



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DODGE COUNTY

**2023**

# **Extension**

# **DODGE COUNTY**

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# **Annual Report**





**Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
DODGE COUNTY



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# 4-H/Positive Youth Development

## Educator Highlights



UW-MADISON EXTENSION  
DODGE COUNTY

## Family Learning Day

Family Learning days for youth to learn more about their Sparks/Project was held in February and March, with over 100 youth attending each of the learning programs. One of the goals of Family Learning Day is to provide opportunities for youth to experience new things that they would not otherwise get the opportunity to experience. By doing this we hope to “ignite a spark” in them. That became the theme for the March Family Learning Day and the name of the session presented by Marie. Youth in her session put an electric circuit together to light up a clear plastic name tag. The youth could then etch their name on the tag, and it would light up. Following the same theme, t-shirts were available for everyone to purchase with the Sparks theme on them.

“A very cool session! The activity was educational and fun!”  
2023 evaluation from member



## New Summer Camp Initiatives

The goals of the Tri-County camp newsletter was to share with families some of the camp experience. It was shared primarily in Dodge County since we had not had a county camp for over four years. I heard about offering this from other colleagues and thought it would help reduce some stress and anxiety in members and families. For many of them, they are new to the county 4-H program and were not aware of any previous 4-H camp plans or expectations.

I chose to email the weekly newsletters to each of the families enrolled in the Tri-County summer camp that lived in Dodge County. In addition to the four week newsletter, I offered a zoom orientation with powerpoint for the families, with a question and answer session. I did have the other educators and some adult staff on the zoom to help answer questions. It went to Dodge County, and was offered to the educators in the other counties if they wanted to share it.

83% of the respondents rated the newsletters excellent or good.

81% percent rated the zoom orientation excellent or good.

83% said they should be offered again.

## 4-H Youth Development

4-H Youth Development Educator

4-H Youth Program Assistant



Marie Witzel

marie.witzel@wisc.edu



Ellen Bohn

## Wisconsin 4-H THRIVE Survey

Youth in Dodge County participated in the Wisconsin 4-H Thrive Survey. Survey results were shared with the Dodge County Extension Education Committee and with 4-H families. It is on the Extension Dodge County website with this header: Marie Witzel, Positive Youth Development Educator, has been reviewing the Dodge County 4-H Thriving Results that Dodge County 4-H youth completed in 2022 from the Wisconsin 4-H Thriving Survey. She identified some great results in the Developmental Context focused on Sparks, Belonging, Relationships and Engagement. Marie shared those results with the Extension Education Committee and the Dodge County 4-H Leaders Association. One area of focus and improvement for 2023 was the Sparks area which marked lower results.

# Wisconsin 4-H Dodge County

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Dodge County at a glance:



### Top 10 Enrolled 4-H Projects

PROJECT	MEMBERS
Photography	138
Cloverbuds	126
Crops	107
Beef	97
Woodworking	90
Dairy	88
Swine	83
Drawing and Painting	82
Art	81
Legos	78

**8.75 % increase**

in membership from the previous year



**22**

4-H clubs and groups



**127**

enrolled adult volunteer leaders



# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Educator Highlights

## RAISING WISCONSIN CHILDREN PARENTING CLASSES

Carroll convened a small work group to offer online parenting education classes. 2023's series included 24 different sessions and topics included, Focus on Fathers sessions, Screens+Families, Raising Helpful Toddlers, Using Gratitude and Savoring, Speaking Your Child's Love Language, Bedtime Routines, and others. Carroll taught, or co-taught eight sessions and was the technology co-host for three other sessions. Over 400 people registered for the Thursday night sessions and post session evaluations were positive. When asked what tip or skill do you plan on using after attending tonight's session?, respondents said things like "To be more calm and to give my kids time to get things done", and "I plan on praising effort more" One participant emailed this right after one of the sessions, "This was an awesome class tonight! It was full of good tips & information. It was perfect for teenagers & pre-teens. I enjoyed these classes & I would like to attend these classes again."

