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September - October 2008

A newsletter of:
UW Extension

THE CHAMBER
WAUSAU REGION
Partnership for Progressive Agriculture

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 9 — Schreiner Farm Pasture Walk

Jim and Tammy Schreiner, 2052 Frahm Road, Athens will host a pasture walk from 1:00-3:00 PM. The focus of this walk is to see how a well planned transition to managed grazing can be very successful. David Combs, UW Dairy Science on hand for a dairy ration discussion and Sam Zimmermann, UW-Extension to discuss dairy facilities. *Directions from Athens: Take County Rd M west 4 miles. County Rd M will turn north, at this point you will take Frahm Rd west for 3/4 mile. Farm is on the right (north) side of the road. Directions from Gad: Take Willow Road east 3 miles to Weiler Rd. Take Weiler Rd south 3 miles to County Rd M. Continue south on County Rd M for 2 more miles, then turn right (west) on Frahm Rd for 3/4 mile. Farm is on the right (north) side of the road.*

September 15 — Marathon County Holstein Sale

Located at the Athens Fairgrounds, sponsored by the Marathon County Holstein Breeders Association.

September 29 — Working Lands Initiative

The Wisconsin Counties Association is sponsoring this educational seminar from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at the Holiday Inn, Stevens Point. This seminar encourages participation from elected officials, planning and zoning staff, and others that are interested in preserving agricultural lands. Secretary Rod Nilsestuen, DATCP is a featured speaker. Registration deadline is Sept 19 and is available on-line at www.wicounties.org or call the Wisconsin Counties Association at (866) 404-2700 toll-free.

September 30 — Wisconsin FTD Applications Due

2011 Host Farm Applications Due to UW-Extension office

September 30-October 4 — World Dairy Expo

Located at the Alliant Energy Center, this 5-day event is an international dairy meeting place, showcasing the finest in dairy genetics and the newest technologies available to the dairy industry.

October 13 — Nutrient Management Update Session, Wausau

Free session, 1:00-3:00 pm at Conference Rm #5, 212 River Drive, Wausau. Learn current nutrient management regulations, producer compliance, and related environmental issues.

Conservation officials will be on hand to give an overview of the regulations and their perspective on compliance. There will also be an overview of the DATCP-approved Nutrient Management Training Series. This session also serves as Class #1 for DATCP-approved classes to develop qualified Nutrient Management Plans in the 5-county area. Contact Mike Wildeck at 261-1239, Scott Mickelsen at 803-1387, or Kirk Langfoss at 261-6008 for more information.

October 13 — Nutrient Management Update Session, Spencer

This free session will be 7:30-9:30 PM at Rm S101/103 NTC, Spencer. This is a repeat of the same program held in Wausau earlier that day.

October 14 — Nutrient Management Update Session, Medford

This free session will be 7:30-9:30 PM at Rm M110/112 NTC, Medford. This is a repeat of the same program held in Spencer the previous day.

November 11 — Dairy Modernization & Energy

Conservation Tour

Currently being planned for the Wausau area. Watch for details.

Search Underway for 2011 Farm Technology Days Host Farm

Are you interested in hosting one of the largest outdoor agriculture shows in the country? Marathon County has been given the opportunity to once again host Wisconsin Farm Technology Days. Previously known as Wisconsin Farm Progress Days, Marathon County hosted the show previously in 1974 at the Ken and Richard Leick Farm, Stratford, and in 1996 at Ross-Hart Farm, Edgar.

Marathon County will serve as hosts for the 2011 show and the Executive Committee is now seeking applicants for a host farm. Application forms are available at <http://marathon.uwex.edu>, or call Marathon County UW-Extension (715) 261-1230 to have one mailed to you. Applications must be received at the Marathon County UW-Extension office by Tuesday, September 30.

The farmstead and major land owned must be located in Marathon County and a minimum of 400 to 450 acres is needed for the show. At least 160 acres of reasonably level

land, in sod, will be used for Tent City, parking, and demonstration plot areas. Additional site selection criteria are now available at Marathon County UW-Extension or the website listed above. For more specifics, please contact Mike Wildeck, UW-Extension Dairy Agent, at (715) 261-1239.

