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UW Extension
Cooperative Extension
Clark County

March 2011



Extension Views Newsletter

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SOLUTIONS FOR RISING CASH RENT

BY MARIA BENDIXEN, DAIRY & LIVESTOCK AGENT

High grain prices have led to increasing land rental rates in some areas of the county. Many producers are concerned that if the price of grain drops these higher rent prices will not be sustainable. To address this problem, flexible lease agreements in which the rent is not determined until after the crop is harvested can be used. The final rental rate is based on actual prices and/or yields attained each year. This allows the landlord and the producer to share the risk involved in the crop. It allows landowners to capitalize on higher grain prices and protects producers risk for lower prices. In general, owners are paid in cash and they do not have to be involved in decisions about crop inputs or grain marketing.

These agreements generally require that you have some knowledge of cost of

production and the corn marketing date cannot be set too far into the future or payment should be made before the corn is marketed.

There are a couple ways to go about these arrangements, one is to look at percentage of the crop revenue as a rental payment. According to the Wisconsin Profits through Efficient Production Systems over the last 10 years the cost of land has been \$54 an acre. An average ten year price of \$3.14 and a yield of 130 bu/acre gives a grower return per acre of \$408 that means rent payments have been a

little over 13% of revenue. Sticking with this percentage \$5 corn would warrant about a \$84.50 rental payment.

Many landlords are not used to taking on risk for crop failure or price volatility so the first example of flexible cash rent is going to really take some getting used to. Another option is to set minimum cash rent and pay a share of the revenue if the price or yield is higher than expected. This really does not protect the producer much but it may be a way to keep land for a lower price in

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Example Clark County Corn

Ten year average price \$3.14 bu X 130 bu/acre
= \$408.00 per acre

Average rental price \$54.00 / \$408.00 = 13%

This year's rental price \$5.00 bu X 130 bu/acre
= \$650.00 per acre

\$650 X 13% = \$84.50 rental payment

2011 WINTER WHEAT WORKSHOPS

The 2011 Winter Wheat Workshop will take place Thursday, March 31st at the Marshfield Agricultural Research Station, 2615 East 29th Street, Marshfield, WI.

The theme for the 2011 workshop is, "The Timeline of Decisions for Wheat Management".

Topics include wheat growth staging, disease and insect diagnostics, nitrogen and weed management, and post-harvest

management issues including cover crops, nutrient implications of straw harvest and manure applications. Participants will be able to work "hands-on" with plant material to improve their knowledge of growth staging in relation to management decisions.

Speakers for the 2011 workshops include: Shawn Conley (State Soybean and Small Grains Specialist), Paul Esker (Field Crops Extension Plant Pathologist), and

Jim Stute (UWEX Rock County). Registration will begin at 10:30 AM with the program to start at 11 AM and be finished by 3 PM. Lunch will be provided.

The cost for the workshop is \$10. Continuing education credits will be requested.

For more information, contact Richard Halopka, UW-Extension Clark County, (715) 743-5121.

SOIL TILLAGE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

ABBOTSFORD CITY HALL

Program Agenda

- **FGD Gypsum**, *Dick Wolkowski, UW Soil Scientist*
- **Tillage and Organic Matter**, *Richard Halopka, Clark County UW-Extension Crops & Soils Agent*
- **Vertical Tillage**, *Dick Wolkowski, UW Soils Scientist & Jim Leverich, On-Farm Research Coordinator*

- **Adapting Equipment for Reduced Tillage and Precision Ag**, *Jim Leverich, On-Farm Research Coordinator*

For more information contact the Clark County UW-Extension at 715-743-5121.

Cost of this workshop is \$5.00 per person (includes lunch and handouts). Pre-registration is required by March 22nd.

Make check payable to UW-Extension office

Mail to:

Clark County UW-Extension
517 Court Street, Rm 104
Neillsville WI 54456

WALKING AND TALKING CROPS DURING THE GROWING SEASON

BY RICHARD HALOPKA, CLARK COUNTY CROPS & SOILS AGENT

What a winter. It began early and we are still receiving snowfall, but spring is near. As the snow decreases we will begin the ritual of planting and growing crops. This growing season Richard Halopka, UW-Extension Clark County Crops & Soils agent, will present a series of crop walks during the growing season. The sessions will be from 1:00-3:00 pm, about once a month to cover topics on crop emergence, IPM, and related seasonal crop concerns.

