



# MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

Date & Time of Meeting: **Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 1:00pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI 54403**

Committee Members: Rick Seefeldt, Chair; Becky Buch, Vice-Chair; Bobby Niemeyer, Crystal Bushman  
Kim Ungerer, David Baker, Tom Rosenberg

**Marathon County Mission Statement:** Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. (Last updated: 12-20-05)

**Committee Mission Statement:** Provide the leadership for implementation of the Strategic Plan, monitoring outcomes, reviewing, and recommending to the County Board all policies related to educational and economic development initiatives of Marathon County.

Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the **telephone conference beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

**Phone#: 1-408-418-9388      Access Code: 146 235 4571**

When you enter the telephone conference, **PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!**

The meeting will also be broadcasted on Public Access or at <https://tinyurl.com/MarathonCountyBoard>

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment (15 Minutes)** (Any person who wishes to address the committee during the "Public Comment" portion of the meetings, must provide his or her name, address, and the topic he or she wishes to present to the Marathon County Clerk, or chair of the committee, no later than five minutes before the start of the meeting. All comments must be germane to a topic within the jurisdiction of the committee.)
4. **Approval of the February 1, 2024, Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes**
5. **Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination**
6. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, Resolution, or Policy**
  - A. Consideration of an Initial Resolution Declaring the Official Intent of Marathon County, Wisconsin to Reimburse Certain Original Expenditures related to the Construction of Certain Solid Waste Facilities from the Proceeds of One or More Series of Tax-Exempt Conduit Revenue Bonds to be Issued by the County After the Payment of Such Original Expenditures of RDF Development I, LLC or Another Entity of Which AMP Americas II, LLC is the Sole Member
  - B. Consideration of Request for Marathon County, WI to Approve the Public Finance Authority as Conduit Issuer for Not to Exceed \$25,000,000 Exempt Facility Revenue Bonds to Benefit Buckhorn RNG, LLC Project
  - C. Consideration of UW Extension's proposed transition to a Regional Agriculture Educator model
7. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
  - A. Marathon County Extension 2023 Annual Report
8. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements and Future Agenda Items**
  - A. Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.
  - B. Next meeting: Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 3:00pm
9. **Adjournment**

\*Any Person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 261.1500 or email [countyclerk@co.marathon.wi.us](mailto:countyclerk@co.marathon.wi.us) one business day before the meeting.

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ s/s Rick Seefeldt  
Presiding Officer or Designee

EMAILED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and other Media Groups

EMAILED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE & TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE POSTED AT THE COURTHOUSE**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE & TIME: \_\_\_\_\_



# MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA WITH MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: **Thursday, February 1, 2024, at 3:00pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI 54403**

Rick Seefeldt	Present
Becky Buch	Present
David Baker	WebEx
Bobby Niemeyer	Absent
Tom Rosenberg	Present
Kim Ungerer	Present
Crystal Bushman	Excused

Staff Present: Administrator Lance Leonhard, Jeremy Solin, Kimm Weber, Leah Giordano

WebEx: Miranda Gentry-Sigel, Jannell Wehr

Others Present: WebEx: Kelly Borchardt

## [Meeting Recording](#)

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Chair Seefeldt called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment:** None
4. **Approval of the January 4, 2024, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes** (:01.31) - Motion by Rosenberg, Second by Buch to approve the minutes. Motion carried on voice vote, unanimously.
5. **Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination:** None
6. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, Resolution, or Policy**
  - A. Opportunity for providing recommendations relative to items to be included in the Administrator’s 2024 Annual Work Plan (:02.10)
  - B. Marathon County’s Role in Providing Affordable High-Quality External Childcare
    1. Childcare Resolution (:16.25)
7. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
  - A. Presentation and Discussion about Horticulture Program Priorities with Janell Wehr (:24.05)
  - B. Marathon County/Regional Agriculture Education Position (:39.00)
  - C. MCDEVCO’s Monthly Report (:44.15)
  - D. Library Monthly Report (:49.25)
  - E. UW – Extension Monthly Report (1:01.25)
  - F. UWSP – Wausau Report
8. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements and Future Agenda Items**
  - A. Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.
  - B. Next meeting: Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 3:00pm
9. **Adjournment**

Motion by Rosenberg, Second by Buch to adjourn. Motion Carried on voice vote, unanimously.  
Meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by Kelley Blume



Confidential | November 2023

# Inducement – Marathon County



# Amp Current Assets Abated More than 480k Tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2022



286,000,000<sup>(1)</sup>  
truck miles / year



1,200,000,000<sup>(2)</sup>  
car miles / year



6,700,000<sup>(3)</sup>  
tons of concrete  
production / year



577,000<sup>(4)</sup>  
acres of forest / year

1.6mm tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e abated since founding

10+

Years of  
operational  
expertise in  
dairy RNG

14

Projects

Operational, under construction or  
with signed Manure Supply  
Agreement (“MSA”)

~165k

Cows

~1.3mm

MMBtu of RNG  
produced  
in 2022

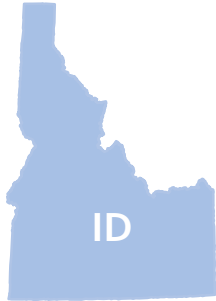
Clear path to 2.5mm MT CO<sub>2</sub> in 2027

Note: 1 MT of CO<sub>2</sub> is equivalent to greenhouse gas emissions from ~588 truck miles / year, ~2,500 car miles / year, ~13.8kg of concrete production / year, and equivalent to carbon sequestered by ~1.2 acres of U.S. forests / year.  
 1. Environmental Defense Fund (grams CO<sub>2</sub> per mile): <https://storage.googleapis.com/scsc/Green%20Freight/EDF-Green-Freight-Handbook.pdf>.  
 2. EPA (grams CO<sub>2</sub> per mile): <https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>.  
 3. SustainableConcrete.org (kg CO<sub>2</sub> per ton) : <https://www.sustainableconcrete.org.uk/Sustainable-Concrete/Performance-Indicators/CO2-Emissions-Production.aspx>.  
 4. EPA: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator#results>.



# Map of Existing Facilities

Big Sky



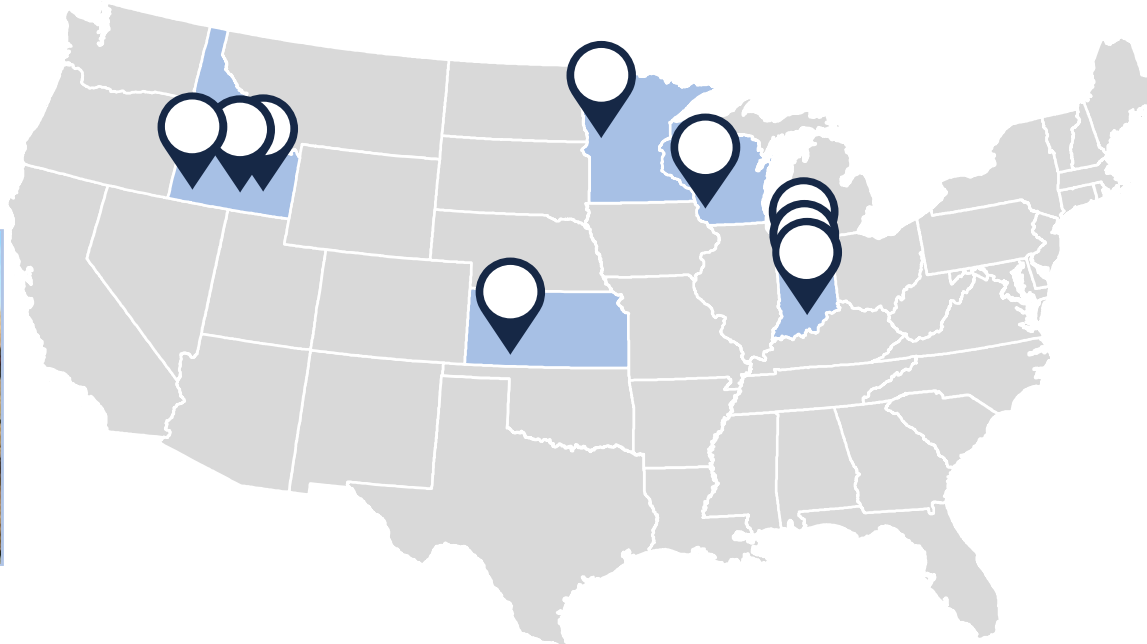
Riverview



Darlington



Spandet



Jasper/Curtis Creek 2



# Amp Management Team Has Decades of Experience in Energy Industry and Record of Successful Execution in RNG



**Grant Zimmerman**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Director

22



**Antoine Lafargue**  
Chief Financial Officer

22



**Martin Gilkes**  
Chief Strategy Officer

20



**Mitch Poindexter**  
Chief Operating Officer

24



**Ethan Hendricks**  
SVP of RNG Marketing

20



**Obi Ofoegbu**  
VP of Engineering

14



**John Legge**  
VP of Project Delivery

32



**Andy Dvoracek**  
VP of Business  
Development

22



**Ameer Patel**  
Director of Asset  
Management

20

# Miltrim Farm

- Founded: 1988
- Dairy: ~3,000 milking cows
- Largest robotic dairy in Wisconsin
- Cow Bedding: Sand
- Manure System: Scrape to Flush Flume
- Solids Separation: None on Milking Cows
- Lagoon Sizes: 9M, 9M, and 24 M gal
- Sand Removal: Mechanical
- Natural Gas Service: WE Energies



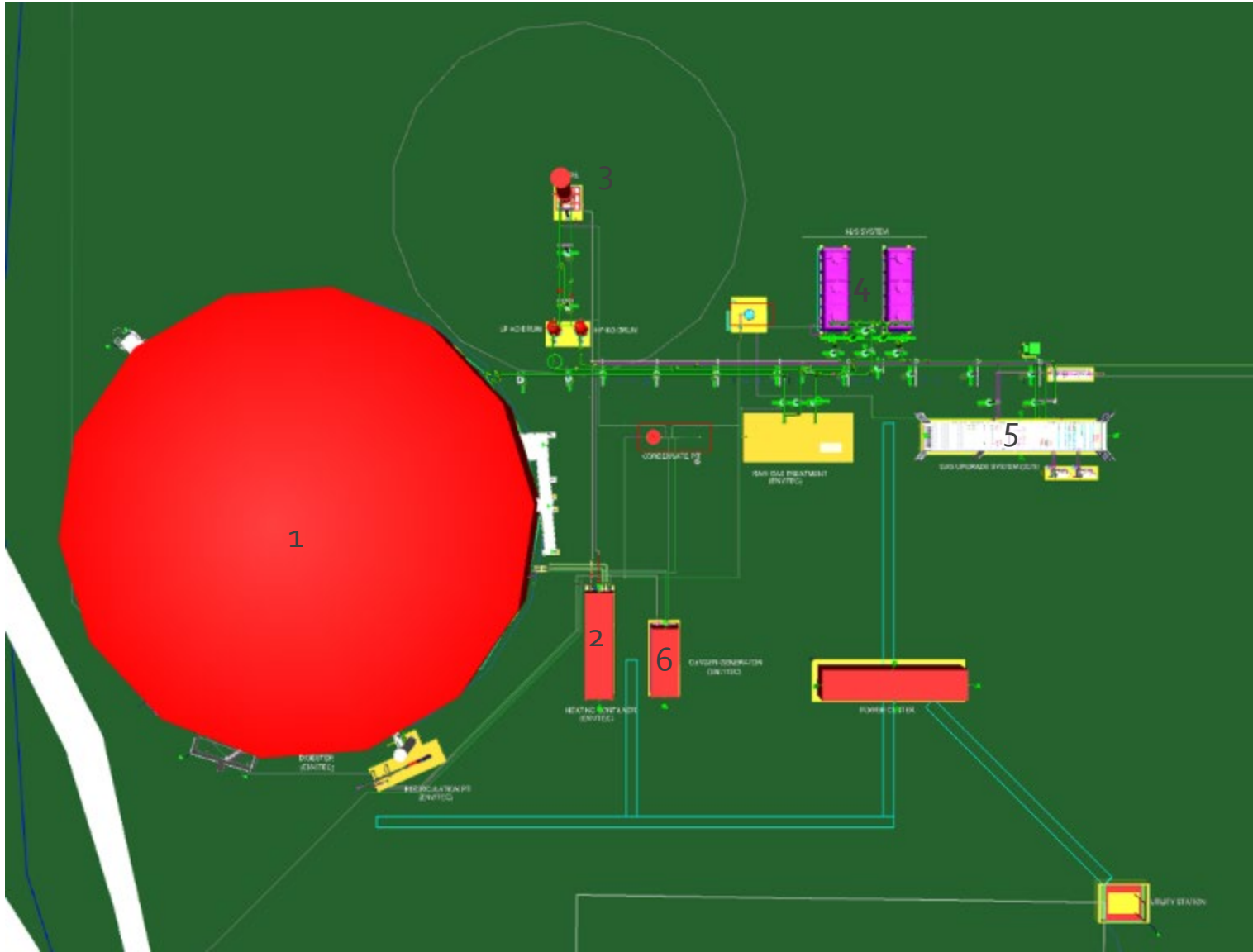


# Miltrim Farm– Wisconsin



# Miltrim Preliminary Site Plan

- 1. Anaerobic digester
- 2. Boiler
- 3. Flare
- 4. H2S removal skid
- 5. CO2 removal skid
- 6. O2 generator



