



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
PORTAGE COUNTY

November 2021 Report

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

4-H – Positive Youth Development

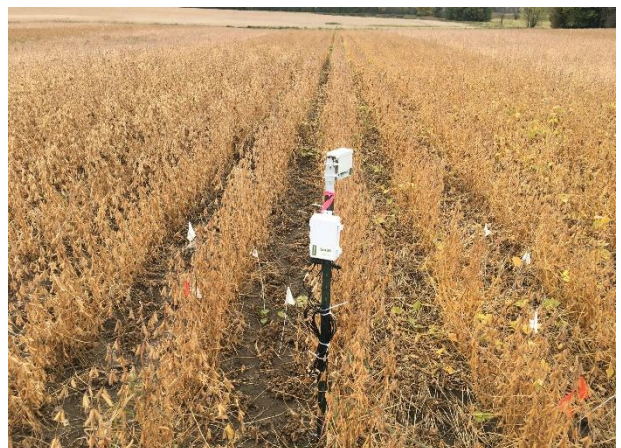
Connie Creighton, 4-H Youth Development Agent

- A County-wide rifle Shooting Sports meeting was held by two newly certified 4-H leaders in October. The leaders met with a group of interested youth and parents. The youth and parents learned about the new county-wide program, the safety procedures, and basic shooting sports educational information. The group has set up monthly meetings and practice shoots. This is the first-time we have leaders who support rifle shooting. Both leaders were required to complete 12-hours of 4-H Shooting Sports safety education training.
- The 4-H Tech Changemakers (TCM) program, supported by a national grant, uses a teens-as-teachers approach with teen leaders learning digital skills to teach them to adults. Through this process, the teens will become certified Tech Changemakers and work in partnership with their 4-H educator to teach digital skills to adults in the community. The lesson plans will focus on digital skills that help drive economic opportunity, like using Microsoft Word to create resumes or safely navigating the internet to find the best job search websites.
 - Portage County has 5 youth 4-H Tech Changemakers (TCM) who have been meeting weekly since September planning their digital program teaching sessions. In early November TCM presented their programming options to the Hmong UpLift program. The TCM has received an invitation to work with the Hmong UpLift group who are enrolled in their digital learning class.

Agriculture

Ken Schroeder, Agriculture Agent

- Ongoing on-farm research project to evaluate the effects of Roller/Crimper termination of a cereal rye cover crop compared to tillage termination on White Mold and Weed Suppression in soybean production. Results from this research will help farmers and crop consultants improve white mold control and weed management in soybeans.
 - Soybeans harvested 11-5-21 and data collected. On to data analysis and interpretation.





- Ongoing Producer-Led watershed protection projects for the Tomorrow/Waupaca River Watershed and Mill Creek Watershed farmers, agribusiness professionals, and local residents where they learn about and adopt soil and water conservation practices to reduce nitrates entering the groundwater and to reduce the environmental impact of agriculture.
 - Adaptive nitrogen management for corn research plots harvested 11-4-21 and data collected. Next, data analysis and interpretation.

Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development

Nathan Sandwick, Community Development Educator

- Continuing to support the Central Sands Groundwater County Collaborative: I helped develop the communications plan for the current grant-funded project. Pieces of relevant information have been collected from participating counties to support the funded research, enable outreach, and develop good groundwater guidance. We are also now convening the overall six county meetings more-frequently to keep the research project on track.
- Organized and facilitated (via Zoom) the several meetings of a series of strategic planning sessions for the Badger Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA).
- Continued to support a village in its strategic planning effort especially by leading efforts to gather useful input from community members with appreciable assistance from a statewide Extension specialist in local government education. I conducted a community survey, and we organized and co-facilitated a participatory workshop yielding a wealth of perspectives and constructive input from residents.

FoodWise

Kelly Hammond, FoodWise Nutrition Coordinator; Hannah Wendels & Penny Schmitt FoodWise Nutrition Educators

- Strongbodies strength training for seniors in collaboration with the aging and disability resource center of Portage County. The goal of this effort is to provide nutrition and strength training to improve physical health and social connection in the community.
- Continued support of a local stockbox program for seniors that provides 30-pound boxes of commodity foods and local vegetables are distributed to eligible community members in partnership with Hunger Relief Federation. This program aims to increase local food distribution and improve food security.
- In-person nutrition education at McKinley Elementary school for 6th grade classrooms.
- Partnered with Wood and Marathon county colleagues to provide a weekly Extension Wellness Series that will provide ongoing education (virtual and in-person) on nutrition education, mental health,



financial health and horticulture therapy for 2022. Soft start in November with virtual-only classes.

- Additional direct nutrition education includes Pathways to Parenting with Children's Wisconsin.
- FoodWise team supported local Boys and Girls Club Trunk or Treat by handing out "jack-o-lantern" clementine's and flyers for upcoming events.



Human Development and Relationships

Sherry Daniels, Human Development and Relationships Educator

- A group of community members asked me to provide education to their membership on improving mental health. I led them in activities which reduce stress and increase resiliency which improved their mental health and those they interact with.
- Facilitated a parenting discussion group series for parents of 13-18-year-olds where we explored positive parenting techniques to build parents' toolbox for use in a variety of parenting situations.
- A training event for homeless individuals where they learned how to create a spending plan and check their credit along with their credit score, in order for them to be better tenants and to get stable housing.
- An in-person and virtual training was developed to teach university students how to be good financial coaches to their peers for the Financial Security Association on campus, so every student has access to a financial coach.