

Agricultural Newsletter

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



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Heart of The Farm Conference for Women Will Highlight Decision-Making, Farm Transfer

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

Jenny Vanderlin
Assistant Director
UW Center for Dairy Profitability

A Heart of the Farm - Women in Agriculture Conference will be held at the Birchwood High School in Birchwood, WI in on Saturday, February 4 from 9:00 a.m to 3:30 p.m.

The Heart of the Farm Conference Series is a UW-Extension program committed to addressing the needs of farm women by providing education on farm business topics, connecting them with agricultural resources and creating support networks. Since 2002, a total of 35 one-day conferences held across the state reached over 800 participants. As a result of these programs, participants improved their record-keeping, made changes to insurance coverage, implemented production changes, made decisions on retirement, and more!

The conference will include two sessions on decision-making, a farmer panel on farm succession, and breakouts on stress, understanding generational differences, and an “ask the veterinarian” session. A chair-massage therapist will be on hand for much of the day. Come and share your questions and experiences on these topics and meet new people.

Registration for the workshop is \$20 per person. To register, obtain a brochure, or for more information, contact UW-Extension Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow, 715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914, Linda Zillmer, 715-651-6611, or Jenny Vanderlin, jmvander@wisc.edu, 608-263-7795, website at: www.uwex.edu/ces/heartofthefarm.

Heart of the Farm is supported by grant from the USDA Risk Management Agency. It is partially funded by the Center for Dairy Profitability, UW-Extension Farm and Risk Management Team, and Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

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Agricultural NEWSLETTER

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Spoooner, WI 54801 or UWEX Area
Agricultural Agent, Ashland Ag Research
Station, 68760 State Farm Road, Ashland, WI
54806.

Beginning Farmer Course Still Has Openings

*Frederic Village Hall – January 26 - March. 15
8 Sessions - Thursdays, 11:00 AM - 1:15 PM*

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

There are still openings to attend the Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers course offered locally at the Village Hall in Frederic. The remaining sessions are \$120 or \$15 each. You can also take the course on-line at your convenience.

The course began on Nov. 10 and is offered by the University of Wisconsin Farm and Industry Short Course. Class sessions are held on Thursdays from 11:00-1:15. Additional discussion and questions following each session are encouraged. Delivery will be done through interactive Power Point and audio. The course applies to both grass-based and conventional farming. An important focus of the remaining sessions is business planning. Since the course began in 1995, over 400 students have enrolled and a third of them have gone on to start their own farms.

This is the tentative remaining schedule, focusing on business planning and management:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Jan. 26 | Farm-driven market strategies, successful business startup model |
| Feb. 2 | USDA/FSA beginning farmer loans, farm start-up financial record-keeping |
| Feb. 9 | Risk management, farm business startups, lessons learned |
| Feb. 16 | Low-cost dairy parlor design, dairy / livestock wintering strategies |
| Feb. 23 | Grazing management, natural resource management |
| Mar. 1 | Emerging markets: biomass for renewal energy, organic and grass-based markets |
| Mar. 8 | Principles of organic dairying, herd health |
| Mar. 15 | Bringing it all together, farmer perspectives on start-up dairy/livestock businesses |

To register or obtain information, contact Otto Wiegand at UWEX Spoooner, 715-635-3506, Jennifer Blazek at UWEX Balsam Lake, 715-685-8600, Dick Cates at 608-265-6437, or Steve Neary, 262-617-0941 at Beginning Farmer.

The course is a collaborative effort between the UW-Center for Integrated Agricultural Studies, UW Cooperative Extension, CALS, DATCP, the Technical Colleges and GrassWorks.

Notes From Douglas County

Jane Anklam
Agricultural Agent
Douglas County

Contact Jane Anklam, Douglas County Agriculture and Horticulture Agent at 715-395-1363 for more information about any of these programs.

Level 2 Master Gardener Program:

If you are a Master Gardener who is interested in expanding your volunteer skills to therapeutic horticulture, consider registering for the Level 2 Master Gardener Program, "Horticulture, History and Health" The class is offered as a series on line each week, February 7- March 13.

Northwestern Wisconsin Corn

Growers: Are you interested in participating in a University research study to help understand the potential impact of climate change on our crops? Contact Jane Anklam to get involved.

