

Extension Education Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting: June 8, 2026

Call to Order: Supervisor John Kannard called meeting to order at 0831

Roll Call: Quorum – Supervisor Matt Foelker, Supervisor Francine Gies, Supervisor Elizabeth Hafften, Supervisor John Kannard, Supervisor Dwayne Morris

Alison Pfau, Jerry Wilcenski, Chrissy Wen, Cadance Hawk, Steven Chmielewski, and Lilianne Bidwell were present in person.

Supervisor Elizabeth Hafften, Julie Hill, and James Kuckkan (Watertown Daily Times) were present via Teams.

Josh Kamps was absent.

Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: In compliance.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved as printed by Foelker and second by Morris

Public Comment: None.

Approval of University Extension Education Committee Minutes from May 11, 2026: Motion by Foelker to approve the minutes as printed. Second by Morris and passed.

Communications: None

Review of 2026 Departmental Budget: Wen stated nothing new with budget and is on track.

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

Steve Chmielewski, Community Development Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- An educational series for residents interested in civic participation with local government to better understand issues and challenges, and opportunities to engage in positive change.
 - *Planning discussions will continue after local elections.*
- 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.*

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. In May and June, we will schedule 4 pilot farms, where we are going to provide the course and get feedback from the employees.

Farms pilot:

Rosy-Lane Holsteins- Paoli, WI

McFarlandale farms - Watertown, WI

Mystic Valley Dairy - Mazomanie, WI

Rosy-Lane Holstein - Watertown, WI

- Development of a calving management and neonate care workshop program in collaboration with the dairy team in Sheboygan county on May 28 and 29. We had total assistance of 45 people in the 2 sessions. The following sessions will be in the southeast region (Dane, Jefferson, Rock, Walworth)
- Planning and developing a proper administration of medication and vaccines in dairy cattle in the summer, to reaching the needs in the area about this topic.
- Developing a collaboration with Colorado State University - Agricultural department (Livestock behavior and welfare team) to bring information, training and updates about: End-of-life decisions and perspectives across the dairy supply chain- research overview.

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

- Countywide Cloverbud Programing that highlights the various projects and activities 4-H has to offer
 - *Improved understanding of 4-H, excitement for Cloverbud projects, improved sense of belonging to 4-H*
- Increased awareness of food systems and processes.
 - *Increased awareness of food systems, food science, and the chocolate making processes.*
- 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.*
- 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, the community, and all other interested parties. Embedded within this is a subgoal to increase program participation and expand program reach.

- Expansion of social media presence aims to expand awareness of Jefferson County 4-H programming and to connect with youth on the platforms they engage with on a regular basis, as well as to increase guardian engagement and awareness of information access via social media.
- 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, grow into leaders, and intentionally participate in lifelong learning. It also maintains a focus on particular youth interests and accounts for youth learning needs. Developed curriculum includes social skills, personal growth, global learning, food preparation, animal science, and STEM.
- The Cloverbuds May Meeting was held on Monday, May 18th at the Jefferson County Fair Park with an "Animal Learning" theme. Approximately 20 4-H members attended with their guardians, as well as several older youth who assisted in the teaching and presentation of the activity. Youth also received a take-home experiential activity kit following the theme in order to support ongoing learning.
- Development and marketing of upcoming summer camps. On June 19th, a project learning day will be held at the Palmyra-Eagle Montessori School, and on June 26th a Cloverbuds Day Camp will be held at the extension office. Both programs are open to all 4-H members, and registration can be found on our website under the newsletters tab. During the project learning day members will make chocolate, pinatas, clay beads, and eco-printed textiles. The Cloverbuds Day Camp will be "Around the World" themed and will host a wide variety of activities.

