



NEWS FROM EXTENSION

UW-MADISON DIVISION OF EXTENSION MANITOWOC COUNTY



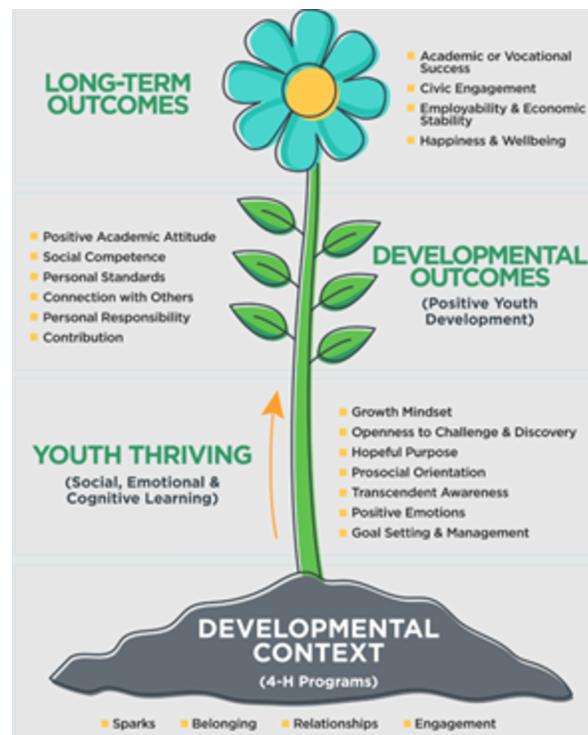
January 2025

Beyond Ready

By: Katrina Pionek

4-H Educator

This fast-paced world is constantly changing. Are the youth prepared for the changing world? The national 4-H has a goal to help 10 million youth be prepared to plan and navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. To reach the goal of 10 million youth, the 4-H uses a model called the 4-H Thriving Model. This model is based on many strands of youth development. There are four levels of the model that show connection of high-quality program setting and long-term outcomes we hope 4-H youth will achieve. The four areas are developmental context, youth thriving, developmental outcomes, and long-term outcomes. Here is an example of each stage of a youth developing over time from 4-H camp experiences.



Developmental Context- A first-time 4-H camper was excited to participate in nature activities.

Youth Thriving- A youth who normally becomes homesick easily when away from her family is now



willing to apply for other educational travel experiences because of their positive experience at camp.

Developmental Outcomes- A counselor supports an upset camper with empathy and compassion.

Long-term Outcomes- After many years of participating in their county 4-H camp on a variety of levels, she has decided to pursue a degree in Environmental Science.

Protein: Dairy's Superpower

By: Angie Ulness

Agricultural Educator



Protein is an essential nutrient that plays a critical role in overall health. Not all protein sources provide the same benefits. High quality proteins contain all of the essential amino acids that the body must get from food each day. Dairy foods are a natural source of high-quality protein, supplying both casein and whey. These proteins are complete and highly usable by the body, making dairy a reliable option for meeting daily protein needs.

Protein content varies across dairy products. A half cup of low-fat cottage cheese provides about 12 grams of protein. Milk and regular yogurt each provide about 8 grams of protein per serving. Greek yogurt stands out with an average of more than 16 grams of protein in a six-ounce serving.

Whey protein is another valuable component of dairy based diets, especially for athletes, older adults, and individuals working to manage their weight. Whey protein contains all essential amino acids and is rapidly digested, allowing the body to absorb and use it efficiently.

Overall, incorporating high quality protein from clean, simple foods supports fullness, sustained energy, and long-term health. By choosing dairy products with naturally occurring protein, individuals can meet their nutritional needs while keeping their diets balanced and straightforward.

Potato and Carrot Success!!

Submitted by: Laura Apfelbeck

Nutrition Educator



The Spud Run: Expanding Access to Fresh Local Produce in Northeast Wisconsin

Challenge

As a UW-Madison Extension staff member working to strengthen food security in Door, Kewaunee, and Manitowoc Counties, Laura Apfelbeck is helping pantries connect with local food producers through the USDA-funded WI Local Food Purchase Assistance Program. When that program lost funding in January 2025, many rural pantries were left without a reliable source of local foods.

Rural pantries are often overlooked in food distribution systems. Few have loading docks, even fewer have refrigerated trucks, and many are open only one or two days a week. Staffing is limited, often relying on one or two part-time employees who may not be able to manage heavy deliveries. Yet the benefits of local procurement are significant. Growers earn needed income, and pantries receive fresh, local produce that families want.

The Project

In many communities across these three counties, fresh potatoes are a household staple. Yet most food pantries do not have a consistent supply. With a few targeted phone calls, Apfelbeck identified a Wisconsin-based grower with the capacity to deliver potatoes at an affordable price. Through a partnership with Alsum Farms & Produce in Friesland, participants could purchase a 50-pound bag of russet potatoes for nine dollars, including delivery to Manitowoc with a minimum order of 30 bags. With a supplier secured at a sustainable price point, The Spud Run was launched.