Douglas Co Farmers: Attention to those who plan to do some re-seeding of their hay land, this is the time to analyze your soil fertility, variety selection, seeding mix and tillage management so that you get the results you want. Cost share and excellent technical assistance are available.

Douglas County Dairy Farmers: In follow-up to our Dairy Round Table discussion this fall, we will be meeting to discuss how to plan for an efficient dairy grazing system on our cold, fertile soils. Dale Peacock will lead the session as participants compare and share their successes and questions for grazing dairy in time to incorporate system changes this spring. We will be meeting in Douglas County. Details to be announced.

Regional Cow-Calf Meeting Features Scottish Highlanders

Shell Lake, Wednesday, March 28, 5:00-8:30 PM

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

Be sure to attend this year's spring beef cow-calf meeting on Wednesday, March 28 in rural Shell Lake sponsored by the UW-Extension Livestock Team. The meeting will be held at the Rachel Swanson Farm, 24560 Poquette Lake Road just west of Spooner in Burnett County. From Spooner, go 7 miles west on Hwy 70 and then ¾ mile south on Poquette Lake Road. Watch for the signs.

Rachel rotationally grazes 20 Scottish Highlanders on 50 acres following a grazing plan developed by NW Graziers. The Highlanders are very tame and Rachel is able to ride on some of them. Rachel and her business partner Rob own 72 total acres that is rolling and scenic.

The program begins at 5:00 PM with a farm tour followed by a beef supper and program at 6:00 at the farm. Speakers may include Amy Radunz, the State Extension Beef Specialist from UW-Madison, Brenda Boetel, Extension Ag Economist from UW-River Falls, Sandy Stuttgen, Ag Agent and Veterinarian from Taylor County, Keith Vandervelde, Ag Agent from Marquette County, and a USDA/APHIS Wildlife Biologist. Topics being considered include: beef market outlook, reducing forage losses, producing more winter forage per acre, crossbreeding advantages, vaccination programs, reducing replacement heifer feed intake from weaning to grass, and the latest information on wolves and other predators.

The cost of the program is \$12 for the meal. Please register in advance by Monday, April 26. For registration or questions, contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at UWEX-Spooner, 800-528-1914 or 715-635-3506.

NRCS Farm Program Deadlines

The Wisconsin USDA-NRCS has announced deadlines for the 2012 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

The EQIP program has a February 3rd deadline for application. This program offers flat rate payments for farmland conservation work on over 70 practices. Common practices done in the past include: Well Abandonment, Pasture/Hay Land Planting, Nutrient Management, Prescribed Grazing, Grassed Waterways and Forest Activity Plans.

The CSP program has a January 13th deadline for application. This program applies to cropland, pasture and non-industrial forestland. The program offers payments over a five-year period to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and who agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship.

For more information, contact your local NRCS Service Center in Spooner at 715-635-8228; in Ladysmith at 715-532-3786; or in Ashland at 715-682-9117.

Plot Results at the UW-Spooner Ag Research Station

Phil Holman
 Superintendent
 Spooner Ag Research Station

Overall, 2011 was a good year for most crops. Variety Trial averages for the Spooner Ag Research Station are listed below. Internet links are listed to help select varieties to plant for 2012.

Corn planting was delayed by a week or two due to a slow warm up and frequent rains in late April and early May. The season actually started cool and dry. Then July and August were both very hot with abundant rainfall. Late August and Early September were dry and then the September 15th frost ended the effective growing season 10 days earlier than normal. Usually a short season means high grain moistures, however the rest of September and October were so dry that the corn moistures declined really fast. Most dry corn needed little or no drying. Two observations on the plot averages to note were: 1) corn on the dryland silt loam grew much slower in the cool May and June months. Much of the season it appeared two weeks behind the sandy soil sites even though they were planted a day apart. And 2) the non-irrigated sandy soil site yielded 3 bu/A more than the irrigated site. With abundant rainfall in July & August, not much irrigation was needed, so these sites were managed very similar. The biggest factor in the yield difference is that the dryland site was a better field and after alfalfa while the irrigated site was following soybeans.

