

October 2008

## Calendar of Events:

## October

- 7 Annie's Project, Mid Wisconsin Bank, Medford
- 11 Northcentral Home Energy Conservation Workshop, Rib Lake High School
- 13 Nutrient Management Update Sessions, NTC, Spencer
- 14 Annie's Project, Mid Wisconsin Bank, Medford
- 14 Nutrient Management Update Sessions, NTC, Medford
- 21 Annie's Project, NTC, Medford
- 24 Brown Bag ETN, 12-1 pm
- 28 Annie's Project, NTC, Medford
- 31 Fall Dairy Goat Conference, Merrimac

## November

- 12 WI Pest Management Update Meetings, Eagles Club, Chippewa Falls
- 13 WI Pest Management Update Meetings, Belvedere, Marshfield
- 13 School for Beginning Farmers, Thorp Library, 11 a.m.

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Learning for life

Clark County

# Extension Views

## FALL CHECKLIST

by Richard Halopka, Clark County Crops & Soils Agent

Fall is here, harvesting is underway, now we need a checklist for our crop plan for the 2009 season.

1. Do we need soil samples on our fields?
2. Do we have weed pressures in the fields?
3. What insects are in our crops?
4. What is the plant population?
5. Is there disease pressure in our fields?

This list can be much longer but, I'll stop here. The harvest process allows us to see the whole field not just the bad or good and it is important to note both.

Soil sampling is of most importance. Fertilizers have doubled so this is an area we need to know what our fields require. Fall is a good time to soil sample. University of Wisconsin recommends a sample for each 5 acre area in a field. (A 20 acre field would have 4 samples.) If you would pull the samples yourself we can send them to the Soils & Forage lab in Marshfield. Cost of a soil sample will be \$7.00 for a sample for a pH-OM-P-K test. If you want a micro test done the price will be greater. Private labs may also

pull the samples for you and the cost will vary. It is important to send these samples to state approved laboratories if you want to use the results for a Nutrient Management Plan in Clark County. When you receive your soil reports, if you don't understand the report give me or a private agronomy person a call to understand the report. Testing is your first step in attaining yields for next season and seasons in the future.

Weed pressures will be seen as the crop is removed, take note of problem areas in the field or if the whole field is a problem. These notes will help determine crop rotation or a change in herbicide program for the next season. The research has proven that crops and weeds will not thrive together.

The past three years I have seen an increase of insect pressure in fields. Corn rootworm is showing damage in many fields. It normally occurs in fields with 2-3 years of corn in succession. Western and Northern corn rootworm beetles, Western bean cutworm, European corn borers and Corn earworms are other insects seen in corn fields. The

damage caused by corn rootworm beetles is silk clipping, corn borer, borers into the corn stalk and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation the ear shank, bean cutworm will be found on the corn ear and earworms will be on the ear. Crop rotation, insecticide or a BT hybrid, specific for the insect, are options to limit damage from these corn insects.

Soybean fields have had aphids later this season and alfalfa fields had lower levels of leaf hoppers this season. Both of these can be controlled by insecticides when they are at threshold levels. Scouting should be done before applying insecticides to prevent the reduction of beneficial insects.

Take note of plant populations just to check if you have the stand you had planned for when you planted in the spring. If stands are lower than you expected you may need to calibrate your equipment or is there a reason for the decrease in population because of tillage practices, disease, insects or weather conditions.

Continued on page 5

## Gardeners — Brown Bag Programs for 2008

The 12-1 PM monthly Brown Bag ETN Horticulture Programs are educational programs offered generally the last Friday of each monthly except holiday months (ie. NOV and DEC and sometimes other months with key holidays) when the program is held one week earlier than the holiday weekend: note dates). The programs are designed for statewide Master Gardeners and other persons interested in horticultural topics.

October 24...Heirloom Fruit and Vegetables Heirloom fruit and vegetables are defined in several ways. Some consider heirlooms to be any cultivar that has been grown for a certain length of time. Others consider plants to be truly heirlooms only if they have been passed down by a family or group who has preserved them. Heirlooms are always open-pollinated and special techniques are used to continue plant selections. Join Bob Tomesh during our Monthly Noon Brown Bag program to learn more about heirloom fruit and vegetables.

November 14...Growing Blueberries in a Harsh Wisconsin Climate The

harsh climate of the northern Great Lakes has made successful blueberry production a challenge. But to meet this challenge, new cultivars with better hardiness have been developed. This, with proper site selection and cultural management opens the potential for fruit production. Join us to review the issues which can lead to the successful growing blueberry plants.

