2015 Annual Report

UW-Extension · Ashland County

Supporting, Empowering, and Engaging the People of Ashland County by:

Supporting a Safe and Healthy Food Supply

Empowering Youth, Families, and Communities

Growing Strong Economies

Creating Resilient and Productive Environments

UW Extension

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Ashland County

From the Ashland County Office

Dear Partners and Friends,

For this report, we chose a photo rich format that we hope provides you with a broad overview of our work and valuable insight into how we strive to improve lives in Ashland County. We are relying on the old adage: a picture is worth a thousand words.

The University of Wisconsin Extension's Educational Priorities were developed to direct UW-Extension's educational work to transform lives, organizations, and communities. We've chosen to use the four Educational Priorities: Supporting a Safe and Healthy Food Supply, Empowering Youth, Families and Communities, Growing Strong Economies, and Creating Resilient and Productive Environments to organize this report. The four Educational Priorities will each headline pages of photos with descriptions of our programs that we think address each priority. Please take a couple of minutes to enjoy a snapshot of our work in 2015.

Thank you,

Your Ashland County Extension Office

University of Wisconsin-Extension provides statewide access to university resources and research so the people of Wisconsin can learn, grow and succeed at all stages of life. UW-Extension carries out the tradition of the **Wisconsin Idea** – extending the boundaries of the university to the boundaries of the state – through its four divisions of continuing education, entrepreneurship and economic development, cooperative extension, and broadcast and media innovations. Our Ashland County office is part of the division of Cooperative Extension and we provide education through four program areas: 4-H & Youth Development; Family Living and Nutrition Education; Agriculture and Horticulture; and Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development.

2015 Educators and Staff

Tom Wojciechowski
Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development (CNRED) Educator

Kathy Beeksma
Family Living Educator, WNEP Coordinator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties and Northwest Regional Associate

Doug Liphart
4-H and Youth Development Educator

Jason Fischbach
Agriculture Agent, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Matt Cogger
Horticulture Agent, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Joy Schelble
Bad River FRTEP (Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program) 4-H Coordinator

Donna Ganson
Nutrition Educator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Stephanie Bakker
Nutrition Educator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Amy Tromberg
Ashland County Office Assistant

Rebecca Butterworth
WNEP & Part Time County Support Staff

Heidi Ungrodt
Ad Hoc Nutrition Educator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Heather Laakso
Nutrition Educator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Ann Christensen
Nutrition Educator, Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Haley Hoffman
CNRED Intern

Travis Sherlin
CNRED Intern

Stewart Schmidt
CNRED Intern

Supporting a Safe and Heathy Food Supply

Promoting Food Sovereignty on the Bad River Reservation

Youth manoomin event: FRTEP helped coordinate a successful youth wild ricing event with Bad River Natural Resources, Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Commission, Healthy Lifestyles Youth Program, Bad River Youth Outdoors, Bad River Food Sovereignty, and community elders and cultural teachers.

WNEP Educates Our Community Across the Lifespan

Cooking for One or Two is a nutrition education series offered to seniors at four different sites. These classes teach a variety of topics such as food safety, portion awareness, choosing healthful foods, and much more. WNEP works with learners across the lifespan, from preschools, parents with small children, public schools and adults to senior learners.

Helping Children Eat Well

Nutrition Educator, Stephanie Bakker making strawberry mice with youth from the Take a Hike program, offered by the Mashkiisiibii Boys and Girls Club. Take a Hike offers youth a series of nutrition lessons during a hike on one of our local trails. It is an excellent collaboration between UWEX's Nutrition program, FRTEP, and Mashkisibi Boys and Girls Club.

Growing Food Year Round

Ashland Middle School high tunnel. Bad River Youth learn food production skills through a garden club hosted by Joy Schelble, FRTEP educator and the Bayfield County VISTA. Children learn other aspects of the food system and align school projects with the high tunnel education.