The first of this series will be held **April 6, 2011** at the Richard Vine family farm, located at W4070 Hill Rd, Granton, WI.

The Vine family has incorporated cover crops in their no-till cropping system. We will walk a couple of their cover crop fields that include tillage radish and winter rye.

Jane Reigel from NRCS Clark County will update growers on programs

related to cover crops and Richard Halopka UW-Extension Clark County will cover topics related to the benefits of cover crops.

Join us on April 6th to learn about cover crops and then watch the newsletter for additional sessions during the growing season on farms in Clark County.

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING OFFERED

BY PAMLEA PETERSON, DOOR COUNTY UW-EXTENSION

More and more Wisconsin residents are seeking fresh, locally produced foods with the goals of eating a healthier diet and supporting the local economy. With the increased emphasis on buying local, the University of Wisconsin-Extension is offering two training programs this spring to help growers and small businesses bring their products to market.

The two programs are "Wisconsin Acidified Canned Foods Training for Licensed Processors" and "Farm to Market: Food Safety Training for 'Pickle Bill' Processors." According to UW-Extension food science specialist Barbara Ingham, it may be an opportune time for growers and small businesses to take advantage of the strong statewide interest in local foods.

"Legislation signed into law in spring of 2010 (the 'Pickle Bill') allows



individuals to can pickles or salsa and naturally acid products like jam in their home kitchens for sale at farm markets in Wisconsin," Ingham said.

To help people do this safely and to help explain these new regulations, the University of Wisconsin-Extension is offering "Farm to Market: Food Safety for Pickle Bill Processors" workshops on April 13 in Eau Claire, on May 4 in Madison and on May 18 in Wausau.

"Some food processors wish to market their canned products to a wider market through grocery stores or to customers in other states," Ingham noted.

These processors now also have easy access to the training that they need. Processors wishing to can a wider variety of products not covered under the "Pickle Bill," or those wishing to sell at locations other than farm markets, must obtain a food processing license. As part of licensing, processors who make and can acidified foods such as pickles, salad dressing or sauces must obtain special food safety training.

The "Wisconsin Acidified Canned Foods" training for licensed food processors was developed to assist these processors in providing safe, high quality foods for Wisconsin consumers. The training is also offered at four locations around the state this spring: April 14 in Eau Claire, on May 5 in Madison and on May 19 in Wausau.

Canned foods may be hazardous if proper procedures are not followed. It's important to follow tested recipes that will produce safe, high quality products for sale. These trainings are designed to assist both licensed and unlicensed processors produce safe food for local and statewide markets.

More information and registration for both programs is available at www.foodsafety.wisc.edu and through your Door County Extension office, (920) 746-2260.

Contact Pamela Peterson, family living educator with the Door County University of Wisconsin-Extension Office, at (920) 746-2260.

WORKSHOP ADDRESSES HOP AND BARLEY PRODUCTION FOR WISCONSIN CRAFT BEER INDUSTRY

If you're interested in growing hops and barley make plans to attend the 2nd annual seminar on hop and barley production on April 9 hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension.

Western Wisconsin has a rich history in crop production, and these are two additional crops that may have promise noted

workshop coordinators, Tim Rehbein, UW-Extension Vernon County agriculture agent and Carl Duley, UW-Extension Buffalo County agriculture agent.

The workshop will be held at the Tomah Hospitality Inn, in Tomah, Wis. on April 9 from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m and will explore the possibilities and challenges associated with production of hops

and barley.

Registration fees are \$60 per person. The registration deadline is April 1. Please send registration information and payment-checks made payable to UW-Extension, to Buffalo County Office, 407 South 2nd Street, Alma, WI 54610. Registration form and brochure can be found at <http://buffalo.uwex.edu/agriculture/barley>

SEEDING ALFALFA FIELDS BACK INTO ALFALFA

BY DENNIS COSGROVE AND DAN UNDERSANDER, EXTENSION FORAGE AGRONOMISTS

Introduction

In certain instances such as after a failed seeding, winterkill or in an attempt to thicken thinning stands, producers may be interested in following alfalfa with alfalfa. This practice has met with varied success due primarily to compounds produced by older alfalfa plants, which inhibit the growth of young seedlings. This process is known as autotoxicity. In this "Focus on Forage", we will discuss what causes autotoxicity, factors that affect it, and ways to reduce the effect.

What is autotoxicity?