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

Children's healthy growth and development is driven by nurturing care from a network of caregivers, including early childhood educators (National Scientific Council of the Developing Child, 2004). High quality early childhood care is linked to a host of outcomes including pedagogical quality, educator responsiveness, and children's academic and socioemotional competence (Brunsek et al., 2020). In our state, the early childhood workforce, estimated to be nearly 17,000, is required to complete up to 15 hours of continuing education annually (Center for the Study of Childcare Employment, 2020). However, there is no contemporary data to inform continuing education approaches, nor is there a statewide, coordinated response to address this coordinated response to address this amount of required education. As one of the co-pi's, Carroll coauthored a proposal for the Dean's Innovation Grant in spring of 2023 which

was awarded \$38,376. Positioned within local communities and connected to the research and resources of our university, our program within Extension responded by implementing a multi-tiered research project to inform innovative continuing education for this audience. Carroll and team with the leadership of Program Manager Lindsey Weymouth, set out to document the continuing education needs of early childhood educators, including preferences for content, delivery model, and dose; the challenges this workforce faces when accessing high-quality education; and best practices for continuing education from the evidence-base. Carroll co-wrote the focus group protocol and facilitated two of six focus groups. Through six focus groups, a brief survey, and a participatory charting exercise, it was discovered that early childhood professionals prioritize continuing education related to learning experiences, strategies, and curriculum; guidance and nurturing; and family systems and dynamics. Also discovered were patterns of availability and preferences for frequency of instruction, as well as what challenges educators face when accessing high-quality material. Analysis of the focus groups data continues using the data jam method to further understand the participants' responses. The summary will be used to inform future Extension professional development and others in the early childhood field through writing journal articles.

### PATTIE CARROLL



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
EDUCATOR  
patricia.carroll@wisc.edu

## ESTIMATING NITROGEN CREDITS FOR MULTI-SPECIES COVER CROPS PLANTED AFTER WHEAT



Adding wheat into the rotation of corn and soy has increases farm resiliency to price shocks and has benefits to both the environment and crop management. However, wheat does not provide as much farm revenue as corn or soy, curtailing acreage in the state. While wheat prices might be low, a mid-summer harvest permits the timely planting of leguminous cover crop to grow nitrogen for the following year's cash crop. Determining the magnitude of the nitrogen credit would help farmers to save money through lower fertilizer needs, putting a dollar sign to wheat beyond the commodity price. In 2023, Dodge county was the state's largest wheat producer, which presents a great opportunity for evaluating the ability of these after wheat cover crops to contribute farm profitability.

Regional Crops Educator Will Fulwider partnered with the Michael Fields Agriculture Institute of East Troy to receive a \$74,000 grant from DATCP's new Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program to collaborate with three Dodge county farmers, Charlie Hammer, Jeff Gaska, and Marty Weiss to run a replicated on-farm trial seeking to estimate the nitrogen credits generated by legume heavy, multi-species cover crops planted after wheat for the following years' corn crop. The farmers planted the cover crops, leaving several unplanted strips in August 2023. This fall baseline soil measurements, which include standard soil fertility tests along with more advanced soil health metrics, such as soil aggregate stability and ace protein, were taken. At the end of the fall, aboveground biomass samples of the cover crops were at first freeze to evaluate dry matter production and percent nitrogen.

The study will continue this year and the following year, with the first yield data comparing the covers and no covers to estimate a nitrogen credit to the cover crops to be collected harvest 2024.



### WILL FULWIDER

Crops Educator

[will.fulwider@wisc.edu](mailto:will.fulwider@wisc.edu)





# 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). With local strengths, we support healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents experiencing limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels.



## Dodge County Landscape

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

**3%**

of county residents experience limited income and low access to a grocery store<sup>^</sup>



**9%**

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



## Achieving More Together

Dodge County 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 Dodge County, FoodWise partners with schools, Head Start programs, senior meal programs, neurodivergent support facilities, senior apartment sites and food pantries to help make the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities.

## Community

## Impacts in 2023

Engaged with 419 learners around nutrition education topics in a variety of settings, including early care and education centers, K-12 school settings, neurodivergent support sites and senior dining centers.

