

WAUPACA COUNTY UW-EXTENSION

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"We can learn wisdom from the ways of a seedling. A seedling which is never hardened off through stressful conditions never becomes a strong and productive."

Steven Sigmund

Dana Nelson Joins UWEX Support Staff



Dana Nelson
Waupaca Co UWEX

Hello! My name is Dana Nelson. Last month I became the new program assistant for Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Development in the Waupaca County UW-Extension office. My predecessors include Carrie Koehn, Nancy Hamm and Virginia Bowersox. Originally from Neenah, my husband & I lived in several states before settling in the Waupaca area thirteen years ago. We have three adult children ages 24, 21 and 18. I enjoy spending time with my family, watching our youngest son play football and baseball. I am active in the Waupaca community and involved in my local church. I have also been active in the Waupaca County 4H dog project and now enjoy training, showing and even judging dog shows.

One of my duties in our local Extension office is managing contact information and scheduling farm calls for Greg, so don't be surprised if / when you hear from me in the future. The farm call project started late last year in response to the drought as a way for Greg to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing local farms. He also shares upcoming Extension programs and other UW resources available to farmers and Ag professionals in our area. Greg says farm calls are also a great way for him to hear new ideas and provide feedback to the university for additional research and testing. Even if schedules don't work out, I will use the call to update your contact information, including Email addresses and cell phone numbers, so that we can stay in touch in the future. I am excited to be a part of the local UW-Extension office team and look forward to working with you.

Oats A Good Early Season Forage Option

While adding grass into thin alfalfa stands may offer a little extra early season feed, total yield for the year is often unchanged as young grass plants can not compete with older established grass or alfalfa plants. For early season forage, consider planting mid-to late-maturing oat varieties like Forage-Plus, Belle, Vista, Gem or Ogle with 2-3 tons DM/acre of good quality forage by early July. Plant early, as soil conditions allow, with 2-2.5 bu./acre (decrease by 30% if alfalfa is under seeded). If no manure was applied since last spring/summer, add 40 units of nitrogen fertilizer to maximize yield (20 units if seeded with alfalfa). Harvest when grain heads begin to emerge ("boot stage" to early heading), wilt according to type of storage structure and use a silage inoculant. Barely and triticale can also give similar results when oat seed is limited.

Adding field peas can help improve quality (2-4 points more protein, 4-8 points lower NDF), but yield is not significantly different. When planting oats with peas, mix 60 lbs of oats (2 bu.) with 45 lbs of field peas. Adding more peas will only increase cost, as well as lodging, and make drying (wilting) more difficult before chopping.

Feed Inventory Tools Available

By Brian Holmes, Extension Ag Engineer, UW-Madison

There are several reasons producers might want to do a feed inventory, such as projecting future needs, allocating feeds over the year, determine future purchased feed needs, planning for storage, as well as marketing and even planting decisions. For dairy producers, feed costs are typically more than half of the total cost of producing milk. Following last years drought, it will be important for many dairy and livestock farms to evaluate inventory, adjust feeding strategies, and work with lenders to update balance sheets. Consider these steps:

- Determine the feed that is available (feed inventory)
- Calculate the herd's daily feed needs
- Calculate the number of days feed will last
- Determine the number of days the inventory is in excess or deficiency
- Calculate the quantity to sell or buy, or
- Modify the ration to get more days of feed from available inventory

There are a number of publications and software tools that can help establish your feed inventory. Several resources and materials can be obtained at University of Wisconsin Extension Team Forage - Harvesting and Storage web page: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/storage.htm>.

Producers who are in the market to buy or sell feed can connect with others on the **Farmer to Farmer Hay, Forage and Corn List**. This list puts Wisconsin farmers in touch with one another for the purpose of buying and/or selling corn and forage. The farmer to farmer list is free to both buyers and sellers. Users can list or search for hay, alfalfa haylage, corn silage, high moisture corn, corn grain, or other forages (i.e., oats, peas, or Sorghum-sundangrass). You can find this list at farmertofarmer.uwex.edu.

For more information about feed inventory resources go to the UW-Extension Team Forage – Harvesting and Storage web page <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/storage.htm> and click on “Forage Inventory”. The first resource listed in this section is a fact sheet, ***Making a Feed Inventory***, which provides several resources. There is also additional information on the UW-Extension Drought 2012 web page: <https://fyi.uwex.edu/drought2012/>. An archived webinar that discusses how to use these feed inventory tools can also be viewed at <http://dairy.wisc.edu/FIT/>.