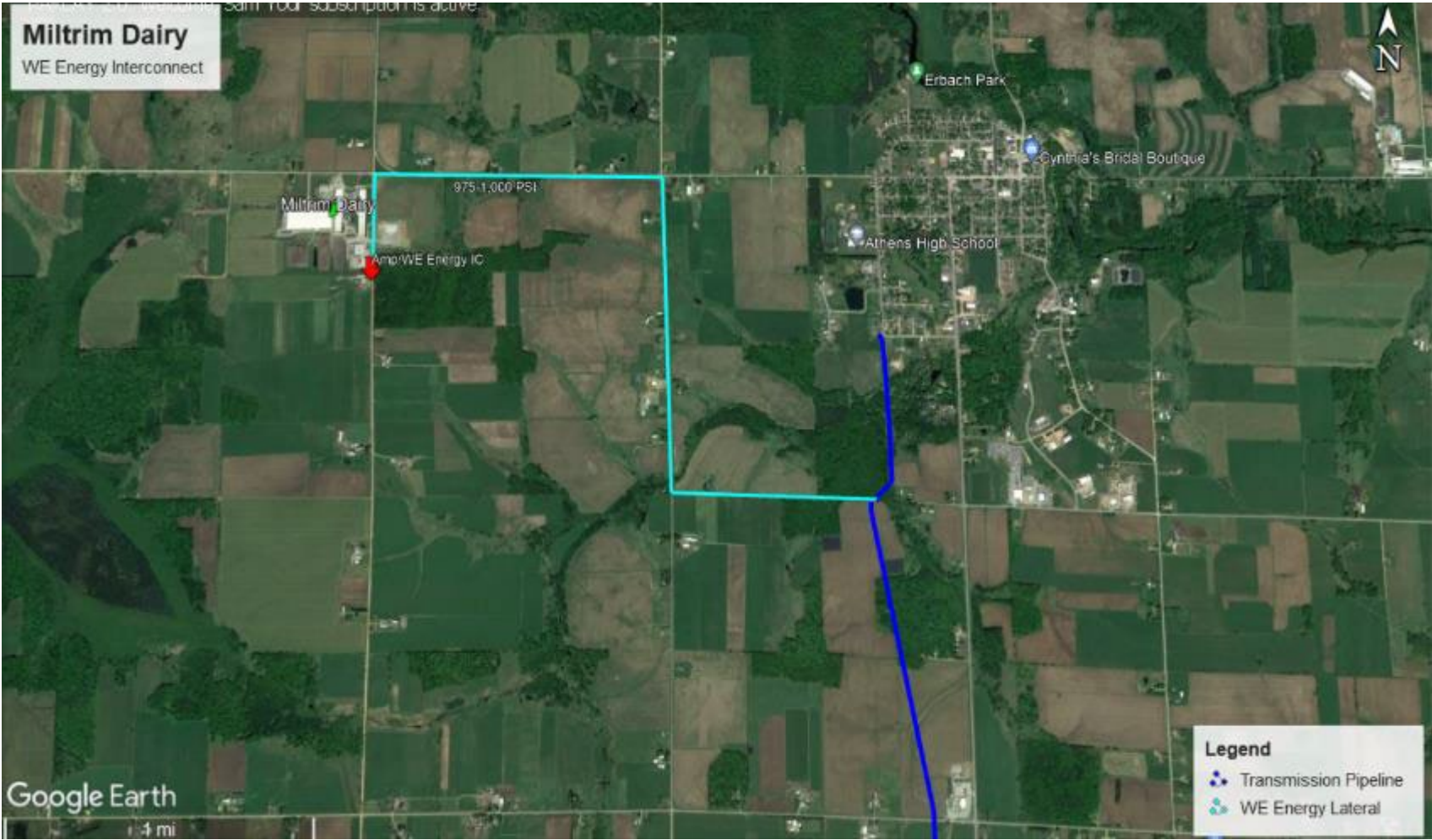


# Similar Sized Anaerobic Digester Install - NY



# WE Energy Interconnect – Preliminary Design/Layout

WE Energy has a natural gas transmission line feeding it's Athens distribution system. WE Energy will install a steel natural gas lateral to Miltrim to deliver natural gas and receive RNG from the project





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Andy Dvoracek  
VP of Business Development  
advoracek@ampamericas.com  
917-583-0408





### Notice of Intent to Obtain a Municipal Industrial Revenue Bond

Section 66.1103 (4m) (a) 1 of the Wisconsin Statutes requires the person or business who intends to obtain an industrial revenue bond issue from a Wisconsin municipality to notify this intention to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and to any collective bargaining agent in the state with whom the person or business has a collective bargaining agreement. This notification must occur at least 30 days prior to entering into the revenue agreement or signing the loan contract. The person or business must provide information on the number of full-time jobs that are expected to be eliminated, created, or maintained at the project site and elsewhere in Wisconsin as a result of the project which is the subject of this notice. The person or business named below hereby gives notice of intent to obtain an Industrial Revenue Bond pursuant to s. 66.1103 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Send completed form to [reporting@wedc.org](mailto:reporting@wedc.org).

**I. Project**

A. Person: Attn: Andy Dvoracek  
 Business: Project: RDF Development I, LLC; Employing Entity: RDF Wisconsin Servicing LLC  
 Address: 2001 N Clybourn Ave., Ste. 400, Chicago, IL 60614  
 Post Office/ZIP: 60614

B. Project site: Athens, Marathon County, WI

(Name of city, village or town in which the project is located)

C. Project type:  Expansion at Present Location  Relocation Within Same Municipality  
 Relocation From Within State  Relocation from Out-of-State  New Business  
 Branch-Wisconsin Operation  Branch-Out-of-State Operation  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Maximum amount of IRB financing: \$ 45,000,000.00

**II. Employment Estimates (to result within the next 3 years)**

Number of Full-Time Jobs	Before Project	To Be Maintained	To Be Created	To Be Eliminated	Net Total Number of Jobs
A. <u>At the Project Site</u>			2		2
B. <u>At All Other Wisconsin Operations</u>		2			2
C. <u>Net Totals</u>		2	2		4

D. Will any jobs transfer from one or more locations to the project site? Yes  No

Number of jobs to transfer: None

Location(s) the jobs will transfer from: (municipality) N/A

Name: Andy Dvoracek   
 Signed/Person completing this form

VP, Business Development  
 Title

29 Nov 2023  
 Date

(312) 414-0768  
 Telephone Number



## IRB JOB RETENTION CERTIFICATION FORM

Under Section 66.1103 (4s) (b) Wis. Stats., a municipality may not enter into a revenue agreement with any employer that employs individuals in this state at a site other than a project site unless the employer certifies that the project is not expected to result in any lost jobs or the employer agrees to all of the following: (1) Offer employment at any new job first to persons who were formerly employed at the lost jobs. **“Lost job” means an employment position with an employer that is eliminated at a site in this state other than a project site when the employer moves any part of its operation to a project site.** (2) Offer compensation and benefit terms at the project site at least as favorable as those of the lost jobs; (3) Certify compliance with this subsection to the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), to the governing body of each municipality within which a lost job exists and to any collective bargaining agent in this state with which the employer has a collective bargaining agreement at the project site or at a site where a lost job exists; and (4) Submit a report to WEDC every three months during the first year after the construction of the project is completed. The report shall provide information about new jobs, lost jobs, and offers of employment made to persons who were formerly employed at the lost jobs. NOTE: Copies of this form may be used for compliance with (3) above. Send completed form to reporting@wedc.org.


I. Project	
A. Employer:	<u>RDF Wisconsin Servicing, LLC</u>
Address:	<u>2001 N Clybourn Ave, Ste. 400, Chicago, IL 60614</u>
Post Office/ZIP:	<u>60614</u>
B. Project Site:	<u>Athens, Marathon County, WI</u> (Name of city, village or town where the project is located)
C. Other Site(s):	<u>Darlington, Lafayette County, WI; Malone, Fond du Lac County, WI; Bryant, Langlade County, WI</u> (Name(s) of city, village or town)
D. Number of employment positions at other site(s) of the employer prior to the project:	_____
E. Is the project expected to result in any lost jobs at the other site(s)?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Estimate of number of lost jobs at the other site(s):	<u>N/A</u>
<i>(If answer to E. is Yes, complete II. A. below; if answer to E. is No, complete III. B. below)</i>	
II. Agreement (in the event that the project is expected to result in lost jobs)	
A. The employer hereby agrees to comply with s.66.521 (4s) (b) 1. Through 4. Wis. Stats.	
Signature (employer/eligible participant):	_____
Person completing this form:	_____ Phone #: _____
III. Certification (if the project is not expected to result in any lost jobs)	
A. The employer hereby certifies that the project is not expected to result in any lost jobs.	
Signature (employer/eligible participant):	 _____
Person completing this form:	<u>Andy Dvoracek, VP, Business Development</u> Phone #: <u>(312) 414-0768</u>



EXHIBIT A

NOTICE TO ELECTORS OF MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

TAKE NOTICE that the County Board of Marathon County, Wisconsin (the "Issuer"), at a regular meeting held at 500 Forest Street in the City of Wausau, Wisconsin, on [DATE], adopted an Initial Resolution pursuant to Section 66.1103 of the Wisconsin Statutes, as amended, expressing the intention to issue not to exceed \$45,000,000 of industrial development revenue bonds of the Issuer (the "Bonds") on behalf of Amp Americas II, LLC through its subsidiary RDF Development I, LLC, (the "Borrower"). The Borrower desires to complete a project consisting of financing the (i) design, development, construction and operation of a solid waste disposal facility for the purpose of converting dairy cattle waste to natural gas for sale on property owned by RDF Development I, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, located at [ADDRESS], Marathon County, Wisconsin (the "Project Site"), (ii) the lease of the Project Site to the Borrower for the production of renewable natural gas, (iii) acquisition and installation of an anaerobic digester and related equipment at the Project Site, (iv) capitalized interest during the construction period, (v) funding of a Debt Service Reserve Fund and other funds, if necessary, and (vi) payment of certain professional fees and costs of issuance (collectively, the "Project"). The Borrower has represented that the net number of full-time equivalent jobs which the Project is expected to create on the Project site within three years is \_\_\_\_\_. Pursuant to the terms of Section 66.1103 of the Wisconsin Statutes, all requirements that the Project be subject to the contracting requirements contained in Section 66.1103 are waived, the Borrower having represented that it is able to negotiate satisfactory arrangements for completing the Project and that the Issuer's interests are not prejudiced thereby.

