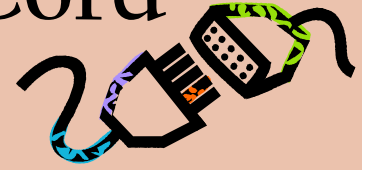




**UW**  
**Extension**

# The Extension Cord

## Connecting Knowledge with Need



NOVEMBER 2008

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## Welcome to the County: Erin LaFaive, New Horticulture Educator



Erin Heidtke LaFaive was hired as the Horticulture Educator for Eau Claire County.

Erin was born and raised in Chippewa Falls, WI. She obtained a Bachelor's of Science degree from UW-Eau Claire in Geography with an emphasis in Natural Resource Management and a Masters of Science degree in Environmental Studies from UW-Madison. Her graduate work focused on vegetation studies including ethnobotany.

Erin has worked for commercial and educational greenhouses, nonprofit organizations, and held numerous teaching assistant positions.

Her last position was at the Nature Conservancy in Madison, where she helped develop a web-based application that provides easy access to data and computer models that support management and policy decisions related to river basin management.



As horticulture educator, Erin will focus on conducting an assessment of Eau Claire County's horticulture and natural resource education needs, supporting the Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and assisting the public with information and education. Please feel free to contact Erin if you have suggestions on how the Horticulture Educator can better serve the Eau Claire area.



## Cultivating Change: Summits Held to Address Poverty in Eau Claire County

Over 130 people attended the *ChangeMakers Summits* held in August and September including elected officials, representatives from local churches, business, teachers and concerned community members.

Participants identified gaps and barriers in the community and discussed ideas for grassroots solutions. For example, to combat housing problems in the Augusta area one group suggested a community support program to "re-habit" unused or rented homes for homeless, transitional or low income housing.

Evaluations indicate 95 percent of the participants "felt their voice was heard" during the process. Eighty-nine percent indicated the summit worked to engage them in impacting poverty.

The summits increased awareness of local solutions to combat poverty and promote opportunity. The summits also engaged citizens of low income in a community change process—a critical step to expand social capital.

For more information about getting involved or the results of the summits, contact Julie Keown-Bomar at 839-4712.

### ChangeMakers' Top Local Solutions

- Expand economic development efforts to attract jobs paying livable wage. (Augusta)
- Community based treatment (for offenders) instead of incarceration. (Eau Claire)

2008 Top Local Solutions, ChangeMakers' Summits, Augusta and Eau Claire.



*(above & below)* Research shows the after school hours to have the highest incidence of risk-taking behavior occurring with elementary age youth. To fill in the gaps, Eau Claire County 4-H has expanded its after school programming for 2008-2009 with a grant from J.C. Penney and a partnership with the Eau Claire Boys & Girls Club.

## J.C. Penney and Boys & Girls Club are New Partners in After School 4-H



Securing a J.C. Penney grant has allowed Eau Claire County 4-H to expand its after school programming for 2008-2009. The program, which provides enriching programming for elementary school students, is now offered Monday through Friday each week. Program sites are Lakeshore and Longfellow elementary schools and the Eau Claire Boys & Girls Club.

on projects which help youth master new skills, learn to work cooperatively, and contribute to their community.

The Boys & Girls Club joins UW-Extension, the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program, the Eau Claire Area School District and the UW-Eau Claire Service Learning Program as partners in providing 4-H educational experiences in the after school hours.

Two 4-H Positive Youth Development Interns from UW-Eau Claire are serving as leaders and educators under the guidance of the 4-H Youth Development Agent, Katy Forsythe. Educational programming emphasizes hands-

Research shows that the after school time frame to be a critical period when the highest incidence of risk-taking behavior occurs in elementary age youth.



## First in the State: Eau Claire County 4-H Hosts the Premier State 4-H Dog Agility Show

4-H members from 21 counties around the state came to Eau Claire on September 20 to participate in the first ever State 4-H Dog Agility Show held at the Expo Center grounds. Dog agility is a fun, healthy sport in which the youth handler and dog team compete to complete a challenging course of obstacles such as jumps, tunnels, a seesaw, a dogwalk and an A-frame as quickly as possible.