Soybean planting was a week behind as well and had similar cool & dry early season weather. The soybean yield was actually a bit better than expected. Most varieties were mature when we had the September 15th frost but a couple were still fairly green. The dry September and October greatly reduced soybean moistures. Most soybeans were harvested between 9 to 11 percent moisture.

Alfalfa yields were great in 2011, yielding a full one ton of dry matter better than last year, even though the stand was one year older and in its last year. Station overall forage harvests were excellent and helped restore reserves after the recent drought years.

Oats and barley yields were average or a bit below average. The cool weather in June was good, but June had little rain. Thus, both were short and lower in yield. Several experimental oat varieties that were top yielders and will be released as named varieties in the next few years. I helped harvest a barley strip trial at the former Ashland Ag Research Station. Yields of our barley trial and that trial were relatively low, but there is some interest in growing local barley for malting again.

2011 Trial Averages were as follows:

Corn Grain	
Irrigated Sandy Loam soil	168 bu/A
Dryland Sandy Loam soil	171 bu/A
Dryland Silt Loam soil	147 bu/A
Corn Silage	
Irrigated Sandy Loam soil	7.9 ton dry matter/A
Dryland Silt Loam soil	6.1 ton dry matter/A
Soybean	
Irrigated Sandy Loam soil	49 bu/A
Dryland Sandy Loam soil	50 bu/A
Alfalfa	4.8 ton dry matter/A
Oats	58 bu/A
Barley	34 bu/A

Complete Variety Trial Results can be found at:

Corn Grain and Silage:
corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/

Soybean:
soybean.uwex.edu/

Alfalfa:
www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/alfalfa.htm

Oats & Barley:
soybean.uwex.edu/

Developing Written Agriculture Lease Agreements

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

Every year our office receives calls concerning various agriculture lease agreements. Bare land crop leases are by far the most popular; however, we do get calls on facility and equipment leases and pasture leases. While it is not our desire to determine rental rates--which need to be negotiated between the property owner and the tenant--we can provide information on lease agreements.

Get it in writing! Unfortunately the days of making lease agreements with a handshake are numbered. With more and more farmers relying on the flexibilities of renting rather than owning, leases and lease agreements are becoming a necessity. Today more than ever, farmers need the assurances that come with written leases as a way of managing their businesses and minimizing risk.

Written leases can be relatively simple. It all depends on what both parties require for their own needs and protections. If you are interested in learning more about ag leases and are looking for good example, you can find them through the North Central Farm Management Extension Committee website at www.aglease101.org. If you don't have access to the Internet, call your local UW-Extension office for more information or a copy of one of these example leases for your consideration. You may also want to attend the Renting Farm Assets workshop in Rice Lake on February 21 (see events calendar on page 7).

Five Things Every Lease Should Include:

At a minimum, an agriculture lease should include the following:

First, the legal names of both parties. If it is an individual, their full legal name should be spelled out. If they are married, the legal name of the spouse may also be a good idea. If the lease is with businesses, (LLC, partnership, or corporation) make sure the business legal name is spelled out, along with any tax business number.

Second, the full and correct legal description of the property. For real estate, this would include the parcel description with section, township and range. An aerial map or other photos can be used to highlight areas not part of the lease.

Third, the start and end date of the lease. Also include when the operator can enter or take possession of the property and when they have to leave.

Fourth, the rent amount and when is it to be collected. For cash rents, are payments made in one lump sum or is it a partial payment. For share leases, what is the share amount and when is the operator obligated to turn over the share of crop to the landowner.

Fifth, make sure both parties sign the lease. Written agreements can only be enforced against the party that signed the agreement. If only one party signs the agreement, the other party can enforce the lease against them, but not the other way around.

Important Notes From the Farm Service Agency

*Evie Moore
Farm Service Agency, Spooner*

DCP Program Signup to Begin:

Enrollment for 2012 DCP and ACRE will begin on January 23, 2012. As required in the 2008 Farm Bill, there are **no** 2012 advance direct payments for DCP and ACRE. 2012. DCP enrollment and ACRE elections may be made any time before June 1, 2012.

