

February 2009**Calendar of Events:****February**

- 18 Farm Transfer Workshop, Abbotsford City Hall, 10 am
- 24 Farm Energy Cent\$, Chelsea's Supper Club, Greenwood, 11 am
- 25 Building a Home for Today's Dairy Herd, Dunn County, 10 am

March

- 5 Pesticide Applicator Training, Colby VFW, 9:30 am
- 5 Annual Sheep Wisline 7:30-9 pm
- 9 "Deal or No Deal — Managing the Margin" Workshop, Belvedere Supper Club, 10 am
- 10 Pesticide Applicator Training, Neillsville Courthouse, 9:30 am
- 12 Pesticide Applicator Training, Thorp Fire Hall, 9:30 am
- 27 Dairy Reproductive Performance Seminar, Abbotsford City Hall, 10:30 am
- 27 Crop Production 101, Abbotsford City Hall, 1-3 pm

Maria Bendixen,

Dairy & Livestock Agent

maria.bendixen@ces.uwex.edu

Richard Halopka,

Crops & Soils Agent

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Learning for life

Clark County

Extension Views

MY FERTILIZER IS BETTER THAN YOURS

BY RICHARD HALOPKA, CROPS & SOILS AGENT

I have had many interesting conversations during the past few months on types of fertilizer. The agronomy sales person is helping the producer make decisions to improve the fertility of his soils and increase the crops yield. After comparing the available products the comment is sure to be made that ours is better because of some reason. Does this sound familiar? So here is some information on fertilizers.

First, we are talking a blend of fertilizer. A blend is made by mixing base products to arrive at the analysis that you desire, very much like mixing corn, oats and soybean meal to make a ration for livestock. These blends may be a dry product fertilizer that is placed in the soil by a planter or broadcast with a spreader. A liquid fertilizer product can also be applied to the soil with the planter or applied broadcast with a sprayer. Now, which one is better? Depends, what is most important to you the producer? Both products will deliver plant food to the crop. The difference will be price per plant food applied to that crop acre. Liquids tend to be a little higher in

price compared to dry products on the plant food basis. How can a producer compare products? The sales person will say his is better of course, but let's work some numbers.

Take two common corn starter blends, one a dry product and one is a liquid. The dry product blend is 19-19-19; the liquid product is 9-18-9. A 200 pound application of 19-19-19 will apply nitrogen, P₂O₅ and K₂O at the rate of 38 pounds of plant food per acre for each product and this must be applied beside the seed row not on the seed. The liquid 9-18-9 light green products can be applied directly on the seed at about 5 gallons per acre or a higher rate beside the seed typically about 10 gallons per acre. How much plant food was applied to the crop with this application? When applying liquids you need to know the weight per gallon of your product. A light green 9-18-9 is about 11.5 pounds per gallon. To calculate the plant food applied at the 5 gallon rate per acre multiply 11.5 X 5 gallons equals 57.5 pounds of product per acre, multiply 57.5 X .09= 5.175 pounds of nitrogen, 57.5 X .18=10.35

pounds of P₂O₅ and 57.5 X .09= 5.175 pounds of K₂O. If 10 gallons was applied beside the seed you can double the plant food numbers. The analysis of the blend is the percentage plant food available per pound of product. The application of liquid is applying less plant food per acre than the dry product. So the question is which one is better? Depends, what other management practices are you using to provide nutrients for your crop? If the producer has applied manure or broadcast fertilizer to adjust for other needed nutrients either product will work to produce a profitable crop.

Many sales people will comment that a liquid product is more available and provide nutrition sooner, the liquid doesn't have to be dissolved into a solution as the dry product, but both products work. The price difference is something you the producer will need to calculate. The ability to plant more acres a day with a liquid system may offset the price difference and every farm will need to determine

(Continued on page 2)

FARM TRANSFER AND SUCCESSION WORKSHOP



Clark and Marathon County UW-Extension will be holding a Farm Transfer Workshop on February 18th, 2009 from 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. at the Abbotsford City Hall, Public Learning Center. Participants will leave the workshop with a better idea of how to plan for farm succession and transfer. Farm succession takes planning and communication. In farm transfers we are very concerned about managing the tax situation well. There are some interesting tax advantages to transferring a farm in the next couple of years. This workshop will cover those and how they can work for farms in Wisconsin. It will also help you to understand the different farm business arrangements that can be used to help transfer farm ownership.

