

Extension Education Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting: July 13th, 2026

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

Roll Call: Quorum – Supervisor Francine Gies, Supervisor Elizabeth Hafften (online for part of the session), Supervisor John Kannard, and Supervisor Dwayne Morris. Supervisor Matt Foelker was absent.

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

Julie Hill, and Michael Luckey were present via Teams.

Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: In compliance.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved as printed by Kannard, second by Gies

Public Comment: None.

Approval of University Extension Education Committee Minutes from June 08, 2026: Motion by Gies to approve the minutes as printed. Second by Kannard and passed.

Communications: None

Review of 2026 Departmental Budget: Wen stated nothing new with budget and is on track. Wen talked about the contract and that we pay in 2x a year. First payment was processed.

Division of Extension update: Extension is applying for a grant for health and wellness for community health workers. Wen will be reaching out to the health dept on collaboration. Other communities will be applying; this is a federal grant. This grant could bring educators into Jefferson county as we don't have anyone currently. This would be a 5-year grant. Wen is reaching out to the community to see if there is interest. Once we have that information then they will move forward. Interest is due by the 27th of July.

Annual report will be coming out this week.

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).

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

- A Real Colors® team development workshop was delivered for employees of the City of Lake Mills. Participants increased their understanding of personality and communication styles, learned strategies for working more effectively with colleagues, and explored ways to build stronger workplace relationships. As a result, participants gained tools to improve communication, increase trust, and enhance team effectiveness in support of organizational goals.

- Planning and partnership development continued for the Rural Entrepreneur Venture (REV) Program in Palmyra. REV is a community-based economic development initiative designed to strengthen entrepreneurship, support small businesses, and identify opportunities for long-term community vitality. Local leaders, business owners, and community stakeholders are working together to assess assets, identify priorities, and develop strategies that support business growth and economic resilience. Locally developed REV Goals include:
 - Support and grow local businesses and entrepreneurs. (Comprehensive webpage in development stages as well)
 - Strengthen downtown vitality and community attractiveness. (Conducting commercial vacancy survey)
 - Build local leadership and partnerships to advance economic development workforce development with Youth Apprenticeship Program (Changes in PEASD staffing with DWD Youth Apprentice program need to be addressed)
- Extension is in discussion with REV communities and UW–Whitewater on expanding City Pitch Program, providing entrepreneurs and small business owners with an opportunity to refine business concepts, receive coaching, and present their ideas to community stakeholders and judges. Participants strengthened their business planning and presentation skills, increased their understanding of available resources, and expanded connections with local economic development partners. The program supports entrepreneurship, innovation, and community economic development throughout the region.
- To help address the Transformative Government Strategic Priority, exploration and planning also began for a county-level Local Government education program designed to help residents better understand county government structure, decision-making processes, and opportunities for civic engagement. The program aims to increase civic literacy, strengthen public participation, and build informed local leadership. Planning team will meet to make program decisions later this month.
- Additional discussion was conducted with Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission on analyzing economic impact of Public Rail System per member county to follow a request to better understand individual county's ROI of being part of a freight system

Events coming up:

Growing Within the Cap: Analyzing Your Municipal Tax Base Under Wisconsin's Levy Limits – July 14

<http://go.wisc.edu/wq44gs>

PFAS & Emerging Contaminants: Community Education, Engagement, and Response – August 20

<http://go.wisc.edu/0s7256>

Solar panels and wind turbines are becoming increasingly common in Wisconsin's energy portfolio as low-cost, reliable energy sources. As our state's energy landscape shifts, many communities are facing new challenging conversations and navigating complicated processes, some for the first time.

To help communities navigate these changes with confidence, we invite you to join the [Fall 2026 Renewable Energy Cohort](#).

This virtual series will take place weekly on Thursdays from September 17th to October 8th from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM.