Connecting Youth to a Healthy, Culturally Relevant, Food Supply

The Rezberries 4-H Club at Bad River promotes food sovereignty and a healthy food supply by starting seeds and growing their own food in traditional raised bed gardens. Healthy and traditional foods also help reduce obesity and juvenile diabetes. Gardening increases physical activity. Cultural connection to food increases resiliency in youth.

Supporting Youth to Both Grow and Eat Healthy, Local Food

Making quesadilla faces with members of the Boys and Girls Club with vegetables from their own garden. Another collaboration with FRTEP, these children use culturally significant food that they helped grow. These collaborations bring about culturally relevant nutrition education.

Empowering Youth, Families and Communities

Representing Ashland County in Madison

UW-Extension Committee members traveled to Madison to meet with local legislators to tell them about the value of UW-Extension education to Ashland County organizations, youth, and families.

Helping Professionals to Support Strong Families

Family Living Educator, Kathy Beeksma, presents at a conference to help her UWEX colleagues learn how to integrate relationship skills in all their work. Being able to develop and maintain healthy relationships helps both at home and in the workplace.

Encouraging Youth to Become an Active Part of Civic Culture

Initiatives like the Superior Days Legislative forum and the Teen Court Program empower Ashland County youth by encouraging youth voices in government and getting youth involved in our democracy in a real way.

Family Living– Provided direct education to **312** individuals in 2015. Topics included: financial education, successful co-parenting, stress and anger, building strong families, strategic planning, childcare, parenting, credit & debt, and basic budgeting. 13 professionals were trained through money management coaching to provide financial education.

CANSKI

4-H CANSKI Group photo March 2015 Year End Shin Dig. 4-H CANSKI, also known as Chequamegon Area Nordic Ski Club, gets kids off the couch in the winter, and teaches them leadership and community service within the context of a strong community, a fun activity, and a club that serves as a vehicle for the 4 Essential Elements of Positive Youth Development.

Summer Camp 2015

4-H Summer camp gives youth a chance to exercise independence, mastery of new skills, generosity within the camp community and empowers them to be better community members. A summer camp experience contains all of the essential elements of positive youth development (and a whole lot of fun)!

Culturally Meaningful Outdoor Education

Take a Hike Mashkiisiibii Boys and Girls Club: FRTEP and WNEP educators provide meaningful experiential education as part of a long standing hiking club with Mashkiisiibii Boys and Girls Club kids. Children learn the importance of physical activity, healthy snacking, and traditional food/medicine plant identification.

Empowering Youth, Families and Communities

Empowering Youth to Explore Other Cultures

States' 4-H delegates are off to Finland to a homestay with Finnish 4-H families and attend 4-H Nordic Camp. 4-H International empowers youth to explore other cultures and other worldviews when they go abroad for exchanges, and to bring the world to their communities when they host.

Outdoor Safety Skills and Youth Development at Winter Camp

Winter Camp offers youth a chance to learn important skills, such as performing this ice rescue. 4-H Youth Development teaches youth the skills they need to be safe in the outdoor environment, to get outside and move, and to make their community a better place to live by training them with the skills they need to keep their community safe.

4-H Rock Climbing

Rock climbing and other outdoor leadership skills teach youth that they can do things they never thought they could, to be able to perform risk-benefit analysis, and to build relationships they can trust. They empower youth and teach self-reliance and teamwork, communication and leadership—all skills that our future community leaders will need.

WNEP Works in Every School

Nutrition Educator, Ann Christensen, works with a classroom of kids from Marengo Valley School. WNEP teaches across all grade levels, in every school in both Ashland and Bayfield Counties. Through the nutrition education that WNEP provides, Wisconsin students can become empowered to choose healthy lifestyle behaviors to help them reach their full potential.

Developing Leaders

The focus of the 2015 Ashland and Bayfield County Leadership Program is to create a network of local leaders who will help guide our communities through change while insuring the healthy quality of life we so cherish. This image shows the graduation ceremony for the class which included a guest presentation by Representative Beth Meyers and a visit from State Senator Janet Bewley.