Plants produce a wide range of chemicals aimed at defending them from attack by insects and diseases. These compounds are called secondary metabolites, as they have no metabolic function in the plant except as a defensive mechanism. Among these chemicals are some that inhibit the growth of other plant species. The production of compounds by one plant species that are toxic to another is known as **allelopathy**. The production of chemical compounds by a plant that are toxic to members of the same species is known as **autotoxicity**. Plants produce these compounds to help "carve out" a space for themselves and reduce competition from other plants for water, nutrients and light. Alfalfa is a plant species that exhibits autotoxicity.

There are a number of potentially autotoxic chemicals produced by alfalfa, one of which is called medicarpin. This compound is present throughout the plant but is more concentrated in top growth than roots. It is a water soluble compound that leaches readily into the soil from both decomposing plant material and growing plants.

What factors affect autotoxicity?

Once a stand of alfalfa is killed, whether by plowing, spraying or even winterkill, the autotoxic compounds are released into the soil environment. How long they remain and what affect they have on a new alfalfa seeding is

a function of soil type, temperature, and amount to rainfall. On sandy soils where the toxins are more available and more easily taken up, the effects are more acute but are less persistent due to leaching. High rainfall leaches the toxins more rapidly than low rainfall. On heavier textured soils, the toxins are more tightly adsorbed to soils colloids and less prone to leaching. Consequently, the effects are less pronounced but are longer lasting. These compounds are microbially degraded and so conditions that favor microbial growth (warm, moist versus cool, dry soils) reduce the persistence of the toxins.

Tillage affects the level of toxin in the soil. More aggressive tillage will better mix and dilute the toxins. Wisconsin research showed the effects of autotoxicity to be greater in no-till fields than those moldboard plowed. Alfalfa that was planted in spring after fall killing an old alfalfa stand showed yield reductions of 30% when seeded conventionally and 40% when no-tilled (1).

The age of the existing alfalfa stand will affect autotoxicity. Younger plants (those one year old or less) contain less toxin than older plants. This means that failed seedings or even new seedings that winterkill can be seeded back to alfalfa with little yield reduction.

Density of the previous alfalfa stand also impacts the concentration of toxins in the soil. Studies at River Falls showed stands densities as low as 30 stems/ft² exhibited autotoxicity similar to stands with 70 plants/ft². It is not known what the thresholds is below which autotoxicity is not a concern.

The time interval between eliminating an old stand and planting a new one has an important influence on the effects of autotoxicity. Research in this area is somewhat conflicting. Studies in Michigan showed that a three-week waiting period was all that was required to eliminate any yield decreases from autotoxicity (3). In Missouri yield was reduced 8% if

alfalfa was seeded back within three weeks (2). Wisconsin studies have shown yield reductions of 30% and 70% when alfalfa was seeded 4 weeks or 2 weeks after plowing down old alfalfa plants (1). This effect was even more pronounced (50% and 80%) when the new alfalfa stand was established without tillage.

How does autotoxicity affect plants?

Autotoxicity affects the development of the seedling root system. Toxins inhibit the ability of the root radicle to elongate. This results in reduced seedling emergence. Emerged plants are stunted and may show purpling because of their inability to take up adequate amounts of phosphorus. Surviving plants will develop a secondary root system that is shallow and more highly branched than that of an unaffected plant. This smaller root system reduces the plant's ability to take up water and nutrients. This affect will persist throughout the life of the plant. Stands affected by autotoxicity during the seedling year will have reduced yields not only in that year but in subsequent years as well. Studies in Missouri and elsewhere have documented reduced yields up to three years after stand establishment.

How can autotoxicity be reduced?

The best way to avoid autotoxicity is to rotate to some other crop such as corn for at least a year before seeding the same field back to alfalfa. This gives the toxins time to be degraded, leached, or otherwise removed from the soil environment. If alfalfa must follow alfalfa, the best choice is to kill the old alfalfa in the year prior to seeding. The degree of toxicity is directly related to the amount of time between killing the old stand and establishing the new stand.

If alfalfa must be planted in the same year an old stand is killed, a late-summer seeding represents the best option. Planting a crop such as oats,

(Continued on back page)

FARM REWIRING AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT: SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND MODERN

The wiring on a substantial number of farms was installed 20 to 30 plus years ago, and in some cases wiring has been subject to alteration by people who were not necessarily qualified electricians. Often work was only done as an “emergency replacement” or broken down equipment using similar older technology that was already in use. Correct farm wiring and equipment selection is essential for energy efficiency, minimizing stray voltage, and ensuring safety. Advance careful review and selection of replacement equipment as well as creating an upgrade plan can save a lot in future equipment replacement cost and energy bills.