Retirement, succession and estate planning should be viewed as good risk management practices for all businesses, especially the family farm.

However, many times these components, if not completely ignored, are given a cursory glance. Developing a working plan will make the actual transition smoother and will make communicating the transfer details with on-farm and off-farm family members easier. Even if your transfer may happen a few years from now starting early will help the process go more smoothly. The workshop will feature the following topics and speakers.

- **The Nuts and Bolts of Farm Transfer – Jackie Carattini, Family Living Agent, Marathon County-UW Extension.**
- **Financial Planning for Farm Transfer – Maria Bendixen, Clark County Dairy and Livestock Agent.**
- **Farm Business Arrangements in the Farm Transfer Process – Phillip Harris, Professor and Extension Farm Law Specialist,**

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Farm Transfer and Succession
Workshop
Abbotsford City Hall
Public Learning Center
Registration Form
Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
# Attending _____
Cost: $25 per family up to 4 people.
Pre-registration required.
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Please pre-register!

Registration can be sent to:

Clark County UW-Extension
 517 Court St., Room 104
 Neillsville, WI, 54456
 or call 715-743-5121

MY FERTILIZER IS BETTER THAN YOURS (CONTINUED)

the cost of convenience.

Plants require large amounts of N-P-K to produce a crop. Now if the sales person tells you he has a product to improve your crop and it does not have an analysis, you must be aware that if it sounds to good to be true it probably is. With the increase of fertilizer prices many soil amendment products are on the forefront. The price per acre appears very good with the promise of a return. Bottom line; calculate what you are receiving for plant food per acre.

Amendments tend to stimulate hormone systems of the plant and will result in a plant response, but if the crop needs 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre an amendment will probably not supply this crop need. If funds are limited cover your crop removal needs first then consider any micros that may be needed in that crop such as boron in alfalfa, zinc in corn or manganese in soybeans.

Plants require many nutrients to grow. The interesting thing about plants they don't care where this nutrition

starts. The plowed down previous crop decaying, manure applied to the field, dry or liquid starter, broadcast dry fertilizer, slaughter plant waste, municipal sludge, organic or commercial products, your plants don't care as long as it is available for them to produce the crop you desire. The price of plant food needed per acre is what a producer should focus on. If your supplier can not provide you with the nutrients available from an application they are suggesting you purchase, then the buyer should be aware.

DAIRY REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE SEMINAR

Has your herd's reproductive performance improved or declined over the years? If the answer is that it has declined, do you have a plan to deal with the issue? UW-Extension is offering a program to help you evaluate your management of reproduction on your farm. It will include discussions about nutrition, sexed semen, synchronization protocols, benchmarking for common reproductive measures, and economics of reproductive performance.



- Sexed Semen how is it being used?
Ryan Sterry-Polk County UW-Extension Agriculture Agent
- Feeding Dairy Cattle for Reproductive Performance
Paul Fricke-UW-Madison Dairy Reproduction Specialist
- What Does Reproductive Performance Cost You?
Maria Bendixen- Clark County UW-Extension Dairy and Livestock Agent

The seminar will be held in Abbotsford at the City Hall Public Learning Center from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm on Friday, March 27th.

The cost is \$15.00 in advance \$20.00 at the door. To register or for questions on the Abbotsford location contact Maria Bendixen at the Clark County UW-Extension office at 715-743-5121.

Topics and speakers for the seminar are as follows:

- Benchmarking Reproduction and what's new in Sych
Paul Fricke- UW-Madison Dairy Reproduction Specialist

Dairy Reproduction Performance Seminar Registration form

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
Attending _____

Please pre-register by March 20th.

Send registration to:

Clark County UW-Extension
517 Court St, Room 104
Neillsville WI 54456
or call 715-743-5121

Dairy Promoters to Present Awards for Low Somatic Cell Count

The Clark County Dairy Promotion committee is once again presenting awards to Clark County dairy producers with a somatic cell count (SCC) average of less than 125,000 for the year. Awards will be presented at the Dairy Promoters Annual Meeting on Monday, April 13, 2009, 8:00 p.m. at Chelsea's in Greenwood.