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

- An in-person program hosted by Big Foot Recreation District, for the general public, where participants learned about different small space gardening techniques to maximize yield and integrated pest management to manage insects and diseases. The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge, confidence and build skills to successfully grow plants while minimizing contamination from horticulture chemicals.
 - *Programming that occurred/is occurring*
- A weekly social media outreach campaign for consumer gardeners utilizing Extension Walworth/Rock/Jefferson County Facebook page to help promote local plant health diagnostic services and upcoming programs and improve understanding of how sustainable horticultural practices positively impact landscapes and ecosystems.
 - *Programming that occurred/is occurring*
- An information booth as part of the Wellness Fair at the Frito Lay Corporation (Beloit location). The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge and awareness of Extension Rock County resources, especially best gardening practices, promote the positive benefits of plants/gardening on personal health and well-being, and share mental health programming resources.
 - *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 presentation in collaboration with Milton Public Library where participants learned about proper horticulture practices to provide food resources and decrease/eliminate pesticide use to improve habitat availability for hummingbirds as a Wisconsin pollinator.
 - *Programming that occurred/is occurring*

Coming up:

- 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 absent.

- A cover crop termination timing field demonstration for farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants where participants will learn about the value of delayed termination of cereal grains on weed suppression versus the risk of crop development and yield potential to inform the use of cover crops as a weed suppression and soil health tool while maintaining soybean yield potential and reducing the risk of developing herbicide resistance.
 - *Participants will gain a clearer understanding of how delayed termination can enhance weed suppression and reduce reliance on herbicides, while also recognizing the potential tradeoffs related to soybean emergence and yield. The demonstration will increase confidence in using cover crops as a weed-management and soil-health tool, helping attendees better evaluate termination strategies that maintain soybean yield potential and reduce the risk of herbicide resistance.*
- A farm consultation reviewing the potential of a field trial generator tool with the farmer and developer to design and place replicated research trials within uniform soil regions of selected fields and create an application script to automate the precise application of nitrogen fertilizer by treatment zone to increase the capacity of on-farm research potential.
 - *The farm gained a clear understanding of how to use the tool to implement replicated, spatially sound nitrogen trials, increasing confidence in conducting future on-farm experiments. The developer received actionable feedback to refine the tool's functionality, and the resulting automated application script improved the precision and efficiency of nitrogen treatment placement. Together, these outcomes significantly expanded the farm's on-farm research potential and strengthened its capacity to make data-driven nutrient management decisions.*
- An on-farm study designed to better understand the amount of nitrogen available as a nitrogen credit following a summer established clover cover crop. Results from this study will assist host farms with gaining the confidence required to adjust nitrogen rate decisions lower to reduce nitrogen input costs while maintaining crop yields.
 - *Results provide growers with evidence-based nitrogen credit values, increasing confidence to reduce fertilizer inputs while maintaining expected corn yields. The findings support more cost-effective nutrient management, improved profitability, and broader adoption of cover crops as a nitrogen-supplying practice.*

- A field day for beginning crop scouts and early career agricultural professionals, where participants learned crop scouting methodologies and pest management identification and techniques to better understand the role and responsibilities of crop scouting, which is the first step of an integrated pest management (IPM) plan and is integral to making decisions for crop productivity and profitability.
 - *This field day provided attendees with beginner crop scouting tools and resources for them to understand how and what to look for when crop scouting a field and how what is seen while in the field will impact management decisions.*
- An on-farm study to better understand the amount of nitrogen available for corn production from an application of dairy manure. Results of this study will assist farmers with calculating an accurate level to credit the manure nitrogen through the use of nitrogen sensing technologies and corn yield comparisons between manure and no manure treatments.
 - *The study provides farmers with reliable nitrogen credit estimates, improving confidence in lowering supplemental fertilizer rates without sacrificing yield. These results support more accurate nutrient management planning, reduced input costs, and more efficient use of manure as a crop nutrient source.*
- A collection of multiple on-farm studies to better understand the optimal nitrogen rate for corn production. Results from these studies will directly influence profitable nitrogen rate decisions at the host farms and add relevant data in support of UW-Madison Extension soil fertility guidelines.
 - *The on-farm studies produced actionable nitrogen response curves that help each cooperating farm identify its most profitable N rate, improving economic returns and reducing unnecessary fertilizer use. Aggregated results also strengthen statewide nitrogen recommendations, ensuring they remain relevant, data-driven, and reflective of current production environments.*

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.jeffersoncountyiwi.gov.

Possible Items of Discussion/Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings: Would like to keep this on the agenda to ensure it's an ongoing cause.

Next Scheduled Meeting: July 13th & August 10th @ 0830

Adjourn: Motion by Kannard to adjourn at 0918. Second by Morris and passed.

Minutes recorded by Lilianne Bidwell, Administrative Specialist