THE BONDS SHALL NEVER CONSTITUTE AN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE ISSUER, NOR SHALL THE BONDS GIVE RISE TO ANY PECUNIARY LIABILITY OF THE ISSUER, NOR SHALL THE BONDS BE A CHARGE AGAINST THE GENERAL CREDIT OR TAXING POWERS OF THE ISSUER. RATHER, THE BONDS SHALL BE PAYABLE SOLELY FROM THE REVENUES AND OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE DERIVED PURSUANT TO THE REVENUE AGREEMENT RELATING TO SAID PROJECT TO BE ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE ISSUER AND THE BORROWER.

The Initial Resolution may be inspected in the office of the County Clerk at 500 Forest Street, in the City of Wausau, County of Marathon, Wisconsin, during business hours.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT THE ELECTORS OF MARATHON COUNTY MAY PETITION FOR A REFERENDUM ON THE QUESTION OF THE BOND ISSUE. Unless within thirty (30) days from the date of the publication of this Notice a petition signed by not less than five percent (5%) of the registered electors of Marathon County is filed with the County Clerk requesting a referendum on the question of the issuance of the Bonds, the Issuer will issue the Bonds without submitting the proposition for the electors' approval. If such petition is filed as aforesaid, then the Bonds shall not be issued until approved by a majority of the electors of Marathon County voting thereon at a 46 general or special election.

Kim Trueblood, County Clerk  
Marathon County, Wisconsin

EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF MEETING  
OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF  
MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

HELD:

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a meeting of the County Board of Marathon County, Wisconsin, was duly called and held at the 500 Forest Street in the City of Wausau, Wisconsin, on \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023, at \_\_\_\_\_m.

The following members were present:

and the following were absent:

\_\_\_\_\_ introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**INITIAL RESOLUTION DECLARING THE OFFICIAL INTENT OF MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN TO REIMBURSE CERTAIN ORIGINAL EXPENDITURES RELATED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN SOLID WASTE FACILITIES FROM THE PROCEEDS OF ONE OR MORE SERIES OF TAX-EXEMPT CONDUIT REVENUE BONDS TO BE ISSUED BY THE COUNTY AFTER THE PAYMENT OF SUCH ORIGINAL EXPENDITURES BY RDF DEVELOPMENT I, LLC OR ANOTHER ENTITY OF WHICH AMP AMERICAS II, LLC IS THE SOLE MEMBER**

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WHEREAS, Marathon County, Wisconsin (the "County") has received a request from Amp Americas II, LLC ("Amp") through its subsidiary, RDF Development I, LLC (the "Borrower"), that the County consider the issuance of its conduit revenue bonds (which may be in the form of one or more series of tax-exempt bonds) to finance the capital costs of the proposed construction of manure digesters and biogas upgrade facilities to produce manure-to-renewable natural gas ("RNG") in the County at Miltrim Farms located near Athens, Wisconsin (the "Project"); and

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WHEREAS, the County expects that the Borrower will pay certain original expenditures for the Project and which original expenditures are expected to be reimbursed from the proceeds of one or more series of tax-exempt bonds to be issued by the County and the proceeds of which will be loaned by the County to the Borrower or another entity of which Amp is the sole member; and

WHEREAS, the Bonds when and if issued by the County would be issued under the provisions of Wisconsin Statutes, Sections 66.1103(3), as amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN, AS FOLLOWS:

1. The County has a reasonable expectation (within the meaning of Treasury Regulations, Section 1.148-1(b)) that the Borrower or Amp will make expenditures for the Project in calendar year 2024 or 2025. The County has a reasonable expectation that it will issue one or more series of tax-exempt bonds (the "Bonds") in the estimated maximum principal amount not to exceed \$[45,000,000] to finance the Project and that the Borrower and/or Amp will make reimbursement allocations with respect to such original expenditures for the Project from the proceeds of such Bonds.
2. This Resolution shall be maintained as part of the books and records of the County at the main administrative office of the County, and shall be continuously available during normal business hours of the County on every business day of the period beginning not more than thirty (30) days after adoption of this Resolution and ending on the last date of issue of any Bonds.
3. This Resolution has been adopted not later than sixty (60) days after payment of any original expenditure for the Project to be reimbursed from the proceeds of any Bonds.
4. All reimbursement allocations with respect to the Bonds will be made not later than eighteen (18) months after the later of: (i) the date the original expenditure is paid; or (ii) the date the Project are placed in service or abandoned, but in no event more than three (3) years after an original expenditure is paid for the Project.
5. All original expenditures to which reimbursement allocations are to be made constitute: (i) capital expenditures; (ii) costs of issuance of the Bonds; (iii) expenditures for extraordinary, nonrecurring items that are not customarily payable from current revenues, such as casualty losses or extraordinary legal judgments in amounts in excess of reasonable insurance coverage, and for which no reserve is maintained; or (iv) a grant (as defined in Treasury Regulations, Section 1.148-6(d)(4), as a transfer for a governmental purpose of money or property to a transferee that is not a related party to or an agent of the transferor with respect to which no obligation or condition is imposed to directly or indirectly repay any amount to the transferor).
6. Amp and the Borrower will pay all transaction costs associated with the issuance of the Bonds and the County shall not be responsible for the payment of any transaction cost.
7. The Bonds, when issued, will be special, limited obligations of the County and do not constitute general obligations or a debt, liability, or pledge of the full faith and credit of the County, the State of Wisconsin (the "State"), or of any political subdivision or agency thereof. The Bonds will be paid solely by loan repayments to be paid by the Borrower under the terms of a loan agreement.
8. The limitations set forth in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this Resolution do not apply to: (i) the costs of issuance of the Bonds; (ii) an amount not in excess of the lesser of \$[100,000] or five percent (5%) of the proceeds of the Bonds; or (iii) preliminary expenditures up to an amount not in excess of twenty percent (20%) of the aggregate issue price of the Bonds that finance or are reasonably expected by the County to finance the Project for which the preliminary expenditures were incurred. The term "preliminary expenditures" includes architectural, engineering, surveying, soil testing, reimbursement bond issuance, and similar costs that are incurred prior to commencement of acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of the Project, other than land acquisition, site preparation, and similar costs incident to commencement of construction.
9. This Resolution is an expression of the reasonable expectations of the County based on the facts and circumstances known to the County as of the date hereof, including the representations of the Borrower. The anticipated original expenditures for the Project are consistent with the County's budgetary and financial circumstances. No sources other than proceeds of Bonds to be issued by the County and loaned

to the Borrower are, or are reasonably expected to be, reserved, allocated on a long-term basis, or otherwise set aside by the Borrower to pay such expenditures for the Project.

10. This Resolution is intended to constitute a declaration of official intent for purposes of the Reimbursement Regulations.

11. No reimbursement allocation of the proceeds of the Bonds to expenditures for the Project will employ an abusive arbitrage device (within the meaning of Treasury Regulations, Section 1.148-10) to avoid the arbitrage restrictions or to avoid the restrictions of Sections 141 through 150 of the Code.

12. The County’s adoption of this resolution does not obligate the County, directly or indirectly, to issue the Bonds in the future.

13. Before the issuance of the bonds described in the Resolution, the County Clerk is directed, (i) to publish notice of adoption of this Resolution as a Class 1 notice, such notice to be in substantially the form attached hereto as Exhibit A and (ii) to file a copy of this Initial Resolution, together with a statement indicating the date the Notice to Electors was published, with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation within twenty (20) days following the date of publication of such notice.

14. THE BONDS SHALL NEVER CONSTITUTE AN INDEBTEDNESS OF THE ISSUER, NOR SHALL THE BONDS GIVE RISE TO ANY PECUNIARY LIABILITY OF THE ISSUER, NOR SHALL THE BONDS BE A CHARGE AGAINST THE GENERAL CREDIT OR TAXING POWERS OF THE ISSUER. RATHER, THE BONDS SHALL BE PAYABLE SOLELY FROM THE REVENUES AND OTHER AMOUNTS TO BE DERIVED PURSUANT TO THE REVENUE AGREEMENT RELATING TO SAID PROJECT TO BE ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE ISSUER AND THE BORROWER.

15. Members of the County Board and officers and employees of Marathon County are not personally liable on bonds and are not personally liable for any act or omission related to the authorization or issuance of bonds.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and, upon a vote being taken thereon after full discussion thereof, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Administrator

STATE OF WISCONSIN     )  
                                          ) SS  
COUNTY OF MARATHON    )

I, the undersigned, being the duly qualified and acting Clerk of MARATHON County, Wisconsin (the "County"), by reason of my office as Clerk, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that I have compared the attached and foregoing extract of minutes with the original thereof on file in my office, and that the same is a full, true and complete transcript of the minutes of a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Marathon County, Wisconsin, duly called and held on the date therein indicated, insofar as such minutes relate to approving the RESOLUTION DECLARING THE OFFICIAL INTENT OF MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN TO REIMBURSE CERTAIN ORIGINAL EXPENDITURES RELATED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN SOLID WASTE FACILITIES FROM THE PROCEEDS OF ONE OR MORE SERIES OF TAX-EXEMPT CONDUIT REVENUE BONDS TO BE ISSUED BY THE COUNTY AFTER THE PAYMENT OF SUCH ORIGINAL EXPENDITURES BY RDF DEVELOPMENT I, LLC OR ANOTHER ENTITY OF WHICH AMP AMERICAS II, LLC IS THE SOLE MEMBER.

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WITNESS my hand this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk



# Municipal Debt Issuance through Public Finance Authority – Buckhorn RNG

## March 6, 2024



# Agenda



Novilla RNG Overview

Buckhorn RNG Project

# Novilla RNG Leadership Team



## Mark Hill (Co-CEO)

- More than 14 years of experience in the RNG industry in operational roles with experience managing, developing, operating, and constructing landfill gas and dairy RNG projects
- Mark held a series of operational roles with DTE Biomass Energy, the largest operators of dairy RNG projects, most recently serving as VP of Business Development and Dairy RNG Operations where he was responsible for the safety, operations, and profitability of 21 landfill gas projects and 8 dairy RNG projects.



