

## **Green County's Top Ten Issues for 2008-2011**

This document reflects the responses of 32 valued Green County stakeholders who came to our Green County UW-Extension Strategic Planning session on Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The participants brainstormed in small groups the top issues facing Green County over the next four years, and then selected their priority issues within our four program areas: Agriculture, Family Living, 4-H and Youth Development, and Community and Economic Development. In the large group, these small group priorities were then voted upon, and higher level priorities were thus selected. Green County UWEX faculty then reviewed this data and thematically organized the priority issues.

It is important to note that while each of these ten issues are of great importance to county stakeholders the Green County UW-Extension office's response to them will come in the form of applied research and educational programs. In some instances, the four agents in the UWEX will work collaboratively to address the issues, both within the office and with other county partners. An appropriate educational response may not exist for all of these issues, and in these cases other entities within the county will be better suited to address the issue.

### **1. Maintaining a solid economic base**

- Keeping and attracting young professionals and families
- New/expanding businesses
- Workforce training and development, skilled higher-wage jobs
- Aging of workforce and infrastructure

### **2. Protecting and preserving our agricultural land uses and natural resources**

- Balance of resources protection - agricultural production and rural living
- Protecting water supply

### **3. Preserving the family farm and adapting to changes in agribusiness**

- Preserving family farm – dairy traditions important to county and way of life...maintaining quality of life in small communities...retaining special character and values rather than just a bedroom community
- Smaller to larger farms, fewer family farms, loss of dairy industry
- Energy and fuel development

### **4. Cultivating future leaders and engaging youth in leadership and life skill development opportunities**

### **5. Providing quality education within state revenue caps**

- Funding cuts, referendums, program cuts, possible school closings

### **6. Addressing alcohol/drug abuse among youth and adults**

### **7. Preparing to meet needs of growing elderly population**

- How can we fund and find people to provide in home supports to elderly for custodial or medication management needs?
- Housing, transportation, and health care

### **8. Integrating the growing Latino population into the community**

### **9. Providing support and resources for parents and childcare providers**

### **10. Addressing the impact of rising costs of living**