4-H Youth Archery

Youth from around the community learn life skills such as focus and discipline through participation in Ashland County 4-H archery and other shooting sports. These opportunities also give the youth a sense of belonging and a venue for multi-generational mentoring.

Growing Strong Economies

Ashland and Bayfield County Leadership Program

The four month program includes leadership skill building, networking and learning more about the region. One of the events included a discussion with Ashland Area Development Corporation director, Dale Kupczyk and Bayfield County Economic Development Corporattion director, Scottie Sandstrom. After a spirited discussion participants were given a tour of the Ashland Area Enterprise Center.

Providing Financial Education to Professionals

Ashland & Bayfield Counties collaborate in many programs. One successful cross-county program is Money Management Coaching. This full day workshop teaches community professionals how to work with families to build their financial capability.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

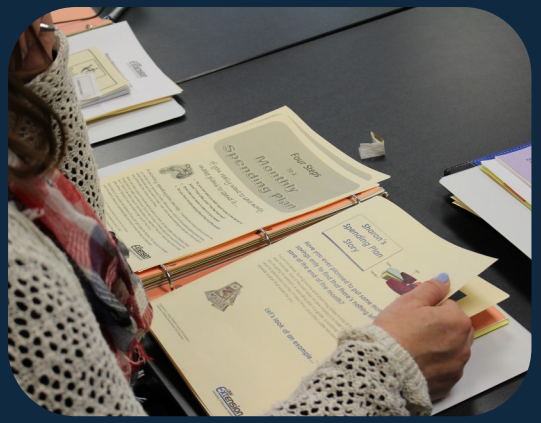
The Wisconsin Innovation Network, Lake Superior (WIN-LS) chapter continues work to promote entrepreneurship and technology innovation in our region. This photo shows the business idea contest that was held in conjunction with the annual Business Conference. Tom serves on the WIN-LS board and helps plan and implement various programs of the organization.

Elementary Adventure Day

The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center was one of three locations for 2015 Elementary Adventure Days. One session provided 4-H Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) activities for Ashland County youth, promoting STEM careers and career readiness, which contributes to growing a strong economy and understanding the local environment.

Promoting Economic Vitality

During 2015, Tom led a strategic planning process for the Ashland Area Development Corporation (AADC). This was the first strategic plan developed by AADC and it involved a lengthy and thoughtful process. The plan was completed after several months of work and was unanimously adopted by the AADC board of directors at their October meeting. Their new mission statement reads: "To create, maintain and promote economic vitality that improves the quality of life of the people in the Ashland region."



Building Financial Security for Ashland County Families

When teaching financial education, it is important to give families practice in developing, implementing and revising their plans. Practicing skills helps to increase the likelihood that families will use what is taught to increase financial stability.

Creating Resilient and Productive Environments

The Agripreneur Program

Initiated in 2015 as a part of the USDA Grant entitled "Meeting the Challenge of Winter: Using High Tunnels to Expand Farm-to-School in Northern Wisconsin," the Agripreneur Program is a student cooperative growing program in the Chequamegon Bay region. This program provides interested students with a more in-depth education around small-scale farming. Agripreneur Program Goals: to grow a crop, to take the crop to market and to learn more about small-scale farming in the Chequmaegon Bay region using High Tunnel technology.

Master Gardener Display and Volunteers at the 2015 Farm and Garden Show

The Master Gardener Volunteer training is a program that is offered annually in Ashland and Bayfield Counties. This training program has two goals. The first is to educate participants on the basics of horticulture. The second goal is for the participants to use their horticultural knowledge in community involvement.

Master Gardener Volunteers are an integral part of the local community. Two of the activities that Master Gardener volunteers organize and participate in are the Ask a Master Gardener booths at the Farm and Garden show in Ashland and in Bayfield at the Bayfield In Bloom event.