A majority of Wisconsin’s electric

utilities and electric cooperatives are offering farm rewiring cost-sharing programs to reduce livestock farmers’ out-of-pocket costs for rewiring of their farms. All of the programs require the work be inspected and done by a certified electrician. The initial low cost of no cost inspection will provide you with a prioritized work plan for the farm and the approximate cost to plan on for future needs, if making upgrades in steps.

Also, upgrading equipment at this time is often very cost effective.

Wisconsin Focus on Energy’s Farm Assessment Toolkit or farm specialists can help a wide range of agricultural operations assess

whether there are energy saving opportunities. They collectively have lots of experience on technologies that would cost-effectively lower energy bills or improve production efficiency. In some cases, incentives are available to lower the cost of implementing energy saving technologies. Changes can be done as an investment in the future or as part of a plan to replace critical equipment as needed with more efficient technology. All farmers have access to Focus on Energy’s extensive library of case studies, fact sheets, and other technical information.

Contact info: Toll Free: 800-762-7077
Email: focusinfo@focusonenergy.com
or Website:
www.focusonenergy.com/Business/

FREE MASTER GARDENER PRUNING WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 9
10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

sponsored by
Over the Garden Gate Master Gardeners

Open to the Public — No Charge

The easiest way to learn how to properly prune is to get out and do it and there are a few basic “rules of thumb” that are easy to learn and remember. Most trees and shrubs should be pruned in the late winter or early spring which is called dormant season pruning. Some can be cut all the way to the ground, where other benefit more from selective pruning. Pruning is actually invigorating to plants and often encourages new growth.

Guest Speaker will be Teri Gear Lessig, Horticultural Educator at Wood County UW-Extension. Her experience includes greenhouse management, landscaping and landscape maintenance, commercial vegetable production, and more!

Participants should meet at the Courthouse Auditorium (Neillsville) for introductions and they will proceed to the Neillsville Public Library for a hands-on

demonstration.

For more information please contact: Pat Hubing, 715-743-2281



GETTING A GOOD FORAGE STAND

DAN UNDERSANDER, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Some farmers always get good alfalfa stands and some are less successful. While there is no foolproof system for establishing forages, there are a few principles that are key to successful alfalfa, clover and grass establishment regardless of the equipment used.

The first and largest reason for alfalfa stand failure in the Midwest is low soil pH. We have known for 100 years that alfalfa needs a soil pH of at least 6.8 for optimum growth but still apply only about half the recommended lime. Alfalfa can be established at lower soil pH (down to about pH 6.0) but the alfalfa will be weak, weedy and low-yielding. Red clover has an optimum soil pH of 6.2 and most other clovers have an optimum soil pH between 6 and 6.2. Grasses can be seeded when soil pH is lower but certain nutrients may be come unavailable. Lower soil pH for clovers and grasses result in poor establishment and slow seedling growth with increased weed competition.

Have soil tested and follow lime and get fertilizer recommendations for lime, phosphorus, potassium and sulfur. Apply lime 1 year ahead of forage seeding and incorporate. The standard Ag lime has a range of soil particles sizes so that it dissolves gradually and maintains soil pH for several years. This is why the lime must be incorporated; a finely ground lime may be applied to the surface in an emergency but it is more expensive and then there are no larger particles to maintain soil pH in future years.

In addition to needing proper soil pH the young forage seedlings need phosphorus for proper root

and seedling development. Potassium and sulfur increase the early growth rate to help the seedlings stay ahead of the weeds and increase yields and stand persistence.

The next most common cause of forage stand failure is seeding too deep. This is especially easy to do when seeding legumes (alfalfa or clovers) with a drill. Legume seed should be placed 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep (slightly deeper in very light soils) and grass seed at 1/2 to 3/4 inches. Accurate seed placement usually requires depth bands on the disc openers. You can tell as the stand emerges if seeding depth was a problem when you see length of row with a good stand and adjacent rows with little or no stand.

On the other extreme some farmers seed without incorporating seed at all or broadcast and go over the field with a smooth roller. Use a corrugated roller; smooth rollers do not incorporate seed well; they just push it down to the soil surface. Smooth rollers also tend to rise up over ridges or stone/clods, further resulting in poor seed incorporation.

After seeding you should see 6 to 8 seeds/ft² on the soil surface: if fewer then the seed was likely placed too deep; if more seeds are on the surface, then seed was too shallow and poor germination will result.

