



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DODGE COUNTY

Monthly Highlights July 2026



Agriculture - Crops

Educator: Will Fulwider

If it happens on a farm or in a field, the Extension Institute of Agriculture works with you to achieve better results. Our innovative dairy management programs range from genetics to farm and business management. Extension researchers work hand-in-hand with row crop, forage and fresh produce growers to provide best practices for every aspect of the growing phase. We also advise communities on using sustainable practices to create inviting spaces free from invasive species.

A major focus for July was the Dodge County Research Farm Field Day, held on July 29 at the Airport Farm in Juneau. The event attracted nearly 70 farmers, agribusiness professionals, conservation partners, and community members, demonstrating strong local interest in applied agricultural research and conservation practices.

The field day introduced attendees to the goals of the Dodge County Research Farm and provided an overview of the research trials being established on the site. Participants learned about projects examining low-input, UW-recommended, and high-yield management systems, the effects of cover crops on farm management and profitability, and the impact of integrating grazing practices on cropland to improve soil health.

The event also provided an opportunity for producers and stakeholders to learn about the farm's role as a local research and demonstration site and to share input on research priorities. Discussions focused on generating locally relevant data that can help producers evaluate management decisions and conservation practices under Dodge County growing conditions.

The strong turnout highlighted the value producers place on research conducted within their own region and reflected considerable interest in soil health, crop management, and conservation-focused farming practices. Overall, the field day increased awareness of the Dodge County Research Farm project and strengthened connections among producers, agricultural organizations, conservation partners, and Extension as this collaborative research effort moves forward.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming in compliance with state and federal law.

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Agriculture – Dairy

Educator: Manuel Peña

Dairy Educator Manuel Peña recently attended the 2026 American Society of Animal Science (ASAS)-Canadian Society of Animal Science (CSAS) Annual Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin. The conference brought together animal scientists, Extension professionals, researchers, and industry leaders to share the latest research and educational innovations in animal agriculture.

A primary focus of the conference was ruminant nutrition, where the educator attended several sessions exploring current research and practical applications for dairy producers. One session on Enteric Methane Emissions examined how nutritional management influences methane production, providing insights into strategies that support both herd productivity and environmental sustainability.

Peña also participated in the ASAS Writing Workshop, gaining practical tools to strengthen grant writing, research publications, and scientific communication. These skills will help support future Extension programming and opportunities to secure external funding.

Another session highlighted the use of a virtual 3D caprine stomach model to improve

The Dairy Program offers education by holding in-person meetings and live webinars, as well as developing resources such as articles, factsheets, and videos. Our program is made up of University Specialists and Regional Educators. Specialists perform scientific research based on dairy industry demands and develop practical resources for Wisconsin farm families. Regional Dairy Educators deliver research and resources to farms like yours and connect trusted, unbiased, university-based research to assist the dairy industry in making the livelihood of farming viable in the future.



understanding of ruminant digestive anatomy, demonstrating innovative approaches that can enhance Extension education.

In addition to the educational sessions, the conference provided valuable opportunities to connect with Extension colleagues, university researchers, and industry professionals from across North America. These professional relationships encourage collaboration and ensure local programming continues to reflect the latest research and best practices.

Peña also represented UW-Madison Extension by participating in the conference's annual 5K event, promoting wellness while engaging with fellow conference attendees.

Participation in this conference strengthens the knowledge and resources our Dairy Educator brings back to Dodge County, ultimately benefiting local dairy producers through research-based education and outreach.



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Positive Youth Development

Educator: Marie Witzel

July was an exceptionally busy month for Positive Youth Development programming in Dodge County, with a strong emphasis on summer learning, youth engagement, and the annual 4-H summer camp experience at Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center.

A major highlight was the successful planning and implementation of the Dodge County 4-H residential camp at Upham Woods, serving 46 campers, counselors, volunteers, and staff. Camp provided youth with opportunities to build confidence, independence, and meaningful peer relationships through outdoor recreation, environmental education, STEM learning, and leadership development. Activities such as canoeing, swimming, archery, challenge course activities, wildlife education, and group games encouraged youth to step outside their comfort zones, discover new interests, and strengthen life skills. Reflections from campers demonstrated growth in belonging, confidence, healthy living, and engagement, reinforcing the value of camp as a positive youth development experience.

In addition to camp, Dodge County's AmeriCorps members delivered a wide range of educational programs throughout the county. Nutrition and cooking programs at Life

Positive Youth Development prepares the youth of today to become the effective, empathetic adults of tomorrow. Our research-based youth enrichment programs build youth and adult capacity and partnerships that help both sides grow. 4-H clubs, camps and after-school programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to develop an understanding of themselves and the world.



Academy and local libraries helped youth develop food preparation skills, kitchen safety knowledge, teamwork, and confidence while encouraging healthy choices. Summer enrichment programming included Wild Wacky Weekdays camps, STEM-focused Discovery Days in partnership with the Beaver Dam Recreation Department, and an Optical Illusions program at the Brownsville Public Library. Additional programs at the Lomira Library engaged youth in hands-on cooking and learning activities that encouraged curiosity, communication, and problem-solving.

Together, these efforts provided youth with meaningful opportunities to explore interests, develop life skills, and remain engaged in positive learning experiences throughout the summer while strengthening Extension's reach across Dodge County communities.