## Jared Williams (Co-CEO)

- More than 12 years of RNG operations and development experience in landfill gas and dairy RNG projects
- Jared was most recently the Vice President of Operations at DTE Biomass Energy where he led an 80-person team managing 21 landfill gas projects and 9 dairy RNG projects, achieving 90%+ on-stream rates across his fleet
- Jared managed the first dairy virtual pipeline in the country with the first provisional CI scores



## Matt Brubaker (CFO)

- Over 20 years of experience in public accounting, financial reporting, and the accounting and sale of renewable attributes associated with RNG.
- Previously the controller for DTE Biomass where he oversaw the finances of 30 renewable energy projects
- Leads seven-person team at Novilla RNG with responsibility for accounting, debt management, information technology, and CARB verification



## Bill Parkhurst (Vice President of Construction and Engineering)

- Over 20 years experience operating and constructing natural gas pipelines
- Previously Vice President of Operations for helium processing plant in Kansas in which he led construction and operations.
- Pipeline, programming, and metering expert



## Steve Berlinski (Director of Commissioning)

- Steve has 21 years experience in renewable natural gas, having started up some of the first US landfill RNG projects and operating and commissioning nine dairy renewable natural gas projects
- Previously served as Regional Operations Manager for DTE Biomass Energy where Steve managed over twenty employees.
- Expert in gas compression and plant problem solving



## Rodney Taylor (Vice President of Operations)

- Twenty years of experience in natural gas processing at Superior Pipeline as Director of Operations, including an OPEX budget over \$300MM/yr
- Ten years of experience managing multiple Class III dairy processing plants
- Participated in global design, fabrication, and installation of waste water treatment and power plants in North America and Asia

# Novilla RNG is a nationwide dairy renewable natural gas developer with nationwide experience



- Two projects in operations
- Two projects under construction
- Internal Novilla construction and engineering team
- Currently 35 employees

Three Petals RNG at Trillium Hill Farm (Operational)



West Branch RNG Project



Red Leaf RNG Project at Maple Row Dairy (Operational)



# Agenda

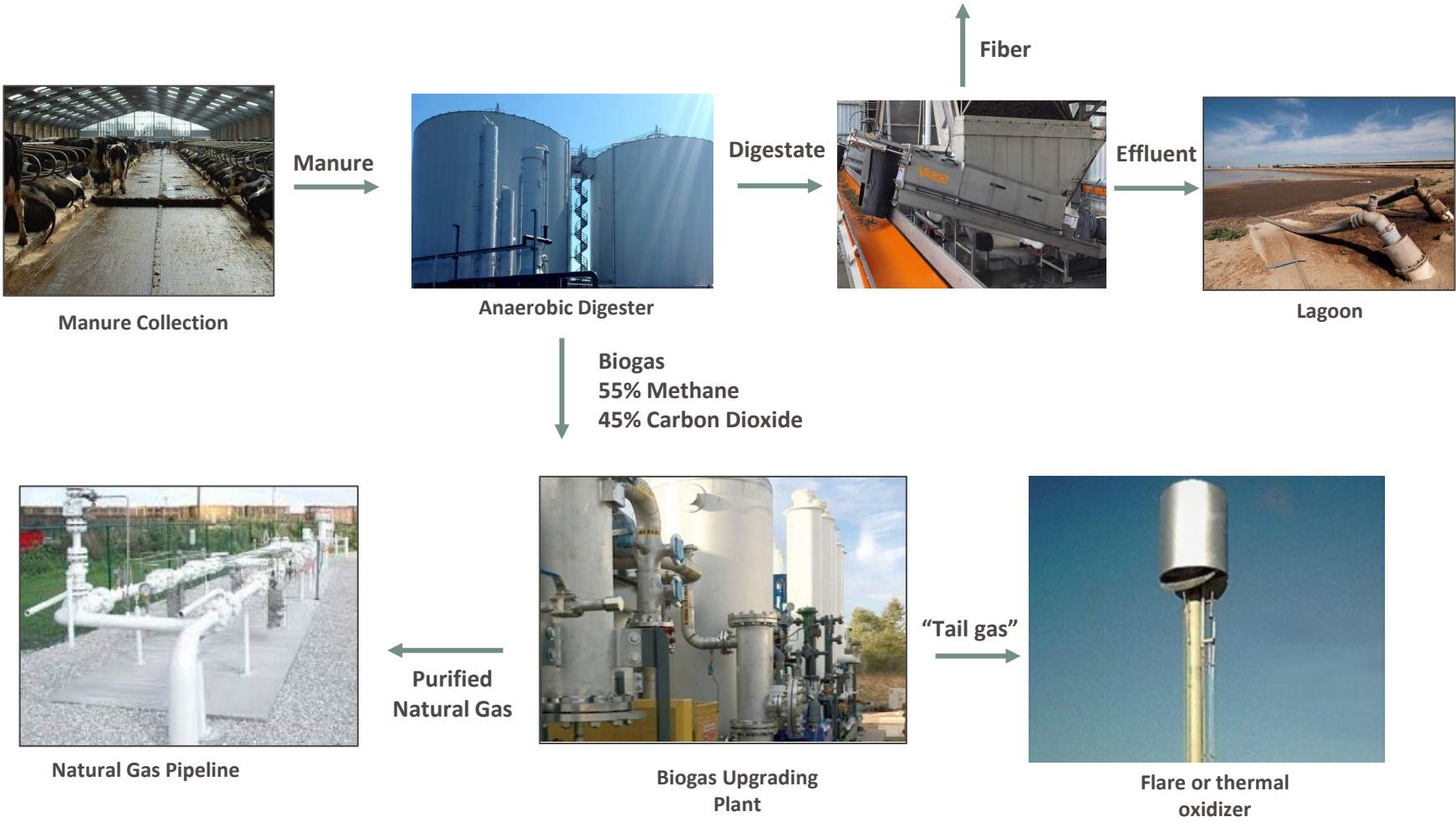


Novilla RNG Overview

Buckhorn RNG Project



# Renewable Natural Gas Process Overview



# Buckhorn RNG Project at Lynn Bros Dairy in Brighton Township



- All necessary approvals and permits received – including conditional use permit from Marathon County
- Pipeline being installed
- Startup summer 2024
- Two quality jobs with Facility Manager already hired (Jason Redlin)
- No workplace injuries
- As startup approaches, there will be meetings with first responders to work through emergency action plans



# Construction Photos



# Buckhorn RNG Request from Marathon County



- Given the significant amount of projects Novilla RNG has in Wisconsin, a more straightforward approach to issuing municipal debt bonds was through the Public Financing Authority (PFA)
- Buckhorn RNG has obtained initial resolutions from the PFA to be the conduit issuer for the bonds
- Buckhorn RNG obtained carry forward volume cap for the PFA to be the conduit issuer for the bond (Federal requirement of volume cap)



***Buckhorn RNG is requesting consent from Marathon County for the Public Finance Authority to be the conduit issuer of the bonds***

# Important aspects of bond issuance through PFA



1. Neither the PFA nor the County will be liable for payment of the principal and interest on the bonds;
2. Neither the PFA nor the County will have ongoing responsibilities of monitoring or reporting with regard to the bonds or the Project.
3. The bonds do not count against the County's borrowing capacity. The County will not levy a tax for payment of the bonds.
4. The PFA and the County will be reimbursed for all fees and costs incurred on connection with the issuance of the bonds.





# Buckhorn RNG has an intense focus on safety and environmental compliance

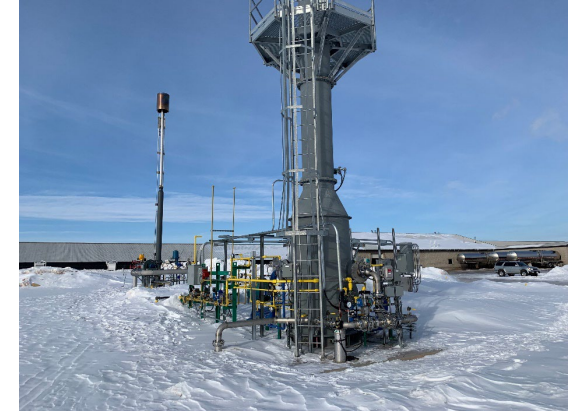


## Environmental Compliance

Digesters, flares, and thermal oxidizers will be required to meet all regulations and have necessary permits before operation

Odor and noise levels will meet all local ordinances

- Environmental control devices (flares and thermal oxidizer) are designed to combust odor causing compounds
- Noise producing equipment will be housed in buildings or containers



## Safety

- Automated e-stops, methane detection devices, fire detection devices, and hydrogen sulfide monitoring installed in enclosed spaces
- Compliance with required construction and safety standards
- Safety training for technicians
- Plant walk through and annual meeting with first responders



# Benefits to Marathon County

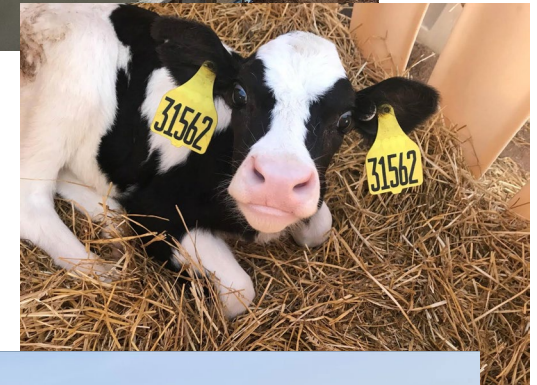


## Employment

- Projected two highly skilled full-time jobs
- Facility Manager (salaried) and one facility technician
- Dozens of construction jobs (2023-2024)
- Ongoing vendor work for electricians, local utilities, piping, etc.

## "Future proofing" agriculture and the economy in Marathon County

- Infrastructure available for potential future digesters.
- Milk customers are looking for lower carbon emissions from dairies, dairies with digesters will be more attractive to milk off-takers.
- Domestically produced vehicle fuel from a renewable source.



# Environmental benefits



- Project is expected to make 80,000 MMBtu of renewable natural gas per year
- Energy equivalent to about 700,000 gallons of gasoline per year
- Greenhouse gas emissions removal equivalent to 4,900 cars off the road





# Novilla RNG is excited to help dairies and the local communities realize the environmental and financial benefits of biogas



**Mark Hill**  
CO-CEO Novilla RNG  
734-395-2452

[mark@novillarng.com](mailto:mark@novillarng.com)



**Jared Williams**  
CO-CEO Novilla RNG  
804-704-1974

[jared@novillarng.com](mailto:jared@novillarng.com)

## I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Provide additional information about the Project, including what manufacturing occurs/will occur, indicate if you have other locations. unique equipment needs .

The Buckhorn RNG, LLC renewable natural gas Project (the “Project”) is a greenfield development that converts dairy manure into renewable natural gas (“RNG”) via anaerobic digestion and biogas upgrading systems for injection of the RNG into natural gas pipelines. The Project is currently under construction. Key equipment used in the project includes a 2.5 million-gallon anaerobic digester provided by Schumann Tanks and a gas upgrading system and related equipment provided by Unconventional Gas Solutions. The anaerobic digester and gas upgrading equipment are specialized pieces of equipment for the use of generating biogas from dairy manure and upgrading that biogas into pipeline-quality RNG by removing contaminants. The Project will produce negative-carbon RNG to be used as compressed natural gas (“CNG”) in natural gas vehicles in order to displace the use of diesel fuel, thereby decarbonizing the transportation fuel market.

The Project facility is located in Region 6 in Unity, Wisconsin. The parent company of Buckhorn RNG, LLC, Novilla Investment Holdings, LLC, operates similar facilities in Michigan and Wisconsin and is simultaneously developing two other projects under contract and seven more projects under letter of intent across the Midwest and Northeast.

**Why is the Company embarking on the Project? Why is it needed?**

Buckhorn RNG, LLC and its parent, Novilla Investment Holdings, LLC, believe the dairy RNG space presents an environmentally beneficial and profitable opportunity to turn a waste, dairy manure, into a valuable decarbonizing resource, RNG. The Project is expected to contribute to an overall net reduction of greenhouse gases due to the Project capturing methane that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere from the dairy’s operations and that methane being converted into CO<sub>2</sub> after it is combusted for a beneficial use.