December 19...Pruning Shrubs for a Reason. Proper pruning is one of the most essential of all management practices for shrubs in the



home landscape. Correct pruning procedures will help keep shrubs vigorous, maintain them in proper shape and form for a desirable landscape effect, and add years to their usefulness. Pruning will help maintain natural habit of growth; remove dead, diseased or broken branches; promote flower and fruit development; encourage vigorous growth of plants with colored twigs; and improve chances of survival at transplanting time.

## Gaining the Competitive Edge: A Dairy Seminar Series 2009



January 8, 2009  
Meadowview Golf Course, Owen  
10:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

- Farm Business Management Strategies for Uncertain Times, *Dr. Greg Hadley, UW-River Falls*
- Livestock Gross Margin for Dairy, *Dr. Victor Cabrera, UW-Madison*
- Myth Busting Milk Routines, *Dr. Pam Ruegg, UW-Madison*
- Calf Barn Ventilation — A Breath of Fresh Air, *Dr. Brian Holmes, UW-Madison*

Cost \$25 per person. Contact the Clark County UW-Extension for more information or a brochure at 715-743-5121.

## Annie's Project

A program for farm women

**Tuesdays**

**10:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m.**

**October 7th & 14th  
Mid Wisconsin Bank,  
Medford**

**October 21st & 28th  
North Central  
Technical College,  
Medford**

The program focuses on providing risk management education and tools to farm women who farm on their own or who are partners in a farming business.



The program costs \$20 per person for the four-session workshop. This fee provides for meals, materials and speakers for each of the days. Class size is limited, registration deadline is October 1st.

For more information contact Maria Bendixen, Clark County UW-Extension 715-743-5121.

*Annie's Project* is sponsored by University of Wisconsin-Extension, Heart of the Farm, UW-Center for Dairy Profitability, Taylor County FSA, and Clark and Taylor County UW-Extension offices.

## 2008 Wisconsin Pest Management Update Meetings

We have scheduled Wisconsin Pest Management Update Meetings for this fall. We hope that you and your associates will find it convenient to attend one of these meetings. The information presented at each meeting will be similar and will cover topics such as:

- **Weed Management:** Corn and soybean herbicide updates; Herbicide resistant weed updates; Corn and soybean weed management; Roundup Ready alfalfa controversy update; Pasture weed management; Wild parsnip control and invasive weed management in CRP; Fall burndown herbicides for dandelions.
- **Disease Management:** Asian soybean rust - Can we drop our guard?; Brown stem rot vs sudden death syndrome; Corn disease management with changing crop rotations; Black point disease: fungal complex on winter wheat.

- **Insect Management:** Soybean insect updates including soybean aphid, stink bug, and two-spotted spider mites; Corn insect updates on corn rootworms; European corn borer and western bean cutworm; Potato leaf hopper management in alfalfa; Foliar- and seed-applied insecticide trial results; Bt corn rootworm hybrid efficacy results.

The speakers at the meetings will be Chris Boerboom and Mark Renz, weed scientists, Eileen Cullen and Bryan Jensen, field crop entomologist, and Paul Esker, plant pathologist.

Please note that 4 hours of CCA CEU pest management credits are requested for the meetings. This may be of special interest to individuals who need to maintain CCA certification.

All sessions start at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. There is a \$30 REGISTRATION FEE for all persons attending these meetings. The registration fee covers the cost of the information packet, noon meal, and facility. The information packet will contain the 2009 Pest Management in Wisconsin Field Crops bulletin (includes weed, insect, and disease control recommendations for corn, soybean, small grains, and forages) plus other pest management reference materials. Additional copies of the information packet will be available for purchase (\$15.00) at the meeting.

Please pre-register for this meeting so agents can plan the meal counts. **MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS WITH THE HOST AGENT NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE MEETING DATE.** Many agents charge a \$5 walk-in fee if not pre-registered.

Make your reservations with the host agent one week prior to the scheduled meeting date.		
DATE	LOCATION	HOST AGENT
Wednesday, November 12	<u>Chippewa Falls</u> Eagles Club 2588 Hallie Road Business Hwy 53 south of Hwy 29 between Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls (across from Farm & Fleet)	Jerry Clark Chippewa Co. Extension 711 N Bridge Street Chippewa Falls WI 54729 (715) 726-7950
Thursday, November 13	<u>Marshfield</u> Belvedere Supper Club 2 miles north of Marshfield on Hwy 97	Matt Lippert Wood Co. Extension PO Box 8095 Wisconsin Rapids WI 54495-8095 (715) 421-8440

## Modernizing for Dairy Heifers Envisioning Profits

Clark, Taylor and Marathon County UW-Extension is sponsoring a Modernizing for Dairy Heifers Envisioning Profits on Tuesday, December 9th from 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. at the Abbotsford Library Community Room.