Marathon County will host Farm Technology Days, the largest farm exposition in Wisconsin

and one of the largest in the United States. Host farm applications are being accepted now with a deadline of September 30. Download your application at <http://marathon.uwex.edu> or call the Marathon County UW-Extension office at (715) 261-1230.



Will Corn Make It to Maturity?

On August 19th and 20th, Lincoln and Marathon County Agricultural Development Agent, Tom Cadwallader, surveyed the corn crop in the two counties in order to determine if it could possibly reach maturity before the first normal killing frost date around the September 20th. Cadwallader randomly selected 12 different corn fields, pulled a half dozen corn samples and determined their stage of maturity. The stages of maturity revealed what many farmers have probably suspected, the cool temperatures this summer and the lack of moisture in many parts of the two counties have definitely delayed corn development. Cadwallader found that 8% of the corn was still in the R1 - Silk stage; 59% was still within the R2 - Blister stage; and 33% had advanced to the R3 - Milk stage. Only one cob, from a field near the Langlade County line had gotten

close to the R4 - Dough stage. About 40% were displaying drought stress with a majority of those being in the Eastern half of Marathon County. Looking at Table 1, it is fairly evident that a majority of the corn in the two counties will need lots of favorable weather to reach maturity before the first killing frost on or around September 20th. According to Extension Corn Specialist Joe Lauer, "If corn reaches the R5 - Dent stage by Labor Day, it should make it by frost time." If you'd like more information on handling drought stressed corn you can either call the Tom Cadwallader at (715) 536-0304 (Merrill Office) or (715) 261-1240 (Wausau Office), or check out the Marathon County Extension Office website at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/marathon/ag/index.html>.

Corn Kernel Growth Stage and Time to Maturity

Stage of Maturity	Calendar Days to Maturity	Growing Degree Days to Maturity For Northern Wisconsin
R1 - Silk	55-60	950-1050
R2 - Blister	45-50	800-900
R3 - Milk	37-42	700-800
R4 - Dough	31-36	550-650
R5 - Dent	26-28	400-500
R5.5 - 50% Kernel Milk	10-15	175-275
R6 - Physiological Maturity	0	0



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Farm Business Management Classes begin in October.

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New Requirement Added to the 2008 Disaster Program

Disaster programs are a permanent part of Farm Service Agency programs because of the new Farm Bill. With this status come changes to requirements for disaster enrollment. One new requirement for the 2008 Disaster Program is that all crops including pastures, harvested or grazed, must be reported. (Acreage reports are also required to participate in Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP), Conservation Reserve Program, Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), as well as permanent Disaster Programs). Contact the Marathon County FSA office for an appointment if you will be participating in the permanent Disaster Programs for 2008 and have not reported all your cropland, pastureland or other grazed non-cropland.

Producers who wish to participate in the new disaster programs must have crop insurance or non-insured crop disaster assistance (NAP) coverage on all farms in all counties in which they have an interest. Because the Farm Bill was enacted after the deadline to obtain crop insurance or NAP, a waiver allows producers to pay a "buy-in" fee to be eligible for the new disaster assistance programs for 2008. A "buy-in" fee must be paid for each crop grown but not covered by insurance or NAP, no later than September 16, 2008.

Under the new law, disaster programs will be more restrictive than in the past. For example, a county may not qualify to be able to offer the disaster program. The program requires that a county have a Secretarial Designation for a natural disaster or be contiguous (touching) to a county that has a designation in order to offer the program to producers. If the county does not have a Secretarial Designation (Marathon County does not have one so far), a producer must suffer a 50% loss on ALL crops raised in the year of loss.

Be Aware of Silo Gas Dangers

Cheryl Skjolaas is with the UW-Extension Center for Agricultural Safety and Health at UW-Madison, and reminds us that this is a prime time of year to be aware of silo gas dangers.

Silo Gas – What is it?