There are many benefits to a dairy RNG facility to both the partner dairy farm operation and the local community, including but not limited to:

### **Emissions Reduction and Waste to Energy**

- Greenhouse gas capture and destruction – dairy RNG operations remove methane emissions, a powerful greenhouse gas, from the atmosphere for injection into the local pipeline grid for beneficial use
- Generates renewable natural gas, displacing the use of fossil gas or other fossil fuels

### **Farmer Benefits**

- Lowers carbon intensity of the underlying dairy operations, which is becoming increasingly important for dairy operations across the country
- Financial benefits to the farmer due to revenue sharing structure enhances the dairy’s financial resiliency and diversifying the dairy’s revenue streams incrementally from traditional agricultural revenues
- Dairy RNG operations improve farm manure management practices as the farmer retains the nutrients post anaerobic digestion and can use it as bedding for their herd and apply it to their crops as a fertilizer

## Community Benefits

- Improves air quality and reduces odor in the surrounding community
- Job creation with well paying jobs with two full time employees at the facility, helping diversify the traditionally agricultural local economy

## II. COMPANY HISTORY AND BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES - (Operating Company)

Buckhorn RNG, LLC is a single member LLC directly owned by Novilla Debt Holdings I, LLC and ultimately owned by Novilla Investment Holdings, LLC (“Novilla”) which was founded in 2020 and is headquartered in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Novilla is a fully integrated originator, builder, developer, owner, and operator of projects that specialize in the production of pipeline-quality RNG from dairy manure across the United States. Buckhorn RNG, LLC was formed in September 2022 as a single purpose entity to own and operate the Project.

### Management

Management team of Novilla:

Mark Hill, Co-CEO:

- Mark has more than 14 years of experience in the RNG industry in operational roles with experience managing, developing, operating, and constructing landfill gas and dairy RNG projects
- Has held a series of operational roles with DTE Biomass Energy, one of the largest operators of dairy RNG projects, most recently serving as VP of Business Development and Dairy RNG Operations where he was responsible for the safety, operations, and profitability of 21 landfill gas projects and 8 dairy RNG projects
- Mark served as a Cavalry Troop Commander (Captain) in Iraq and was awarded a Bronze Star

Jared Williams, Co-CEO:

- Jared has more than 10 years of RNG operations and development experience in landfill gas and dairy RNG projects
- Was most recently the Vice President of Operations at DTE Biomass Energy where he led an 80-person team managing 21 landfill gas projects and 9 dairy RNG projects, achieving 90%+ on-stream rates across his fleet
- Managed the first dairy virtual pipeline in the country and received some of the first provisional CI scores

Matt Brubaker, CFO:

- Matt has over twenty years of experience in public accounting, financial reporting, and the accounting and sale of renewable attributes associated with RNG
- In his previous role he was the Controller for DTE Biomass Energy where he oversaw the accounting of over 30 renewable energy projects and proper recognition of renewable attribute sales
- Matt is a Certified Public Accountant and holds a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting from Central Michigan University

Bill Parkhurst, VP, Construction & Engineering:

- Bill has over 20 years experience operating and constructing natural gas pipelines and processing plants

- Previously Vice President of Operations for 1 Bcf/d helium processing plant in Kansas of which he led construction and operations
- Construction, permitting, programming and metering expert

Rodney Taylor, VP, Operations

- Rodney has twenty years of experience in natural gas processing at Superior Pipeline as Director of Operations, including an OPEX budget over \$300 MM/yr
- Ten years of experience managing multiple Class III dairy processing plants
- Participated in global design, fabrication and installation of wastewater treatment and power plants in North America and Asia

Ownership:

<b>Buckhorn RNG, LLC Schedule of Ownership</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Novilla Debt Holdings I, LLC	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>----- Corp. Schedule of Ownership</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION COMPREHENSIVE NARRATIVE**

Buckhorn RNG, LLC is developing a dairy renewable natural gas (RNG) production facility located in region 6 in Unity, Wisconsin. The Project is co-located with and receives manure from the cows owned by Lynn Farms Dairy. Having been founded in 1949, Lynn Farms Dairy has been in operations for more than 70 years. The project will be comprised of one 2.5 million gallon anaerobic digester, gas upgrading equipment and other related equipment where it will process dairy manure biogas into pipeline quality RNG. The pipeline quality RNG produced at the Project will be directly injected into a pipeline operated by Wisconsin Gas LLC. The project is expected to produce ~80,000 MMBtu of RNG which is expected to remove the equivalent of ~23,000 metric tons of CO2 or the equivalent of removing ~4,900 cars from the road every year.

The project is currently under construction with an expected commercial operations date in August 2024.

Novilla is responsible for managing the site engineering, procurement, and construction associated with the construction of the project and will be responsible for operating the project once it has reached commercial operations..

Once the project is complete, Buckhorn RNG LLC will receive manure produced by dairy cows at Lynn Farms Dairy which feeds into the 2.5 million gallon digester. Once in the digester, the manure is stirred and heated, producing biogas from the cow manure. The manure is stirred and heated in the anaerobic digester for ~27 days at which point the gas is sent to the gas upgrading skids to remove impurities and undesirable constituents before injecting it into a local pipeline/interconnect owned and operated by Wisconsin Gas LLC. The residual manure is given back to the farmer as digestate after it leaves the anaerobic digester which is then used by the farmer as fertilizer for their fields.

The project costs are presented in the table below: Label each "Source" as applicable "IRB" "Bank" "Equity" "Grant" "TIF" "OTHER"

USE (Complete for those applicable)	SOURCES OF FUNDING (Bank, Equity, SBA, RLF, etc.)				TOTAL
	SOURCE #1 Equity:	SOURCE #2 IRB:	SOURCE #3 NAME: Other (Taxable Tail)	SOURCE #4 NAME:	
Land Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Building – New Construction	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Building – Purchase of Existing	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Building – Renovations	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Building – Annual Lease Cost	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Leasehold Improvements	\$547,000	\$10,937,000	\$	\$	\$11,484,000
Machinery and Equipment –	\$518,000	\$10,361,000	\$	\$	\$10,879,000



Purchased					
Machinery and Equipment – Leased	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Training	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Working Capital	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Special Tooling	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other (explain): COI	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other (explain): Engineering	\$35,000	\$702,000	\$	\$	\$737,000
Other (explain): Financing Costs / DSR	\$	\$3,000,000	\$250,000	\$	\$3,250,000
<b>TOTAL USE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>\$1,100,000</b>	<b>\$25,000,000</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$26,350,000</b>

**IV. EMPLOYMENT**

Buckhorn RNG, LLC will create 2 new full-time employees in Wisconsin.

JOB CLASSIFICATION	POSITIONS RETAINED/ AVERAGE WAGE PER HOUR	POSITIONS CREATED			TOTAL JOBS/AVERAGE STARTING WAGE PER HOUR
		Year One	Year Two	Year Three	
Manufacturing					
Supervision		1	0	0	\$110,000 per Year Salary
Maintenance		1	0	0	\$30-\$35 per Hour
Administration					
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

Benefit Package	
Type	Percentage (%) Paid by Company
Individual Health Insurance	100%
Family Health Insurance	100%
Other Benefits Provided: 401(k) with 6% matching	

This salary and benefit information is confidential based upon a trade secret exemption

**V. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

See attached financial statements for the Borrower as follows: (i) historical financial information **for the last three fiscal years and (ii) interim financial statements.**

The financial information is confidential based upon a trade secret exemption. No financial information is available prior to 2023.

**VI. GENERAL INFORMATION**

SECTION A-GENERAL INFORMATION	
1.	Which community will sponsor your bond request? Region 6 What is the expected date for adoption of the “comfort” resolution? <a href="#">Inducement Resolution was adopted September 6, 2023</a>
2.	If you have chosen a bond attorney, please provide contact information: <a href="#">Bond attorney not chosen at this time</a>
3.	Of the total project costs, how much is IRB eligible?  <a href="#">Bond counsel currently estimates that \$25,000,000 million is IRB eligible</a>

4. Please provide contact information for the bank or underwriter that will purchase or guarantee the bonds. [Underwriter not decided at this time](#)

Name

Phone:

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail:

5. Please provide information on expected annual interest cost savings and/or interest rate differential resulting from use of tax-exempt bond financing.

[It is expected that the interest rate from use of tax-exempt bond financing would be in the range of 150-200bps better than non-tax-exempt bond financings](#)

To: Public Finance Authority  
22 East Mifflin Street, Suite 900  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

RE: Not to Exceed \$25,000,000 Public Finance Authority  
Exempt Facility Revenue Bonds, Series 2024  
(Buckhorn RNG, LLC Project)

To Whom It May Concern:

The Public Finance Authority (“Authority”) proposes to issue not to exceed \$25,000,000 principal amount of its revenue bonds captioned above in one or more series of tax-exempt and/or taxable bonds (the “Bonds”) on behalf of Buckhorn RNG, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (or an affiliate thereof, the “Borrower”), to finance a project consisting of the engineering, construction, installation, improvement, equipping, and operations of a dairy renewable natural gas (“RNG”) production facility comprised of one 2.5 million gallon anaerobic digester, gas upgrading equipment and other related equipment where it will process dairy manure biogas into pipeline quality RNG (the “Project”). The Project will be owned and operated by the Borrower and will be co-located with the Lynn Farms Dairy located at or in the immediate vicinity of B4595 River Avenue, Unity, Wisconsin (mailing address) located in the Town of Brighton, Wisconsin. This letter shall constitute approval by Marathon County, Wisconsin, of such financing of the Project by the Authority for purposes of Section 66.0304(11)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The undersigned certify that they are the highest-ranking executive and administrator, respectively, of Marathon County, Wisconsin.

This approval does not constitute an endorsement of the Project.

This letter may be produced as evidence, and shall be conclusive proof, of the approval granted herein in connection with any proceedings relating to the issuance of the Bonds and may be relied upon by any party thereto in connection therewith.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## SUMMARY

**Request for MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN  
to Approve the Public Finance Authority as Conduit Issuer  
for  
Not to Exceed \$25,000,000 Exempt Facility Revenue Bonds  
to Benefit  
Buckhorn RNG, LLC Project**

This will summarize the request of Buckhorn RNG, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (or an affiliate thereof, the “Company”), asking that Marathon County, Wisconsin (the “County”) approve the issuance by the Public Finance Authority (the “PFA”) of not to exceed \$25,000,000 principal amount of Exempt Facility Revenue Bonds, Series 2024 (Buckhorn RNG, LLC Project), to be issued in one or more series of tax-exempt and/or taxable bonds, to finance a project on behalf of the Company.

### **Project Summary; RNG Production Facility**

The Company’s project consists of the construction, installation, improvement, equipping, and operations of a dairy renewable natural gas (“RNG”) production facility comprised of one 2.5 million gallon anaerobic digester, gas upgrading equipment and other related equipment where it will process dairy manure biogas into pipeline quality RNG (the “Project”). The Project will be owned and operated by the Company and co-located with the Lynn Farms Dairy located at or in the immediate vicinity of B4595 River Avenue, Unity, Wisconsin (mailing address) located in the Town of Brighton, Wisconsin. The Project receives manure from the cows owned by Lynn Farms Dairy, which was founded in 1949 and has been in operations for more than 70 years. The pipeline quality RNG produced at the Project will be directly injected into a pipeline operated by Wisconsin Gas LLC.

The Project is currently under construction with an expected commercial operations date in August 2024. The anaerobic digester and gas upgrading equipment are specialized pieces of equipment for the use of generating biogas from dairy manure and upgrading that biogas into pipeline-quality RNG by removing contaminants. The Project will produce negative-carbon RNG to be used as compressed natural gas in natural gas vehicles in order to displace the use of diesel fuel, thereby decarbonizing the transportation fuel market. The Project is expected to produce approximately 80,000 MMBtu of RNG which is expected to remove the equivalent of approximately 23,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> or the equivalent of removing approximately 4,900 cars from the road every year.

After the Project is complete, the Company will receive manure produced by dairy cows at Lynn Farms Dairy which feeds into the 2.5 million gallon digester. Once in the digester, the manure is stirred and heated, producing biogas from the cow manure. The manure is stirred and heated in the anaerobic digester for approximately 27 days at which point the gas is sent to the gas upgrading skids to remove impurities and undesirable constituents before injecting it into a local pipeline/interconnect owned and operated by Wisconsin Gas LLC. The residual manure is given back to the farmer as digestate after it leaves the anaerobic digester which is then used by the farmer as fertilizer for their fields.



