

# Agricultural Newsletter

UW-Madison College of Ag & Life Science  
University of Wisconsin-Extension



## Learn more about low-cost milking parlors at Farm Technology Days

*Otto Wiegand and  
Tina Kohlman  
Agricultural Agents*



Are you a dairy producer looking for alternatives to modernize your operations? Do you like the idea of being able to grow your operation in smaller steps, keep your debt level down and make improvements over a period of time? How about saving your knees and helping to encourage Junior to stay on the farm?

One option may be to install a modern low-cost parlor system. Historically, producers have relied upon using existing buildings for modernization purposes. This project builds on that time-tested, retrofit model by fabricating a low cost milking parlor into an existing structure. Dairy farmers who have installed low-cost parlor systems report that their new facilities make them more productive and more profitable while both humans and animals are healthier. More than 500 low-cost parlors of different sizes and types have been installed in Wisconsin.

The low-cost milking parlor display featured above just finished a tour of dairy breakfasts in NW Wisconsin, including Barron, Washburn, Burnett and Sawyer Counties. It was also shown at the Cedar Mall Farm Show in Rice Lake last January.

You will have another chance to see the parlor display and other technologies at the Applied Technology Center tent at Farm Technology Days in Sheboygan County. Visitors can see how the equipment works to improve efficiency and speed of milking while it improves cow comfort and dairy workers' health and safety. University of Wisconsin-Extension experts will be on hand to answer questions and provide information about modern low cost parlor systems.

Farm Technology Days is July 11-13, 2006, at Hesselink's Quonset Farm near Oostburg, Wis. For more information, contact UW-Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at Spooner, 715-635-3506, or Tina Kohlman at Sheboygan Falls, 920-467-5740.

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# Agricultural NEWSLETTER

*produced by*  
University of Wisconsin-Extension  
and  
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Sciences

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## NW Graziers on track this summer

*Otto Wiegand*  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

Dean Retzlaff, the grazing planner hired by the Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network, reports that he has completed 15 grazing plans totaling 1150 acres through the end of June. Additional grazing plans are in process. The goal of the 2005 GLCI (Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative) grant that is funding Dean is to complete 15 plans covering 1500 acres in 2006, so Dean is on schedule. The Graziers Network covers Burnett, Washburn, Sawyer, Polk, Barron and Rusk Counties.

Dan Baugh, the summer intern from River Falls hired by the Graziers Network under the GLCI grant, has been working on clover interseeding trials on four farms under a GLCI grant obtained in 2004. He also supports Dean in his work and is updating grazing educational materials.

The Graziers Network has four more pasture walks scheduled this season: Neil Jensen featuring dairy in Polk County on July 7, the Spoooner Ag Research Station featuring sheep on July 14, Tom and Tweed Shuman featuring beef in Sawyer County on August 5, and Phil Odden featuring horses on September 23 in Burnett County. See the grazing article of this newsletter for details.

For further information or to contact Dean or Dan, call UW-Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at the Spoooner Station, 715-635-3506, or Tom Fredrickson at NRCS in Spoooner, 715-636-8228, Extension 3.

## Soybean and corn fueled vehicles featured at Farm Technology Days

Madison - Where can you find a pickup truck that runs on fuel made from soybeans or a car powered by fuel made from corn? At Farm Technology Days, July 11-13, 2006 at Hesselink's Quonset Farm near Oostburg, Wis.

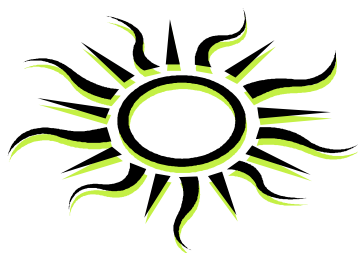
These vehicles will be highlighted at the Applied Technology Center tent. University of Wisconsin-Extension experts will be on hand to discuss what is needed to make biodiesel and ethanol, and the processes to make these fuels.

Biodiesel is produced from renewable oil sources such as soybeans, animal fats or used fryer oil. The vast majority of biodiesel made in the U.S. is from soybeans. Local biodiesel production can reduce petroleum imports while utilizing by-product, and strengthening Wisconsin's agricultural industry.

In addition to being used as fuel for vehicles, biodiesel is being used to power Farm Technology Days. Two thousand gallons of biodiesel will be used for field demonstrations and 1,000 gallons will be used for electric generators.