The third most common reason for stand failure is poor seed to soil contact. Seed must be placed in the ground and the soil firmed around to seed to allow transfer of water from the soil to the seed for germination. The need for firm soil

is especially critical for alfalfa and legumes because the seed is planted so shallow (1/4 to 1/2 inch deep). If you see better establishment in the wheel tracks or headlands than across the field, better soil packing would have increased the stand. *The best stands result from packing soil both before and after planting.* Soil should be packed before seed, not gone over with a spike tooth harrow which loosens soil. Then use a drill with properly adjusted press wheels or to broadcast and use a corrugated cultipacker (a Brillion seeder has two cultipackers). Following the seeder with a drag (spike tooth harrow) loosens the soil and is not recommended.

A final common reason for stand failure is not to control weed competition during the first 60 days after planting. During this establishment period weeds (especially broadleaf weeds) can significantly thin stands.

Small seeded crops, such as forages, are more difficult to get good stands with than large seeded crops but careful attention to the details described above can result in good forage seeding success most years.



Alfalfa skips due to variable seeding depth.

USING FLUE GAS DESULFURIZATION (FGD) GYPSUM IN WISCONSIN

DICK WOLKOWSKI, BIRL LOWERY, ANA TAPSIEVA, AND MEGHAN BUCKLEY

Greater than 50% of the electricity produced in the USA is generated from burning coal. As a consequence of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendment many coal-burning power plants burn low S coal and some have installed flue gas scrubbers to reduce sulfur emissions. Use of a wet scrubber results in the byproduct flue gas desulfurization (FGD) gypsum. FGD gypsum is created from a process where a stream of finely-divided calcitic lime is sprayed through the flue gasses resulting in the precipitation of calcium sulfate (gypsum). The USEPA estimated that 12 million tons were produced in 2006, with about 9 million tons beneficially reused. Approximately 80% of the material was reused for the production of wallboard. Industry experts suggest the production of FGD gypsum will double over the next 10 years with a minimal increase in demand for current uses. This gypsum source is more reasonably priced and more readily available than mined gypsum in Wisconsin. Currently, Wisconsin has two power plants in the southeastern part of the state producing FGD gypsum, with a third to come on-line in 2012. Over 500,000 tons of FGD gypsum will be produced at that time. The EPA and USDA are encouraging farmers to consider land applying this material in lieu of landfilling at great expense to society and environment. However, not all soil

and agronomic benefits are fully understood or quantified.

There has been limited research on the agronomic benefit of gypsum use on Wisconsin soils resulting in modest utilization of the material by producers. Land application of gypsum has potential to be beneficial to Wisconsin crop producers through S fertilization, which ironically has become more important as S emissions decrease. Gypsum use has other claims that have yet to be documented in the state including improved soil aggregation and physical properties, enhanced N use efficiency, and reduction of dissolved P losses in runoff. Gypsum also contains calcium. Calcium fertilization is unnecessary for most field crops on Wisconsin soils, however research has shown yield and quality benefits for potato. Because gypsum contains Ca some believe that it can be used as lime to increase soil pH. This belief is erroneous since it is the carbonate anion (CO₃²⁻) in lime that actually neutralizes the H⁺ in the soil.

As gypsum improves the chemical and physical properties of a soil, agronomic productivity would also be expected to increase. A recent Ohio study showed a tendency for increased corn grain yield at low nitrogen (N) fertilizer rates when the N was applied in combination

with gypsum suggesting that gypsum can decrease the amount of N required for corn production. This would reduce production costs and improve N use efficiency reducing the risk of N loss to the environment.

Wisconsin FGD research

Several small plot research studies are being conducted with FGD material by the authors. FGD gypsum was obtained for all studies from a power plant near Kenosha operated by We Energies. This material has the consistence of damp flour and is relatively easy to handle with little dust. However, if allowed to air dry the finely-divided nature of the product would make it difficult to spread in the presence of even a light breeze. FGD gypsum is typically purer than mined deposits. A comparative analysis for two materials from an Ohio State University publication is shown in Table 1.

Research information will be presented March 30th at our Soil & Tillage Meeting, Abbotsford City Hall, 11:00 AM or by contacting Richard Halopka, Clark County UW Extension Crops & Soils Agent 715 -743-5121. There are currently a number of plot trials with additional variables that are too large to print in this newsletter.