Harvesting Traditional Food

Summer Blueberry Harvest: FRTEP provided meaningful traditional foods education as a new component of the Bad River Youth Outdoors program. Youth learned how to identify and harvest blueberries. Next steps include coordinating an extended berry camp next summer to give youth more opportunities to harvest and learn about blueberries.

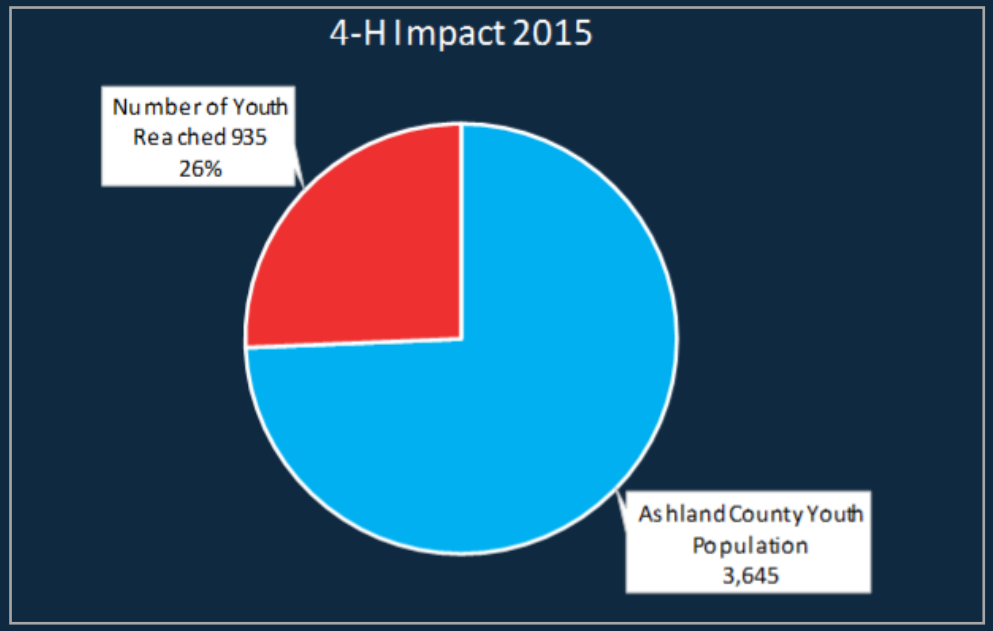
Renewable Energy

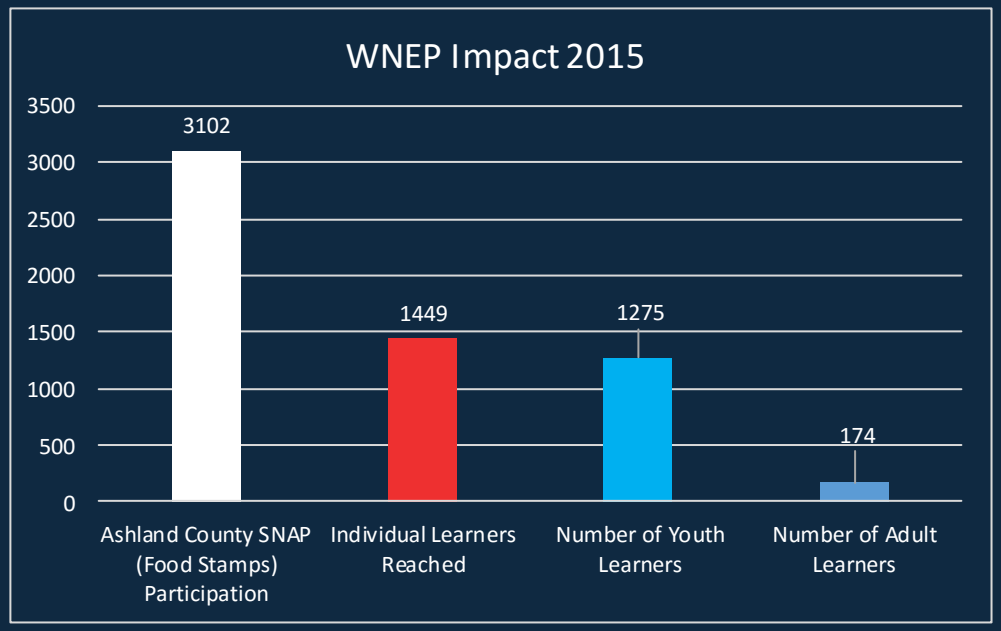
During 2015 we saw a resurgence of interest in energy efficiency and renewable energy in our region. Interested citizens attended a tour and discussion at Bailey's Greenhouse. Tom gave a presentation at the event, updated county data on energy use, reconvened the area Energy Independence network and researched opportunities for energy efficiency projects in county facilities and for adding solar power to county facilities. Tom is gathering first hand data from a solar photovoltaic system he installed at his home in 2015 and plans to make this data available to area citizens considering renewable systems.