## **The Company**

The Company was formed in September 2022 as a single purpose entity to own and operate the Project. The Company is a single member LLC directly owned by Novilla Debt Holdings I, LLC and ultimately owned by Novilla Investment Holdings, LLC (“Novilla”) which was founded in 2021 and is headquartered in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Novilla is a fully integrated originator, builder, developer, owner, and operator of projects that specialize in the production of pipeline-quality RNG from dairy manure across the United States. Novilla operates similar facilities in Michigan and Wisconsin and is simultaneously developing two other projects under contract and seven more projects under letter of intent across the Midwest and Northeast.

Novilla is responsible for managing the site engineering, procurement, and construction associated with the construction of the Project and will be responsible for operating the Project once it has reached commercial operations.

## **Why is the Company Embarking on the Project? Why is it needed?**

Buckhorn and Novilla believe the dairy RNG space presents an environmentally beneficial and profitable opportunity to turn a waste, dairy manure, into a valuable decarbonizing resource, RNG. The Project is expected to contribute to an overall net reduction of greenhouse gases due to the Project capturing methane that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere from the dairy’s operations and that methane being converted into CO<sub>2</sub> after it is combusted for a beneficial use.

There are many benefits to a dairy RNG facility to both the partner dairy farm operation and the local community, including but not limited to:

### *Emissions Reduction and Waste to Energy*

- Greenhouse gas capture and destruction – dairy RNG operations remove methane emissions, a powerful greenhouse gas, from the atmosphere for injection into the local pipeline grid for beneficial use
- Generates renewable natural gas, displacing the use of fossil gas or other fossil fuels

### *Farmer Benefits*

- Lowers carbon intensity of the underlying dairy operations, which is becoming increasingly important for dairy operations across the country
- Financial benefits to the farmer due to revenue sharing structure enhances the dairy’s financial resiliency and diversifying the dairy’s revenue streams incrementally from traditional agricultural revenues
- Dairy RNG operations improve farm manure management practices as the farmer retains the nutrients post anaerobic digestion and can use it as bedding for their herd and apply it to their crops as a fertilizer

### *Community Benefits*

- Improves air quality and reduces odor in the surrounding community
- Job creation with well paying jobs with two full time employees at the facility, helping diversify the traditionally agricultural local economy

## **PFA as Conduit Bond Issuer; Exempt Facility Revenue Bonds**

The PFA will be the conduit issuer for the bonds and adopted an inducement resolution on September 6, 2023. The proceeds from the sale of the bonds will be loaned by the PFA to the Company. The PFA acts strictly as a conduit, which enables the Company to borrow at a lower rate of interest. Because the bonds are issued by a governmental entity, the holder(s) of the bonds may exclude the interest on the bonds from gross income for federal tax purposes.

Exempt facility revenue bonds must comply with both Federal law (Sec. 142 of Internal Revenue Code (“IRC”)) and Wisconsin law. Section 142(a) IRC permits the issuance of qualified exempt facility bonds for multiple purposes, including for projects in which 95% of the project is used for conversion of solid waste to a first useful product (Section 142(a)(6) IRC). The Project, as outlined above, converts animal waste into renewable natural gas (“RNG”) and will constitute a solid waste conversion facility under Section 142(a)(6) IRC.

These exempt facility Bonds are municipal bonds; however, they are not general obligations of the PFA or the County:

1. Neither the PFA nor the County will be liable for payment of the principal and interest on the bonds;
2. Neither the PFA nor the County will have ongoing responsibilities of monitoring or reporting with regard to the bonds or the Project.
3. The bonds do not count against the County’s borrowing capacity. The County will not levy a tax for payment of the bonds.
4. The PFA and the County will be reimbursed for all fees and costs incurred on connection with the issuance of the bonds.

By acting as the conduit issuer, the PFA can grant the Company a significant monetary benefit, at no cost to the PFA, because the Company will enjoy a lower interest rate as a result of using a bond structure. The bonds will be sold to the public (“Bondholders”) by an underwriter and thereafter, an independent third-party fiduciary, (the “Trustee”) will continuously monitor the bonds on behalf of the Bondholders. The Bondholders will look solely to the Company for repayment. Bondholders will not look to the PFA or the County for payment. The PFA will assign all of its rights, liability and responsibilities under the bonds to the Trustee for the benefit of the Bondholders. In addition, the Bond documents will include broad indemnification of the PFA. The Company will be fully responsible for repaying the loan. If the Company is not able to meet its payment obligations, the Trustee will enforce the rights of the Bondholder as required in the bond documents. Neither the PFA nor the County are liable for payment.

### **TEFRA Public Hearing**

The PFA and the Town of Brighton will be asked to hold a public hearing required by Section 147(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “TEFRA hearing”), regarding the bond financing at a future date.

## **APPROVAL REQUESTED OF THE COUNTY**

### **Wisconsin Statutory Local Approval**

Section 66.0304(11)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that the PFA may not issue bonds to finance the Project unless a “political subdivision” in which the Project is located “approves the financing of the project.” The Company respectfully requests that the County approve the issuance of the bonds by the PFA to finance the Project, and the Marathon County approval document is included with this document packet. The Company will also seek to obtain approval from the Town of Brighton.

The foregoing is just a brief discussion of tax-exempt bond financing and the approval being requested of the County. By acting as conduit bond issuer, the PFA will give the Company an interest rate benefit, because the tax-exempt bonds will be tax-exempt in the hands of the Bondholders and, therefore, the cost savings passed along to the Company. It must be emphasized that neither the PFA nor the County will be liable in any way on the bonds; the conduit bonds are special, limited obligations of the PFA.



**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

### **Area 7 Agriculture Education Position Plan - Proposal**

**Situation:**

Area 7 counties (Clark, Marathon, Portage, and Wood) currently each have county based agriculture educators (see table below). With the retirement of Richard Halopka (Feb 2024) in Clark County, we need to begin the process of shifting the counties to the regional educator model to align with the rest of the state and with the funding and positions available.

**Current Agriculture Education Positions and Funding in Area 7**

County	Co-Funded FTE
Clark	1.5
Marathon	1.0
Portage	1.0
Wood	1.0

**Proposed Regional Model**

The regional model implementation in Area 7 would be done in two to three phases. The first phase would include a region formed by Marathon and Clark Counties. In the future, other counties may be considered for additions to the region or a rearrangement of the region.

The Clark-Marathon Region will ultimately include 1 Crops & Soils Educator and 1 Dairy & Livestock Educator (2.0 FTE). However, in the interim due to existing educator positions, the region will include 1.5 FTE Dairy & Livestock Educators and 1 FTE Crops & Soils Educator. A Regional Crops & Soils Educator would be hired. The 2 existing Dairy & Livestock Educators would share both counties.

The interim situation in the Clark-Marathon Region (until the region only has 1 Dairy & Livestock Educator) maintains the current number of educator position FTEs (2.5) with 0.5 FTE to be paid for entirely by Extension. Marathon and Clark Counties will be asked to each co-fund (with Extension) the equivalent of 1.0 FTE. Extension will fund 0.5 FTE who will serve both Marathon and Clark Counties.

**Proposed Clark and Marathon Counties Regional Agriculture Education Positions**

County	Current Co-Funded Positions	Interim Co-Funded Positions	Interim Fully State Funded Position
Clark	1.5	1.0	0.25
Marathon	1.0	1.0	0.25
<b>Total</b>	2.5	2.0	0.5







**Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
MARATHON COUNTY



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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**University of Wisconsin–Madison Extension Marathon County**

212 River Dr. Ste 3 | Wausau, WI 54403

715-261-1230 | [marathon.extension.wisc.edu](http://marathon.extension.wisc.edu) | [info@extension.wisc.edu](mailto:info@extension.wisc.edu)



# Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**UW-Madison Extension's outreach** creates key connection points for families, farms, communities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, government, and more. We support local volunteers and leaders to take action and serve as role models in their communities, and we make sure Wisconsinites have the latest research, best practices, and educational opportunities.



**Learn more at**  
[extension.wisc.edu](http://extension.wisc.edu)







# Horticulture

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

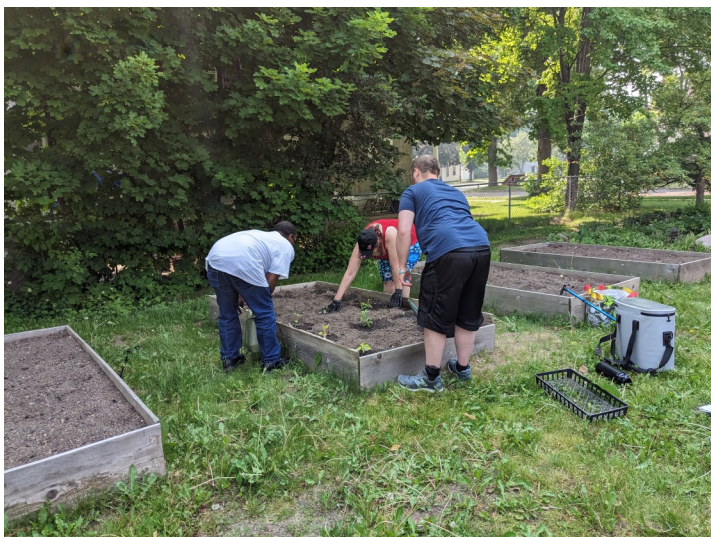


## Responding to Pollinator Decline and Pollution Due to Pesticide and Fertilizer Misuse

Marathon County is facing environmental challenges including pollinator decline and pollution due to overuse of horticulture chemicals. Proper pest management techniques can reduce fertilizer and pesticide use leading to reduced environmental contamination and pollution.

Marathon County residents have come to rely on their local Extension office to answer horticulture related diagnostic questions with research based answers in a timely manner. Questions come into the office either directly through phone calls, direct emails to Janell Wehr, horticulture educator ([janell.wehr@wisc.edu](mailto:janell.wehr@wisc.edu)), or the [UW-Madison Horticulture Program website](#). Inquiries also are processed through the Marathon County Master Gardeners, either directly via email or at one of the many events they attend (farmers markets, plant sales, and the Wisconsin Valley Fair). Support for the Master Gardeners includes identification and selection of volunteers, training and orientation to diagnostics, as well as providing continuous support to the volunteers.

By providing research based answers to gardening questions, residents see reduced time and money spent on efforts either have no impact, or worse, negative impacts in their lawns and gardens and the larger environment.



## BY THE NUMBERS

### Public Outreach

- 65 Programs

### Media Outreach

- 119 Posts
- 23,536 Engagements
- 3,849 New Visits to Website

### Outreach Partnerships

- Woodson YMCA–The Landing and Mosinee Aquatic Center
- ATTIC Correctional Services
- UWSP–Continuing Education
- Mosinee Community Education
- Marathon County Public Library–Wausau and Hatley Branches
- Marathon County 4-H
- The Women’s Community
- Wausau Funeral Care
- ADRC and Hmong American Center
- North Central Wisconsin Master Gardener Association
- NTC



# Horticulture

## Sowing Success

Sowing Success is a 12 week introductory course in horticulture. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) course teaches participants how to link gardening practices and biology to prevent plant problems. Students learn how to select, grow, and maintain the health of plants, including lawns, woody and herbaceous ornamentals, fruits, and vegetables. Students learn how to apply the principles of IPM to pests, including insects, diseases, weeds, and wildlife. As they learn how to grow plants in a way that helps them plan for gardening success, they will prevent plant problems before they start and manage issues when they happen. They will leave the course with a combination of practical gardening skills to try plus the knowledge of why they work.