Heifers are the future of the farm. With increasing

feed prices they are costing more than ever to raise. Many producers are thinking about improving heifer housing to improve feed and labor efficiency, to help offset this increased cost. This program is designed to help producers improve heifer performance through modernization and management. Strategies will be covered from baby calves to springing heifers.

### Schedule

#### **Truth and Myths Associated with Rearing Dairy Replacement Heifers**

*by Pat Hoffman, Marshfield Ag Research Station*

What is more important—days on feed, limit feeding, breeding

efficiency or age at first calving? Professor Hoffman will lead a discussion regarding the perception versus the reality of key heifer management practices.

#### **First Responder Training: Diagnosing Who Is Sick & What Needs to Be Done**

*by Sandy Stuttgen, Taylor County Agriculture Agent*  
On your farm you are the first responder when an animal is not doing well but not all of us are trained to handle those situations. Sandy will help you develop a plan of action for animals when “She just doesn't look right Doc!”

#### **Get control of heifer raising costs; or send them to a grower so they can lose money**

*by Maria Bendixen, Clark County Dairy and Livestock Agent*

It is not getting any cheaper to raise heifers should you be investing in a more efficient system? What can you or a grower do to improve the economics of raising dairy replacements.

#### **Heifer facilities- bedded pack/ freestalls- bedding types-barn sizing**

*by Sam Zimmerman, Northern Wisconsin Dairy Educator*  
If you are thinking of building or remodeling a heifer facility you will want to make sure it is as convenient for you to use as it is great for heifers. Sam will offer ideas on heifer barn planning design and workability of facilities.

#### **Calf Barn Ventilation Options: Practical systems for all the seasons**

*by Brian Holmes, UW-Madison Biological Systems engineering*  
Tube ventilation in calf barns has been a popular idea the past few years but it has some limitations. Brian will explain what this system can and cannot do as well as offer good design principals for heifer buildings in general.

#### **Virtual Calf Barn tour**

This presentation will feature local calf barns are using new technologies in ventilation.



### **Modernizing for Dairy Heifers Registration Form**

Cost \$15.00 per person Registration Deadline Tuesday, December 2nd Late registration or at the door \$20.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: UWEX

**Send Registration to:**  
Clark County UWEX  
517 Court St Room 104  
Neillsville WI 54456 or  
call 715-743-5121.

## Fall Checklist (continued from page 1)

Plant diseases have had more of a focus as grain prices have increased. Seedling diseases have a large impact on plant populations and many seed companies are using new seed treatments to help producers protect the seed investment. This season corn plants were showing stress from Fusarium, which will result in Crown rot later in season and reduced stalk strength. This time of the year certain hybrids are showing symptoms of Anthracnose, which will cause the upper part of the corn plant to die off, which may cause lodging. Rust

and other leaf disease is also present in most corn fields. Soybean plants had Rhizoctonia early in the season and as season advanced leaf diseases Septoria and others were present. Seed treatments and fungicides may reduce the stress of many of the diseases mentioned.

The checklist could be much longer, but I will stop here this month. As a crop producer take note of what you see in the field this fall. If you are stumped by something you see, let me know and let's try to figure it out

together. Every field you grow will tell a story good, bad or indifferent, to understand the story and to improve for next year is the objective of the checklist this fall at harvest time.

Please have a safe harvest, I know everyone will push ourselves and at times this can lead us to making mistakes, do take time for rest and nourishment. Please don't become a statistic.

Again have a safe harvest! If I can help you please call.

## Northcentral Home Energy Conservation Workshop coming on October 11th

The skyrocketing cost of energy is affecting almost every facet of our lives. As gasoline and diesel, home heating fuel, and electricity get more expensive, the price of almost everything else goes up correspondingly.

Energy use in the home accounts for 22% of the energy used in the United States. There are many things you can do to conserve energy at home. Some are simple and inexpensive, such as turning off computers when not in use. Others may take a small amount of time and money, such as caulking windows. Some may be more expensive and complex but save energy and money in the long run.