Ethanol is currently produced at four plants in Wisconsin with several more being constructed. One bushel of corn can make 2.7 gallons of ethanol. Visit the Applied Technology Center tent to find out which cars and trucks can burn E85, where in Wisconsin E85 is available and the fuel economy of E85.

# Dry weather is affecting crops again



*Phil Holman,  
Assistant Superintendent  
Spoooner Ag Research Station*

As of June 26<sup>th</sup>, (writing this article) we are experiencing droughty conditions again. At the Ag Research Station we are one inch below normal precipitation in April, another inch below normal in May and so far are three inches below normal for June.

Month	2006	Normal
April	1.49"	2.54"
May	2.23"	3.18"
June (26 <sup>th</sup> )	1.12"	4.15"

Alfalfa second crop will be lower in yields, grass hay and pastures have very little regrowth, and corn and soybeans are starting to curl in some fields. How this affects yields for the rest of 2006 will depend on if, when, and how much rainfall we get in the future.

If we use history to think of what will occur we can think of the drought conditions of 2005 (here) did not start until July and August. We actually had a wetter than normal June. However, much of southern Wisconsin did have a similar June drought last year. While they didn't have much rain, timely rainfalls in mid July and August actually allowed for excellent corn and above average soybean yields. The following is information from an article written by Joe Lauer, UW-Extension Corn Agronomist last year for the early season drought.

## ***The corn crop needs rain: It's time to be concerned***

*Joe Lauer  
UW-Extension Corn Agronomist*

The National Weather Service has classified much of southern and southeastern Wisconsin as "abnormally dry" and "moderate drought" areas. Spotty rain showers occurred and farmers have rated the corn condition from excellent to poor in these areas.

Research indicates that the most sensitive period that affects corn yield is the pollination period. The research methods used to determine these sensitive periods are to quickly withdraw and apply water at different growth stages. That is not our situation this year. Soil water has steadily depleted over a long period. Soil moisture is still present because the crop is still growing. Leaf rolling might occur during the day, but plants are usually turgid the next morning.

The important question is: How much yield potential is lost? We do not have a good answer for this. In general, I think we are in good shape, but we need rain. There might be

some impact on yield with stress at this time, but the plant responds by increasing root growth at the expense of above ground leaf area growth. Roots are growing into the soil profile where they typically may not grow every year. Typically, corn roots will grow 3 feet to the side of the plant and 5 to 7 feet into the soil profile in the absence of compaction. Plants experiencing drought will likely be shorter than normal. The "factory" will be smaller and even if field conditions improve, yield will likely be reduced.

The pollination period is the most sensitive time for the corn plant because silk and kernel ovule development are the most water sensitive tissues in the plant. Tassels typically emerge even under severe water stress. Under stress, tassels will emerge and shed pollen earlier than normal, but silk emergence is delayed affecting pollen germination and ovule fertilization. The result is a decrease in kernel number. So, even if field conditions become favorable during August and beyond, grain yield is reduced since no kernels were fertilized and developed during the pollination phase of the corn life cycle.

**Sign 2006 DCP Contracts Before September 30th**

Producers who missed the June 1, 2006 deadline still have until September 30, to enroll in the 2006 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program. Applications will be considered late-filled and a \$100 late filing fee per farm will be assessed.

Contracts must be signed annually to receive benefits for the current year. Producers who decide not to participate in the 2006 DCP will retain eligibility for the 2007 DCP.

For more information, contact your local Farm Service Agency Office.

## Livestock facility siting law to be implemented

Exclusive Agricultural Zoning (EAZ) is a type of zoning that a county or town enacts through ordinance to help support and preserve farmland within their local jurisdiction. Many local governments will soon choose to amend their EAZ ordinances to implement the Livestock Facility Siting Law. Amendments made to EAZ ordinances must often be certified by the Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB) for compliance with the Farmland Preservation Law to ensure that farmers covered by the ordinance may claim farmland preservation tax credits. A local government may wish to:

- amend the ordinance to conform existing standards for livestock facilities to comply with the Livestock Facility Siting Law,
- amend the ordinance to establish new requirements for livestock facilities to obtain a conditional use permit, or
- amend the ordinance to modify existing EAZ districts.

DATCP will have a booth with information on Livestock Facility Siting at Farm Technology Days from July 11-13, 2006.

If you would like more information on this topic, please contact Coreen Fallat at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection at 608-224-4625 or email [coreen.fallat@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:coreen.fallat@datcp.state.wi.us).

