

Green County
Agriculture and Extension Education Committee Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, April 8th, 2026-- 8:00 AM

Green County Justice Center, Multi-Purpose Rooms-Lower Level,
2841 6th St, Monroe, WI

1. Call to Order & Meeting Voucher
2. Public Comment - (time limit not to exceed three minutes per person or thirty minutes total)
3. UW Extension Educator Reports – Written Report
 - a. Bob Wiegel, Human Development & Relationships Educator – Oral Report
4. Approve Minutes of the March Meeting
5. Review and Approval of March Bills
6. Area Extension Director Informational Items
 - a. Staffing Update
 - b. County Official Workshops (C.O.W.s)- Dodgeville, Friday, May 15
7. Business Manager Informational Items
 - a. Sheriff/Jail/Justice Center Project Update
 - b. Hybrid Schedule - Update
 - c. Tractor Safety Kits
8. Any other business – *(New topics for discussion to be put on future agendas)*
9. Set Time and Date for Next Meeting -- Proposed May 6th, 2026 at 8:00 AM
10. Adjourn

<i>Committee Members – Erica Roth, Dawn Sass, Susan Knox, Peg Sheaffer, and Yvette Smith</i>
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Please Note: Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities through sign language, interpreters or other auxiliary aids. For additional information or to request the service, contact the Green County UW-Extension Office at 608-328-9440



Regional Crops & Soils Educator

Jordyn Sattler

Regional Dairy Educator

Jackie McCarville

Regional Livestock Educator

Casey Lobdell

I'm a Farmer, Too 2026

A workshop for farmers and agriculture professionals where they learned how to manage and communicate about stress, mitigate heat stress for animals, and the benefit of good soil health in cropping systems. Through this program, attendees have tools and resources to utilize in conversations around mental health, can recognize signs of animal stress which allows them to improve animal welfare, and understand the importance of soil health as it relates to crop health and farm sustainability. (Sattler, McCarville, & Lobdell)



Youth for Quality Care of Animals—Green & Lafayette Counties

A training for youth who are raising animals to learn more about animal welfare, marketing, biosecurity, character development, and food safety. The goal of this training is to help youth better understand the importance of raising ethical animals while promoting agriculture. (McCarville)

Badger Dairy Insight Webinar—March Session

A webinar for dairy farmers and ag professionals that focused on virtual fencing and how it meets pasture nutrition for maximum productivity. The purpose of this webinar was to provide participants with unbiased, evidence-based research about other strategies for grazing and nutrition. (McCarville)

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Best Practices for Dairy Farms and Dairy Employees

A webinar on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Best Practices for Dairy Farms and Dairy Employees for dairy producers, farm managers, and dairy employees, where participants learned practical biosecurity protocols, employee training strategies, and herd monitoring practices to reduce disease transmission risk, protect animal and human health, and strengthen the long-term resilience and economic sustainability of dairy operations. (McCarville)

2026 Focus on Forage Webinar Series

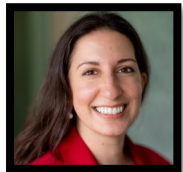
A four part Focus on Forage webinar series for forage growers, livestock producers, agency staff and agricultural consultants where research based forage management solutions are shared to optimize forage yield and quality to improve animal performance and overall farm profitability. (Sattler)

Winter Forage Meeting

An in-person meeting for local farmers and producers from the four-county Area 15. The meeting highlighted many forage based conversations including inventory, hygiene, breaking down forage samples and results, as well as crop disease that can affect forage.

(Lobdell, McCarville & Sattler)





Community Development Educator

Victoria Solomon

Green County Leaders: Entrepreneurial Leadership

At the March Green County Leaders (GCL) session participants focused on learning about entrepreneurial leadership and ways to apply this in their professional and personal lives. The day started at Colony Brands with a panel of entrepreneurs and a session to learn more about Colony. At Badger State Ethanol, participants saw entrepreneurial leadership being applied in a business setting, and at Monroe Truck, participants saw entrepreneurial leadership's intersections with workforce development. Participants shared these responses when asked "What are your biggest lessons or takeaways from today's sessions?"

- "I learned that many of the big businesses in the town started off as locally owned businesses."
- "Don't assume that because it is a big company they don't contribute locally."
- "My biggest lesson/takeaway on entrepreneurial leadership was the emphasis on innovation and how constantly innovating and being ahead of the game guides a business path allowing them to grow."
- "Being an entrepreneur myself, a lot of the lessons and ideas surrounding confidence and seizing opportunity was my biggest takeaway."