- Shortly after green plant material is ensiled, it begins to ferment. Oxygen used in fermentation combines with nitrates in the plants, and nitric oxide gas is released. This combines with oxygen in the air to form nitrogen dioxide, a heavier-than-air, toxic gas which can injure or kill people or animals.
- Silo gas forms within a few hours up to three weeks after fresh plant material is added to the silo. It is a problem in conventional, non-airtight silos.
- Dry growing conditions may cause an increase in the nitrates in the plant material. Weeds and corn are naturally high in nitrates. Nitrate levels in corn are extremely high after a rain following a dry period. Harvesting the plant high will help to decrease the nitrate level.

Silo-Filler's Disease

- Silo-filler's disease is the term given the injury resulting from exposure to silo gas. Inhaling even a small amount can result in serious, permanent, or fatal lung injury. The nitrogen dioxide combines with water in your lungs to form highly corrosive nitric acid. High concentrations of nitrogen dioxide may make a person helpless in 2-3 minutes.
- Symptoms of silo-filler's disease include coughing, burning, shortness of breath, chills, fever, headaches, nausea, or vomiting. While a person may not immediately experience the symptoms from a mild exposure, in 3-30 hours there is a slow, progressive inflammation of the lungs resulting in fluid buildup in the lungs. This can be fatal.
- A unique characteristic of this disease is that there may be a relapse in two to six weeks after the original episode, which may be milder or more severe than the first episode.

To prevent Silo-Filler's Disease:

1. Stay out of the silo for at least three weeks after filling.
2. Be alert for bleach-like odors and/or yellowish brown gases in or near the silo.
3. If you must enter the silo, e.g., to set up a silo unloader, do so immediately after the last load is in.
4. Do not wait several hours or overnight. Run the blower 15-20 minutes before entering and keep it running while inside.
5. Keep a door open down to the silage surface, and have someone keep in contact with you from the outside.
6. Ventilate the silo room adequately for three weeks after filling, keeping windows and doors open.
7. Keep the door between the silo room and the barn closed to prevent silo gas from killing livestock.
8. If you experience throat irritation or coughing in the silo, get fresh air immediately.
9. **See your doctor immediately after exposure to silo gas.**

Farm Business Management Classes offered at NTC

Beginning in October, Farm Business Management classes will be offered at Northcentral Technical College (NTC) regional campuses. These classes are for farm owners, managers, renters, or workers with decision-making responsibilities. Classes will originate at the Medford and Antigo campuses and will be broadcasted ITV to the Phillips, Spencer and Wittenberg campuses. Highly qualified instructors provide group and one-on-one farm management, marketing and financial training in this program. Students will receive classroom instruction as well as individualized on-farm instruction each year.

The program has two different certificates – one for beginning farmers and one for advanced farmers. These classes run from October to March each year.

2008 Classes offered in Medford, Phillips and Spencer:
Introductory: Farm Business Analysis
Advanced: Advanced Livestock Nutrition

2008 Classes offered in Antigo and Wittenberg:
Introductory: Soil/Crop Management
Advanced: Advanced Farm Records and Business Management

Four other classes: Livestock Management, Agriculture Health and Safety, Advanced Nutrient Management and Farm Estate Planning will be offered in October 2009. The classes will rotate areas and the full four-class certificate can be completed in four years.

For more information, please contact Melissa Klein at (715) 803-1671 or (888) NTC-7144 Ext. 1671

Q & A Qualified Nutrient Management Plans

What is the difference between nutrient management and a qualified Nutrient Management Plan?

At the basic level, nutrient management is an accounting of nutrient needs of a crop and balancing of various sources of nutrients (soil, manure, legumes, commercial fertilizer, etc) used to meet these needs. A qualified Nutrient Management Plan is the document in which the accounting and balancing is detailed and tracked for farm operations. Like balancing a checkbook, this accounting ensures that nutrients aren't over or under applied. This maximizes production and profits, and reduces the risk of nutrients negatively impacting the environment.

How is a qualified nutrient management plan different from existing fertilizer programs?