## Consider FSFL Program when developing 2006 marketing plans

Producers of farm commodities are encouraged to consider FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan Program when looking at marketing alternatives. The FSFL program offers producers an opportunity to meet storage needs by offering marketing flexibility. On-farm storage gives you the control you need to segregate crops and to decide when to sell them.

This program provides seven-year fixed rate financing for on-farm storage of wheat, soybeans, sunflower seed, canola, safflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, corn, grain sorghum, oats, and barley. Facility loans are available for corn silage storage, but are not available for hay storage, including haylage. The interest rate, currently at 5% for June 2006, changes monthly. The interest rate in effect at the time a loan is approved remains in effect for the term of the loan. Security requirements depend upon the loan amount and other factors. Loans are limited to 85% of the net cost of the improvements.

Eligible structures include but are not limited to new cribs and bins, new oxygen limiting and other upright silos, new flat storage structures with a permanent floor, storage and handling equipment, bunker type and open silo structures with at least 2 concrete walls, handling and drying equipment, and concrete pads subject to limitations. Ineligible structures include portable equipment, and other structures that do not have a useful life of at least 10 years.

Producers are encouraged to apply now, to insure improvements can be completed prior to the 2006 harvest.

A fact sheet on the FSFL program is available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/psd/programs.htm>. To apply for a FSFL or for additional information, contact your local county FSA office or USDA Service Center.

## Spooner Sheep Day planned for August 26

*Yves Berger  
Superintendent  
Spooner Ag Research Station*

On Saturday, August 26, 2006, the Spooner Ag Research Station will host its Annual Spooner Sheep Day.

The morning session starts with registration at 8:30 a.m. in the Station auditorium. After registration and a short introduction, different specialists will present the results of new research in the sheep industry and topics relevant to the everyday operation of a sheep farm.

Whole lamb on the spit is offered as the main course for lunch.

Afternoon seminars held at the sheep barn are more hands-on related. Advanced sheep farmers and beginners alike will receive useful information to bring back home.

The public is welcome to attend. Even if you are not in the sheep business, please feel free to come and learn about the raising of sheep and tour our facilities at the Spooner Ag Research Station. Registration is free; however, there is a charge for the lamb barbecue luncheon.

# Beef updates for Wisconsin

Dan Baugh

Summer Grazing Intern

Northwest Wisconsin Grazing Network

As we all know, Northern Wisconsin is known not for agriculture but tourism, and your taxes reflect that well if you're zoned recreational. Curbing this tax issue can be done through various government tax incentive programs such as CRP, forest crop, and agricultural use. Beef cows and steers can be used in this curbing process to turn your high dollar recreational land into a well managed grazing land taking advantage of the agricultural tax brake.

Beef markets run in ten year cycles. Due to new markets opening and an unfavorable drought in the Southern United States we are seeing high demands in beef. The drought caused a larger number of cows to be culled than usual and resulting in a smaller calf crop. Higher market prices are predicted to hold their value through at least a few more seasons.

Even though the markets are looking favorable, there are always concerns. One main issue in northwestern Wisconsin is the lack of moisture. Second on the list at this time is fuel costs, potentially driving local and regional feed prices up. The way to challenge this is through good management by keeping input costs down, so profits can be maximized. "Let the land work for you" is a motto the NWGN (Northwest Wisconsin Grazing Network) hold dearly while promoting low input well managed grassland farming. For more information on intensive rotational grazing, contact the Spooner area Ag Agents at: (715)635-3506 or Toll Free: (800)528-1914.

## Beef Events Calendar

Northern Wisconsin State Fair, Chippewa Falls, July 12-17, 2006

- Open livestock class
- 4-H class

Northwest Jr. Livestock Shows (WLBA), Eau Claire, August 15-16, 2006

- Beef, sheep and swine

Kids & cows, Connersville, September 30, 2006

- Showmanship clinic in the morning and contest in the afternoon.
  - Teaches youth how to fit animals and proper show techniques.
  - If youth doesn't have livestock rescues, a limited number will be available for the day.
- There will also be a quiz bowl, Guess the Beefers Weight and a parade of breeds to conclude the day.
- All adult competitors must join the Northern Wisconsin Beef Producers Association.
- Contact Lori Lyons at (715)237-2746

Quality Replacement Female Sale, Barron Equity Feb. 24, 2007

- Consignment and buyers sale
- Cows, heifers, and heifer calves
- Pure Breed and crossbred
- NWPBA Membership required \$15
- Contact information: Lori Lyons (715)237-2746

## This Quarter's Events

**July 6-9, Thursday-Sunday, Webster – Central Burnett County Fair**

**July 7, Friday, 1-4 p.m., Polk Co, Comstock – Dairy Pasture Walk** - Neil & Janice Jensen, 1938 25<sup>th</sup> Pl, features rotational grazing of 100 Guernsey dairy cows (see article).