Material	Ca	S	Mg	As	Cd	Cr	Co	Cu	Pb	Hg	Mo	Ni	Se	Zn
	%			ppm										
FGD	23.0	18.6	0.03	0.56	<0.48	1.30	<0.48	1.16	0.80	<0.26	0.51	0.73	5.51	3.88
Mined	19.1	15.2	1.35	<0.52	<0.48	1.38	0.53	1.33	2.92	<0.26	1.28	1.42	<1.45	0.91

COST SHARE PROGRAM AVAILABLE FOR FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS

Fruit and vegetable producers have an additional tool to minimize food safety hazards, ensure a safe product, and increase sales through the GAP/GHP Audit Verification Program. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is offering a GAP/GHP Cost Share Program to defray the cost of this voluntary audit.

GAP/GHP is administered by DATCP under a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) audit measures efforts to reduce the risk of microbial contamination at the farm/harvesting level of production, and the GHP (Good Handling Practices) audit measures efforts after harvest in the packing, handling, storage, transportation and processing stages.

"Producers are committed to producing an abundant and safe food supply," said Tim Leege, the

Manager of DATCP's Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Unit. "GAP/GHP audits farms against good agricultural practice guidelines."

USDA trained and licensed auditors provide an unbiased review of growers, handlers, or receivers' practices. Audits are done when operations are running and workers are present. The audit results are valid for one year from the date of inspection and are validated through the use of unannounced audit(s) throughout the growing/packing season.

"This fee-for-service audit is not mandatory but many produce buyers are requiring growers to participate in a third party verification program," explained Leege. "The USDA's GAP/GHP program was developed at the



request of the fruit and vegetable industry, state departments of agriculture, and consumers."

Wisconsin's cost share program allows for eligible parties to be reimbursed 75% of the audit cost, with no maximum on the amount. There is also a \$50 base payment to the USDA for the audit. To be eligible, a GAP/GHP audit must be conducted, and the bill must be paid on time. The audit does not need to be passed to receive reimbursement.

"Wisconsin's cost share program will allow fruit and vegetable producers to participate in this voluntary audit while removing a majority of the financial barrier," concluded Leege. "I encourage producers to contact me now to coordinate a GAP/GHP audit for this season."

For more information on the cost share program, contact Leege at tim.leege@wisconsin.gov or 715-345-5212. To learn more about GAP/GHP, visit

FOOD SAFETY WORKSHOP FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS

Fresh fruit and vegetable growers are invited to attend one of the following Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin workshops to learn more about food safety. The "Food Safety for Diversified Fruit and Vegetable Growers" workshops will be held in April 2011 in Viroqua, Oconomowoc, and Green Bay.

Participants will learn the implications of the new Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act for their farms. In addition, presenters will discuss GAP/GHP food safety inspections, tips for handling raw and processed products, and buyer specifications. These workshops are made possible by the Wisconsin Department of

Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program, which seeks to provide growers the resources needed to be successful in the marketplace and find new business opportunities.

Presenters include: Jill Ball, a DATCP Food Safety Scientist; Larry Hood, the Managing Director of Technical and Business Services, LLC; Steve Ingham, DATCP's Food Safety Division Administrator; and Tim Leege, DATCP's GAP/GHP Program Manager.

Workshop dates, times, and locations are:

- Monday, April 4, 2011, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m., Western Technical College,

Viroqua

- Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 12:00 – 4:00 p.m., Oconomowoc Lake Club, Oconomowoc
- Friday, April 15, 2011, 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Green Bay

Interested individuals can find a brochure or online registration at datcp.wisconsin.gov, under *Business, Buy Local Buy Wisconsin*. Cost is \$20 per person to attend. For more information, contact Theresa Feiner at theresa.feiner@wisconsin.gov or 608-224-5112.

FARM SAFETY TRAININGS AVAILABLE

Managing farm employees is a challenging thing for many farm employers. One issue is the safety of farm employees who are unfamiliar with farm equipment and cattle. To make matters more complicated OSHA has started inspecting farms for safety. Even without the inspections accidents on farms are expensive. Lost time and productivity due to accidents is not cheap. UW-Extension can help you to reduce this risk by offering farm safety training to your employees in the area of skid loader operation and cattle handling.

Skid loaders are used by farm workers in many situations and in addition to their safety hazards for workers they can also be hazards for farm buildings and cattle. The Skid loader safety training covers topics

that should reduce both injuries to workers and property. It consists of a one hour presentation and a skid loader operator's course that tests their skills driving a skid loader and reviews safe operation and entry and exit.