Community Change Framework

Communities across Wisconsin continue to experience polarization, reduced civic engagement, and challenges in mobilizing residents around local issues. To address these needs, Extension team members—including Victoria Solomon, Blake Roberts, and Barry Hottmann—along with Green County Development Corporation Director Olivia Otte, began working with Pulling Together author Tom Mosgaller in November 2025. Over ongoing sessions in November, December, and early 2026, the group has been developing a new educational framework grounded in the Pulling Together model. This emerging effort responds to the need for structured, research-informed programming that teaches communities how to navigate differences, invest locally, and cultivate the skills needed to create sustainable community change. This work includes curriculum planning, defining key teaching modules, identifying target audiences (local leaders, civic groups, grassroots organizations), and designing facilitator supports for future implementation.

Homecare Cooperative Development

UW Center for Cooperatives has reached out to partners and collaborators in Green County who have expressed interest in homecare cooperative development. Respite Care Association of Wisconsin is partnering with UWCC to identify key stakeholders and potential cooperative members to develop a steering team and strategy for marketing, business planning, and incorporation. An information session for county leaders was held in December 2025. Outreach efforts are transitioning to community members in January of 2026 and by Spring 2026, the goal is to have an established Steering Committee. By June 2026, the Steering Committee will be positioned to apply for grants that will fund feasibility and business planning work, and there will be increased awareness of the homecare cooperative model and movement as a potential solution to the caregiving crisis.



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GREEN COUNTY

Extension Green County

April 2026 Educator Report



4-H Youth Development Educator Ellen Andrews

4-H Rabbit Committee: Youth Driven, Adult Supported

The Rabbit Project is an interest area of over 100 youth in Green County. When the long time leader of this project passed away unexpectedly a couple years ago, there wasn't really anyone who stepped into this role of offering 4-H rabbit related educational offerings. This past fall, a handful of youth, along with a couple brave adult volunteers, came together with the goal of offering more experiences in 4-H where youth could grow their skills and passion for raising and showing rabbits. Since that time, the group has met monthly and become a shining example of youth leadership development and youth-adult partnership. Recently the committee held their first workshop, which was attended by 13 families. The youth committee members planning, developed and delivered all three elements of the workshop, including a presentation on rabbit breeds, a rabbit equipment game, and a showcase of several different rabbit breeds. The workshop received positive feedback from youth participants and parents.



4-H Scholarship Application & Interviews: Opportunities for Learning & Recognition

The Green County 4-H program is fortunate, thanks to the generosity of the 4-H Adult Leaders Association and an individual donor, to be able to offer 4-H travel scholarships and several post-secondary scholarships. Youth members also need opportunities to develop written and oral communication skills necessary when applying and interviewing for future jobs. The Green County 4-H Scholarship Application process offers a prime opportunity for youth to gain real world experience developing a written application, which includes a cover letter, resume, essay and recommendation letter. All youth wishing to be considered for one of the available scholarships must also complete an interview with a panel of reviewers. While often there are more applicants than available scholarships, each youth does benefit from participating in the process. As a result of the application process, youth applicants state how the process has helped them build their resume, as well as how it has encouraged them to think more deeply about how 4-H has helped them grow more skills. Andrews also notes how remarkable it is to see the growth in youth through the interview process, as they grow more confident and comfortable speaking with adults.



Human Development & Relationships Educator **Bob Wiegel**

Rent Smart- Green- 3/18/26

The average American tenant is "cost-burdened" (paying 30% or more of income toward rent) for the first time in United States history. According to the 2022 State of Home Affordability in Wisconsin report, 65% of renters in the state pay more than 30% of their income on housing and 37% of renters spend more than 50%/month (among renters who earn less than \$50,000/year). The report also indicates that many renters don't earn enough to afford the average rental unit. The hourly wage needed to afford fair market rent for a two-bedroom Wisconsin home is \$18.56. Minimum wage in the state is \$7.25. The shortage of homes relative to demand (for both rentals and those for purchase) is -52,615. The lack of affordable housing availability makes it difficult for a community to attract and retain workers. Extension's Rent Smart course provides participants with knowledge and skills that can help them find and keep safe and affordable housing that meets their needs.