**July 14, Fri. 10 a.m. -Noon, Spooner Ag Research Station – Sheep Pasture Walk** – one mile east of Spooner, features 300 milking ewes and rotational grazing (see article).

**July 11-13, Tuesday-Thursday, Cedar Grove, Sheboygan County – Farm Technology Days.**

**July 27-30, Thursday-Sunday, Spooner – Washburn County Fair.**

**August 3-6, Thursday-Sunday, Hayward – Sawyer County Fair.**

**August 5, Saturday, Sawyer Co, Hayward - Beef Pasture Walk** – Tom, Janet, Tweed and Melanie Shuman, 11110 N Company Lake Rd, features cow-calf beef, grazing planning (see article).

**July 18-19, Tuesday-Wednesday, Abbotsford – Wisconsin Grazing School** (see also August 23-24).

**August 22, Tuesday, 5-8 p.m. – Spooner Garden Tour** – Spooner Ag Research Station.

**August 23-24, Wednesday-Thursday, Rice Lake – Wisconsin Grazing School** (see attached brochure).

**August 24-27, Thursday-Sunday, Grantsburg - Burnett Agricultural Society Fair.**

**August 26, Saturday, 9 a.m. 3 p.m. – Spooner Sheep Day** – Spooner Ag Research Station.

**September 23, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.- Noon, Burnett Co, Barronett – Horse Pasture Walk** - Phil and Elsa Odden, 20337 Co. Hwy. H, features rotational grazing of Norwegian Fiord horses, family woodcarving business.

## Scouting your fields for insects may save crops

*Kevin Schoessow  
Area Ag Development Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties*

Every summer our office receives numerous calls on a variety of insect pests. While the majority of these are nuisance pests feeding on landscape trees and shrubs, flowers or garden crops, we do on occasion receive calls from farmers, crop consultants or Coops on field crop pest outbreaks.

In most cases by time we receive the call the damage from insect feeding is quite apparent and the insects are often reaching the end of their life cycle. Last year's armyworm outbreaks were a good example. Nearly all the corn and grass hay fields that we became aware of had extensive feeding and caterpillars were nearly an inch long. At this growth stage, larvae were nearly full grown and soon stopped feeding and then pupated. In some cases a spray treatment was not justified.

As we continue with the growing season now is the time to scout fields, especially if there was a history of insect damage in the past. While every year presents different weather conditions, it could be that this year's drier than normal weather may set us up for increased insect pressure. During dry summers insects do not have as many natural predators or disease outbreaks so their numbers can increase dramatically.

Some pests to keep an eye on include armyworm in corn and grass hay and pasture. Grassy field edges or grass weeds attracted moths in early June. The second generation is most damaging. Corn Earworm moths migrate from the south, moths lay eggs on silks, most damage is from second generation in late Aug to early September. European Corn Borer, overwinters as a larvae in corn stalks and stems of weedy hosts. First generation most damaging, although a second generation in late summer may also cause damage. Corn Rootworm eggs overwinter and larvae feed on corn roots throughout summer. Adults appear in late July, and often feed on corn silks.

Common alfalfa insects include Potato Leafhopper, Pea Aphid and Plant Bugs. All three of these insects damage alfalfa by sucking plant sap and cause either leaf yellowing, stunting or mis-shaped leaves. Scouting is essential to monitor these pests, since there are multiple generations per year, and treatment is dependent on both numbers and alfalfa growth stage.

Two Spotted Spider Mite can be a problem in soybeans especially during times of moisture stress. These tiny spider like insects will spin webbing and under heavy infestations can cover the plant with webbing. They feed by penetrating the leaf surface and sucking plant juices.

The above mentioned insects are some of the more common or likely insect pests we may see yet this summer. Disease pests may also be a concern, particularly in soybeans. To date soybean rust has not been found in Wisconsin, but like many pests in may just be a matter of time.