Cattle handling is a big concern as well, according to a survey of Spanish speaking dairy employees in south eastern WI 30% of employees had been injured on the dairy farm and of those injuries 38% were caused by an animal kicking them. Improved cattle handling can also improve the bottom line as cows have been shown to increase production under improved handling.

Workers that know how to handle cattle should also be more efficient at completing tasks with cattle.

The trainings are hosted on farms and workers from neighboring farms are invited to participate. The trainings are about 2 hours in length and there is no cost unless an interpreter needs to be paid. Workers will be asked to sign in and a record of their performance in the field tests will be sent to the farm for employee files that can be used to document the training to OSHA officials or workers compensation providers.



If you are interested in hosting trainings on your farm please contact the Clark County UW-Extension office at 715-743-5121.

ALL GOAT FIELD DAY:

MANAGEMENT, FEEDING & SHOWING BASICS

The Chippewa Valley Dairy Goat Association is sponsoring an All-Goat Field day on Saturday, **April 23, 2011**. The event will be hosted by Raintree Dairy Goats, N3690 Elmwood Road, Hawkins, WI 54530 and will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch will be available from noon to 1 p.m.

Pre-registration is encouraged and

appreciated. Cost of the event if pre-registered is \$5 per person or \$10 per family. Lunch will be available for \$5 for an adult plate and \$4 for a youth plate. Walk-ins are welcome and registration will be \$10 per person or \$15 per family. Meal prices will remain the same.

Topics to be covered:

- Feeding for High Production

- Kid Care: Birth to Kidding
- How to Raise Goats
- Preparing for a Goat Show
- Basic Vet Care for Goats
- Clipping, Fitting, Showing

To register call:
Deb Macke at 715-585-2307
or email:
rain_treedairygoats@yahoo.com.

DAIRY REPRODUCTIVE ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TOOL

A new and exciting tool written by Victor Cabrera is available in the UW Dairy Management Website: DairyMGT.info — Tool — Reproduction — Dairy Reproductive Economic Analysis.

This decision support tool has been developed to assess the economic value of reproductive programs and more importantly, to calculate the

economic value of improving reproductive performance; for example: improving 21-day pregnancy risk from 15% to 20%.

Every possible effort has been made to present this tool as a practical, user-friendly application in spite of the complexity involved in the internal calculations. The tool is web-based, free for easy use and

application. A 7-minute video demonstration and one-page overview help explain how to use the tool. Do not hesitate to contact your UW-Extension Agriculture Agent for further information, technical support or use of high-speed internet.

SOLUTIONS FOR RISING CASH RENT (CONTINUED)



highly competitive areas and improve the relationship with tenants and landlords. In this case since risk is not shared the amount paid should be lower.

In any situation the shared risk payment should be paid both on yield and price because they rarely both go up at the same time. If the price of the grain is the only factor to be considered and the yield is poor the producer is at more risk than with a traditional land rental agreement.

It is also important to define how and when price and yield will be determined. For instance, if the

crop will be marketed in the spring but payment made in the fall, will you use the price at the local elevator the first week in October or the futures price for May? Will yield be measured with weigh ticket at the elevator or yield monitors on the combine? You can also use average yields and the current price, but as mentioned above this can create more risk for the producer.

There are a few other things to sort out in a flexible lease agreement one is if FSA payments will be included in the shared risk agreement that includes disaster payments. FSA does not require them to be shared and they will, in most cases, be paid to the producer.

Most importantly whatever you decide should be in writing. This includes agreements that are made with traditional land rental agreements. A handshake agreement is wonderful until something happens to one party or

the other, at that point there is no record of what was agreed upon. Example contracts are available through the Clark County UW-Extension office that can be used for your farm.

You can also research this topic at the Clark County website for examples of written agreements at: <http://clark.uwex.edu/cash-farm-leases/>.

Extension publication FM 1801 or **Ag Decision Maker File C2-20** contains information on how to determine fair cash rent.

An interactive spreadsheet to analyze flexible farm lease agreements is available on the Ag Decision Maker Web site at: www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/xls/c2-21flexiblarentanalysis.xls

Please let us know what you are doing with your rent by filling out the survey on page 11.

UW EXTENSION LIVESTOCK TEAM COW/CALF WORKSHOP

UW-Taylor County invites area beef producers to attend the UW-Extension Livestock Team Cow/Calf Workshop on **March 24, 2011**, at the Bear's Den, Hwy 73, Jump River WI.