Youth gain skills including teamwork, patience, confidence



*(above)* **Leading the way:** Eau Claire County 4-H Dog Project members and volunteers planned, executed and evaluated the first ever State 4-H Dog Agility Show. 4-H members from 21 counties around the state came to the Expo Center grounds on September 20 to participate.

and problem-solving. They also learn much about being responsible and nurturing pet owners. In addition, they learn about a healthy free time activity that they can become involved in now, and in the future.

An additional benefit of hosting this event was leadership development in Eau Claire County 4-H Dog Project members and volunteers, as they planned, carried out and evaluated the event.

## Recognition: Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) Receives 2008 Regent's Award

On September 16, 2008, Nancy Coffey, Pamela Warren-Armstrong and Joy Weisner were among the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) staff members recognized by the UW System with the 2008 Regents' Academic Staff Excellence Award.

The Regents' Award is the highest recognition bestowed on members of the UW System Academic Staff.

Coffey is the WNEP Coordinator for Eau Claire County and Warren-Armstrong and Weisner are both Nutrition Educators.

WNEP provides knowledge and skills that enhance the quality of life for limited-resource families, youth and adults. In Eau Claire County WNEP staff provides programming to approximately 19



different agencies such as the Eau Claire and Augusta school districts, Eau Claire city and county programs and non-profits. Programming primarily focuses on nutrition, but also may include hygiene, food safety, gardening, cooking, physical activity, and money management.

To learn more about WNEP contact the Extension office at 839-4712.

(left) Meet the Eau Claire County WNEP staff: Joy Weisner, Nutrition Educator; Nancy Coffey, WNEP Coordinator; and Pamela Warren-Armstrong, Nutrition Educator. WNEP recently received the 2008 Regent Academic Staff Excellence Award. The program was selected based on demonstrated excellence, initiative and creativity and outstanding achievement.

## Bringing Poverty to the Forefront: Coffey Receives Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement

On September 18, 2008, Nancy Coffey, coordinator of the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program through the Eau Claire County UW-Extension, received the Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement by UW Colleges and UW-Extension Chancellor David Wilson.

The Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement recognizes outstanding performance by an individual, program or unit that has advanced UW Colleges' or UW-Extension's commitment to civic engagement and/or service learning.

Coffey was identified as a recipient of this award due to her hard work, guidance and leadership that has helped bring poverty to the attention of Eau Claire County

stakeholders and helped build a strategy to help reduce and prevent poverty.

Coffey chairs the Hunger Prevention Group that in 2006 began researching and writing on local services, barriers and gaps that keep individuals and families in poverty.

The issue papers that the Hunger Prevention Coalition developed were shared with Clear Vision Eau Claire and will continue to help create a broad collective vision to impact poverty and help people in the area meet basic needs.

Coffey is the coordinator for the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) that helps limited resource families and individuals



(above) Nancy Coffey pictured with UW-Extension Chancellor David Wilson. Coffey received the Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement for her leadership in bringing poverty to the attention of Eau Claire County stakeholders including Clear Vision Eau Claire.

choose healthful diets, purchase and prepare healthful food and handle it safely, and become more food secure by spending their food dollars wisely.

For more information about the Hunger Prevention Coalition or WNEP contact the Extension Office at 839-4712.



*Hmong Cookbook* contains easy-to-read recipes, an introduction to Hmong culture, and nutritional analyses. Cost is \$8.00. Proceeds support local Hmong business, entrepreneur grants and scholarships. Copies can be purchased at the Extension office.

## Hmong Cookbook Shares Culture & Cuisine

Looking to expand your knowledge of Hmong cuisine and culture? A new *Hmong Cookbook* features specialty dishes from Hmong cooks in the Chippewa Valley. Edited by Julie Keown-Bomar, Nancy Coffey and Kong Vang, it is one of the only Hmong cookbooks produced.

