

# DEPARTMENT SNAPSHOTS

## Recent News and Advances



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### Animal and Dairy Science

#### Professional Dairy Producers (PDP): Record High Year for Mentor Program with Many UW–Madison Students Involved

Brooklyn Schwoerer, a junior studying Dairy Science, said, “The PDP mentorship program allowed me to connect with a producer within the dairy industry who was so close to my home. JTP Farms gave me insight into how technology can be incorporated into the dairy industry through their robotic milking and feeding systems.”



### Biochemistry

#### Mapping Folate Distribution in Mice Reveals Insights into Gut Microbiota

A recent study from the Chaudhari Lab in the UW–Madison Department of Biochemistry explores the relationship between gut-dwelling bacteria and folate, a vitamin that is critical for health and metabolism. “Folate is important for essential functions in our body, like constructing the backbones of our DNA and RNA, and synthesizing amino acids needed to make proteins,” says Snehal Chaudhari (*left*). “We get folate primarily through foods like dark leafy greens, but it’s not well understood if the gut microbiome produces folate to contribute to what our body needs.”



### Entomology

#### Claire Schloemer Part of Team Awarded Western Extension Directors Association (WEDA) Excellence in Extension Programming Award

A team of researchers from Auburn University and University of Hawaii at Manoa, including Claire Schloemer (Ph.D. student, Groves Lab), were awarded the 2026 Western Extension Directors Association Award for Excellence in Extension Programming-Team for their work on the Organic Sweet Potato IPM and Soil Health Management for Small- and Mid-Size Farms project funded by the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) program through USDA NIFA.



### Genetics

#### Browning Designated 2026 Genetics Outstanding Senior of the Year

The Laboratory of Genetics is thrilled to announce Evelyn Browning as the recipient of the 2026 Outstanding Senior Award, an award dedicated to recognizing exceptional achievement in academics, research, and service! Evelyn was chosen out of many qualified nominees, and showcases the best of what a UW Genetics student has to offer.



### Life Sciences Communication

#### First a Student, Now a Teacher: LSC Welcomes Back Program Alum, Kelly Mella

As a student, Mella was initially pre-med at UW-Madison. During one fateful trip to her advisor’s office, however, she saw an intriguing sign on the building next door. The sign read, “Agricultural Journalism,” (now LSC) and it turned out to be where Mella would find her new passion. After completing her bachelor’s degree in LSC and then pursuing a master’s as well, Mella’s experience as a Teaching Assistant for LSC100 would lead her to realize that she also loved teaching.