The six-session course features lessons on:

- Determining what they can afford to pay for rent
- Checking out the rental property and landlord
- Application process
- Understanding who's responsible for maintenance, repair, and care
- Communication skills
- Rental agreements

The Rent Smart program also offers a train-the-trainer course for community service providers so that they can use the curriculum to help their clients meet their housing needs. Rent Smart is designed to help participants find and keep safe, affordable, and quality rental housing. Among Rent Smart survey respondents in 2025, 99.6% said This class will or might help me obtain appropriate housing in the future. 99.2% of respondents said This class will or might help me keep housing in the future. We know from follow-up surveys that 94% of respondents who moved since completing the course report that the new housing is safer, more affordable, and/or better quality. When residents have reliable housing that they can afford and landlords have responsible tenants, communities benefit through having a stable workforce. Two residents of the Green County Jail with no rental history completed the entire course, including all activities and assessments. They brought a positive attitude to the program and stayed on task throughout.

Green County
Agriculture and Extension Education Committee
March 4, 2026 MINUTES

The March 4th, 2026 meeting of the Agriculture and Extension Education Committee was called to order at 8:05 am by the Ag & Extension Chair, Erica Roth. The meeting voucher was circulated for signatures.

Members present were: Susan Knox, Dawn Sass, and Erica Roth. Yvette Smith was excused. Peg Sheaffer was absent.

Also present—Samantha Wileman, Extension Business Manager; Lynn Perkins, Area Extension Director; Ellen Andrews, 4-H Youth Development Educator; Victoria Solomon, Community Development Educator; Bob Wiegel, Human Development & Relationships Educator; Jordyn Sattler, Regional Crops & Soils Educator; Casey Lobdell, Regional Livestock Educator; Olivia Roth, Office Specialist; Jessy Bradish, Renewable Energy Specialist; and Diane Mayerfeld, Senior Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Statewide Coordinator.

Public Comment – No public comments were presented.

Green County Educator Reports--Written Report for Educators

Written Educator Reports were reviewed. No questions were presented.

Green County Educator Report – Ellen Andrews, 4-H Youth Development

Ellen Andrews gave an overview of the 2025-2026 Thrive Survey and enrollment data. Green County had a 30.5% responder rate to the Thriving Survey from the 203 eligible youth. The Green County 4-H program, much like other programs, has a bell curve for engagement levels, meaning most members fit in the “moderate” involvement. The data also showed improvements in all program quality measures, and all measures fit in the “High Quality” range. Andrews showed that the overall program quality has improved by .19%. She also shared quotes from members about the program and what they have learned in the program. The overall enrollment has also been steadily increasing for both youth members and adult volunteers.

Minutes Approval

Sass moved to approve the February 2026 Ag & Extension committee meeting minutes as corrected and Knox seconded. Motion passed. The changes presented were to include the passing of the chair at the beginning of the minutes, and to note Roth excusing herself from the closed session.

Review and approval of the Green County Community Perspectives on Large-Scale Solar Development Report

Solomon gave an overview on the community preparation conversations regarding large-scale solar project. Jessy Bradish, the Renewable Energy Specialist; and Diane Mayerfeld, the Senior Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Statewide Coordinator were present via zoom. Sass moved to approve the Green County Community Perspectives on Large-Scale Solar Development Report as presented to be submitted to the county board and Knox seconded. Motion passed.

Bill Approval

Sass moved to approve the February EFT payments of \$13.06 and the February presented check payments of \$960.70, and to include RICOH invoice once received up to \$180.00, seconded by Knox. Motion passed.

Area Extension Director Updates

Area 15 Staffing Update – No staffing update was presented.

Business Manager Updates

Sheriff/Jail/Justice Center Project Updates – Wileman presented about the potential upcoming Sheriff/Jail/Justice Center project and how it will affect the operations of the Extension Office. A proposed letter was handed out to committee members that will be submitted to the property committee to potentially obtain more office space. The Justice Center will be moving to a single secure entrance starting potentially in April of 2027. The Extension entrance to the building will not be available from 8:00am-4:30pm, Monday – Friday during operating hours. Wileman and the rest of the Extension staff noted importance of keeping Extension accessible, visible, and welcoming for all community members. Sass requested the letter as presented to be submitted to the property committee as soon as possible.

Summer Staff Updates – Andrews notified the committee of the two summer staff position candidates that were selected for the 2026 summer.

Tractor Safety Kits – Wileman notified the committee they will be donating the first-aid kits for the Tractor Safety participants again this year. Wileman has not received a total from Blackhawk Technical College yet, but will plan to order the kits in March/April.

Other Business –

No other business was presented.

Next meeting: Wednesday—April 8th, 2026 at 8:00am.

Motion by Sass, second by Knox to adjourn at 9:16 am. Motion passed.

Minutes submitted by Smith/Wileman.