Producers with a 2008 SCC less than 125,000 need to contact the Clark County Extension Office at 743-5121 by April 1st. Producers need to present proof of their 2008 SCC average.

If interested in attending the annual meeting on April 13th, contact Theresa, Clark County UW-Extension office at 715-743-5121.



PESTICIDE APPLICATORS RE-CERTIFICATION CLASSES

The Clark County UW-Extension will be holding the following pesticide re-certification meetings from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. on:

General Farming Training & Testing

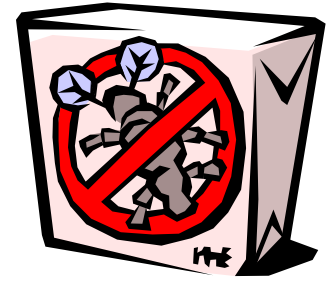
- Thursday, March 5
Colby VFW, Hwy 13
Colby
- Tuesday, March 10
Neillsville Courthouse
Auditorium, 517 Court St
Neillsville

- Thursday, March 12
Thorp Fire Hall
101 So Wilson St, Thorp

If you are interested in getting re-certified you can pick up material at the Clark County UW-Extension Office, 517 Court Street, Courthouse, Rm 104, Neillsville WI 54456 or send in your check for \$35.00 made payable to the Clark County UW-Extension.

Self-study is another option that you might want to consider. If interested in self-study you would need to make an appointment, at your convenience, and come to our office to take the test.

If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me at 743-5121.



FARM ENERGY CENT\$ – PROGRAM OFFERED IN GREENWOOD

The UW-Extension office in Clark County is offering an informational program on farm energy on February 24th at Chelsea's Supper Club in Greenwood. Farms are big users of energy and although it is not the biggest expense that farmers deal with, it is often an easier expense to control than other big expenses. There are also new opportunities in controlling energy costs through the focus on energy program that Clark Electric has just joined. Along with energy; conservation is a big topic lately so this program will offer information about selling carbon credits. This program is designed to help producers understand the new opportunities and cash in on them as well as give suggestions for



improving energy efficiency on the farm. Topics include:

The Focus on Energy Program – Scott Sanford. Scott will explain the most popular incentives that focus on energy offers to farmers and how much they might save you in the long run. If you are looking at lowering your energy bill and want some incentives to do so this is a must see presentation.

Strategies for Farm Energy Conservation – Jeff Springer and Paul Gilis. Jeff and Paul will discuss ways that you can save on your energy bill on both the dairy side and the grain side, of your operation. These are things you can do even if you don't have focus on energy available to you.

Carbon Credit Program – Patty Edelburg, Wisconsin Farmers Union. You may have read about carbon credit trading and wondered if you could get any money out of it. Patty will discuss what you have to do to sell carbon credits and what you can expect to get paid for different practices.

The program will be held from 11:00 am to 2:30 pm the cost to attend is \$10.00 to cover your meal at Chelsea's.

For more information or to register call the Clark County UW-Extension office at 715-743-5121. You must register by February 17th.

“DEAL OR NO DEAL—MANAGING THE MARGIN” WORKSHOPS

UW-Extension's
Farm and Risk
Management
(FARM) Team and
the Center for Dairy
Profitability – are



offering five workshops in March for Wisconsin producers on managing their profit margin. This program is offered by the FARM Team whose mission it is to help Wisconsin farmers improve business profitability and lifestyles through informed decision-making.

The day long program will be held in Marshfield, Green Bay, Juneau, Rice Lake and Melrose beginning in March. The *Deal or No Deal Managing the Margin* workshops have a very interactive presentation on price volatility using a marketing game compiled by Kevin Bernhardt, Farm and Risk Management Specialist for UW-Extension/Center for Dairy Profitability. In this day and age, managing your profit margin is much more than simply paying attention to milk prices. Good milk prices no longer automatically translate into good

profits because of the volatility in inputs.

Presentations on determining your cost of production for different commodities will also be presented. Cost of Production (COP) is determined by the costs associated with production divided by the number of units. Learn how to calculate your cost of production through a hands-on exercise and use the information for your decision-making.

Workshop will be held at the following location:

March 9th, 2009
Belvedere Supper Club,
Marshfield
10:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.