Homeowners, renters, and people who are contemplating building a new home can learn about ways to save energy in the home by attending the second annual Northcentral Home Energy Conservation

Workshop on **Saturday, October 11th** at the **Rib Lake High School**. The program will cover alternative home heating systems, solar energy applications, energy saving ideas for new and existing homes, home energy audits, renewable electricity, and alternative home construction methods. The workshop will cover the costs and payback potential of the various types of systems and practices as well as tax credits and cash incentives for various energy saving applications. Speakers will cover practical, feasible ways to save money and energy and provide you with information that you can use to choose which energy-saving options will work for you.

The program will include 15 breakout sessions to choose from and includes a lunch featuring locally grown foods from the Price and Taylor County areas. In the afternoon, participants can choose from two options: an optional tour of two nearby homes demonstrating a variety of energy-saving practices, or a

workshop on designing and building window quilts. The Price and Taylor County UW-Extension Offices and Land Conservation Departments, the Upper Chippewa River Basin Program, and Pri-Ru-Ta Resource Conservation and Development Council are sponsoring the program in partnership with Price Electric Cooperative, Taylor Electric Cooperative, Clark Electric Cooperative, Xcel Energy, Medford Electric Utility, Wisconsin Focus on Energy, and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association, with major funding through a grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

Registration for the program is \$25 and includes the meal, materials, and all breakout sessions. For more information or a brochure, contact the Price County UW-Extension Office (339-2555), Taylor County UW-Extension (715-748-3327), or Taylor County Land Conservation (715-748-1469) or visit the Price County UWEX web site at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/price/>.

## Federal and State Grant Programs for Farmers

### ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WAYS TO DEVELOP OR EXPAND YOUR AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS?

Join us for a workshop designed to help you identify which grants might be right for you. This workshop will also discuss ways to plan your project and strengthen your application. Specific grant programs to be covered include:

- USDA's Value Added Producer Grant program, which provides planning and working capital funds to farmers and farmer-based enterprises to develop and implement value-added ventures.
- DATCP's Agricultural Development and Diversification grant program, which funds initiatives that develop new value-added products, new markets, or new technologies in agriculture.
- USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grant program, which funds research, marketing and demonstration projects.

A REGISTRATION FEE OF \$10  
WILL COVER THE COST OF  
LUNCH AND MATERIALS

### **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH - 9:30 AM TO 2:30 PM**

WASHINGTON TOWN HALL IN EAU CLAIRE, WI  
TO REGISTER, CONTACT: PAM HERDRICH AT  
[PAM.HERDRICH@WI.USDA.GOV](mailto:PAM.HERDRICH@WI.USDA.GOV) OR 715-834-9672  
OR RIVER COUNTRY RC&D AT 715-834-9672 OR 800-226-9672

## Registration Open for Fall Dairy Goat Conference

Beginning and experienced dairy goat farmers can all benefit from a two-day conference, *Focus on Goats: Growing Wisconsin's Goat Industry*, planned October 31—November 1 in Merrimac.

The conference at Devils Head Resort will run from 8:30 a.m.—6 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m.—4 p.m. Saturday. Cost is \$25 for one day or \$45 both days until Oct. 15, with a \$10 late fee added to registrations after that date. Online registration is available at [www.datcp.state.wi.us/registration/focusongoats.jsp](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/registration/focusongoats.jsp), where detailed information is also available.

Highlights of the conference include opening remarks from Rod Nilsestuen, Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer

Protection, and keynote address by Tony Dutra, CEO of Woolwich Dairy, one of Canada's largest goat milk processors with U.S. headquarters in Lancaster. Other general sessions will feature Dr. Chris Duemler, goat producer and large-animal veterinarian with Brodhead Veterinary Medical Center, and a panel discussion led by experienced producers Gary Libberton, South Wayne; Gene Zimmerman, Fox Lake; and Larry Hedrich, Chilton.

In addition, attendees will be able to choose among several breakout sessions on goat nutrition, managing Johne's disease, National Livestock Producers Association loan program and a lender's panel, facility design, statistical survey reports, milk quality, case studies

and profitability, marketing goat meat, and goat product diversification.

For more information, call 608-224-5121 or email [jeanne.meier@wisconsin.gov](mailto:jeanne.meier@wisconsin.gov).

Organizers of the conference are the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Other sponsors are the Dairy Business Innovation Center, Cargill, Milk Products, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, Coburn Co. Inc. and Badgerland Farm Credit Services. Supporters are the University of Wisconsin-Madison, UW-Platteville and UW-Cooperative Extension.