Project organizers hope that this cookbook will spark interest in buying and cooking with locally grown vegetables and sharing and preserving Hmong cultural heritage. Few of the recipes contributed had ever been published before. This full-color, beautifully illustrated cookbook includes:

- 15 easy to read recipes
- an introduction to Hmong culinary culture
- profiles and photos of each

- contributor and dish, and
- nutritional analysis of each recipe.

Dishes include a mixture of daily and celebratory meals such as

**“ This is an innovative project that we hope will benefit generations to come.”**

**- Julie Keown-Bomar**

beef salad (*laj*), curry noodles (*khob poon*), and Hmong egg rolls (*kab yaub*). Each page is illustrated with traditional *Paj ntau* or *Paj ntaub* geometric designs.

"This is an innovative project that we hope will benefit generations to come," says Editor Julie Keown-Bomar, "for this book we worked with the community."

Editors collaborated with cooks from the Hmong community, local non-profits, and students from the University of Wisconsin-Stout to help with nutritional analysis, food styling and photography.

Through their research, Keown-Bomar and Coffey gained knowledge of dietary habits of the Hmong community which will assist them in designing programming that addresses nutrition and obesity.

Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will support Hmong business, entrepreneur grants and scholarships in the Western Wisconsin area.

*Hmong Cookbook* costs \$8.00 and can be purchased at the Extension office.



## Prescription Drug Working Group Investigates Development of Collection Program

As a result of growing concerns in the community, the Eau Claire County Prescription Drug Working Group was formed to investigate the development of a collection program for waste pharmaceuticals.

The group is chaired by Family Educator, Julie Keown-Bomar and members are representatives from city-county government, law enforcement, the medical community and concerned citizens.

For several months the group has examined the problems that stem from improper disposal of pharmaceuticals, contemplated the purpose for having a collection program, looked at other programs that have

been established by other jurisdictions, and investigated applicable rules, regulations, and guidelines.

Based upon their findings, the Group is recommending the following:

1. Conduct an initial one-day awareness and collection event for waste pharmaceuticals from households,
2. Establish a permanent collection program for continuous collection of waste pharmaceuticals from households in cooperation with local law enforcement offices, and
3. Arrange for centralized assemblage of all materials to transport the materials to an appropriate

### Prescription Drug Working Group's Statement of Purpose:

To protect the health and safety of Eau Claire County residents and the environment by developing effective educational resources and safe disposal options for prescription drugs through public/private collaboration and community partnerships.

facility for final destruction of the materials.

To become involved or for more information, please contact Julie Keown-Bomar.

## Nutrient Management Evaluation Project: Results Show Farmers Save Money While Improving Water Quality

Follow-up survey work on nutrient management planning was conducted on 13 farms by Mahlon Peterson, Eau Claire UW-Extension agricultural agent. In 2006, farm families wrote their own nutrient management plans in workshops conducted by Peterson and Gary Osborne, Eau Claire County Land Conservation Division.

The farms surveyed produced agricultural crops on 2,610 tillable acres.

All of the producers reported 100 percent of their land was covered by their nutrient management plan. None of them reported having major problems following their plan.

In addition, 100 percent of the farmers reported their nutrient management program had a positive effect on surface and groundwater quality in their neighborhood.

Forty six percent of the farmers reported an average savings of \$17 per acre on purchased fertilizer. On

average, each producer saved \$3,400 for the year.

Overall annual saving for the 190 Eau Claire County producers who have written their own nutrient management plans exceeds \$608,000.



### Results Show...

“...100 percent of the farmers reported their nutrient management program had a positive effect on surface and groundwater quality in their neighborhood..”

2008 Nutrient Management Evaluation Project, Eau Claire County UWEX.



## Grant Program Designed to Address Hmong Agriculture

Eau Claire County UW-Extension received a state sponsored grant to work with area Hmong farmers in 2006-2007. Major goals were to help these producers:

1. Adapt new technologies to expand growing seasons.
2. Improve marketing strategies.

3. Increase knowledge of pesticides and fertilizers.
4. Expand and diversity crop base.

In 2008, Xue Xiong, a freshman from UW-Eau Claire continued to work with several families on the goals outlined.

If funding is available for 2009, Xiong and two other interns will continue to work on the project. The special emphasis will be on pesticide use and safety.