- September 17: Wisconsin's Energy Landscape & Community Engagement
- September 24: Community Priorities in Locally Permitted Projects
- October 1: State Regulatory Process & Joint Development Agreements
- October 8: Local Government Actions

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

- Planning and developing a proper administration of medicine and vaccines for dairy cattle on August 27th and 28th from 9 to 3 pm in Dane county. In this program we will talk about the proper management and storage of health products, common mistakes handling health products in dairy farms, practical tips for a successful cattle vaccination, right intervention and right medication on time, and the importance of the vaccination plan in cattle.
- Planning and developing the fourth edition of El "Break" Info-Lechero. A webinar in Spanish created to help dairy workers and the dairy industry in Wisconsin and around the world to get access of the most up to date dairy information in different topics like animal reproduction, date collection, animal welfare, nutrition, calf care and more. This webinar will be held in September and October 2026.
<https://dairy.extension.wisc.edu/el-break-info-lechero-english/>
- Bovi-noticias is a bilingual (English & Spanish) newsletter created through collaboration between the Dairy and Farm Management teams. It provides dairy farms and their employees with accessible, research-based information that explains the reasons behind key practices and offers practical insights for daily work. Through this effort, Bovi-noticias helps build a more informed and engaged workforce, improving animal well-being, optimizing resources, and supporting farm profitability and safety. New summer issue, see the attachment. (Here is the link you can print the newsletter for the report)
<https://dairy.extension.wisc.edu/bovi-noticias/>
- 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 July, August, and September, we will schedule farms, where we are going to provide the course and get feedback from the employees.

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

- Summer Programming focused on youth sparks and expanding skills in food production and animal care with Beulah Homestead
 - *Ongoing*
- Livestock Marketing programming that gives youth real world experience in marketing their livestock project to prospective buyers using industry criteria.
 - *As a result of participation, youth increase their ability to communicate the value of livestock and agricultural products, strengthening confidence in public speaking and promotional strategies. They gain practical skills in marketing, sales, and consumer awareness—competencies that are increasingly essential in agriculture and transferable to a wide range of careers. Youth also develop broader life skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, and leadership, which are consistently linked to participation in livestock programs and agricultural*

competitions. Through this experience, participants become better prepared to engage with buyers, advocate for agriculture, and succeed in both industry and community settings.

- 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*
- 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.

- A Cloverbud Summer Day Camp for Jefferson County 4-H Cloverbuds, where participants will engage in a wide variety of activities following an "Around the World" theme. Through this program, students will learn new skills, practice critical thinking and collaboration, and engage in multicultural education.
 - *I anticipate that this work will increase student knowledge of practical skills, multicultural awareness, and general facts-based information. This will equip students to more intentionally engage in 4-H and the world by providing an introduction to topics of lifelong relevance.*
- A summer sparks-based learning program for Palmyra-Eagle Montessori School Club Members, where youth engaged in self-directed independent projects with support from 4-H Educators. Through this activity, youth had the opportunity to more deeply engage in 4-H programming, initiate a pathway into future projects, build connections with other club members, and strengthen youth-adult partnerships.
 - *Palmyra-Eagle Montessori School Club members showed significant social emotional growth, an increased connection to 4-H, and strengthened-youth adult partnerships. These outcomes were measured qualitatively through educator observation. Student social emotional growth was assessed based on the capability of students to effectively and positively convey emotions, students' level of participation in pro-social activities, and students' ability to self-regulate throughout the course of activities. Increased connection to 4-H was assessed based on student participation in independent 4-H projects and student awareness of 4-H opportunities. Strengthened youth-adult partnerships were assessed based on student growth in response to specific guidance provided by 4-H educators, as well as increased trust of educators. Each of these measures showed positive growth throughout the course of the program.*
- A project learning day for Jefferson County 4-H Members, where participants engaged in experiential learning in the areas of foods, arts, and STEM. Through this program, students explored their sparks, practiced problem-solving and engaged in youth-adult partnerships.