## Take Special Precautions for a Safe Harvest

Late summer and early fall are busy times on the farm. As farmers prepare for harvest time, they also need to take special precautions to prevent accidents and injuries. October 2006 saw more farm-related fatalities than any other month in 2006 according to the University of Wisconsin Center for Agriculture Safety and Health's recently released farm-related fatality report for 2006.

"While Wisconsin suffered 26 farm-related fatalities in 2006, compared to 30 in 2005, agriculture remains one of the three most hazardous industries in the country, according to the National Safety Council," said Cheryl Skjolaas, University of Wisconsin-Extension agricultural safety specialist.

She added, "These fatalities were all related to farm work or hazards of the farm work site, and do not

include recreational or home-related deaths that may have occurred on a farm."

National Safety Council statistics show agriculture had an estimated 626 work deaths in 2006 and a worker death rate of 28.7 per 100,000 workers. That compares with 4988 fatalities for all U.S. industries combined, with a death rate of 3.4 per 100,000 workers.

"We see many of the same types of serious and fatal injuries year after year, even though we know how to prevent them," said Skjolaas

In 2006, as in previous years, deaths involving tractors and other farm machinery were common in Wisconsin, with nine tractor-related and seven machinery-related fatalities.

"The report also reflects the diverse types of farms and

machinery used in production agriculture," said Skjolaas.



In 2006, farm-related fatalities were reported in 17 counties. One county had three fatalities, four counties had two fatalities and 12 counties had one fatality.

All of the victims were male. Working age adults (age 20-64) accounted for 43% of the fatalities. Two victims were under the age of 4.

Additional details about the 2006 and previous farm fatality reports are available at the University of Wisconsin Center for Agricultural Safety and Health's website, <http://www.wiscash.uwex.edu>

## School for Beginning Dairy & Livestock Farmers



Clark County will be holding a School for Beginning Dairy farmers starting Thursday, November 13th at the

Thorp Library from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. These classes will run on Thursdays from November 13 through March 12th. Classes will not be held December 25 through January 15th.

The Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers can give you the edge you need to succeed in the pasture-based dairy and livestock industries. It is the only program of its kind in the nation, and your best resource for an education in pasture-based dairy and livestock farming.

The school has been designed to provide the opportunity for motivated individuals to educate themselves about pasture-based dairy and livestock farming. We offer our specialized training

through traditional classroom activities, hands-on internships, and farm tours of pasture-based farms managed by successful graduates and mentors. We strongly emphasize the business and financial planning knowledge required to run a successful farm business.

For more information contact Maria Bendixen, Clark County Dairy & Livestock Agent at 715-743-5121.

## The Relationship Between Corn Grain and Forage Yield: An Update

by Joe Lauer, Corn Agronomist

Understanding the relationship between corn grain and forage yield is important to dairymen and grain farmers who often contract with each other for corn silage production. Recently, the grain versus forage relationship has been used to set government Loan Deficiency (LDP) Payments to farmers for corn silage acres.

Arriving at a fair and equitable price for corn silage is difficult due to the number of factors involved that are dynamic and biologically variable. Factors include grain yield, forage yield, production costs, grain price, harvesting costs, grain drying costs, fertility value of stover, and forage quality (especially starch content and neutral detergent fiber digestibility-NDFD).

Some growers will want to calculate the forage price based on corn grain yield (as the alternative harvestable crop) and

some dairymen will want to calculate the price based on alternative forages (primarily alfalfa as the alternative forage source). In either case, the final price is affected by supply and demand of corn grain within a region.

The objective of this paper is to describe the relationship between grain and forage yield. For the growing seasons between 1997 and 2004, experiments were conducted to measure the impact of hybrid, plant density, planting date and row spacing on corn performance. It is difficult to obtain data for both corn grain and forage yield as usually one or the other is harvested in a field or research plot situation. In these studies, forage yield and quality was measured in four of eight rows in the plot. The four remaining rows were left for later grain yield and quality measurements.

*The relationship between grain yield and forage yield*

Grain yield treatment means ranged from 0 to 256 bushels per acre while dry matter forage yields ranged from 3.0 to 12.3 tons dry matter per acre. The relationship between grain yield and forage yield is shown in Figure 1. Little grain yield was measured when forage yields were below 2 to 3 tons dry matter per acre. The relationship between grain yield and forage yield was mostly linear through forage yields of 8 tons dry matter per acre.

