

Extension Education Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting: May 11, 2026

Call to Order: Chrissy Wen called meeting to order at 0831. Committee was reappointed after the Board organized and a new Chair will be elected at this meeting.

Roll Call: Quorum – Supervisor Matt Foelker, Supervisor Francine Gies, Supervisor Elizabeth Hafften, Supervisor John Kannard, Supervisor Dwayne Morris - quorum is present by Lilianne

Alison Pfau, Jerry Wilcenski, Julie Hill, Chrissy Wen, Cadance Hawk, and Lilianne Bidwell, were present in person. Steven Chmielewski and Josh Kamps are not present

Michael Luckey, Dwayne Morris, Elizabeth Hefften, James Kuckkan (Watertown Daily Times) were present via Teams.

Position of Committee Chair Appointment: Nominations are now open for the position of Committee Chair. Morris to appointment Kannard, second by Foelker for Chair. Vice chair nominations – Foelker by Kannard – second by Morris. All in favor

Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: In compliance. By Michael

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved as printed. By Morris and second by Hafften

Public Comment: None.

Approval of University Extension Education Committee Minutes from March 09, 2026: Motion by Foelker to approve the minutes as printed. Seconded by Kannard and passed.

Communications: None

Review of 2026 Departmental Budget: Wen talked through the budget with explanation for new board members. Wen talked about the funding from the USDA and how that has effected Jefferson County and how the legal team is handling everything.

Discussion of Monthly Educator Reports: Steve Chmielewski (Community Educator) not present, Alison Pfau (Bilingual Regional Dairy Educator), Jerry Wilcenski (4-H Program Educator), Cadance Hawk (4-H Associate Educator) Julie Hill (Horticulture Educator), Josh Kamps (Regional Crop Educator)

Steve Chmielewski, Community Development Educator, Was not present, Wen went over his portion.

- Planning with the City of Lake Mills to facilitate Real Colors, a team development workshop for organizations. Real Colors workshop helps participants to increase their ability to recognize their strengths. A team development workshop (Real Colors) for organizations where participants increased their ability to recognize their strengths and the strengths of others, build rapport quickly with others, understand how others process information, and modify their communication to connect with others. The workshop is intended to help teams work together more effectively.
 - As a result of participating in the Real Colors workshop, team members gained a deeper

understanding of human behavior, built trust, improved communication, and learned how to work together more effectively. When the team puts what they learned into practice it can improve their ability to contribute to achieving the organization's goals and mission.

- Facilitated the final session of the Jefferson Area Food Pantry (JAFP) strategic planning process where we analyzed and discussed community partner input. This initiative engaged the Pantry's Board, key stakeholders, and community partners to assess current operations, identify strengths and gaps, and clarify priorities for the future.
 - With the planning phase now complete, Extension is working with JAFP to draft a formal Strategic Plan and accompanying report. The plan will translate community and stakeholder input into clear goals, strategies, and implementation actions to strengthen food access, support organizational sustainability, and enhance the Pantry's long-term impact in the Jefferson area.
- Continued working with the Palmyra REV team to support local revitalization and community development efforts. Extension provided facilitation and technical assistance to help the team clarify priorities, strengthen collaboration, and advance implementation of locally identified revitalization strategies.
 - This work focused on supporting the REV team's capacity to move from planning to action by aligning goals, identifying next steps, and reinforcing partnerships among community leaders and stakeholders. Extension's ongoing engagement helps the Palmyra REV team maintain momentum and position the community for sustained progress.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 7th, Southeastern Wisconsin Housing Summit
 - Zoofari Conference Center, Milwaukee County Zoo

Alison Pfau, Bilingual Regional Dairy Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- A statewide program promoting humane dairy cow-handling practices for dairy cow handlers where the participants will learn to be aware of their own beliefs about working with cows, which affect how they interact with them. They will also learn how to form or maintain good habits, which will make the cows easier to handle and their job smoother.
- A statewide survey for dairy producers, where participants shared detailed records on inputs, management practices, and expenses associated with raising replacement heifers to generate updated benchmarks and highlight cost-saving opportunities, to support more informed decision-making and improve the economic sustainability of dairy operations.
- Developing the Bilingual Forward Farm Safety Toolbox. This hands-on resource is designed to support practical, effective safety training on dairy farms. This pilot event will be on April 14th and 15th at the Research Station in Arlington WI.