Partnered with 20 classrooms in 4 schools to expand youth knowledge on what healthy and active lifestyles look like and encourage consumption of new fruits and vegetables.

Worked with 2 food pantries to provide handouts to pantry guests which included information on healthy diets, stretching food dollars and practicing proper food safety.

<sup>^</sup>County Health Rankings

\* WI Dept of Administration and WI Dept of Health Services

# Inspiring Collaborations



In 2023, in collaboration with Beaver Dam Community Activities and Services, Juneau Park and Recreation and Dodge County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), FoodWise grew the StrongBodies program in Dodge County.

Physical activity is a key component in a healthy lifestyle. According to the County Health Rankings, 25% of Dodge County residents do not have access to exercise opportunities; therefore, 21% report low physical activity. As a way to increase access to a safe, no-cost physical activity, FoodWise worked with community partners to grow the StrongBodies program.

With the help of Dodge County community partners, one new session of StrongBodies was provided in Beaver Dam and Juneau Park and Recreation offered StrongBodies to residents for the very first time.



## Connect With Us

Dodge.Extension.wisc.edu  
127 E. Oak St.  
Juneau, WI 53039



Caitlin Richardson  
Nutrition Coordinator



Kimberly Lafler  
Nutrition Educator



Melissa Beernink  
Nutrition Educator

## Setting the Groundwork: Harvest of the Month

Wisconsin Harvest of the Month (HOM) is a social campaign that encourages students to eat more locally grown fruits and vegetables. For several years, FoodWise has built a relationship with Dodgeland Elementary in Juneau, WI with the hope of implementing HOM into the school lunchroom.

FoodWise staff have been meeting with Dodgeland Elementary staff to try to find a way to implement HOM into the school. This year, FoodWise coordinated with the school lunch and snack menu to provide food samples that align with what the students receive already. FoodWise also used the school menus to talk more about produce items offered with the intention of encouraging students to try what's available. This effort is building the groundwork to implement Harvest of the Month in the next school year.





# Agriculture | Dairy

## Educator Highlights

To help Wisconsin Spanish dairy workers and the Spanish dairy industry to get the most current and update research information, UW-Extension developed the Dairy Spanish Webinar El “Break” Info-Lechero. This Webinar was an update on different dairy topics covering reproduction, colostrum management, Fresh cows’ management, and milk quality and more. The webinar had 4 different sessions where each specialist could explain the updates depending on the topic and discuss the questions the attendees provided. The registration of this webinar was incredible, we had around 400 people registered and during each session we had around 40 attendees. People from all over the planet registered for this webinar (Italia, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Wisconsin, Texas, Spain, Dubai, California, Colorado, Idaho, Chile, Florida). The presentations were recorded and posted on the Extension Ag YouTube channel and those videos already have around 200 views. Participants requested more information and more programs in Spanish, and the idea is create another series next year. We are so thankful both for the support and the engagement people had with the webinar, and we are going to continue programing in Spanish with the idea to educate more people and to reach the dairy Latino community needs.



**Alison Pfau**  
Bilingual Regional  
Dairy Educator  
[alison.pfau@wisc.edu](mailto:alison.pfau@wisc.edu)



“People from all over  
the planet registered  
for this webinar”



