Extension Education Committee Minutes

Date of Meeting: October 12th, 2026

Call to Order: Supervisor Foelker called meeting to order at 0833

Roll Call: Quorum – Supervisor Dwayne Morris, Supervisor Francine Gies, and Supervisor Matt Foelker were present in person. Supervisor Elizabeth Hafften was present online. Supervisor John Kannard was absent.

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

Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: In compliance.

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

Public Comment: None.

Approval of University Extension Education Committee Minutes from September 14, 2026: Motion by Morris to approve the minutes as printed. Second by Gies and passed.

Communications: Jefferson County Youth Government Day is November 20th. UW Extension will be participating in the scavenger hunt and the career fair.

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

Division of Extension update: Wen stated the 2027 contracts will be sent to counties in November. She also mentioned that there are some local events that are happening in Jefferson County. 1. Mental Health Summit featuring Dr. Roxy Etta. 2. A soil testing course by Kevin Erb.

Discussion of Monthly Educator Reports: Steve Chmielewski (Community Educator), Alison Pfau (Bilingual Regional Dairy Educator), Jerry Wilcenski (4-H Program Educator), Josh Kamps (Regional Crop Educator), and Cadance Hawk (4-H Associate Educator) presented in person. Julie Hill (Horticulture Educator) presented online.

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

- Local Government Leadership series: Planning team includes department heads, county board supervisor and County Administrator. The purpose is to assist with the strategic priority of advancing a Transformative Government by bridging the gap between residents and county operations. Goals include demystifying local governance, building a sustainable pipeline for public service and strengthening inclusive civic engagement, empowering residents to become active, and developing opportunities for new county employees, committee members, elected board supervisors or community leaders. In the current stage of our program planning process, a resident survey will be launched the week of 10/12 to gather input on learning objectives, structure and logistics. This fall/winter results will be applied for program development, in January the program will be promoted/registration opened, with the series planned to start in March.

- Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) supports the development of rural entrepreneurial ecosystems across Wisconsin with 2 efforts in Jefferson County
    - Palmyra REV Team: Sept. 9 presentation on RenewTowns program engaged 12 key community players in a discussion on a process to strengthen upcoming entrepreneurs and help fill commercial vacancies. The team will provide the community with more information as well as gather input from business operators. Next steps include developing timeline/promotional schedule, engage property owners and finalize fund development for the project budget.
    - Jefferson REV Team: Sept. 24 presentation on RenewTowns and discussion held with 20 key community players. The community demonstrated readiness to begin this community-led effort. Program leadership is provided in cooperation with the Main St Association, Jefferson Area Chamber, City officials and UW-Whitewater.
        - Daily Jefferson County Union 9/21/26 article: https://www.dailyunion.com/news/local/renewtowns-initiative-hopes-to-bring-new-downtown-business-in-jefferson-community-meeting-scheduled-for-thursday/article_c5536b7a-0af7-4373-9a6d-880e941dcbe2.html
        - Project sponsor has been secured for the process, waiting on official announcement; final budget pieces in the works
        - Discussions with REV teams also informed development of a resource page highlighting available business startup and foundational resources specific to four phases of a business hosted on Extension Jefferson County website:https://jefferson.extension.wisc.edu/starting-a-business-business-foundation-resources/

- Planning for Statewide Housing Webinar Series: In cooperation with our statewide Housing Team, we are developing a lunch and learn series to address statewide priority topics with local governments staff and elected officials. November kick off date to be announced soon.

Events Coming Up:

- Oct 12, 11am - 1pm Grant Writing 101 https://extension.wisc.edu/events/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D205603853

- Oct 13, 6pm - 8pm Grant Writing 101 https://extension.wisc.edu/events/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D205603855

- Oct 29, 12pm-1pm Cooperative Childcare Solutions Webinar – Wisconsin https://extension.wisc.edu/events/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D207720158

- Nov 5, 9:30am - 3pm Renewable Energy Academy - Vaughn Library 502 Main St. W Ashland, WI 54806 https://extension.wisc.edu/events/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D204775245

- Nov 10 8:30am - 4:30pm Southwestern Wisconsin Housing Summit - Southwest Technical College 1800 Bronson Blvd. Fennimore, WI https://extension.wisc.edu/events/?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D209993019

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

- 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.
    - Aug 27th- New Youth Leader Orientation.- 23 youth participated in orientation for their roles, team building and beginning planning of the new educational year.
    - Sept 22th- Planning meeting. Youth reviewed last year's guide book and awards and worked on drafting a new guide book and program calendar. Youth species chairs take the lead on educational programing in their areas as well as holding regular meetings to help coach youth through the project cycle.