Sixteen students completed Sowing Success in fall 2023. Students prepared for each session by reading assigned chapters and watching videos hosted on the web. During the sessions, students worked through hands-on activities designed to reinforce the concepts introduced in the readings and video lectures. Pictured here, students are familiarizing themselves with all the information available on a fertilizer label. Marathon County Master Gardeners provide added support in mentoring students throughout the course.

Sowing Success is an approved learning opportunity for the Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program in preparation to become a Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener. The Marathon County Master Gardener Association looks forward to adding these students next year.

## Inquiries About Horticulture

In 2023, at least 74 diagnostic questions in Marathon County were answered through the Extension office. Here are the trends from the inquiries:

- 25% of questions centered on trees and shrubs. This isn't surprising, since trees significantly add to property values. Many of these questions were centered on the drought in early summer 2023.
- 43% of questions centered on insects, diseases, and weeds, most were located in vegetable gardens. This is an area of opportunity to increase responsible use of pesticides and fertilizers.



# Horticulture

## Gardening to Support Community Wellbeing

Social isolation, the absence of social connections, is a key indicator of community strength, impacting individual and communal well-being. Strong social ties correlate with better mental and physical health. Socially isolated individuals face heightened risks like depression, anxiety, and poor physical health. According to the Marathon County 2022 LIFE Report, Marathon County residents feel less connected to their communities than in 2017, with the greatest growth of disconnection to organizations (clubs, churches, etc).

In an effort to combat social isolation and improve wellbeing, Extension partnered with local agencies, organizations, and businesses to meet the needs of the Marathon County residents.





- Spices for Life, a program hosted by Wausau Funeral Care, that partnered with two local grief counselors to share how gardening with herbs can improve optimism while supporting positive socialization.
- Two programs for Hmong elders at the ADRC senior dinner at the Hmong American Center. Hmong elders were introduced to low risk, low cost indoor gardening activities to support positive wellbeing and socialization.
- Three programs in partnership through the Women's Community Hmong domestic violence survivors support group in which participants learned propagation techniques through low risk, low cost activities, supporting positive wellbeing and socialization.
- Lifelong learning is beneficial for Marathon County's aging population, because it supports overall cognitive function, sense of accomplishment, and personal growth, and positive social engagement that combats social isolation, which is common in older adults while developing technology skills.
  - ◇ Monthly programming at the Woodson YMCA-The Landing, serving adults over 55. The topics of these 12 programs included workshops that increase gardening success while promoting positive socialization. Participants learned about composting, seed saving, container gardening, terrariums, raspberry cultivation, and more.
  - ◇ Two additional programs were hosted for the Woodson YMCA at the Mosinee Aquatic Center, targeting adults over 55.
  - ◇ Spring and fall programs serving adults over 55 through the UWSP Learning is Forever program (LIFE). During the spring program, participants learned about best practices in designing and maintaining container gardens. The fall program introduced participants to the biophilia hypothesis, and learned how incorporating elements of nature into their everyday lives supports mental health resilience.
- Gaining Ground Gardens is a weekly therapeutic horticulture program that serves justice-involved individuals with court mandated community service hours and individuals within the drug court program. Participants gained basic horticulture skills that can translate into green industry vocations, while working on soft skills like working in groups. This was the third year of justice-involved programming partnership with Attic Services. This program runs April-October (weather dependent).








# Horticulture

## Media Outreach

-  Engaged in multiple WSAW and WAOW interviews.
-  Participated in a panel discussion for WNPR's Garden Talk with Larry Meiller.
-  The Extension Horticulture Program Social Media Team works together to provide timely and relevant information to gardeners through engaging and educational social media posts, using the Extension Horticulture Facebook and Instagram channels. The team also evaluates this effort using data from Meta and Google Analytics. Over the course of 2023, 119 posts were made to Facebook and Instagram to educate the public about timely and relevant horticulture topics throughout the year. Posts include educational information and links to articles on the Horticulture Topic Hub and upcoming events such as statewide webinars, classes and activities (i.e. Pollinator Week).
-  Overall, from Facebook Meta Analytics, Facebook posts on the Extension Horticulture page reached 3,674,168 people with 23536 engagements (combined total of link clicks, shares and comments). The majority of Facebook posts directed people to the Extension Horticulture Topic Hub website. Additionally, posts may direct people to other university-based information. Using Google Analytics for the Horticulture Topic Hub website, we had 4356 users on the website from Facebook posts and activities and acquired 3849 new users on the website.

## Youth Outreach

-  Partnered with the Wausau School District G2M program to provide a 5 week after school series for Lincoln School 2-3rd grade students. Through plant propagation activities, students cultivated science literacy skills.
-  Multiple area BSA Cub Scout packs participated in hands-on activity creating seed bombs to support pollinators.
-  Engaged with youth at four 4-H led activities, including agriculture literacy, chemistry, and plant growing techniques.





## Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives

FoodWise is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles, and healthy community environments for Wisconsin residents with limited incomes through nutrition education at the individual, community, and systems levels.

## Community Impacts



Engaged with 240 learners around nutrition education topics in a variety of settings, including early care and education centers, K-12 school settings, and senior nutrition centers.



Partnered with ADRC and The Women’s Community to expand nutrition education reach in English and Hmong, hosting 7 classes for Hmong elders and women. This education prompted healthy eating and offered culturally-relevant recipes and suggestions.



Worked with the Marathon County Hunger Coalition to glean over 5,000 pounds of local produce and establish a mobile food pantry serving neighborhoods and community members with limited income.



## BY THE NUMBERS

Whether people are healthy or not is affected by systems, policies, and environmental factors.

**6%** of county residents experience limited income and low access to a grocery store.

**9%** of county residents use SNAP benefits to purchase food for themselves and their families.



## Inspiring Collaborations

Julia Perock joined the FoodWise team as a Nutrition Educator in 2023 and provides nutrition lessons to 1st and 3rd grade students in the Wausau School District.





FoodWise nutrition education lessons provide hands-on and engaging activities to expose students to MyPlate and new foods. Youth learn about the food groups of MyPlate and taste samples of proteins, dairy, grains, fruits, and vegetables, and discuss healthy snack options.

Julia cultivated relationships with local food pantries and the Marathon County Hunger Coalition, providing nutrition education at mobile food pantries that serve low-income neighborhoods and programs. Julia is excited to support a healthy community for everyone in Marathon County!



## Multi-level Program Efforts

FoodWise provided leadership in the Marathon County Hunger Coalition in partnership with United Way, local food pantries, nonprofits, and service organizations. The Hunger Coalition impacts the food landscape in Marathon County by:

-  Purchasing 2,200 produce boxes from local farms for Marathon County food pantries including healthy recipes.
-  Starting a mobile food pantry to reach the community during hours when most pantries are inaccessible.
-  Utilizing Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) funding to procure food from local farms for food pantries.
-  Gleaning 5,650 pounds of local food from the Wausau Farmers Market for mobile food pantries and local food pantries.





# Agriculture

Heather Schlessor, Dairy Educator



## Importance of Dairy in Marathon County

Dairying remains paramount to the success of agriculture in Marathon County. Marathon County's 347 dairy operations housing 145,000 cattle and calves (National Agriculture Statistics Service, 2022) produce 3.6 billion pounds of milk annually (National Agriculture Statistics Service, 2022). Agriculture in Marathon County creates 11,021 jobs, generating \$71.4 million in sales, property, and income taxes. Total agricultural economic impact grew from \$2.7 billion to \$2.8 billion (Deller, 2014, 2017). The report reflects the importance of Agriculture and Dairy farming in Marathon County, providing jobs and tax revenue to improve infrastructure such as roads, schools, and other public services.

The dairy industry is dynamic, continuously developing new technologies and practices. To aid the Marathon County dairy farmers, this educator programs in Animal Welfare and Herd Health, Reproduction and Genetics, Manure Management, and Farm Stress.

## Animal Welfare and Herd Health

While we know that the calf is born with an immature immune system and that the absorption of maternal antibodies through the mother's colostrum (first milk) is vital to the calf's survival only, 21.8% of all operations surveyed in the 2017 National Animal Health Monitoring Systems report fed four or more quarts of colostrum at first feeding, which occurred on average within 3.6 hours after birth.

To determine the success of passive transfer on farms in Marathon County for retained heifer calves and non-retained animals (heifers, bull calves, and beef x dairy calves), we enlisted 15 farms in Marathon County for a colostrum management project. Passive transfer is the term used to describe the transfer of antibodies from the mother to the calf. A successful passive transfer indicates that the calf received an adequate quantity of immunoglobulins to fend off infection and disease while the calf's immune system developed. Blood from 1 – 7-day-old calves was collected, and serum total protein values were read. At the end of the one-year study period, each farm will be provided with a breakdown of its rate of passive transfer.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Milk Quality Research Project

- 16 farms from Marathon County

### Colostrum Management Research Project

- 15 farms from Marathon County

### Artificial Insemination

- 30 Participants

### Women's Program

- 40 Participants

### COMET

- 69 Participants

### Manure Summit

- 116 Participants

### Repro Roadshow

- 37 Veterinarians

### Pesticide Applicator Testing

- 24 Farmers



## Reproduction and Genetics

Over the past two decades, a reproduction revolution has occurred in the dairy industry that has led to dramatic increases in reproductive performance in high-producing cows. A consequence of increased reproductive performance is a concurrent increase in replacement heifer inventories, which has driven down replacement heifer values. The result is that producers have an oversupply of heifers that they feed and care for, which have little or no financial value. To increase farm viability, farmers have changed their breeding philosophy. They are breeding the top animals to dairy and the bottom animals to beef semen (to create beef x dairy crosses, which have more value as meat animals). Beef semen sold to U.S. dairy farmers increased by 21% from 2021 to 2022, with 7.2 million units of beef semen used in 2021 (Geiger, 2022, Hoards Dairyman Intel). Due to increased fertility in cows, we have seen an increase in the use of sexed semen from 8% in 2015 to 21% in 2020. The use of conventional semen has fallen from 85% in 2017 to just 52% in 2020 for Holstein cows, but even more so in Jersey cows.

A workshop for 37 veterinarians was held. The goal of this workshop was to increase knowledge of the latest University research on the use of sexed semen and beef semen and how dairy professionals can practically apply these technologies to their clients' farms.

To aid dairy and beef farmers in breeding their own cattle, two artificial insemination trainings were held in 2023 with 20 participants from Marathon County. The post-training self-reported evaluation results indicate a positive 1.32-point average change in the participant's understanding of the topics discussed (1.91 points on average before participating in the training/3.23 points on average after). This was determined using a 4-point Likert scale, ranking excellent at 4 points and little/ no knowledge at 1 point. The highest average change (1.90 points, 1.6 before/3.5 after) in knowledge occurred in the reproductive tract and semen handling category. Participants were also given a pre and post-test to gauge their change in knowledge. Participants showed a 15% increase in knowledge after attending the course. Many participants indicated that they plan to put their new knowledge to work right away by breeding their cattle.

To enhance the instructional content of the artificial insemination course, two videos were created (Heat Detection Aids, and Semen Tank/ Semen Handling). The objective of the videos was to help visual learners reinforce the topics taught during the course.





## Manure Management to Protect Water and Soil

All dairy farms produce manure. Each dairy cow can produce 20-plus gallons of manure and urine each day. Managing manure and other dairy by-products has both economic and environmental implications for the farm and the local community. Dairy manure is a significant nutrient resource, a resource whose value is impacted by its collection, processing, storage, and application. Currently, 2% of dairy operator respondents use a sand separator, 1% use a digester, and 3% use a nutrient recovery system ([WI Dairy Producer Survey 2020](#)).

