



Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – June 2012

A skid steer safety training participant maneuvers the machine during the driving skills evaluation.

- [Community Gardens](#)
- [Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Assn. & Dip Into Lakes Workshop Series](#)
- [Skid Steer Safety Training Programs for Dairy Farm Employees](#)

Community Gardens

Last year we had 102 gardening families participate and this summer we are already at 105 families. The gardens were tilled perfectly this spring and now all we need is some RAIN!!! Keeping water in the tanks has really been a challenge. Many families take a smaller plot, but there are several that have a large garden area. We also offer space for the Salvation Army and Advocap to use for any of their membership.

One of the educational offerings we do for the gardeners is a newsletter that includes garden advice and items that need to be brought to their attention. They like the simple recipes which we include along with up to date information on the latest garden plants and diseases. One thing they hear from us every year is, “This is a community garden - watch out for your neighbor!” Gardeners are a great group of people. However, working with a project that is at the mercy of “Mother Nature,” can be a challenge at times.

Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association and Dip into Lakes Workshop Series

Diana Tscheschlok and regional UWEX Natural Resources Educator Chad Cook have been providing organizational development support to the newly forming Lake Winnebago Quality Improvement Association of Fond du Lac County. This lake association will soon be a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization of locals who care about the future of Lake Winnebago. The association is positioning itself to undertake grant applications, long range planning, aquatic plant management, and responses to other emerging lake issues. Anyone who cares about the future of Lake Winnebago is welcome to join. [Further information...](#)

Also this spring Cook and Tscheschlok hosted the Dip into Lakes workshop series. Four sessions addressed the health of fish populations in Lake Winnebago, lake ecology, the role of aquatic plants, invasive species, how Wisconsin laws protect the public’s right to enjoy rivers and lakes, the multi-million dollar impact recreation and tourism on Lake Winnebago bring to the area, and threats to the lake we may see in the future. About 60 people attended each session with most reporting that the presentations deepened their understanding of the topics. Watch for these seminars to be posted online and available on DVD later this year.

Skid Steer Safety Training Programs for Dairy Farm Employees

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has recently initiated a program to insure the safety of dairy farm workers with a focus on operations with 11 or more employees. Included in this effort are the unannounced safety inspections of a limited number of dairy farms on an annual basis. This has resulted in the need for formal safety training in various work-related areas. Several of the county's larger farms have requested that UW-Extension provide skid steer operation safety training to their employees. Skid steers are a common but dangerous machine found on most dairy farms. In the past year, about 75 employees from three different farms have participated in the on-farm training program. Over half of the employees who completed the training program were Hispanic. Hence, the program requires that the training and materials be presented in both English and Spanish. An interpreter was utilized at each of the three training sites. The program consists of classroom training with a PowerPoint presentation or video, a skid steer pre-operation walk-around, and an operational skills test. Post training surveys yielded very positive feedback regarding the training experience.

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