FSA Low Interest Commodity Loans Available to Producers:

Producers may obtain low interest, nine-month loans for 2011 crops stored on the farm in an eligible structure or at a public warehouse. Commodity loans are a valuable marketing tool by providing operating capital at competitive rates and offering flexible repayment at the time a commodity is sold or marketed. The December interest rate is 1.125 percent for all commodity loans.

FSA Offers Low Interest Farm Storage Facility Loans: Producers

who may be considering upgrading or adding extra storage space for harvested crops next year should consider the FSFL program. FSA provides low interest loans for building or upgrading storage facilities. The maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL has increased to \$500,000 per structure. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent. Loan terms of seven, 10 or 12 years are now available depending on the amount of the loan.

For more information about FSFL, please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Beef Cow University Series Offered in Six Northern Wisconsin Counties

*Amy Radunz
Extension Beef Specialist*

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

An intensive, hands-on short course is being offered for those individuals interested in cow/calf beef production in northern Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin Extension Service and University of Wisconsin Livestock Team will provide the program this January through March.

This short-course series is designed to mentor current and aspiring cow/calf producers: those who are considering starting a cow herd to those who are seeking more information for an existing cow herd.

The program will cover topics on **nutrition, genetic selection, reproduction management, calf crop management, herd health, business strategies in order to manage a profitable beef herd, and marketing arrangements**. Instructors include UW-Madison Extension Beef Specialist Amy Radunz, UW-Extension specialists and beef industry experts.

The program will be held on six Monday evenings between Jan. 23 and Mar 5 and utilize both distance education and live instruction. Six locations are simultaneously offering the program: **Ashland, Ladysmith, Medford, Siren, Spooner, and Superior**. A follow-up chute side session and pasture walk will be held at a later date to be determined in the spring.

Enrollment per site is limited in order to allow hands-on experience and interaction with instructors in the course. Registrations are available on a first-come, first-served basis, so register early. The registration fee is \$100 per person or \$125 per farm for two people sharing materials. Registration fees provide for coursework proceedings from the seven sessions organized for your future reference, lab analysis and interpretation of your forage sample, a personalized enterprise budget for your farm, three-year BQA certification, and operational costs for the shortcourse. Registrations for this year's workshop are due on Jan. 10, 2012.

For more information and registration information contact UW-Extension Agents facilitating the site where you wish to enroll: for Spooner or Siren contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at 715-635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914, or for Siren contact Jennifer Blazek at 715-485-8602, for Ashland contact Jason Fischbach at 715-373-6104, for Ladysmith contact Rich Toebe at 715-532-2153, for Medford contact Sandy Stuttgart at 715-748-3327, and for Superior contact Jane Anklam at 715-395-1515.

The beef website is <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/extension-programs>, or contact Amy Radunz aradunz@wisc.edu; 608-890-3448.

Northern Safari of Ag Specialists Seminar Series

*Kevin Schoessow
Area Agricultural Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties*

This winter marks the 28th year that UW-Extension has sponsored the Northern Wisconsin Safari of Agriculture Specialists. The goal of this series is to bring University of Wisconsin-Extension specialists and agents, and their expertise to the state's northern counties with the latest research-based information for farmers and farm businesses.

Seminars are free and open to the public, run for an hour and one-half, and are held on three Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

This year's topics and speakers will be:

January 18-20 – **Making Money with Sheep and Goats in Northern Wisconsin** – Claire Mikolayunas, UW-Extension small ruminant specialist. Claire will discuss current market opportunities, finding the right weight to market your goat kids or lambs, lamb and goat kid nutritional needs, and low cost feeding strategies to increase farm profits.

January 25-27 – **Using Cover Crops to Improve Soils and Farm Profitability** – Kevin Shelley, UW-Extension nutrient and pest management specialist. Kevin will discuss practical options in selecting, planting and managing cereal rye, clovers and other short season cover crops into various cropping systems.

February 8-10 – **Raising Backyard Pigs**– Mahlon Peterson, UW-Extension interim swine specialist and swine team leader. Raising a few pigs for your own food or for small off-farm markets is a growing trend. Mahlon will guide participants through the finer points of raising pork including choosing breeds, selecting feeders, feed and nutrition requirements, housing and animal health and pastured hogs. There will also be a Pork Quality Assurance training and certification at 1 p.m. on February 10 at the Spooner location only.