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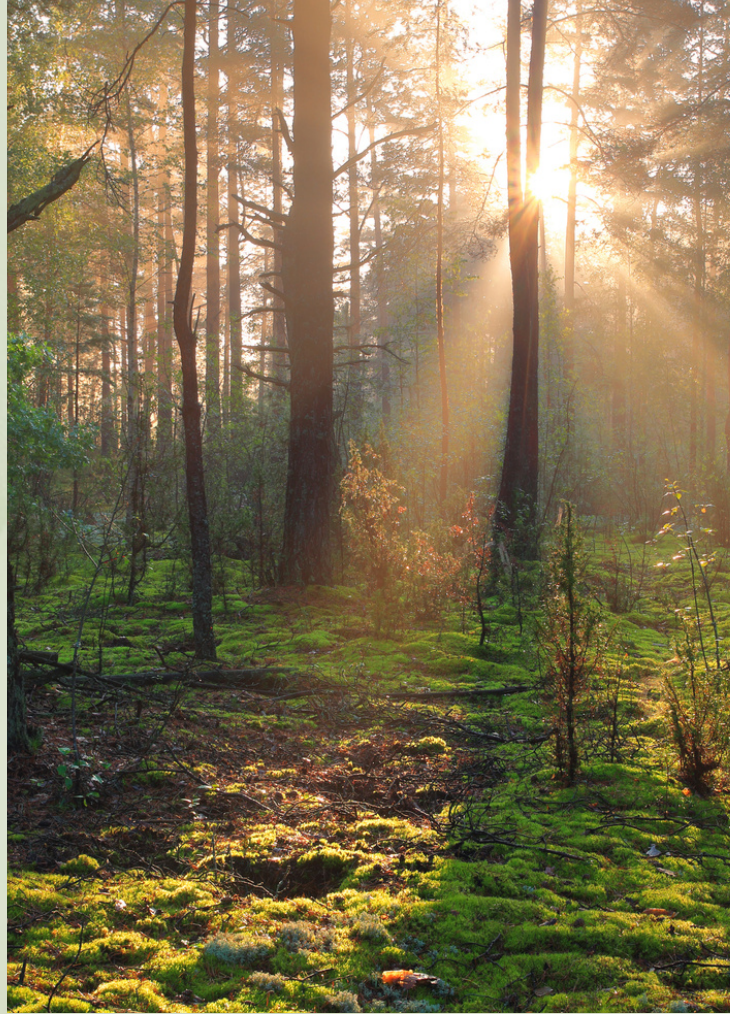
# NATURAL RESOURCES FORESTRY OUTREACH

## Educator Highlights

The Regional Natural Resource Education program organized numerous events both in person and online, throughout Wisconsin. Hundreds of participants learned about invasive species, forest health, wildlife and other forestry topics. Special programming for new Wisconsin landowners and maple syrup producers was supported by external grants.



**Tony Johnson**  
Natural Resources  
Forestry Outreach  
anthony.johnson@wisc.edu





**Extension**  
**DODGE COUNTY**  
**Annual Report**

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**2023 DIVISION OF EXTENSION -  
DODGE COUNTY EDUCATORS & STAFF**

**Jeff Hoffman**

*Area Extension Director*

**Marie Witzel**

*Positive Youth Development  
Educator*

**Ellen Bohn**

*4-H Youth Program Assistant*

**Will Fulwider**

*Crops Educator*

**Caitlin Richardson**

*FoodWise Nutrition Coordinator*

**Kimberly Lafler**

*FoodWise Nutrition Educator*

**Pattie Carroll**

*Human Development*

**Alison Pfau**

*Bilingual Regional Dairy Educator*

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**Amber Griswold**

*Extension Liaison | Program Support Specialist*

**Kelly Flanders**

*Administrative Support Specialist*

# EXTENSION DODGE COUNTY PROGRAM AND SERVICES

What follows is a comprehensive list of the educational programs and services provided by UW-Madison, Dodge County Extension to Dodge County residents.

## **UW-Madison Campus Specialist/Professor Workshops**

County initiated workshops and training opportunities are offered for community and governance groups throughout the year. For example professors on campus are team members with Dodge County Extension Educators collaborating to provide research based data. Additionally, professors and specialists lead workshops and training providing their expertise on priority issues or challenges. UW campus Specialist / Professor efforts are provided at no cost to Dodge County because Dodge partners with the UW-Madison in the local Extension office.

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## **Positive Youth Development Education -- Marie Witzel Youth Development Education**

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs designed for Dodge County youth who serve on 4-H committees, and other local decision-making bodies. – the purpose is to empower the youth voice and develop new leaders in the 4-H program for other county committees and organizations

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs which teach and facilitate youth leadership training. The purpose of these trainings is to for youth to learn skills to become productive citizens and have the strength to share their voice in a public forum

A county initiated, community centered program of administration of county 4-H clubs

A county initiated, community centered sequence of educational programs designed to teach local adult volunteers best practices they can use when supporting youth in leadership roles and how to engage with youth and empower them to make decisions

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs which teach youth to create a resume, cover letter, and/or prepare for a job or scholarship interview

A county initiated, community centered educational program which empowers youth to identify skills gained through experiences (4-H or others) that contribute to workforce or college readiness.