The biggest difference is that proven, standardized methods are required and used to do the accounting and balancing of various nutrients, and the product that results meets an established and accepted standard for quality...a qualified Nutrient Management Plan. As a result, the fertilizer programs of different farm operations will be on a "level playing field". Because many variables in farm operations, such as weather, cropping systems, soil fertility levels and livestock numbers change over time, qualified Nutrient Management Plans require annual updating.

What is the importance of having and implementing a qualified Nutrient Management Plan?

Most importantly, it is a tool that can help a farm operation make sound management decisions that help maximize production and profit. But they also can help reduce the risk of nutrients negatively impacting the environment, and may provide some protection should a pollution event occur. The recommendations in a qualified nutrient management plan are considered accepted best-management practices. As such, if it can be documented that the plan is being followed, farm operations will be able to better justify their management decisions. Another important reason for implementing NMP is that Wisconsin law requires all farms applying nutrients have and implement a qualified Nutrient Management Plan. County ordinance also requires qualified Nutrient Management Plans for construction and management of manure storage facilities; and many government farm programs require a qualified Nutrient Management plan to be eligible for participation.

Who can develop a qualified Nutrient Management Plan (qNMP)?

A qNMP may be developed by a certified professional or, farm operations may develop their own qNMP if they complete a DATCP-approved training course and the qNMP they develop meets the standard for quality (NRCS Standard 590). Which is better, developing one's own qNMP or working with a certified professional? That's up to the farm operation, but the best plan is one that can be easily understood and can be implemented.



A qualified Nutrient Management Plan helps producers make sound decisions that help maximize production and profit. Classes for qNMPs will be offered in Abbotsford, Loyal, Thorp, Medford, Prentice and Wausau. Registration deadline is October 31.

Nutrient Management Training Begins With Update Sessions -- October 13, 14

Update Sessions Also Serve As Class #1 For 5-County Nutrient Management Training Series

Educators and conservation officials in a 5-county area are working together offer Nutrient Management Update Sessions in three locations, October 13 and 14. The free sessions are: Monday, October 13, 1:00-3:00 PM at Conference Rm #5, 212 River Drive, Wausau; Monday, October 13, 7:30-9:30 PM at Rm S-101/103 NTC, Spencer; and Tuesday, October 14, 7:30-9:30 PM at Rm M-110/112 NTC, Medford. Topics include current nutrient management regulations, related environmental issues, and producer compliance. Conservation officials will be on hand to give an overview of the regulations and their perspective on compliance. There will also be an overview of the DATCP-approved Nutrient Management Training Series being offered to producers in Marathon, Clark, Taylor, Lincoln, and Price Counties. Producers may be interested in taking the Nutrient Management Training Series to develop their first qualified Nutrient Management Plan (qNMP) or as a refresher to maintain "qualified" plan status. Those producers must attend one of the three Nutrient Management Update Sessions and register for a class, but you do not have to be taking the class to attend the free Update Session.

DATCP-approved classes to develop qNMPs will be offered in Abbotsford, Loyal, Thorp, Medford, Prentice, and Wausau in January and February 2009. The cost of the program is \$130 and includes plan development using either SNAP-Plus computer software or a manual option. The registration deadline is October 31. Participants receive...

1. a qualified plan that meets state requirements, and
 2. information on cost-share opportunities that are available
- For a registration brochure and other details, call Scott Mickelsen, Northcentral Technical College at (715) 803-1387 or Mike Wildeck, Marathon County UW-Extension at (715) 261-1239. The registration brochure is also on the web at <http://marathon.uwex.edu>.

Enroll Now in Quality Loss Crop Disaster Program (05-07)

We are in the final phase of the 05-07 Crop Disaster Program. FSA has been signing up producers for crop quantity losses and livestock losses since last fall, and now we're signing up producers for crop quality losses. Producers must have suffered quality losses of at least 25 percent to be eligible for CDP Quality Loss.

Producers may receive assistance for both quantity and quality losses. For information about disaster programs implemented by FSA, visit: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.