The schedule for the program is as follows:

Wednesday, 10:30 AM - Rusk County Extension conference room, Ladysmith Courthouse

Wednesday, 1:30 PM - Price County Extension conference room, Phillips Courthouse

Wednesday, 1:00 PM - Ashland Agricultural Research Station

Thursday, 7:00 PM – Northwestern High School, Maple

Friday, 10:30 AM – Spooner Agricultural Research Station

For more information about the Safari, contact your local UW-Extension office in following counties:

Ashland and Bayfield Counties - Jason Fischbach 715-373-6104, Douglas County – Jane Anklam 715-395-1363, Price County - Mark Kopecky 715-339-2555, Rusk County - Rich Toebe 715-532-2151, Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn Counties - Kevin Schoessow or Otto Wiegand 715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914.

There is no pre-registration required, but a call letting us know you plan to attend is appreciated.

This Quarter's Events

Contacts: UW-Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow, Spooner Station, 715-635-3506/800-528-1914, Jane Anklam Douglas Co, 715-395-1363, or Jason Fischbach, Ashland & Bayfield Counties, 715-373-6104 x5 for more information

Jan 5, Thurs, 8:30-3:15 – W. Wis. Ag Lenders Conference, Menomonie – contact Katie Sternweiss, UWEX Dunn Co. 715-232-1636, \$50 registration (includes lunch)

Jan 12-14, Thurs-Sat – GrassWorks Grazing Conference, Rothschild/Wausau – Patriot Center, contact Lanice Szomi at 715-965-8324

Jan 13-14 & Feb 10-11, Fri-Sat, 4 days – Returning To the Farm (Farm Succession Program for the Next Generation), UW-River Falls – research farm, contact Joy Kirkpatrick at 608-263-3485

Jan 18, Weds, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm, WI Corn & Soybean Conference, Menomonie, Stout Ale House – contact Katie Sternweiss, UWEX Dunn Co. 715-232-1636, \$5 registration (includes lunch)

Jan 23, 30, Feb 13, 20, 27, Mar 5, Mondays, 7-9 PM – Beef University, Siren, Spooner, Ashland, Superior, Ladysmith & Medford – contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 (See article)

Jan 24-25, Tues-Weds, 10-3:30 – Rice Lake Farm Show – Red Cedar Mall

Jan 26–Mar 15, Thursdays, 11 AM to 1-2 PM – Beginning Farmer Course Parts II & III, Frederic Village Hall - 8 remaining sessions, 2-3 hrs per session, \$15 per session, 5th consecutive year in this region, contact Otto Wiegand, 715-635-3506 (See article)

Feb 4, Sat, 9:30-3:30 - Heart of The Farm Womens Conference, Birchwood High School – contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 (See article)

Feb 4, Sat – Indianhead Shepherds Clinic, WITC, Rice Lake – contact Tim Jergenson 715-537-6250, or register on-line at Indianhead Sheep Breeders Association

Feb 10, Fri, 1 PM, Pork Quality Assurance Training and Certification, Spooner – Spooner Agricultural Research Station

Jan-Feb – Northern Safari at Spooner, Ashland, Maple, Ladysmith & Phillips (See article)

Feb 21, Tues – Renting Farm Assets Workshop, Rice Lake – Tim Jergenson 715-537-6250

Feb 23-25, Thurs-Sat – MOSES Organic Conference, LaCrosse – discount if registered by Jan 16, contact MOSES at 715-778-5775, or www.mosesorganic.org

Mar 21, 9:30-3:30 – NW Graziers Annual Conference, Rice Lake – details later in mail and newspapers

Mar 14, Weds, 9:00-3:00 – Pesticide Applicator Training, Spooner – contact Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 – other sites are Balsam Lake – Jan 19, or Barron – Mar 7

Mar 28, Weds, 5:00-8:30 – Cow-Calf Seminar, Shell Lake – Rachel Swanson Farm, just west of Spooner, contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 (See article)



UWEX Area Agricultural Agents
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties
Spooner Agricultural Research Station
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Kevin Schoessow
UWEX Area Agricultural Agent