Timing First Crop Alfalfa Harvest



The Waupaca County Forage Council is again sponsoring the annual PEAQ (Predictive Equations for Alfalfa Quality) first crop alfalfa monitoring program this year. Field data from cooperating farms/consultants will be available late April and into May to help improve timing of first crop this year. Measurements will be taken on Mondays and Thursdays and available online at:

www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/scissorsclip/

How to take PEAQ measurements?

Step 1: Choose a representative area in the field.

Step 2: Identify the most mature stem in a 2 sq. ft. sampling area using the criteria in the table below.

Step 3: Measure the length of the tallest stem in that area from the soil surface (next to plant crown) to the tip of the stem just below the top leaves (NOT to the leaf tip). Straighten the stem for an accurate measure of its length. (note, the tallest stem may not be the most mature stem.)

Step 4: Based on the most mature stem and length of the tallest stem, use the chart to estimated the relative forage quality (RFQ) of your standing alfalfa forage.

Step 5: Repeat in several areas across the field. Start harvesting 10-15 points above desired relative feed value level to offset quality declines during harvest.

Height of Tallest Stem (from soil surface to stem tip)	Stage of Most Mature Stem		
	LATE VEGETATIVE	BUD STAGE	FLOWER STAGE
	Vegetative (>12") No buds visible	1 or more nodes with visible buds. No flowers visible	1 or more nodes with open flower(s)
-inches-	-----Relative Feed Value-----		
16	237	225	210
17	230	218	204
18	224	212	198
19	217	207	193
20	211	201	188
21	205	196	183
22	200	190	178
23	195	185	174
24	190	181	170
25	185	176	166
26	180	172	162
27	175	168	158
28	171	164	154
29	167	160	151
30	163	156	147
31	159	152	144
32	155	149	140
33	152	145	137
34	148	142	134
35	145	139	131
36	142	136	128
37	138	133	126
38	135	130	123
39	132	127	121
40	129	124	118
41	127	122	115
42	124	119	113

Milk Price Update / Outlook

by Dr. Bob Cropp, Professor Emeritus, UW-Madison

With slow improvement in the economy, dairy product sales continue to also show growth. The world supply and demand situation is forecasted to remain relatively high through at least this summer giving opportunity for favorable U.S. exports. So exports ought to be a positive factor going forward for higher milk prices. Milk production normally peaks around May or June giving rise to higher milk prices by later summer or fall. Dairy cow slaughter continues to run well above a year ago which should reduce cow numbers for at least the first half of this year. But, up to now, despite heavier cow slaughter, there exists an inventory of dairy replacements to increase cow numbers. Yet, cow numbers are expected to decrease for the first six months before increasing again during the last half of the year. That's if milk prices improve and there is some easing of feed prices.

Milk Price Forecast - April 3, 2013

While dairy futures have shown rather modest improvement in milk prices, the probability of doing even better still exists. Class III futures show no improvement for March and don't reach \$18 until June and peaks at \$18.55 for August and September. I still believe \$19 by September and October is still very possible. There are price forecasters who have Class III as high as \$20 by then. And of course there are some who forecast lower prices expecting much stronger milk production second half of the year. But, I believe the probability is better for higher rather than lower prices. But, recognizing milk prices change with relatively small changes or anticipated changes in milk production, sales or exports all forecasts are possible. This challenges dairy producers and milk processor in managing price risk.

Month	Class III	Class IV	Mailbox
Dec 2012	18.66	17.83	20.35
Jan 2013	18.14	17.63	19.71
Feb 2013	17.25	17.75	18.98
Mar 2013	16.95	17.81	18.74
Apr 2013	17.33	18.30	18.62
May 2013	18.44	18.90	19.63
Jun 2013	19.15	19.50	20.31
Jul 2013	19.32	19.40	20.34
Aug 2013	19.30	19.50	20.33
Sep 2013	19.29	19.50	20.32
Oct 2013	19.03	19.26	20.87
Nov 2013	18.68	19.25	20.57
Dec 2013	18.29	19.10	20.23
Jan 2014	17.86	15.44	19.15
Feb 2014	17.61	15.51	18.96

Farm Management Update for Ag Professionals

Friday, May 3, 2013

9:15 am

Registration, coffee, juice, and rolls

9:45 am

"Dairy Market and Policy Update"

What are the milk market drivers and the latest on dairy policy issues

- Professor Mark Stephenson, Director of the Center for Dairy Profitability

10:45 am

"Grain Price Update"

Grain market opportunities and risks in a volatile price environment

- Jim Cronin, Grain Marketing Consultant, Advance Trading Inc.