To calculate the value of an acre of corn silage, the amount of grain contained in one ton of silage (grain equivalent) is multiplied by the corn price and the forage yield. For example, if corn yielded 150 bushels/A and was 65% moisture, the grain equivalent is 7.4 bushels of grain per ton of corn silage (Table 1). An average yield is 20.4 T/A. If corn is priced at \$2.00 per bushel, the value of the field is 7.4 bu/T x \$2.00 /bu x 20.4 T/A = \$302 / A or \$14.80 /T. Further negotiation would need to be conducted over harvest, ensiling, and storage costs.

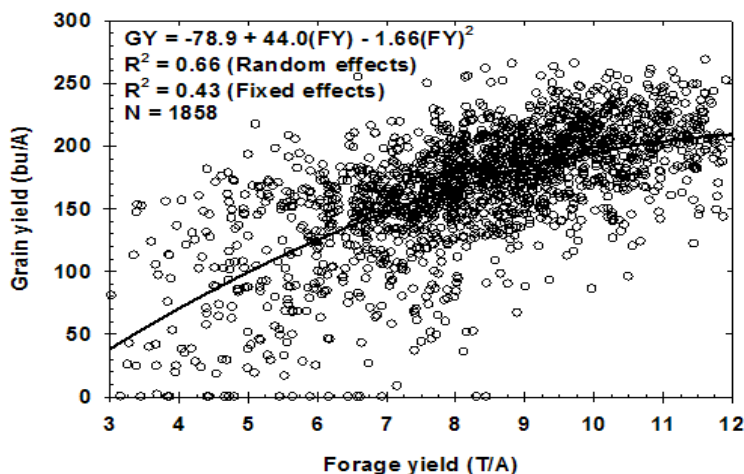


Figure 1. The relationship between corn grain and forage yield in Wisconsin between 1997 and 2004.

## The Relationship Between Corn Grain and Forage Yield: An Update (Continued)

*Factors that affect the grain equivalent calculation*

Anything that affects grain or forage yield will affect grain equivalents contained in corn forage. Depending upon grain yield level, grain equivalents per ton of corn silage ranged from 3.3 to 7.4 bushels per ton of silage at 65% moisture (Table 1). These values are slightly higher than the values calculated by Jorgenson and Crowley in 1972.

**Table 1. Bushels of grain contained in a ton of corn silage. Values are derived from experiments conducted in Wisconsin between 1997 and 2004.**

		0% moisture		60% moisture		65% moisture		70% moisture	
Grain yield @ 15.5% moisture	Silage yield	Grain equivalent per ton of silage		Grain equivalent per ton of silage		Grain equivalent per ton of silage		Grain equivalent per ton of silage	
		Bu/A	T/A	Bu/T	T/A	Bu/T	T/A	Bu/T	T/A
<b>25</b>	2.6	23.8	6.6	3.8	7.5	3.3	8.7	2.9	
<b>50</b>	3.4	23.1	8.4	6.0	9.6	5.2	11.2	4.5	
<b>75</b>	4.1	22.3	10.4	7.2	11.9	6.3	13.8	5.4	
<b>100</b>	5.0	21.4	12.6	8.0	14.3	7.0	16.7	6.0	
<b>125</b>	6.0	20.4	15.0	8.3	17.1	7.3	20.0	6.3	
<b>150</b>	7.1	19.3	17.8	8.4	20.4	7.4	23.7	6.3	
<b>175</b>	8.5	17.9	21.3	8.2	24.3	7.2	28.4	6.2	
<b>200</b>	10.6	15.9	26.4	7.6	30.2	6.6	35.2	5.7	

The amount of moisture has a major influence on this relationship and needs to be considered to accurately determine fair silage prices. Grain yield per ton of silage for four moisture levels is shown in Table 1. For a field that yields 150 bu/A, the grain equivalents range from 17.9 bu/T at 0% moisture to 6.3 bu/T at 70% moisture.

The growing environment affects the relationship between grain and forage yield. Depending upon year, grain equivalents ranged from 6.4 to 9.4 at a 150 bu/A yield level (Table 2). Due to the drought in 2005, many corn fields are shorter than normal but corn yield appears to be high. If this observation holds true and grain yield is relatively greater than forage yield, grain equivalents will be higher than normal.