Local Farming & Conservation

Tom works with the County Board and Committees. Each year he assists with planning and delivery of a Board Retreat. In 2015 the focus of the retreat was conservation and farming practices in the county. The Land and Water Conservation Department organized and George Mika hosted a tour for board members. Tom also worked during much of 2015 with the county's effort to review and update its Comprehensive Plan. That work will continue into 2016.

Our Impact on Ashland County in 2015



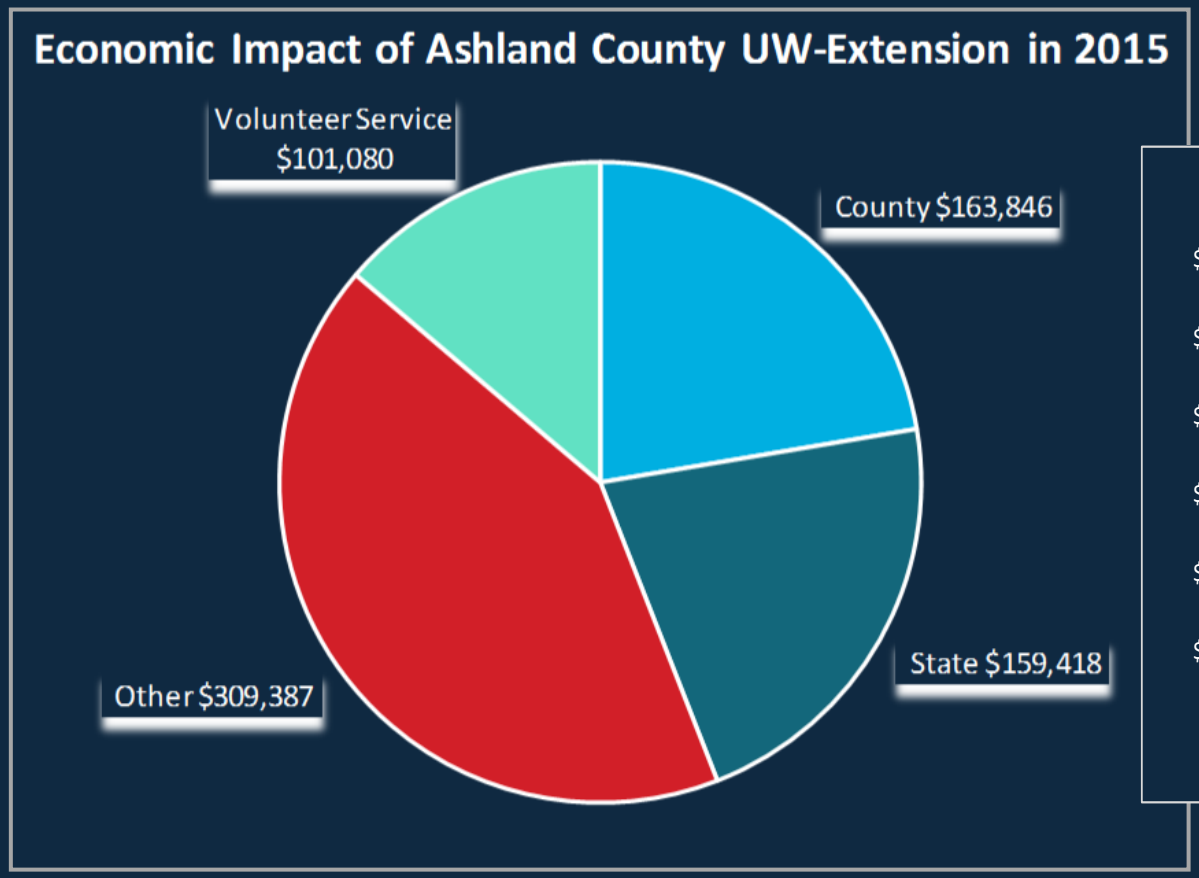


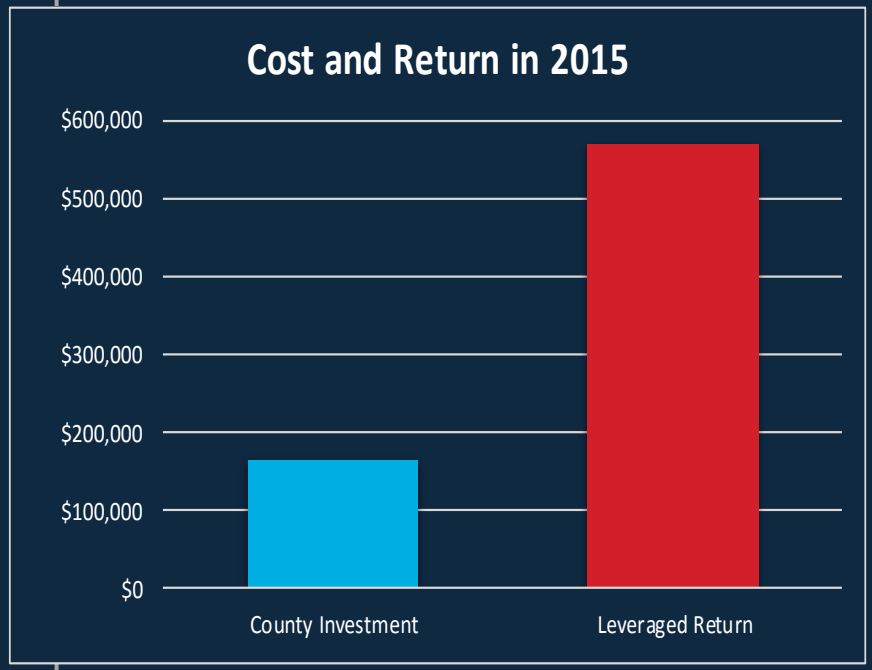
Did you know? Ashland County WNEP had **5,477** teaching contacts and Ashland County 4-H had **1,876** teaching contacts in 2015 !

CNRED– Impacts of 2015 Clean Sweep Hazardous Waste Collection Event

Approximately 156 people participated. We collected:

- 1.5 pounds of controlled substance meds
- 66 pounds of non-controlled meds;
- 3,566 pounds of paint & stain related materials
- 6 pounds of mercury
- 201 pounds of corrosives
- 331 pounds of pesticides/toxic liquids
- 560 pounds of ethylene glycol
- 142 light tubes
- Miscellaneous items like batteries, ballasts & aerosols





University of Wisconsin Extension offices are located in all 72 counties in the state. Extension is funded from a combination of County, State, Federal and program/research funds. Generally, the counties supply 40% of educator salaries plus support staff and operation costs. The State provides 60% of salaries plus many forms of support such as state specialists who can be called upon to provide research, education or programming in our county. Our Nutrition Education Program is fully funded by federal dollars.

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