11:30 am

"Green (\$) Going In and Green (\$) Going Out"

Placing a value on forages and manure

- Kevin Jarek, UW Extension Outagamie County

12:00 Noon

Lunch

1:00 pm

"Growing Vs. Buying Feed: A Paradigm Shift"

Risk Implications for farms and the industry

- Professor Mark Stephenson, Director of the Center for Dairy Profitability

1:30 pm

"They Paid How much for that Land!!!"

What Price does production cash flow support and what are the risks.

- Gary Sipiorski, Dairy Development Manager, Vita Plus Corporation

2:30 pm

Adjourn



UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX requirements. UW-Extension programs are open to all persons without regard to race, color, ethnic background, or economic circumstances. Please make requests for reasonable accommodations to ensure access to educational programs as early as possible preceding the event. Requests will be kept confidential.

Farm Management Update for Ag Professionals

Registration Form

Name(s): _____

Business _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Registration Fee: \$30 per person

Make check payable to: **UW-Extension**

Mail this registration form and check to:

UW-Extension Farm Business

P.O. Box 2003

West Bend, WI 53095-2003

Registration Deadline: April 26, 2013



Wine & Cheese Tasting

2nd Annual Fundraiser for
Waupaca County to benefit the
Rural Health Initiative

Friday, April 19, 2013

7:00-10:00 p.m.
Crystal Falls Banquet Hall
1500 Handschke Drive
New London, Wisconsin

Sponsored by:

Larson Cooperative
First State Bank
ThedaCare Physicians
Waupaca Area Dairy Promotions

The Waupaca County Rural Health Initiative brings basic health education and screening to the farm. Rural Health Registered Nurse Michelle Yaeger makes home visits to ensure that all Waupaca County farm families have access to basic health services.

Buy a table
of eight for your
company or clients!

• Tickets to attend are \$25 per person

*Tickets can be purchased at Premier Community Bank locations (Bear Creek, Iola, Scandinavia, Waupaca, Manawa, King, Fremont or Marion) or First State Bank locations (New London, Clintonville, Manawa, Waupaca or Dale)

• 40 kinds of wine

• 40 types of cheeses

• Entertainment by Uptown

Please pre-order tickets for you or your business by calling John Lockwood at 715-256-2500 or Rhonda Strebel at 715-524-1488, or by sending an email to rhonda.strebel@thedacare.org or to jlockwood@bankfirststate.com or by sending in the attached response form.

Send in this reply to:

Rural Health Initiative
c/o Rhonda Strebel
ThedaCare Physicians
100 County Road B
Shawano, WI 54166

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Company Name/Address _____

of tables _____
(8 seats for \$200)

of individual tickets _____
(\$25 per person)



FSA Supports Local Farmers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations by modifying its Operating Loan (OL) application, eligibility and security requirements. The program will offer more flexible access to credit and will serve as an attractive loan alternative for smaller farming operations like specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). These smaller farms, including non-traditional farm operations, often face limited financing options.



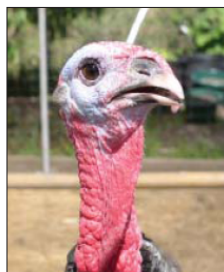
Use of Microloans

Microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses as authorized by the FSA Operating Loan Program, including but not limited to:

- Initial start-up expenses;
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents;
- Marketing and distribution expenses;
- Family living expenses;
- Purchase of livestock, equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations;
- Minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers;
- Hoop houses to extend the growing season;
- Essential tools;
- Irrigation;
- Delivery vehicles.

Simplified Application Process

The application process for microloans will be simpler, requiring less paperwork to fill out, to coincide with the smaller loan amount that will be associated with microloans.



Requirements for managerial experience and loan security have been modified to accommodate smaller farm operations, beginning farmers and those with no farm management experience. FSA understands that there will be applicants for the ML program who want to farm but do not have

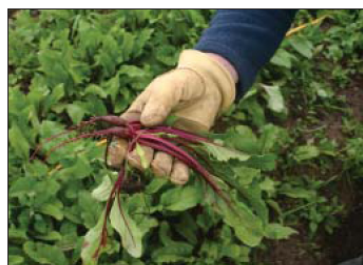
Microloans

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

traditional farm experience or have not been raised on a farm or within a rural community with agriculture-affiliated organizations. ML program applicants will need to have some farm experience; however, FSA will consider an applicant's small business experience as well as any experience with a self-guided apprenticeship as a means to meet the farm management requirement. This will assist applicants who have limited farm skills by providing them with an opportunity to gain farm management experience while working with a mentor during the first production and marketing cycle.