**Table 2. Year effect on grain equivalents contained in corn silage at Arlington, WI.**

Year	Grain Yield Equivalent								R <sup>2</sup>
	25	50	75	100	125	150	175	200	
Bushels of grain (15.5%) per Ton of corn silage (65% moisture)									
<b>2004</b>	1.8	3.3	4.5	5.5	6.3	6.9	7.2	7.1	0.78
<b>2003</b>	—	—	—	—	—	9.4	6.6	5.2	0.65
<b>2002</b>	—	—	—	—	9.4	8.3	7.5	6.8	0.51
<b>2001</b>	1.9	3.5	4.8	5.9	6.8	7.4	7.8	7.9	0.53
<b>2000</b>	—	—	8.7	8.7	8.4	7.9	7.0	—	0.53
<b>1999</b>	—	3.4	4.6	5.4	6.0	6.4	6.7	6.8	0.59
<b>1998</b>	—	—	—	—	8.0	8.1	7.9	7.3	0.40
<b>1997</b>	8.2	9.9	10.3	10.3	9.9	9.3	8.1	—	0.44

In summary, the grain equivalents shown in Table 1 on average reflect the grain versus forage yield relationship. Forage moisture and year significantly affect grain equivalents and must be considered when negotiating a contract. Since the grain equivalent calculation is variable, when buying corn silage, the purchaser should chop corn as it is harvested to determine forage quality. Ideally, contracts should be based on corn silage quality rather than grain equivalents.

## If you read only one thing, this should be it!

Currently, most farmers are actively implementing the agricultural performance standards established by the State of Wisconsin, whether they know it or not or are willing to admit it. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Wisconsin's Agricultural Performance Standards (APS), also known as NR151, will be fully enforceable statewide. These standards affect agricultural and urban landowners. Now, don't get worried, the Clark County Land Conservation Department realizes that the land is the living entity on which agriculture depends on for long-term sustainability. And farmers realize that degradation of this resource may produce short term economic gains, but in the long run, short-term gains will be offset by the reduction of a farm's future long-term economic viability. Heck, most of us at the LCD either farmed or are still farming so we understand your concern! Before you read further, let me bring in an element of common sense, the Land Conservation Department realizes that you may not be in compliance with all of these standards. No sweat, the APS should be looked upon as a journey, not as a destination and we realize that it is difficult to comply with something you may not know much about. Since the WDNR expects that each farmer in the state will be in compliance with these standards, the Clark County Land Conservation Department is prioritizing a few of the standards by organizing educational classes for farmers to learn how to implement the performance standards on their own. Below is a list of the five main agricultural performance standards. The five main performance standards can be summed up in the following statements:

1. Control soil erosion with a conservation plan that covers each field
2. Implement a nutrient (fertilizer and manure) management plan
3. Build manure storage facilities to current engineering standards
4. Divert clean water around feedlots and barnyards
5. Prohibit the following manure management activities
  - a. Overflow of liquids or solids from manure storage
  - b. Stacking manure within 300' of streams or where water seasonally flows
  - c. Direct runoff from feedlots or barnyards into streams or lakes
  - d. Livestock grazing on barren eroding stream banks

Notice that APS is not concerned with managing aesthetics: there is nothing addressing manure odor, what color to paint the barn, or what kind or numbers of animals are raised. Also, notice that none of the standards will produce economic hardship if implemented since cost-share money is available for farmers to implement the standards.

In Clark County, the main implementation focus is on conservation and nutrient management planning (NMP). Therefore, it has become our goal to create convenient opportunities for farmers to receive training and assistance and eventually become compliant with the new State Law. **Currently, if you operate a manure storage facility you may already be required by County Ordinance to implement a NMP. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, all 2000 farms in Clark County are required by Wisconsin Law NR151 to begin implementing**

**a certified Nutrient Management Plan.** Don't wait until the WDNR shows up, get proactive and join the other 300 farmers in Clark County who already have implemented a nutrient management plan. It doesn't matter if you're English, Amish, Mennonite, or something else, take the time to teach yourself how to make your own fertilizer and manure recommendations.

There are two main strategies to get a NMP done. First, you can hire the private sector to write your NMP. The costs vary, but average around \$2,000 for a 200 acre NMP. Or you can learn to write your own plan.

Each year, the LCD holds workshops within the county to promote fertilizer and manure management. These workshops are called "qualified nutrient management farmer training". The first class is free of charge and will be held in Spencer at the Northcentral Technical College campus on October 13<sup>th</sup> from 7-9pm. This first class will give farmers a broad understanding of what the expectations are for implementing the agricultural performance standards, especially nutrient management. Attendance at this class does not commit you to attending the full training sessions offered at other locations. However, it is required that you attend this first class before signing up for the remaining classes. The remaining NMP training classes are scheduled in Loyal, Thorp, and Abbotsford. Other locations will be added as needed. This year, Northcentral Technical College has agreed to standardize these classes and provide class attendees with formal credits for attending. There is a fee charged for these classes (see

## If you read only one thing, this should be it! (continued)

advertisement in this newsletter), but you will receive additional computer training on the Snap Plus nutrient management software program and leave the class with a completed NMP. That's right, you will have a NMP completed when you finish the class and if further work is needed, the LCD will be able to assist you. Our services cost nothing and we can help you create additional wealth by minimizing the loss of your soil and manure resources.