Contact: Maria Bendixen,
Clark Co. Extension Office
715-743-5121

Registration cost is \$15.00 per site (\$25.00 at the door). Visit the FARM Team website <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/farmteam/> to download a brochure or contact the Clark County UWEX 715-743-5121. These workshops are sponsored by the UW-Extension's Farm and Risk Management Team and local Extension Office.

“Deal or No Deal Managing the Margin” Workshop Registration Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
Phone _____
Number Attending _____
Amt Enclosed \$ _____

Please send registration to Clark Co. UW-Extension, 517 Court St, Rm 104, Neillsville WI 54456 or call 715-743-5121. Registration deadline: **March 2nd.**

CROP PRODUCTION 101: JUST THE BASICS

March 27, 2009

Abbotsford City Hall, Council Room

1:00–3:00 p.m.

and

March 30, 2009

USDA Bldg, Donald St, Medford

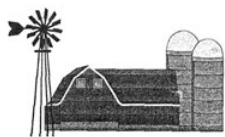
1:00–3:00 p.m.

Topics:

- Nutrient plants – plant use
- Interpreting a soil sample – Ph & lime recommendations, OM the unknown nutrient, P benchmark values, K benchmark values
- The Fast Facts Experience – on the farm nutrients, crop needs, crop budget
- Fertilizer blends

Please pre-register by March 20th. Program fee is \$5.00. Contact UW-Extension 715-743-5121.

BUILDING A HOME FOR TODAY'S DAIRY HERD



The University of Wisconsin Extension and Bremer Bank

are sponsoring "Building a Home for Today's Dairy Herd." The overall goal of the program is for producers to improve overall herd performance through better building design and operation.

When: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Where: Dunn County Judicial Center in Menomonie

Cost: \$10.00 per person which includes meals, breaks, and material

Pre-registration is required. Late registration or registration at the door is \$25.

Program Topics:

- The Cost and Benefits of Rubber flooring in Dairy Facilities
- The Ideal Freestall and Barn Around it
- Economic Costs and Labor Efficiency of Raising Replacement Heifers
- Calf Barn Ventilation: A Breath of Fresh Air
- Replacement Heifer Building Design

Speakers:

- Brian Holmes, Biological Systems Engineer, University of Wisconsin Extension—Madison

- Dave Kammel, Biological Systems Engineer, University of Wisconsin Extension—Madison
- Jim Faust, Agricultural Agent, UW-Extension, Dunn County
- Ryan Sterry, Agriculture Agent, UW-Extension, Polk County

Make checks payable to: Dairy 20/20. Registration deadline is Monday, February 23, 2009. Snow Date: Thursday, February 26, 2009.

To attend the conference, send check and registration to: Jim Faust, UW-Extension, 800 Wilson Ave., Rm 330, Menomonie WI 54751 or call the UW-Extension Office at 715-232-1636.

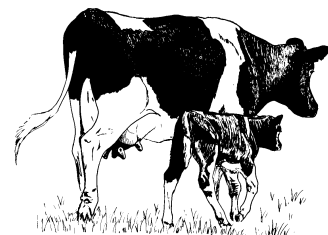
ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM NOW AVAILABLE

For the first time since 2005, cost-share funds for organic certification are available in Wisconsin. The 2008 Federal Farm Bill provides five years of funding for this popular program that helps organic farmers and processors pay for their organic certification. Application materials have been mailed out to over 1200 farmers and handlers that are currently certified. They're also available on-line at <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/> (search for "organic cost-share" or may be requested from Laura Paine, Organic Agriculture Specialist at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, at 608-224-5120 or via email at laura.paine@wi.gov.

With over 1200 certified organic farms and processors, Wisconsin is second only to California. "Organic is one of the fastest growing agriculture sectors in the state and this has been a very popular program among our farmers," said Paine. All farms and companies using the word "organic" in their advertising must be certified under USDA National Organic Program rules. Certification is an annual cost that can range from \$500 to several thousand dollars. The only exemption is for farms earning less than \$5000 per year.

The program provides for a 75% cost-share of certification costs with a maximum payment of \$750 per

farm or processor. Wisconsin has been allocated approximately \$256,000 per year for the first two years of the program. All certified organic farms and handlers are eligible for cost sharing on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications for 2008 growing season certifications are being accepted through March 31, 2009.