Since 2009, Extension has hosted the Midwest Manure Summit biannually to successfully meet industry needs. One hundred and sixteen people, including four farmers and six agricultural professionals from Marathon County, attended the 2023 Midwest Manure Summit.

Thirty-one participants completed a pre/ post evaluation. After attending the conference, 96% of respondents stated they plan to share, further research, and/or implement a practice or technology they learned.

- 85% indicated they would add innovative manure-hauling processes.
- 95% indicated they wanted to improve sustainability through manure management and technology.
- 81% indicated they wanted to improve dairy farm business viability.
- 89% indicated they planned to improve manure management.
- 85% plan to utilize data, technology, and automation.
- 74% plan to adopt alternative business practices, including value-added and diversified income.
- 88% of respondents indicated that the conference was a good or excellent use of their time.

Participants expressly indicated they planned to implement the addition of biochar, share information about manuresheds, and investigate becoming part of a methane recapture program. Participants indicated that the Manure Summit was useful to learn from successful operators. One respondent provided the following comment, "Informative educational opportunities NEED to continue to be sponsored by UW-Extension!"





# Agriculture

## Farm Stress

The ongoing economic conditions with milk and commodity pricing is taking a toll on dairy farm families and their rural communities. The associated chronic stress is also impacting mental and physical well-being, relationships, and decision-making. This educator is working to help farmers, families, businesses, and communities remain resilient by learning how to manage stress and be there for those that are going through a challenging time.

To help farm women think strategically about their farm business and other business opportunities available to them, a program was held where 23 Marathon County residents learned about strategic thinking/ diversification ideas.

Results from a 2021 focus group study conducted by this educator on causes of farm stress and reasons farmers do not seek help revealed that farmers want opportunities to socialize off the farm to help reduce stress. To that end, this educator partnered with the Marathon County Farm Bureau to offer Quarterly Card Parties. Five Farm couples participated in this event throughout 2023. Focus group participants also indicated Farm Succession as a stressor. In 2023, this educator worked one-on-one with two Marathon County farms to help them with the farm succession process. This educator also facilitated quarterly farm succession virtual meetings. The meetings provided an opportunity for four Marathon County farmers going through a farm succession to ask questions of their peers and experts in the field.

Lastly, Heather is trained as a Changing your Mental and Emotional Trajectory (COMET) trainer and held three trainings in 2023 for 60 Marathon County agriculture professionals and 9 Marathon County Farmers. COMET focuses on training the layperson in active listening and questioning techniques to help change the mental and emotional trajectory of a person who is under stress.



## Planning for Emergency Livestock Transport Response (PELTR) is a

UW Madison Division of Extension program for helping local responders prepare to efficiently respond and manage traffic incidents that involve livestock, including dairy cattle. Livestock transportation is a critical segment of the food supply system. It is also highly visible to the public with animals being transported between farms, points of sale and to processing facilities. Many first responders lack experience with roadway incidents involving livestock trailers.

Seven Marathon County EMS personnel participated in a hybrid PELTR courses. Course participants learned about the importance of determine holding facilities and supplies in advance. They also learned about how to handle cattle, the cut points in a trailer, and the importance of biosecurity.



# Natural Resources

Kris Tiles, Natural Resources Program Manager

Anna James, Natural Resources Educator



## Farm Profitability Conference

Natural Resources (NRE) organized the third Central Wisconsin Farm Profitability Expo, to encourage profitable farming by building resiliency, diversifying farming operations, reducing inputs and increasing farmers' return on investment. The event returned to an in-person event this year with 42 attendees.

## Producer-led Watershed Groups

The community-led watershed group, EPPIC (Eau Pleine Partnership for Integrated Conservation), conducts educational programming about agricultural Best Management Practices as part of their overall mission to improve water resources in the Big Eau Pleine. Extension assists with program planning and provides resources as needed. The NRE facilitated discussions with members to review the group's strategic plan and the efforts made to meet outlined goals and objectives within the plan. Through this activity, the group was able to identify areas where they could be focusing on the next steps to meet their current strategic plan, and/or parts of the strategic plan that need to be updated to meet the group's future goals and objectives.

The efforts of producer-led watershed protection groups are generally focused on a local watershed ecosystem, but the importance of regional collaborations should not be overlooked. Producer members and conservation educators in the Wisconsin River basin recognized the importance for regional collaboration and decided to host a regional gathering for the 7 producer-led groups in the North Central area. During the gathering, 24 producers and collaborators participated in a guided question and answer session led by Anna James, to identify regional resources concerns, discuss successes and hardships, examine group needs, and talk about the statewide producer-led program. The regional gathering ultimately served as a space for groups to strengthen their relationships through candid conversations.

## Fenwood Creek Watershed

The NRE hosted an educational display for landowners within the Fenwood Creek Watershed community event where event attendees learned about the watershed approach and water resources by engaging in hands-on activities. Attendees also learned about the effects of non-point source pollution to groundwater and surface water resources. The goal of this display was to help landowners take an active role in a watershed restoration project by learning ways that they can reduce their impact to water resources while being good stewards of the land.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Learn About Your Land (LAYL)

- 22 classes—291 attendees
- 1239 people receive monthly e-newsletter
- 1000 followers on Facebook
- 815 followers on Instagram

### Your Land, Your Legacy

- 27 participants representing 11 properties
- Canvas course that goes through the 8 steps of planning for family transition of woodland property





# Natural Resources

## Learn About Your Land Classes for Woodland Owners

22 individual classes were held in conjunction with 10 counties around the state. 291 individuals attended these classes, which occurred virtually and in-person. Seventy percent of attendees reported that they had not attended an educational event about their woodlands in the past 5 years. In cooperation with DNR, all attendees were referred for a free walk-through and stewardship plan with a forester. Additional support for LAYL attendees included monthly blog posts, bi-weekly Facebook posts, and a monthly e-newsletter. 1239 people receive the newsletter (with a 61% open rate), and 1000 people follow the Facebook page. Additionally, we are building engagement on Instagram (815 followers).

<http://www.woodlandinfo.org/>

## Outreach for Women Woodland Owners

The WI Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry (WDNR-Forestry) and The UW-Madison Division of Extension received a federal grant to conduct education, outreach and evaluation to women woodland owners across the state. The UW – Madison Division of Extension Educator is contracted to create educational outreach programming and facilitate the delivery of natural resource instruction to this target audience. A weekend retreat style event was organized and facilitated in May 2023 with The Aldo Leopold Foundation, WDNR Silviculturists and Forest Health Staff, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, and Extension Outreach Specialists. The Wisconsin Women’s Woodland Gathering had a total of 70 landowners and 11 resource professionals, for a total reach of 81 individuals.



## Additional Efforts in 2023

Drinking water sources near agricultural activity are susceptible to contamination from animal waste and farm chemicals, and these contaminants can pose health hazards to humans and livestock. This project seeks to incentivize well water testing for farmers that provide housing for workers by providing homeowner water testing packages at no cost that test for bacteria, nitrates, and water quality.







# Wisconsin 4-H

Holly Luerssen, 4-H Educator

Jasmine Carbajal, Bilingual 4-H Educator



## Educational Partnerships



**Growing Great Minds Earns WI 4-H's "Friend of 4-H Award" for Partnership:** In 2023, the Wausau School District's Growing Great Minds (G2M) program collaborated with Marathon County 4-H to offer engaging after school workshops for elementary students. Across four quarters, AmeriCorps/4-H Program Assistants conducted STEM-based activities at different schools, with 52 students participating in the Full STEAM Ahead program during winter and spring. Activities included exploring milk fat differences, extracting DNA from strawberries, and creating LED name tags. The current school year continues the STEM focus, emphasizing Wisconsin's diverse agriculture products. This fall, students delved into apple variations, learned about local soil structure, and explored the anatomy of popcorn kernels. Beyond education, the programs foster meaningful connections, strengthening bonds among students, staff, and peers. Youth evaluations indicate growing relationships, high engagement, and a solid understanding of program components. A G2M staff member praised the team's ability to connect with students, spark curiosity, and create an inclusive environment, leaving a lasting impact on participants in Wausau School District's Out-of-School Learning programs.

In spring 2023, Marathon County 4-H Educators nominated G2M for the "Wisconsin Friends of 4-H" Award. We highlighted G2M's alignment with 4-H's mission of offering hands-on learning in science, agriculture, leadership, and citizenship. Recognizing G2M with this award expresses gratitude for their collaborative efforts, providing a supportive and educational environment for youth in the community. Julie Bowen and other G2M representatives attended the WAE4-HYDP Annual Banquet to receive the award.



## BY THE NUMBERS

### Membership

Participation in Marathon County 2nd Largest Program in Wisconsin

- ~ 800 Youth Members
- ~ 225 Adult Volunteers

### Top Projects

- Photography
- Foods and Nutrition
- Expressive Arts
- Cake Decorating
- Dairy
- Swine
- Rabbits
- Lego
- Woodworking
- Vegetables

### Youth By Residence

- Towns Under 10,000 - 436
- Farm - 220
- Towns & Cities and Suburbs (10-50,00) - 101
- Suburbs & Cities over 50,000 - 25





# Wisconsin 4-H

## Local 4-H Programming



**Youth Organizations Join Forces:** A community-wide pinewood derby event in November 2023 was an opportunity for youth-serving organizations to join forces to provide a unique experience for Marathon County youth. In collaboration with Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Scouts BSA, and Girl Scouts, UW-Extension Marathon County was able to offer build nights before the main event where youth chose a derby car or truck and painted it the way they wanted. Over 70 local youth raced their cars. The goal was for youth and families to become aware of various local organizations that have various programs to offer while the youth had fun.



## Multi-Cultural Education

**Juntos in Abbotsford:** Abbotsford, Wisconsin is located between Marathon and Clark County lines. The Abbotsford School District is composed of a student body that is around 60% Latinx. In collaboration with Clark County Extension, the program Juntos was offered for the first time in Abbotsford in 2023 and it was a success! Juntos means "together" in Spanish and the goal of the program is to help Latinx students achieve academic success. The families that participated in the program were able to gain tools and resources to help their high school students make graduation and post-secondary education an achievable goal in their future. This partnership has also opened the door to more collaboration between the local school district and Marathon County 4-H.







# Wisconsin 4-H

2023



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Program Quality Overall Score

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality. Scores between 4.9 - 6.1 represents a high-quality program.



# 5.7



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Youth Sparks

The Youth Sparks outcome measures how 4-H community club programs give youth opportunities to explore topics they are interested in learning about, passionate about, and engaged with, like 4-H projects.

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality.



# 5.6



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Challenging Growth

The Challenging Growth outcome assesses the extent to which adults in the 4-H program help youth to see new possibilities, push them to reach higher, and hold them accountable.

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality.



# 5.6







# Wisconsin 4-H



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Youth Belonging

This outcome evaluates how safe, welcomed, and supported youth feel in 4-H programs.

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality.



A large graphic showing the score 6.0 in a white circle with a blue border. Below it is the 'HELPING YOUTH THRIVE' logo with a 4-H clover and the text '4-H THRIVING MODEL'.



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Caring Adults

This outcome illustrates how youth feel the adults in their 4-H programs care about them and invest time in their 4-H experiences.

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality.



A large graphic showing the score 5.6 in a white circle with an orange border. Below it is the 'HELPING YOUTH THRIVE' logo with a 4-H clover and the text '4-H THRIVING MODEL'.



## Marathon County 4-H Measured

### Youth-Adult Partnerships

This outcome calculates how youth feel about adult volunteers working with them and if they feel respected, listened to, and have their ideas taken seriously.

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 7 meaning outstanding program quality.



A large graphic showing the score 5.8 in a white circle with a blue border. Below it is the 'HELPING YOUTH THRIVE' logo with a 4-H clover and the text '4-H THRIVING MODEL'.



# Extension

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