



Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – October 2013

Contact our office if you have questions about safely preserving food at home.

- [Wisconsin 4-H Centennial Celebration](#)
- [Food Preservation](#)
- [Affordable Care Act Informational Session](#)
- [Junior Master Gardeners/Community Gardens](#)

Fond du Lac County 4-H is Gearing Up to Take the Lead on the Centennial of Wisconsin 4-H Celebration

During the months of September and October, 4-H staff assistant Carmelo Dávila has been coordinating a number of activities to promote greater participation among our 4-H members in the upcoming celebration of the Centennial of Wisconsin 4-H. This initiative is part of our ongoing efforts to develop and promote a series of new 4-H projects emphasizing one or more aspects about the vibrant history of 4-H in Fond du Lac County, as well as other aspects of our County's local history and heritage.

Starting this past October, Fond du Lac County 4-H initiated a poster contest focusing on the Centennial of Wisconsin 4-H theme. The top three winning posters will be used throughout the county to promote 4-H. We are also planning to display all posters submitted at the 2014 County Fair. The Centennial of Wisconsin 4-H's theme is "100 Years of Growing Wisconsin Leaders." We are requiring participants to use this theme, and to provide orientation on where to find information about FDL County 4-H.

Beyond the poster contest, Dávila is leading the discussion with our 4-H community to find ways to engage our 4-H members in other heritage dissemination-focused activities or projects such as coordinating recorded oral history interviews with elder members of the community, documenting historical landscapes and structures through photographs or other visual mediums, developing innovative forms of storytelling, performing or visual arts projects emphasizing heritage awareness, and the mounting of a traveling exhibit. The proposed program will create new educational opportunities to engage 4-H youth in promoting community cohesion and pride, social inclusion, and the value of showing respect for others.

Food Preservation

Amanda Miller, Family Living Educator, reached a total of 135 Fond du Lac County residents with up-to-date, research-based information on safe, quality food preservation. This information was provided through the following programming:

Food Preservation Workshops: A total of 6 workshops were offered throughout the beginning of June to the end of August. The topics included: making jams/jellies, canning fruits and vegetables, canning tomatoes and salsa, making pickles, drying foods and successfully storing garden produce. Although the peak of the food preservation season has ended, workshops will continue through the rest of the year. Future sessions include, but are not limited to: preserving meat, food safety during the holidays, and planning a successful gardening year.

Dial Gauge Canner Testing: The UW-Extension office has a master dial gauge that tests dial gauge canners for accuracy.

The Wisconsin Safe Food Preservation Series, by Barbara Ingham (UW-Extension Food Safety Specialist): These resources are available at the UW-Extension office year-round and include basic canning information and recipes on: making jams & jellies, canning salsa safely, homemade pickles and relishes, tomatoes, canning fruits safely, canning vegetables safely, canning meat safely, and freezing fruits and vegetables. These publications are sold at the main office of the UW-Extension desk year-round.

Phone, email, mail and in person assistance to answer community members' food preservation/food safety questions.

Of those that participated in an evaluation of the food preservation programming, 81% said that they either "agree" or "strongly agree" with the following statement: *I will contact the UW-Extension office if I have questions about safely preserving food at home.*

Affordable Care Act Informational Session

A total of 24 participants attended an Affordable Care Act informational session hosted at UW-Extension by Amanda Miller and Shelley Tidemann, Family Living Educators. Caroline Gomez of Covering Kids and Families and the UW-Extension Healthcare Outreach Specialist, provided a brief summary of the ACA and Badger care+. The primary goal of the session was to provide key stakeholders in Fond du Lac County an opportunity to communicate and share their roles and questions regarding the ACA with others in the community. A few of the agencies/organizations represented included: ADVOCAP, Public Health Department, Department of Senior Services, St. Agnes Hospital, Salvation Army, and the Public Library. In addition, regional representatives from Moraine Lakes Consortium and WI Department of Health Services were present at the meeting.

Junior Master Gardeners

Junior Master Gardeners finished up the year early. At their last session they picked as much produce as was ready to harvest and took it to the Solution Center. The center was happy to receive tomatoes, peppers, onions and squash. The pumpkins will be picked later in October and used for decorations. The group still needs to clean-up the garden and pull out all the plants so it can get mulched and tilled.

Community Gardens

The Community Gardens will be closing October 25. The final newsletter was mailed recently. Fall harvest is in full swing so the newsletter included information on how to prepare and freeze the extra produce. It also included a listing of all the local food pantries to contribute extra produce for the needy. The Master Gardeners will be helping do a garden walk-through for a second harvest to be donated to local food pantries. When the weather permits, the gardens will be tilled for the fall. Next year a new water system should be ready to go for spring planting.

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