What is the total cost of nutrient

management if you learn to do it yourself? Since soil samples are pulled once every four years, the actual annual cost is around 50¢ per acre per year. In times of high fertilizer prices, it is essential for a farmer to know how much fertilizer and manure is needed to maximize yields. Cost-share dollars are available for NMP implementation (\$28/acre) and will be targeted toward those farmers who have attended a training session. The Land Conservation Department is also writing a grant which may be able to reimburse you for the cost of

attending the class. Do not wait to sign up for any of the class locations, since enrollment is limited to 15 farmers. A few of the locations are filling up fast with farmers who were unable to attend last year.

Take advantage of the training offered. According to the WDNR, the "I did not know" will no longer be a valid excuse in the near future. If you have any questions, please call the Land Conservation Department at 715-743-5102. We are willing to help!

## Nutrient Management Planning Workshops

Clark County Land Conservation Department will be offering Nutrient Management Planning Workshops at the Northcentral Technical College.

The idea of soil and crop fertility management is not new. However, what is new is Nutrient Management, the name given to fertilizer programs, and the development of qualified Nutrient Management Plans. The qualified Nutrient Management Plan is a best management practice that serves as a tool to help make sound management decisions. These decisions can lead to maximized production and profit. As of January 1, 2008, the state of Wisconsin is requiring that all farms that apply nutrients implement a qualified Nutrient Management Plan.

For the most current information, please plan on attending a Nutrient Management class. The class will cover plan implementation, using

SNAP-plus software or an option to create a handwritten plan. Upon completion of the class, producers will have a qualified plan that meets state requirements, as well as available cost-share opportunities.

- Become a WI Dept of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) qualified Nutrient Management Planner for your farm operation.
- Develop your own Nutrient Management Plan that meets regulatory standards for your 2008 farm operation growing season.
- Learn how to best manage your crop nutrients by maximizing farm productivity and protecting natural resources while increasing profitability.
- Utilize Nutrient Management Software to improve efficiency and record keeping or develop your own handwritten Nutrient Management Plan.

Cost of the workshop is \$130.

### Workshops

**Abbotsford City Hall**  
Mondays, Jan. 5–Feb. 2, 2009  
1:00–3:00 p.m.

**Abbotsford City Hall**  
Mondays, Jan. 5–Feb. 2, 2009  
7:30–9:30 p.m.

**Citizens State Bank, Loyal**  
Wednesday, Jan. 7–Jan. 21, 2009  
10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

**Thorp Library**  
Thursday, Jan. 8–Feb. 5, 2009  
7:30–9:30 p.m.

For class information or registration information contact the Clark County Land Conservation Department at 715-743-5102.



**CLARK COUNTY**  
 517 Court Street, Room 104  
 Neillsville WI 54456  
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 Fax: 715-743-5129

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**Spring 2009 Master Gardener Program**

The Spring 2009 General Master Gardener Program will be delivered by UW specialists and other presenters. The program will be broadcast live from the UW-Extension Pyle Center on the UW-Madison campus to a number of sites throughout the state via fiber-optics, or Wisline/CD power-point.

Dates for the program which are scheduled on Tuesday evenings from 6:00–9:00 p.m. beginning February 3rd and continuing weekly through April 21st. Please contact the Clark County UW-Extension office

at 715-743-5121 if interested in participating in this program. The deadline to register is Friday, January 2nd.

Participant cost will be \$110 and class participants are expected to return 24 hours of volunteer service to their community in exchange for the 36 hours of training they receive. This fee will be used to cover materials, electronic and other overhead costs.



Program Schedule

Feb

- 3 Introduction to the MG program vegetable crops
- 10 Introduction to turf management
- 17 Plant pathology
- 24 Backyard wildlife

March

- 3 Weeds & pest management
- 10 Entomology
- 17 Fruit crops
- 26 Using native plants invasive plants
- 31 Woody landscape plants

April

- 7 Soils and fertility
- 14 Plant propagations
- 21 Herbaceous annuals and perennials