- Planning and development a calving management and neonate care workshop program in collaboration with the dairy team in Sheboygan county on May 28 and 29th.
- Presenting at the Dairy Cattle Welfare Council Symposium on May 20 to My 22nd in Minneapolis, MN. I will be talking about the different educational tools to handle dairy animals in a smart way to keep safe animal and humans.

Jerry Wilcenski 4-H Program Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- Weekly in-school programing at the Palmyra Montessori school that provides and exploration of 4-H and its diverse project areas for new and primarily first generation 4-H youth.
 - Programming completed in: Legos, Food Science, Plants and Soil Sciences, Rabbits, Global Exploration, Archiving and Collections and Gems and Minerals.
- Countywide Cloverbud Programing that highlights the various projects and activities 4-H has to offer
 - "The Countywide Cloverbud activities are something my child looks forward to each month. I love the take home bags and the wide range of projects covered."
- Increased awareness of food systems and processes. Food4ward Chocolate teaches youth about the chocolate making process from bean to final product. Youth are able to learn more of the science behind tempering chocolate and how crystal formation play a roll in making products that are shelf stable and high quality.
 - Increased awareness of food systems, food science, and the chocolate making processes.
- The Youth Livestock Producers is series of programs and a youth lead committee that aims to build future leaders in fields of genetics, animal science, meat science and veterinary science.
 - Ongoing

Cadance Hawk 4-H Associate Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- Website updates to increase information accuracy, navigability, and presentation. The goal of this initiative is to increase accessibility to accurate program information for club members, volunteers, interested parties, and the community. Embedded within this is a subgoal to increase program participation and expand program reach.
- Expansion of social media presence to Instagram. The goal of this initiative is to expand awareness of Jefferson County 4-H programming and to connect with youth on the platforms they engage with on a regular basis. An additional goal is to connect with volunteers of varying age groups, following an expressed gap in connection with volunteer audiences.
- Redesign of the 4-H newsletter increases accessibility, constituent engagement, and the opportunity to connect to a wider audience of constituents. This initiative has been built in tandem with website updates in order to consolidate information into one location, as well as to increase constituent familiarity with the website interface.
- Development of experiential learning curriculum with an emphasis on youth empowerment. New curriculum aims to support youth in developing the skills necessary to engage in their communities and

grow into leaders. It also maintains a focus on particular youth interests and accounts for youth learning needs. Developed curriculum includes mindfulness, global learning, food preparation, animal science, and STEM.

Julie Hill, Horticulture Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- An in-person presentation, hosted by Big Foot Recreation District, for the general public where participants learned about integrated pest management to reduce wildlife conflict in a way that supports both garden and ecological balance.
 - Programming that occurred/is occurring
- An in-person presentation, hosted by East Troy Parks and Recreation, for the general public where participants learned about integrated pest management to reduce wildlife conflict in a way that supports both garden and ecological balance.
 - Programming that occurred/is occurring
- A yearlong activity/service for residents of Jefferson County to provide research-based answers to their horticulture questions. The goal of this effort is to educate individuals of Jefferson County so they can implement best practices in their landscapes that will positively affect the environment and their communities.
 - Programming that occurred/is occurring
- An in-person program for consumer horticulture audiences at Lake Mills Club 55, where participants learned about proper horticulture practices to provide food resources and decrease/eliminate pesticide use to improve habitat availability for avian fauna, especially in a changing climate.

