfellow, 5th graders at Lakeshore and Locust Lane in February.

Joy is starting a five week afterschool nutrition series at Longfellow and a six week Adult Nutrition Series at Affinity House. The women at Affinity House will learn about healthy choices from each food group, meal planning, grocery store shopping tips, and food safety during the series.

We are out and about in the county teaching individuals and communities to make the healthy choice the easy choice!



Pamela Warren-Armstrong

FoodWise Educator

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Human Development & Relationships

Yia Lor

Human Development &
Relationships Educator
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Yia will be joining our office Monday, February 17, 2020!
Look for her introduction in the March Highlights!

Positive Youth Development



Rachel Hart-Brinson

4-H Program Coordinator
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I participated in my 2nd in-person “new” cohort training in Stevens Point during January. I always find those group interactions energizing. I love hearing about the good work that everyone is doing around the state and in different Institutes. We had some great training around teaching and learning strategies and made some connections with the Environmental Ed Curriculum folks at Stevens Point. I’m excited to utilize their resources for my camps in the future.

Also, I started the online Extension course, “Achieving the Extension Mission through Volunteers.” This course was developed by volunteer development specialists in the Midwest region to help Extension professionals better work with volunteers. I’m only three weeks in and my mind is churning with all of the things that I can be doing better. There are some really useful theoretical pieces to help ground my practices in so I’m looking forward to learning more and starting to implement what I’m learning.

And, we’re preparing for the Tri-County Performing Arts Festival on February 29 at Cadott High School. Young people from Dunn, Eau Claire, and Chippewa Counties will be performing plays, skits, demonstrations, speeches, and musical acts. Come and be part of the audience!

Support Staff



Kristi Peterson

Office Coordinator
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We were able to coordinate traveling artists and have new art on our wall. This is a great community project that we are excited to share in. It has brought life to our bare wall. Stop in and check it out!



I continue working with end of year tracking as well as new processes with our shared educators.



Andy Heren

Administrative Specialist

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Meetings and seminars for which I was handling registrations are now completed. I continue to work with our Fair Coordinator, Debbie Kitchen, on what needs to be done to switch our fair entry format from Blue Ribbon to Fair Entry (a sister website to 4HOnline). 4-H families, watch for updates on this!

I am also helping Lyssa with registrations for the Private Pesticide Applicator Training classes on Wednesday, February 19 and Saturday, March 14.

We're a part of UW-Madison! Click here to read about Extension's transition updates.

Developments in the planning process can be found at <https://universityrelations.wisc.edu/extension/>