A county initiated, community centered set of programs of outreach collaborative partnerships with Dodge County Shop with Cops, Dodge County FFA programs

A county initiated, community centered educational applied research which is looking into improving the ability for youth to thrive in Dodge County 4-H

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## **4-H Program Education -- Ellen Bohn**

### **4-H Membership Club Education**

A county initiated, community centered program which organizes the following youth program activities and contests: 4-H Family Learning Day, 4-H demonstrations, 4-H clothing & food revues, music performances

A county initiated, community centered program which coordinates 4-H educational experience opportunities with 4-H members and families

A county initiated, community centered educational program which facilitates employability skill-building through youth interviews for scholarship applications

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs which coordinates the Kids in Need donations to distribute project activity materials to 4-H clubs and partners for community service projects

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs which teach youth Ag Education in partnership with county ag organizations

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs which coordinates summer literacy activities throughout the county

A county initiated, community centered educational effort of designing promotional activities to get youth interested in the 4-H Club program

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## **Human Development and Relationships Education -- Pattie Carroll**

### **Parenting and Financial Education**

A county initiated, community centered educational program providing parenting education with community partners and with referrals from Dodge County Human Services, Family Courts, Parent Resource Place, Head Start and Early Head Start, Birth to Three among other agencies

A county mandated, community centered educational program teaching Co-Parenting education as a booster sessions to augment Dodge County Family Court's mandated co-parenting

A county initiated, community centered educational program providing financial literacy education with referrals from Dodge County ADRC, Human Services and Beaver Dam Parent Resource Place (Renewal Unlimited) among other agencies  
Mental Health Education -certified trainer in WeCope and ACE Interface

A county initiated, community centered educational Professional Development training for Dodge County Early Child Care providers

A county initiated, community centered educational program training for Educators-Registered Tier 14 trainer for the Wisconsin State Registry serving Dodge County child care industry

Community centered educational program designed to increase healthy eating and food awareness concerns by answering food safety, food preservation, and food preparation calls from Dodge County residents

A county initiated, community centered educational effort for families which designs, develops, and implements needs assessments with the interest of strengthening families in Dodge County and throughout the state

A county initiated, community centered educational effort for families which designs, develops, and implements research and evidence informed curricula and programs with the aim of strengthening families in Dodge County and throughout the state

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## **Crops Education -- Will Fulwilder, regional educator**

Regional educators in Agriculture collaborate with other crops and soil team members in the State applying research findings and providing education and outreach efforts. This education will be done through assessment of needs and designing, delivering, and evaluating research-based educational programming and services to meet these needs.

### **Ag Education - Crops**

A county initiated, community centered educational effort providing one-on-one discussions and local area presentations on high priority Ag topics

A county initiated, community centered effort providing educational programs and acting as an advisor to Dodge Co. Healthy Soils Healthy Waters Farmer-led Watershed Group. This includes planning research and educational activities, workshops focusing on farmer education of conservation cropping practices

A county initiated, community centered effort providing educational programs and acting as an advisor to Dodge Co. Forage Council. This includes planning research and educational activities, workshops focusing on dairy farmer education of best forage cropping practices

A County initiated, community centered on-farm research projects. This applied research is conducted in collaboration with campus professors at the UW-Madison College of Ag and Life Science. Topics for this research are focused on increasing the sustainability of Ag producers, and building healthy soils. These research projects are conducted on local Dodge County farms

A county initiated, community centered educational Field Notes podcast/radio show. broadcast on WBEV radio station monthly and available on streaming services as well as the UW Madison Extension state-wide Crops and Soils website. It features interviews pairing a research or industry specialist and a farmer to discuss innovative cropping practices

A county initiated, community centered educational monthly newsletter for Ag producers. It includes recent research applicable to farmers in Dodge County as well as promotes Extension and partner educational events