Connections built through The Big Apple Project also supported expansion. After learning about the effort, Larry Peterson of Resurrection Church Food Pantry in Green Bay reached out to Alsum for pricing information. Peterson shared this message: "Thanks for the info! I called Dave at Alsum this afternoon and he is going to send me a price list of lots of different products. This is the info I have been hoping to get to the Coalition all year but didn't know where to find the opportunities. You have been just the resource I have been praying for."

The December Spud Run will include the original partners plus the Manitowoc Boys & Girls Club, United Ministries (serving pantries in St. Nazianz and Two Rivers), and the Kewaunee County Food Pantry in Algoma. The January Spud Run will expand to include seven pantries in Door County.



Dan Balch and Eric Weidner loading potatoes destined for Lakeshore Community Pantry



Tracy Bruce-Minehan and a Peters Pantry volunteer with potatoes from Alsum Farms



Mark Janiak at Kewaunee Co Food Pantry stocking potatoes from Alsum



Alsum Farms & Produce is known for their eco-friendly practices

On November 4, the pilot delivered 46 bags of potatoes (2,300 pounds) to four food pantries and two community meal sites in Manitowoc and Kewaunee Counties. The Big Apple Project offered a helpful model for logistics and partnerships. Because Alsum does not deliver directly to Kewaunee or Door Counties, the Manitowoc nonprofit Grow It Forward provided transport from Manitowoc, similar to their role in distributing apples.

Continuing Impact

Community partners are enthusiastic. By collaborating, pantries can increase buying power and reduce transportation costs. Still, most rural pantry managers do not have the capacity to design and pilot new multi-county distribution systems while meeting the immediate needs of the households waiting at their doors.

Extension plays a key role as connector and facilitator, helping create a sustainable model for long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships. Once established, these systems can continue to strengthen local food access well into the future.

By the Numbers

2,300 pounds of potatoes delivered in the pilot

46 bags distributed

6 organizations received potatoes in the first run

“ You have been just the resource I have been praying for. —Larry Peterson, Co-Chair, Brown County Hunger Coalition



November: CARROTS



Corteva Sponsorship

The Manitowoc County Hunger Coalition received a \$3000 Community Betterment grant from Corteva Agriscience to purchase locally grown produce for area food pantries. Harvest of the Month will continue through February. Harvest of the Month celebrates Wisconsin-grown foods and healthy eating through signage, recipes, cooking demos and tastings.

Community Impact

In November, Wilfert Farms of Manitowoc sold us 800lbs of carrots. Grow it Forward delivered the carrots to partners--Peters Pantry, Salvation Army Food Pantry, and First Presbyterian Community Dinners and Grow it Forward. FoodWise provided posters and signage to showcase carrots and offered in-person cooking classes with Nutrition Educator Jace Purdy. More than 500 families enjoyed fresh carrots as a result of this work.

Providing fresh, locally grown carrots supports nearby farmers reduces food miles, and ensures our neighbors receive the most nutritious, flavorful produce possible.

—Amber Daus, Grow it Forward CEO

Partners & Recognition

Fresh produce came to our pantries through Corteva's generous program. In addition, the West Foundation's gift allows FoodWise staff to continue working toward such initiatives. Success relies on participating community organizations including our fiscal agent, Manitowoc United Way. Together, we will continue to make healthy, local food more accessible.



Carrots are such a wonderful and versatile vegetable this time of year, everything from soups to Thanksgiving dinner.

—Tracy Bruce-Minehan, Peters Pantry manager



Tracy Bruce-Minehan from Peters Pantry and Laura Novak from Grow it Forward unload the fresh carrots.



Fresh carrots from Wilfert Farms



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Pathways to Well-Being: Exploring the 8 Dimensions of Wellness in Manitowoc County

By: *Cath Tease*

Health & Well-Being Educator

Wellness is more than just not being sick. It means feeling good in your body, your mind, and your relationships with others. The Wheel of Wellness helps explain this by showing eight important areas of life that all work together to keep us healthy and balanced. These areas are always part of our lives, even when we don't think about them. When we understand how each area affects the others, we can make better choices to take care of our overall well-being.

Extension educator, Cath Tease worked with the Lighthouse Recovery Community Center, several sober living homes and local businesses to create fun, nature-based and self-care activities. With support from two small grants from the Rural Opioid Technical Assistance-Regional Center, the project encouraged healthy activities instead of substance use and focused on helping people care for their physical, emotional and social health.

One grant focused on helping people in early recovery reconnect with nature through exciting activities like guided hikes, gardening, stargazing nights, sober swim events, and even family fishing days. A second grant brought calming and empowering practices such as breathwork and yoga to the community. Best of all, these activities were planned together with people who have lived experience, making programs more meaningful, supportive, and truly connected to the needs of those they serve.

The project showed that even small, community-based investments can create powerful ripple effects. Over just five months, 420 participants strengthened their connection to themselves, to one another, and to the wider community. The impact was felt deeply—captured best by one participant who shared, "Connection is the opposite of addiction."



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