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

- An in-person presentation, hosted by Janesville Senior Center, 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 program in collaboration with Lake Mills Club 55, where participants learned about growing vegetables in containers. The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge, confidence and build skills in gardening for improved yields and reduce the harmful effects of pesticides.
 - *Programming that occurred/is occurring*
- An in-person presentation for consumer horticulture audiences where participants learned about proper horticulture practices to provide food resources and decrease/eliminate pesticide use to improve habitat availability for Wisconsin pollinators.
 - *Programming that occurred/is occurring*
- An in-person program in collaboration with Lake Geneva Public Library where participants learned about home composting. The goal of this effort is to increase knowledge, confidence and build skills in composting to help mitigate the causes of climate change and to improve the soil health of yards and gardens.
 - *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 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 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*

Josh Kamps, Regional Crops Educator, provided an oral report based on the written report provided to the committee.

- A study to better understand the target termination timing of cereal rye and triticale to provide a 50% reduction in weed biomass while not impacting the yield potential of soybean. Results from this study will help farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants in managing cover crop biomass accumulation as a tool for weed suppression while reducing the risk of herbicide resistance development.
 - *The study identified termination windows that consistently achieved approximately a 50% reduction in weed biomass while maintaining soybean yield potential. These results provide actionable recommendations that support farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants in using cover crop biomass accumulation to suppress weeds, strengthen integrated weed management programs, and reduce reliance on herbicides, which lowers the risk of herbicide resistance*

development.

- A study to better understand the optimal nitrogen rate for corn grain production within different farm production systems. Results from this study will help farmers, crop consultants, and conservation professionals in making nitrogen rate decisions which maximize profitability while reducing the risk of nitrogen leaching or loss to the environment.
 - *The study identified nitrogen rate ranges that consistently optimized corn grain yield within each production system while reducing the risk of nitrogen leaching or loss. These results provide actionable, data-driven recommendations that help farmers, crop consultants, and conservation professionals make more precise nitrogen decisions that enhance profitability and support long-term environmental sustainability.*
- A study to better understand the nitrogen credit level available for corn from a legume cover crop planted in mid-summer following small grains the previous year. Results from this study will help farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants maximize the use of nitrogen made available through legume cover crops and more accurately identify the rate of synthetic nitrogen required for profitable corn production within this cropping system.
 - *The study will generate practical nitrogen credit estimates that can be reliably applied to corn grown after mid-summer legume cover crops. These results will enable farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants to better utilize biologically supplied nitrogen, reduce unnecessary synthetic nitrogen applications, and maintain profitable corn yields while supporting improved environmental stewardship.*
- A study to better understand the level of nitrogen credit available when manure is applied ahead of corn grain production. Results from this study will help farmers, crop consultants, and conservation professionals more accurately credit the level of nitrogen and other nutrients provided in manure for corn grain production which will improve farm profitability and reduce losses of nutrients to the environment.
 - *The study will produce reliable nitrogen credit estimates that reflect the contribution of manure under real-world field conditions. The results will help farmers, crop consultants, and conservation professionals more accurately account for manure-derived nitrogen and other nutrients, enabling more precise synthetic nitrogen applications that support profitable corn production while reducing the risk of nutrient loss to the environment.*
- A farm consultation with a farmer seeking advice on grazing management of Reed canary grass where resources and recommendations were provided. Through this farm consultation, the farmer has the tools necessary to make an informed decision on utilizing the section of their farm with Reed canary grass to increase available on farm forage for the beef herd, which will reduce the need for purchased forage and will increase farm profitability.
 - *Following the consultation, the farmer now has the tools and confidence to make an informed decision about utilizing Reed canary grass as part of the beef herd's forage supply. This will increase available on-farm forage, reduce dependence on purchased feed, and ultimately improve the farm's profitability.*

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: Would like to keep this on the agenda to ensure it's an ongoing cause.

Next Scheduled Meeting: August 10th and September 14th @ 0830

Adjourn: Motion by Morris to adjourn at 0932. Second by Gies and passed.

Minutes recorded by Lilianne Bidwell, Administrative Specialist