

Jackson, Trempealeau, Buffalo & Pepin FoodWise: Committee Report: July 2025

FoodWise Projects & Professional Development - April Duval, Coordinator & Mariel Ortez, Educator:

- ❖ PEARS data (Cathy and April)
- ❖ Curriculum review, lesson planning updates for 4K lessons (Mariel)
- ❖ Preparation for parent program at Independence Head Start to be held in August (Mariel)
- ❖ Harvest of the Month for the 2025-2026 School year. April is creating the monthly informational handouts with Mariel translating them into Spanish. Support Staff or community partners have created space on the Extension webpages or Community Coalition spaces.

<https://trempealeau.extension.wisc.edu/harvest-of-the-month/>

<https://www.jacksoninaction.org/harvestofthemoth>

<https://buffalo.extension.wisc.edu/harvest-of-the-month/>

<https://pepin.extension.wisc.edu/nutrition-education/harvest-of-the-month/>

Examples from Jackson County:

**HARVEST OF THE MONTH
JULY: PEPPERS**

Pick a Pepper

SELECT
Select peppers that are firm and bright colored. Peppers are in season in Wisconsin July to October

STORE
Refrigerate and use within 5 days

USES
Slice peppers into strips and eat raw with your favorite dip
Roast or sauté sliced peppers and add to burritos or fajitas

Nutrition

Peppers have vitamin C. Vitamin C keeps us healthy by helping wounds heal.

Red bell peppers have twice the amount of vitamin C as green peppers.

Antioxidant help prevent chronic diseases, like heart disease

Taste Testing

Try different colors of sweet peppers, like red, yellow, orange, and green. Which is the sweetest? Which one is your favorite?

Logos: Wisconsin harvest of the month, Jackson In Action, FOOD WISE, Extension UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Recipe: Stuffed Peppers

Ingredients:

- 1/2 pound ground Italian sausage, turkey sausage, or beef
- 1 onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1 can (15 ounces) spaghetti sauce
- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (divided)
- 4 green or red peppers (softball sized)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Sauté sausage and onion in a large skillet over medium heat until browned and cooked to 155°F. Pour off any fat.
3. Stir in oregano, spaghetti sauce, rice, and 1/2 cup cheese.
4. Wash peppers, cut in half lengthwise, and remove seeds. Arrange in a 9x13-inch baking dish.
5. Spoon sausage mixture into the peppers, mounding on the top.
6. Cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and sprinkle remaining 1/2 cup cheese on top. Continue to cook another 10 minutes.

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/stuffed-peppers/>

Logos: Wisconsin harvest of the month, Jackson In Action, FOOD WISE, UW-MADISON EXTENSION, QR CODE (SCAN ME)

**PLEASE NOTE: April is at a 60% reduced appointment for the rest of summer: (24 hours per week) + using leave time
Mariel will be on a 60% reduced appointment for the summer: (24 hours per week) + using leave time**



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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Update on FoodWise and Extension’s SNAP-Ed programming

For over 30 years UW–Madison Extension has been providing local nutrition education throughout our state that has been funded by the federal SNAP-Ed grant program. Our FoodWise educators have been a cornerstone of Extension’s mission to improve the health and well-being of Wisconsin residents. FoodWise reaches over 133,000 people with nutrition education and community-based strategies to support healthy eating and active lifestyles – partnering with schools, food pantries, farmers markets, and community centers to engage children, families, and seniors. Despite extensive advocacy efforts by Extension, UW–Madison’s University Relations, and partners such as the Wisconsin Counties Association, the congressional budget reconciliation bill signed into law on July 4 eliminated all SNAP-Ed funding effective September 30, 2025.

FoodWise is one of six SNAP-Ed implementing agencies in the state, and Extension is currently navigating the difficult process of winding down our SNAP-Ed-funded programming including a layoff notice process for affected employees. We will continue FoodWise programming through September 30, 2025. We will also be exploring all possible pathways to sustain some of the program’s capacity through alternative funding sources, including leveraging our infrastructure, expertise, and remaining EFNEP funding.

This is not just a loss of funding – it is a loss of services that have been vital to communities across Wisconsin. FoodWise’s staff of more than 90 educators across the state have directly helped families with limited incomes make a healthier choice for their future. The impact will be felt in schools, food pantries, and community centers where our educators have helped families make healthier choices and stretch limited food dollars.

FoodWise has always been about more than just nutrition education. It’s about empowering communities to thrive. We know that SNAP-Ed makes Wisconsin healthier. We are proud of the work we have done and the lives we have changed for the better. Thank you for supporting our staff, our programs and our mission. Extension’s commitment to your community remains and we will continue to bring university resources to residents in your area across our program areas.

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**7/23/25: Lay-off notices were issued to FoodWise staff: Mariel’s last day on payroll is October 1<sup>st</sup> and April’s last day on payroll is December 1<sup>st</sup>.**

For questions please contact: Area Extension Director Sarah Torbert at [sarah.torbert@wisc.edu](mailto:sarah.torbert@wisc.edu) or Nutrition Education Coordinator April Duval at [april.duval@wisc.edu](mailto:april.duval@wisc.edu)