Security Requirements

For annual operating purposes, microloans must be secured by a first lien on a farm property or agricultural products having a security value of at least 100 percent of the microloan amount, and up to 150 percent, when available. Microloans made for purposes other than annual operating expenses must be secured



by a first lien on a farm property or agricultural products purchased with loan funds and having a security value of at least 100 percent of the microloan amount.

Rates and Terms

Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates are based on the regular OL rates that are in effect at the time of the microloan approval or microloan closing, whichever is less.

More Information and Eligibility Criteria

Additional information on the FSA microloan program may be obtained at local FSA offices or through the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.



For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

With Tillage, Less is More

For Better Soil, Drought Resilience and Profit

Spring tillage is a tradition that runs deep in American agriculture. But more and more producers are realizing that this tradition will cost them in more ways than one. The possibility of another dry year might have producers rethinking their use of tillage. Traditional tillage practices, which were once considered necessary to prepare a proper seed bed for planting, come at a high price with increasing fuel and labor costs.

“However, the bigger long-term cost may be the health and function of the soil itself resulting in lower yields, higher input costs, and reduced drought resiliency for your farm”, according to Jimmy Bramblett, State Conservationist with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Traditional tillage is very destructive to both the structure and the ecosystem of our soil. In healthy soil you have 50 percent air and water, made possible by the pore space in the soil, and 50 percent mineral and organic matter. But tillage collapses and destroys that structure, making the soil vulnerable to erosion, surface crusting and compaction. Because tillage destroys organic matter and soil structure, tillage actually reduces the soil’s infiltration capacity. Besides infiltration capacity, soil structure allows for greater crop rooting depths. Tillage can also bury the surface residue which helps to retain soil moisture. In short, traditional tillage tends to limit the availability of water in the soil and that could prove very costly during those long, summer dry spells where every drop of water counts.

Fortunately, more and more producers in Wisconsin are farming with reduced tillage systems which build soil health. Producers are using management systems that include conservation practices, like no-till or strip till, diverse crop rotations, planting cover crops and following nutrient and pest management plans. These systems follow the four main soil health principles: 1- disturb less soil, 2 -increase plant diversity, 3 - grow living roots throughout the year, and 4- keep the soil covered as much as possible.

The benefits of improved soil health extend far beyond the farm. Producers who improve the health of the soil also increase its water-holding capacity and infiltration rate, which reduces runoff that can cause flooding. Improved infiltration keeps nutrients and sediment from being carried off into nearby lakes, rivers, and streams.

Producers interested in learning more about the basics and benefits of soil health, or in receiving technical and financial assistance to implement a soil health management system, should contact the Waupaca NRCS office, located at 1337C Royalton St. in Waupaca, or call 715-258-8380. Additional soil health information is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov.



Waupaca County UW-Extension
Courthouse
811 Harding Street
Waupaca, WI 54981

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postal Paid
Waupaca, WI 54981
Permit No. 3



Upcoming Events:

April 19

Rural Health Initiative Fund Raiser
7 pm Crystal Falls, New London

May 3

Ag Lender/Farm Managers Conf
9:30 am Liberty Hall Kimberly

June 2

Waupaca Co. UW-Extension
Master Gardener Plant Sale
Fairgrounds, Weyauwega

June 3

ACRE sign-up deadline
FSA Office, Waupaca

July 9-11

WI Farm Technology Days
Breezy Hill Dairy Farm
Barron County, WI

July 15

Crop reporting deadline
FSA Office, Waupaca

Waupaca Co. Farm Service Agency Updates...



Waupaca County FSA can now process loans for \$35,000 or less (Microloans) directly out of the Waupaca office. (see enclosed fact sheet).

If you have not yet signed up for the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) or the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP) call the FSA office to set up an appointment. The deadline for these programs is June 3 and August 2 respectively.

If you have an area that you would like to plant trees or establish permanent grasses we will have a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Sign-up from May 20 to June 14.

For more information on any of these programs, or to set up an appointment, call the Waupaca County FSA office at 715-258-7162.