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

- Connected with Lake Mills and Johnson Creek schools to plan afterschool programs for middle school students. Lake Mills is set to start on November 12th for a 5-week fall program. This program will serve as a catalyst for a longer spring program at the middle school and has potential to serve as a catalyst for a program at the elementary school as well. Johnson Creek is still in the planning stages.

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

- An in-person presentation for the general public, in partnership with UW-Whitewater's Continuing Education Enrichment Classes, where participants learned research-based strategies to prepare for and respond to extreme weather impacts in their gardens and landscapes, to improve their ability to successfully garden in a changing environment.

- An in-person presentation for Jefferson County Retired Teachers group where participants learned about horticulture practices so that they can prevent pests, improve pollinator habitat, and reduce the use of horticulture chemicals in the landscape.

- A weekly social media outreach campaign for consumer gardeners utilizing Extension 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.

- 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.

Events Coming Up:

- Understanding Your Garden Soil, October 5, 5:30 p.m., at Big Foot High School, in partnership with Big Foot Recreation District.
    - For more information and to register, visit: https://www.bigfootrecreation.org/

- Informational booth at the Beloit Senior Fair, October 6, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Central Christian Church, Beloit

- Fall Gardening for a Winter Ready Landscape, October 12, 5:30 p.m., MATC Watertown Campus (Enrichment Classes).
    - For more information and to register, visit: https://ce.madisoncollege.edu/madisoncollege/course/course.aspx?C=361&pc=96&mc=100&sc=123

- Gift Plants Unwrapped, November 10, 5:30 p.m., at UW-Whitewater campus, in partnership with UW-Whitewater Continuing Education.
    - For more information and to register, visit: https://www.uww.edu/ce/gardenlandscape/giftplants

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

- A bilingual (English and Spanish) newsletter, Bovi-noticias, for dairy farm owners, managers, employees, and industry partners, where readers gain practical, research-based information that explains the reasons behind key farm management practices and supports everyday decision-making. Through this effort, dairy operations are better equipped to strengthen workforce engagement, improve communication and safety, enhance animal well-being, and support long-term farm sustainability and profitability.

- The El "Break" Info-Lechero 2026 Webinar

Webinar Dates:
For the El "Break" Info-Lechero 2026 Webinar

- October 14th, 2026, 12:00 pm Manuel Peña, Bilingual Regional Dairy Educator – Dairy Cow Nutrition: Nutrients, Management, and Production. University of Wisconsin Madison, Division of Extension.

- October 21st, 2026, 12:00 pm Dr Paola Bacigalupo, Dairy Technical Services Veterinarian – Drying Off Dairy Cows: Preparing Them for a Healthy and Productive Next Lactation. Zoetis

- An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, and American with Disabilities (ADA) requirements.

- La Universidad de Wisconsin-Extensión, un empleador con igualdad de oportunidades y acción affirmative (EEO/AA), proporciona igualdad de oportunidades en empleo y programas, incluyendo los requisitos del Titulo VI, Título IX, y de la Ley para Americanos con Discapacidades (ADA).

- October 28th, 2026, 12:00 pm Dr. Victor Cabrera, Professor & Extension Specialist Dairy Farm Management Extension; Ing. Pablo De Caso Udave, MS student at the Department of Animal & Dairy Sciences – Create Your Own AI Advisor: Converting Farm Data into Profitable Decisions. – University of Wisconsin Madison

- November 4th, 2026, 12:00 pm Katy Schultz - Schultz Dairy Farm; Rosario Ibarra - Grotegut Dairy Farm Inc; David Maldonado - Statz Bros., Inc. Dairy Producer Panel from Wisconsin

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

- A study to better understand corn rootworm pressure within different corn management systems. Results from this study will help farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants with identifying effective control strategies that reduce the risk of resistance developing.
    - Farmers and agricultural professionals will have increased knowledge and confidence in selecting corn rootworm management strategies based on pest pressure and production system. Improved decision-making will support effective pest control, promote responsible use of management tools, and reduce the risk of resistance development.

