

UW-Madison Extension Implements Regional Agriculture Staffing Strategy in Northeast Wisconsin Counties



The University of Wisconsin-Division of Extension Agriculture Institute is moving to a structure of having regional educators across the state. Northeast Wisconsin is one of the first regions to implement this staffing strategy. Counties involved in this transition include Brown, Door and Kewaunee Counties. Regional educators will provide research-based education to dairy, and crop producers by assessing the needs of farmers across their region and designing and delivering educational programming and services to meet these needs.

Dairy and crop production are the largest agricultural industries in the state and Regional Educators in Brown, Door and Kewaunee Counties will offer specific expertise that can serve those industries across several counties. Regional Educators will:

- Design and deliver educational meetings and field days in the counties they represent
- Provide consultation on production challenges to farmers and agricultural consultants
- Contribute to digital outreach opportunities on agricultural topics through email, websites, and social media
- Collaborate with other educators and specialists across the state
- Engage with Extension Committees on progress and planning

Door, Kewaunee, and Brown Counties will be served by a Regional Dairy Educator and Regional Crops Educator. The Regional Dairy Educator is Aerica Bjurstrom who joined Extension in 2007. Bjurstrom has a lifetime of experience with dairy. She earned a Bachelor's Degree from UW-Madison with a major in Animal Science and a Master's Degree from UW-La Crosse. Before joining Extension, Aerica held positions in the allied agriculture industry in sales and marketing. In her current role, she develops agriculture programming focusing on dairy herd health management. Contact information for Bjurstrom is Aerica.Bjurstrom@wisc.edu or 920.388.7138.

Krishna Bhandari is the Regional Crops Educator. He recently joined UW-Madison Division of Extension. He has a PhD in Plant and Soil Science from Texas Tech University, Masters Degree in Plant Protection and Pest Management from the University of Georgia, and Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Tribhuvan University in Nepal. He recently served as a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of Agronomy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and prior to this role, Bhandari was a Postdoctoral Research Assistant at Texas Tech University. His research focuses on alfalfa, cover crops, soil health, and pest management. Bhandari can be contacted at kbhandari3@wisc.edu or 608.381.2216.

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