Coming up:

- May 4th, Gardening Small
 - Big Foot HS, Walworth, WI (6:00pm)
- May 18th, Gardening for Hummingbirds
 - Milton Public Library, Milton, WI (6:00pm)
- June 1st, Growing Vegetables in Containers
 - Lake Mills Club 55 Meeting, Lake Mills, WI (10:00am)
- June 3rd, Planting for a Buzz
 - Barrett Memorial Library, Williams Bay, WI (1:00pm)
- June 10th, From Scrapes to Soil: Composting Basics
 - Lake Geneva Public Library, Lake Geneva, WI (2:00pm)
- June 11th, Gardening with Nosey Neighbors (The Furry and Antlered Kind)
 - Janesville Senior Center, Janesville, WI (1:00pm)

Josh Kamps, Regional Crops Educator, was not present. Wen talked through his portion.

- An interview on the "Ag Matters" radio show for Southern Wisconsin listeners highlighting on-farm research of cover cropping and nitrogen management within grain production systems to reduce nitrate leaching to groundwater and phosphorus runoff to lakes, rivers, and streams while maintaining profitable crop production.
 - The radio interview expanded awareness of effective conservation practices among Southern Wisconsin farmers and advisors. By translating research results into practical recommendations, the effort helped listeners better understand how to reduce nutrient losses to groundwater and surface waters while sustaining profitable grain production.

- Planning for the 2026 Badger Crop Connect season for a statewide virtual audience of farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants. The goal is to provide timely updates throughout the growing season to assist with management decisions of Wisconsin corn, soybean, small grain, and forage crop production.
 - The planning process produced a well-organized framework for the 2026 Badger Crop Connect series, ensuring that timely, accessible, and relevant information will reach a statewide audience. This coordinated approach supports more informed decision-making, improves crop management efficacy, and strengthens the ability of Wisconsin growers and agronomists to respond to in-season challenges.
- An educational field day for farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants where we discussed beneficial insect management and spring cover crop management. Through this effort attendees are better equipped to make crop production decisions in conservation cropping systems.
 - Participants left the field day with improved knowledge and practical tools for managing beneficial insects and spring cover crops. This increased confidence and understanding helps attendees make more informed crop production decisions, ultimately strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of conservation-based cropping systems across Wisconsin.
- A planning discussion highlighting the research and outreach efforts of the WiscWeeds Team for the 2026 field season. The goal is to coordinate efforts for collecting trial data, organizing educational events, and preparing information to ultimately assist growers and agronomists with weed management decision making to increase weed control efficacy and lower the development of resistance.
 - The planning effort resulted in a coordinated framework for 2026 research and outreach activities. By aligning data collection, educational programming, and communication strategies, the WiscWeeds Team is positioned to deliver timely, research-based resources that help growers and agronomists improve weed management efficacy and reduce resistance risks across Wisconsin cropping systems.
- An educational article for the Field Fodder section of the Wisconsin Agriculturalist magazine for farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants outlining the importance of measuring corn rootworm populations. The goal is to assist farmers with the selection of corn rootworm control practices which improve efficacy and reduce resistance.
 - The article equips farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants with practical, research-based guidance for monitoring rootworm pressure and interpreting results. By promoting data-driven decision-making, the project supports more effective control strategies, reduces unnecessary inputs, and contributes to long-term resistance management across Wisconsin corn systems.

Coming up:

May 19th, Foundational Crop Scout Training
Janesville, WI (10:00am - 2:30pm)

The full reports are included in the meeting packet distributed prior to this meeting and are also available on Jefferson County's website at www.jeffersoncountywi.gov.

Possible Items of Discussion/Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings: Morris – is happy with the advertising for UW Ext. Says it's better and more accessible to the public. Would like to keep this on the agenda. Who

recruits the kids in 4-H? Jerry stated we need to try to recruit, however, many kids come from other parents currently in 4-H. Our open house is our big recruitment push.

Next Scheduled Meeting: June 8th & July 13th @0830

Adjourn: Motion by Kannard to adjourn at Seconded by Gies and passed.

Minutes recorded by Lilianne Bidwell, Administrative Specialist