## Participants needed for nutrient management program

Burnett and Washburn County are seeking participants for this year's Nutrient Management Farmer Education Program. This goal of the program is to assist farmer's in meeting current and future water quality standards through nutrient management planning. To be eligible farmers must not be enrolled in any other nutrient management cost share programs, and must be willing to participate in three training sessions. In addition to the training sessions, farmers will receive assistance in weighing and calibrating manure spreaders, obtaining manure analysis, and will receive up to \$3.00/acre cost share on soil testing for all cropped acres.

In addition, farmers will receive a \$300 incentive payment for attending the orientation workshop, the phosphorus and nitrogen workshop and the successful completion of a basic nutrient management plan.

The Nutrient Management Farmer Education Program is a collaborative effort between Burnett and Washburn County Land & Water Conservation Depts, UW-Extension and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. There is a limit of six participants per county. For more information contact Kevin Schoessow or Otto Wiegand at the Spooner Area UW-Extension Office at 715-635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.

# NW Graziers plan upcoming pasture walks

*Otto Wiegand  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties*

## **Dairy - Jensen Farm**

Managing pastures for lactating dairy cattle will be the topic of a pasture walk at the Neil and Janice Jensen farm on Friday, July 7, 2006 beginning at 1 p.m.

The Jensens began grazing their 100 head of Guernsey cattle on their farm near Comstock, Wisconsin three years ago. During the pasture walk, Neil will explain his farm's transition from confinement management to managed intensive grazing.

The Jensen farm is located at 1938 25<sup>th</sup> Pl. To get the pasture walk from the east or north, take Hwy .63 to CTH G south of Cumberland and follow CTH G for 9 miles. From Turtle Lake, take Hwy. 8 to CTH T, go north and then turn west onto CTH G and follow the signs.

The pasture walk at the Jensen farm is sponsored by the Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network in cooperation with UW-Extension, Land Conservation Departments and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Polk, Barron, Rusk, Burnett, Washburn, and Sawyer Counties.

## **Sheep - Spooner Ag Research**

A sheep pasture walk will be at the University of Wisconsin Spooner Ag Research Station on Friday, July 14, from 10 a.m. to Noon. The Station is located at W6646 Highway 70 on the east side of Spooner. The



event is co-sponsored by the Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network and UW-Extension.

The walk will feature over 300 milking ewes of mostly East Friesian and Lacaune breeding, a sheep milking parlor and rotational grazing of sheep on pastures of orchardgrass, Italian ryegrass, and kura clover. A guard donkey is used to protect the sheep from predators. The Station also features a hybrid poplar plantation, a prairie, irrigation, various crop research plots including alfalfa, corn, soybeans, potatoes, winter wheat, canola, organic crop acres and a demonstration garden with vegetables, grapes and annual and perennial flowers run by the Master Gardener program.

The Spooner Station was established in 1909 under the University College of Agriculture. Pioneering research was done on open-pollinated corn, oats, soybeans, hybrid corn. Sheep replaced cattle in 1936. Milk-ing sheep were introduced in 1995.

## **Beef - Shuman Farm**

A beef farm pasture walk at the Tom and Janet Shuman Farm just outside of Hayward on Saturday, August 5, 2006, from 9 a.m. to Noon. Tweed and Melanie Shuman are co-sponsors of the event.

The pasture walk coincides with the Sawyer County Fair which will be

held from Thursday through Sunday, August 3-6. Some of Shuman's animals will be shown at the Fair, so please also come and enjoy the fair.

The Shumans own a Red Angus cow-calf operation that features rotational grazing with water lines to the paddocks. A grazing plan was developed in 2005 with help from a Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D grazing specialist. The family has been grazing Red Angus cattle for nine years. There are 70 cows, some at the home farm, and some at other locations. The 40 acres of pasture at home is divided by a public road. In addition to having to move cattle across the road and to different rented locations, a major issue for the Shumans is to be able to rent land long enough to justify building fences and seeding pastures. There are considerable land development pressures around Hayward.

The farm is located on 11110 N Company Lake Road just northwest Hayward. From the intersection of Highways 63 and 27-77 in Hayward, go one mile northwest to Nyman Ave., turn left, proceed 300 ft., and turn right on Company Lake Road. Go ¾ mile, looking for the farm on the right.

For more information on the Jensen pasture walk, contact UW-Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at Spooner, 715-635-3506, or Tim Jergenson at Barron, 715-537-6250.

For the Spooner Ag Research Station pasture walk, contact Wiegand or Schoessow at Spooner.

For the Shuman pasture walk, contact Wiegand or Schoessow at Spooner or UW-Extension Youth Agent Lori Laberee at Hayward, 715-634-4839.