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**FoodWise Nutrition Education -- Kimberly Lafler, Caitlin Richardson**  
**Nutrition Education**

A county initiated, community centered educational collaborations with local agencies to expand access to healthy food. Efforts include garden projects and promotion and marketing of EBT at the Beaver Dam Farmers Market

A county initiated, community centered educational program which provides nutrition education in Dodge County Schools

A county initiated, community centered educational program which provides nutrition education at Head Start Programs with students and parents in Dodge County

A county initiated, community centered educational which provides nutrition education at partner Food Pantries in Dodge County

A county initiated, community centered educational which provides nutrition education at Senior Meal Sites and eligible senior housing in Dodge County

A county initiated, community centered educational which provides nutrition education at job education sites, skills training sites with partner agencies in Dodge County

A county initiated, community centered educational which provides nutrition education with UMOS and summer rec programs for K-5 with partner agencies in Dodge County

Strong Bodies Program - A county initiated, community centered program which provides resistance training and nutrition education for adults in Dodge County

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### **Dairy Education -- Alison Pfau, regional educator**

Regional educators in Agriculture collaborate with other dairy team members in the State applying research findings and providing education and outreach efforts. This education will be done through assessment of needs and designing, delivering, and evaluating research-based educational programming and services to meet these needs

### **Ag Education - Dairy**

A county initiated, community centered set of educational programs designed to educate area Dairy farmers on the best practices of animal nutrition and address individual farm challenges

A county initiated, community centered educational workshops for area Dairy farmers on current issues and best practices in animal welfare and animal care

A county initiated, community centered educational programs designed to teach area livestock and dairy farmers on the best practices in farm animal handling

A county initiated, community centered educational workshops for area Dairy farmers on best practices in Human Resources and Labor related with dairy farming

A county initiated, community centered educational programs for area Dairy farmers on best practices in worker safety trainings for all types of Ag producers

A county initiated, community centered educational programs for area Dairy farmers on human resource issues faced by Dairy farm owners who have farm employees

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### **Forestry & Natural Resources Outreach -- Tony Johnson, regional educator**

Woodland Owners Workshop - A county initiated, community centered educational program designed to increase awareness of private woodland owners about best practices of small woodland ownership practices

Agroforestry workshops - A county initiated, community centered series of educational programs designed to address the local needs of woodland owners needs and increase the sustainability of the natural resource

Maple Syrup Workshop - A county initiated, community centered educational program designed to introduce private landowners about starting or improving a maple syrup operation

Facilitation and outreach for professional association - A county initiated, community centered educational program facilitating committee meetings for the WI Tree Farm Committee assisting with improving the committee's mission focus

Conference planner for the WI Woodland Owner Association - A county initiated, community centered educational program assisting the Association's goal to provide relevant high level educational presentations for the region

## Office Administrative Support Services

The Pesticide Application Certification program is a Department of Trade and Consumer Protection Agency State mandated, community centered program where area farmers are trained to gain a certification on the proper use and disposal of Ag chemicals. Office personnel complete the administering of the program and test. Weekly during the winter

A county initiated; government centered service which coordinates department room Reservation/Calendaring for Auditorium rooms on 1st Floor. All year

A county initiated; government centered service of cross-promotion of department programs/events with public (e.g., Land & Water Conservation, Land Resources & Parks)

A county initiated; government centered service of coordinating the UPS pickup location for county department packages

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating the public with UW Madison Extension resources & programs (via phone, in-person, and calls) farm management, crops & livestock, financial literacy, food preservation, youth development

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating and connecting local volunteers with UW Extension programs and events

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating and distributing marketing materials, publications, social media content of UW Extension programs

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating, instructing & distributing of household water test kits

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating, instructing & distributing of soil sample kits/bags

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating the checkout of soil sample & hay probe equipment

A county initiated; county centered service of conducting pressure canner testing & education materials distribution

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating the Dodge County Clean Sweep Event and Education with the public, which includes managing the Clean Sweep and Recycling page on the Extension Dodge County website. Continually updated

A county initiated; county centered service of coordinating the County Conservation Aids Grant applications and report