There is no cost to attend this event. Plan to gather for dinner on your own (tavern menu) at 6:00 p.m. while joining in conversation with members of the North Central WI Cattlemen's Association.

The program begins at 6:45 p.m. and includes discussions led by

UW-Madison Beef Specialist Amy Radunz and others of the Livestock Team.

Topics to be covered include:

- Benefits of moving the calving date to May
- Stockpiling of forages to reduce hay feeding
- Reducing hay loss from harvest, storage, and feeding
- Economic decision on raising/buying replacements
- Vaccination protocols

So that we may plan program materials, please register your attendance by March 22, 2011, by calling the UW Extension Taylor County Office at 71-743-3327.



CLARK COUNTY LAND & BUILDING CASH RENT SURVEY

Clark County Land Cash Rent Survey

	Parcel 1	Parcel 2	Parcel 3	Parcel 4
2011 Cash Rent: (\$/acre)				
Township Where Parcel is Located:				
Flexible Arrangements:				
Normal Corn Yield: (bushels/acre)				
Please Circle One: Renter Owner				

Clark County Building Cash Rent Survey

	Structure 1	Structure 2	Structure 3	Structure 4
Structure Type: (silo, pole shed, etc.)				
Rate: (\$/animal, \$/sq. ft., \$/ton, etc.)				
Township Where structure is located:				
Structure size: (sq. ft. or silo dimension)				
Please circle one: Renter Owner				

Please fill out and mail to the Clark County UW-Extension, 517 Court St, Room 104, Neillsville WI 54456.



Clark County is currently asking for your help on the above land rent survey. If you are currently renting cropland or renting to a producer, please take time to fill out this survey and return to the Clark County Extension Office, 517 Court Street, Rm 104, Neillsville WI 54456. Thanks for your input and help!

SEEDING ALFALFA FIELDS BACK INTO ALFALFA (CONTINUED)

sorghum or other early harvested crop may help in that some of the toxin may be removed through plant uptake. If alfalfa must be planted in spring following a spring killing of an old alfalfa stand, wait at least three weeks before reseeding. In all of the scenarios discussed above except rotating out of alfalfa for at least one year, some yield reduction will likely be experienced. In the case of a spring-kill followed by spring replant, serious yield reductions are possible.

Can I thicken an old alfalfa stand by interseeding alfalfa?

As stands age and become thin, producers often wonder if they can be thickened by interseeding alfalfa into them. This practice has met with very little success. In part, this is due to the very competitive environment the new seedling is placed in and in part due to autotoxic chemicals secreted by the existing plants. Researchers at the

University of Missouri found that new seedlings planted within 8 to 16 inches of an old alfalfa plant had significant yield reductions (2).

Seedlings within 8 inches of an old plant did not survive. This means that an existing stand density as low as 0.8 plants/ft² would be enough for the autotoxic zone to cover an entire acre. Given this, along with the potential for weed competition, **interseeding alfalfa to thicken alfalfa stands is not likely to be successful and is not recommended.** An exception would be large dead areas, such as from ice sheeting, or failed new seedings where only young plants (less than one year old) are present.

What about winterkilled stands?

Plants that are healthy in fall and then winterkill will not release the toxins from the roots until they thaw. Even if thawing takes place during a winter warm up, little leaching or microbial

degradation of these compounds will take place until spring. This means that the autotoxic effect of a winterkilled stand would be similar to that of a stand killed in early spring. There will be significant yield reductions if these stands are spring seeded back to alfalfa unless they are less than two years old. These stands should be rotated out of alfalfa, or late summer seeded following oats or some other annual crop.

Literature Cited

1. Cosgrove, D.R. 1996. Effect of phytophthora resistance levels and time of planting on alfalfa autotoxicity. Proc. Amer. Forage and Grassl. Conf. Vancouver, BC. PP 73-76
2. Jennings, J. 1999. Understanding autotoxicity of alfalfa. 2001. Proc. WI Forage Council 25th Forage Production and Use Symposium. PP110-116.
3. Tesar, M.B., and V.L. Marble. 1988. Alfalfa establishment. In AA Hanson, DK Barnes and RR Hill, Jr., Alfalfa and Alfalfa Improvement, 303-22. Am. Soc. Agron. Monogr. 29. Madison, WI.

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RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED



UW-Extension Office
Clark County
517 Court Street Room 104
Neillsville WI 54456

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