



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

4-H – Positive Youth Development


Additional Positive Youth Development work being conducted in Portage County

- The Upham Woods Science Camp for youth enabled them to explore magnetic forces and climate science to understand the basic science of these two phenomena. This effort was designed to promote 4-H youth development STEM programming and connect youth to technology and issues that impact their daily lives. – *Joanna Skluzacek, 4-H STEM Specialist*

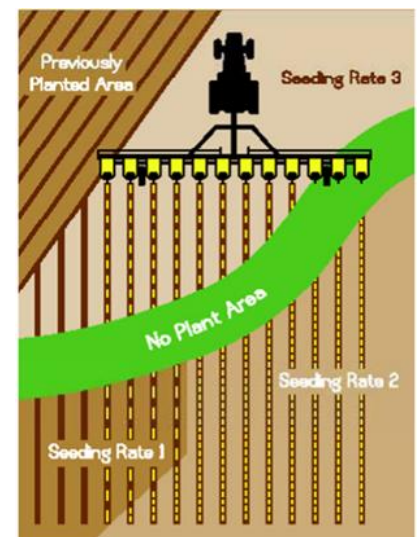
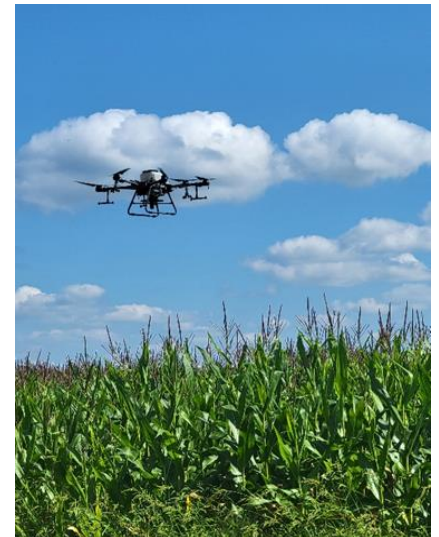
Agriculture

Ken Schroeder, Agriculture Agent

- Presented at the Portage County Ag Tour August 22, 2023 on Addressing the Challenges of Agriculture in an Economical and Environmentally Sustainable Way. Fifty people learned about the latest advances in agriculture and how these advances bring with them production efficiencies and more environmental sustainability.
- Hop Potassium Rate Research Project Update - harvested hops August 17 and 28 taking yield data and soil and tissue samples for testing.

 Farmers for Tomorrow Field Day Planning. Planning for a cover crop and soils field day to be held September 11th. Soil scientist Jamie Patton will be walking about soils along with conversations on using cover crops in our cropping systems.

 Working with Farmers of Mill Creek and Farmers for Tomorrow on their grant applications for 2024 funding. Application due September 15th.





Additional Natural Resources work being conducted in Portage County



An event for farmers and agribusiness professionals where participants learned about converting an irrigated vegetable field to pasture for managed grazing. This effort is designed to help people see the options available to them with irrigated ground and to promote managed grazing as a viable option for the Central Sands when it comes to water management, soil health, and nutrient cycling for more resilient agricultural systems. – *Natasha Paris, Regional Crops Educator (Adams, Green Lake, Marquette & Waushara Counties)*

Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development

- Welcome to Katie Livernash! Katie joins the Extension team in 2023 as Portage County's Community Development Educator. She attended UW-Stevens Point and holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in Geography as well as a professional certificate in Geographic Information Systems. Prior to joining Extension, she worked for East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and has experience in transportation and safe routes to school planning. Understanding and helping communities reach their full potential is something Katie has always had a keen interest in, and she is excited to work alongside communities in Portage County as it is the region, she has called home her entire life. In her free time, Katie enjoys being outside in any and all forms, from gardening, walking her beloved dog, and hiking with her husband.



Additional Community Development & Natural Resources work being conducted in Portage County

- A strategic planning session for a small non-profit organization, JusticeWorks, LLC, where board members and staff reflected on the organization's history and made decisions about its future. The purpose of this session was to allow space for stakeholders to discuss the organization's future in an open and safe environment. – *Kayla Rombalski, Wood County Community Development Educator*
- A pilot workshop for producers and agronomists, where participants learned about the Nitrate Leaching Calculator. This workshop was designed to provide an opportunity for producers and agronomist to demo the calculator while estimating potential nitrate leaching simulations of various management scenarios. – *Anna James, Natural Resources Educator, Wood County Extension & Guolong Liang, Commercial Vegetable Agriculture Water Quality Outreach Specialist*



Denotes educational or planning efforts that work toward improving water quality in Portage County, Central Wisconsin, and the State as whole. While these efforts are highlighted in this report, there is more work being done by Extension to address water quality concerns outside of what is here. For more information about these efforts, or other efforts Extension has undertaken regarding water quality, please reach out to our office.

FoodWise

Mallory McGivern Nutrition Administrator; Penny Schmitt, FoodWise Nutrition Educator

- A quarterly nutrition education series in Portage County utilizing the Feeding for Healthy Eating curriculum for adults with young children as part of the Children's Wisconsin LEAP (Learning Essentials about Parenting) program where they learn about incorporating healthy eating habits into the family routine, including family meals and eating more fruits and vegetables. The goal of this effort is to encourage healthy eating behaviors at home.
- Community outreach at Summer Sizzle Reading Series with United Way of Portage County - fostering collaboration with community partners to build space for expansion of FoodWise programs in Portage County.
- Leadership of Giving Gardens Committee of Hunger and Poverty Prevention Partnership, working to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables, along with nutrition education opportunities.





Human Development and Relationships

Sherry Daniels, Human Development and Relationships Educator

- A program for families and individuals, where participants learn how to create financial goals and gain money management skills. The goal of this program is to enable participants to prepare for and take charge of household financial situations that occur due to changes in income or unforeseen hardships.
- A quarterly meeting with the Financial Wellness of Portage County (FWPC) Board where we discussed options to increase referrals to the financial wellness program, including bringing on a marketing student to promote the FWPC's on-line presence. The goal is to increase access to resources that help build financial wellness and stability within the community.
- A course for renters where participants learn how to find and apply for rental housing, understand their responsibilities as a renter, how to communicate effectively with their landlords, and manage housing expenses. Through this, homeless populations and those who have negative rental records are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public supports.
- A 12-session virtual series (Aging Mastery Program) for seniors, where participants learn how to navigate longer lives through healthy eating, exercise, financial fitness, healthy relationships, medication management, and community engagement. The purpose of this program is to develop sustainable behaviors that lead to improved health, stronger economic security, enhanced well-being, and increased societal participation among seniors.