## Eau Claire County Farms Participate in Statewide Research Projects

Each year land owners and farmers are involved in the statewide research projects conducted by the UW-System's campus-based faculty/specialists and county-based faculty. In 2008, twenty-one Eau Claire County farms were involved in the following research projects

### Dairy Modernization Survey

Four dairy producers were surveyed as part of the Dairy Modernization Survey conducted by David Kammel, UW-Extension agricultural engineer. The survey compared changes in environment, operation size, and changes in management brought about because of the modernization process on their farms.

### Cost of Raising Dairy Heifers in Wisconsin

Two county dairy producers were part of

an in-depth Cost of Raising Dairy Heifers in Wisconsin study conducted by Pat Hoffman, dairy scientist at UW Research Farm near Marshfield. This study compared the costs of raising dairy heifers in smaller herds and larger herds.

### Anthracnose Study

Two other county farmers were part of the Anthracnose study conducted this year. Anthracnose is a fungal disease that can kill individual plants and cause stand\* decline. These particular fields were selected because of problems growing healthy alfalfa stands

### Nutrient Management Survey

Thirteen farmers are part of a Nutrient Management Evaluation Project that measures results for farmers that adopt nutrient management plans. Two survey types were

conducted by Mahlon Peterson, agricultural agent. The first survey was conducted to establish a baseline. A second survey is conducted once the farmers have implemented their plan for one growing season (see *Nutrient Management Evaluation Project* for survey results).

All research projects are used to improve the agricultural industry through programming and assistance to farmers.

\*stand: A recognizable area of plants that is relatively homogeneous and can be managed as a single unit.





The Extension office offers **FREE** testing on pressure canner gauges.



*Don't own a canner?* The Extension office rents pressure canners. Cost is \$5.00 for every 3 days with a \$5.00 deposit.

# Crazed by Canning? The Extension Office Offers Resources & Services on Food Preservation



The Extension office offers services and publications to assist in safe food preservation.

**Pressure Gauge Testing:** Office staff is able to test pressure canner gauges with a highly sensitive heat compensator. The compensator measures the accuracy of the gauge. Customers receive a written diagnosis. If the gauge is more than 2 pounds off, customers are recommended to purchase a new gauge.

**Pressure Canner Rentals:** If you don't have a canner but want to try your hand at it, the Extension office rents Presto pressure canners. Rental fee is \$5.00 for every 3 days with an additional \$5.00 deposit. The deposit is reimbursed when the canner is returned on-time and undamaged.

### Publications:

In addition to equipment, the Extension office carries a series of publications on canning everything from tomatoes to venison. Cost for each publication ranges from \$2.50 to \$5.00 or can be downloaded in PDF form for free from the UWEX Learning store website at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu>.

The Extension office also carries the popular *So Easy to Preserve* by The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension.

On backorder for several weeks, *So Easy to Preserve* is back on the shelves at the Extension office and can be purchased for \$21.00.

### Food Preservation Publications

- *Freezing Fruits & Vegetables B3278*
- *Canning Vegetables Safely B1159*
- *Canning Fruits Safely B0430*
- *Homemade Pickles & Relishes B2267*
- *Canning Meat, Wild Game, Poultry & Fish Safely B3345*

Publications can be purchased at the Extension office or downloaded for **FREE** in PDF form from the following website:

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu>



### Extension Staff

- Mahlon Peterson.....Co-Dept. Head/Agricultural Agent
- Julie Keown-Bomar.....Co-Dept. Head/Family Living Agent
- Katy Forsythe.....4-H & Youth Agent
- Mary Cork.....4-H Program Assistant
- Erin LaFaive.....Horticulture Educator
- Nancy Coffey.....WNEP Coordinator
- Pamela Warren-Armstrong.....WNEP Educator
- Joy Weisner.....WNEP Educator
- Karen Blaeser.....Administrative Assistant
- Michelle Haviland.....Office Associate
- Nikki Jackson.....Office Associate

### Words on Service

"You don't have to save the world. Just save your hometown. It will add up."

Hubert Humphrey