- A study to better understand the prevalence of Johnsongrass, Sorghum halepense, populations and differentiate it from similar species across southern Wisconsin. Results from this study will help farmers, agronomists, and crop consultants in properly identifying this grass weed plant, choosing appropriate control measures, and reducing the risk of these populations from spreading.
    - Farmers and agricultural professionals will have increased confidence in identifying and managing Johnsongrass populations. Improved identification and timely management will support more effective control decisions and help reduce the risk of Johnsongrass spreading to additional cropland across southern Wisconsin.

- Planning for an on-farm educational event for state legislators to learn about farmer's decision-making process when balancing reduced nitrogen leaching with farm profitability. The goal is to highlight the work underway by Producer-led groups, County partners, and Extension to support farmers with navigating this balance so that legislators are more informed when making decisions to support future opportunities.
    - Legislators will gain a more informed understanding of the opportunities and challenges farmers face when working to reduce nitrogen losses while maintaining profitable farming operations. This increased understanding will help inform future policy, funding, and program decisions that support practical, farmer-led approaches to improving water quality and agricultural sustainability.

- An on-farm research study to better understand manure application, commercial nitrogen application rates, and nitrogen credits on corn yield and potential effect on ground water. Results from this study will help farmers, agriculture industry professionals, and agency professionals in adjusting manure and commercial nitrogen applications to optimize corn yield and protect groundwater resources.
    - Commercial nitrogen application can be a major expense in the production of corn grain and silage. Nitrogen also possesses risk to moving through the soil profile to groundwater and off-site to surface waters such as rivers and lakes.

- Soil fertility consultations for farmers where soil test reports are analyzed, crop goals are identified, and options for meeting crop fertility requirements are discussed to aid farmers with limited acres and

farmers that are new to nutrient management with making fertilizer decisions based on UW-Madison soil fertility recommendations that promote profitable crop production.
    - Farmers will increase their knowledge and confidence in making soil fertility and fertilizer decisions based on soil test results and crop needs. These consultations will support appropriate fertilizer use, efficient use of farm resources, and profitable crop production.

- Planning for an educational breakout session during the 2026 WWASH Conference which brings together farmers, crop consultants, agronomists, and conservationists. This breakout session will focus on the pest management risks and benefits within conservation cropping systems known to improve soil health, reduce nutrient losses, and increase farm resilience. The goal of the break out session is to improve confidence and expand adoption of these systems on cropping acres in Wisconsin.
    - Participants will gain a better understanding of the pest management risks and benefits associated with conservation cropping systems and increased confidence in implementing or recommending these practices. Ultimately, the effort aims to support greater adoption and successful management of conservation cropping systems across Wisconsin cropland.

- A workshop for farmer and agronomists, where attendees learned how to better manage herbicide resistance and use pesticide adjuvants. Through this workshop, farmers and agronomists will have gain knowledge to improve weed management efforts.
    - This workshop was aimed at helping Wisconsin farmers and agronomists with the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and agroecological approaches to achieve long-term pest suppression by generating and sharing research-based knowledge through UW-led and on-farm research, and by translating findings into practical tools, Extension publications, and multimedia resources for farmers and agricultural professionals. We developed the Wisconsin Extension Weed Management workshop to help Wisconsin farmers and agronomists address critical weed management challenges. The agenda was drafted based on evaluation data from previous events and considering the plan of work strategies. Wisconsin farmers and agronomists gained valuable knowledge on identifying different cases of resistance, planning to prevent resistance, using new crop trait technology, and selecting proper spray adjuvants. Herbicide resistance is a very large challenge for farmers and this information should help slow the spread of herbicide resistance.

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: November 9th & December 14th @ 0830

Adjourn: Motion by Morris to adjourn at 0937. Second by Gies and passed.

Minutes recorded by Lilianne Bidwell, Administrative Specialist