CLARK COUNTY LAND & BUILDING CASH RENT SURVEY

Clark County Land Cash Rent Survey

	Parcel 1	Parcel 2	Parcel 3	Parcel 4
2009 Cash Rent: (\$/acre)				
Township Where Parcel is Located:				
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:				
Please circle one: Renter Owner				

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



Annual Sheep Management Teleconference
Thursday, March 5
7:30 to 9:00 p.m.
Clark County Extension Office, Neillsville.

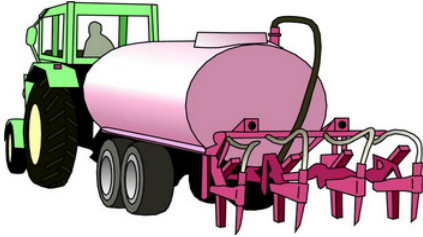
Participants must call the Clark County Extension Office for availability. This will guarantee that the WisLine site is open and that adequate copies of handout materials are available.

Further questions should be directed to the Clark County Extension Office 715-743-5121

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!

WINTER MANURE SPREADING ADVISORY POSTED

BY MATT ZOSCHKE, LAND CONSERVATIONIST



On Monday and Tuesday while driving north on highway 73, I was surprised at what I saw. Remember: Highway 73 is a major thoroughfare in Clark County, so any activity is witnessed by a lot of travelers heading north or south. Here is what I witnessed- Manure: manure being spread by small spreaders and larger spreaders. Manure being carried off fields by runoff water that was flowing directly into Cawley Creek or Rock Creek. I thought these gentlemen must not have seen the Manure Spreading Advisory posted by numerous state agencies, including UWEX Discovery Farms, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the WI Department of Natural Resources. I more surprised when I recognized some of the farmers and even more surprised when they noticed me and casually waved. Then, I knew that this activity was not due to blatant disregard of the advisory, but probably due to lack of planning and information. So, in an attempt to minimize further manure spreading on melting snow cover, minimize further runoff events that impact all of our water resources, and lastly to minimize any potential enforcement visits by the DNR, I would like to summarize the “Manure Spreading Warning” (as

called by UWEX) and offer the Land Conservation Department’s assistance in finding good places to spread or stack winter manure.

Here is the UWEX warning summary:

Manure Spreading Warning

“As the temperatures begin to go up producers need to listen closely to the weather forecast. For much of Wisconsin, temperatures will become mild over the weekend and into next week, with daytime highs expected to climb into the 40’s in much of southern Wisconsin. This relatively prolonged period of warmth is expected to be accompanied with rain at some point next week.

The snowpack is generally 4-12” deep in most of southern Wisconsin with greater amounts to the north and in areas along the “thumb” in Northeastern Wisconsin. The brief warm-up and rainfall after Christmas consolidated some of the heavy December snows, and in many places there are icy layers within the snow and on top of the soils. These ice layers may reduce infiltration and increase the potential for surface runoff. In addition, data from the Discovery Farms and Pioneer Farm sites indicates that soils are generally frozen – from as much 20” deep in southwest Wisconsin to as little as 4” deep in the northeast along Lake Michigan.

Based on the data collected in

previous winters at the Discovery Farms and Pioneer Farm sites, this combination of increased temperatures and rainfall, along with frozen soils and snow with ice layers, means that there is potential for surface runoff from fields. Livestock producers who make manure applications to agricultural fields need to understand that spreading manure during snowmelt can have an extremely high risk of runoff. Studies from farms cooperating in the Discovery Farm Program indicate that manure applied to snow covered and/or frozen soils during conditions of snow melt or rain on frozen soils can contribute the majority of the annual nutrient losses.

What can livestock producers do to reduce their risk of manure run off?

- √ During the period of active snow melt or when rain is predicted on frozen soils, producers who must haul manure from their barns should stack it in an area where the potential for runoff or groundwater infiltration is low,
- √ Farmers who daily haul manure should work with their local conservation departments to identify safe stacking sites that have minimal potential to runoff into either surface or groundwater,

WINTER MANURE SPREADING ADVISORY POSTED (CONTINUED)

- √ Producers who have lots or facilities with bedded pack systems need to be cautious about spreading this manure during this high risk period. Cleaning lots and getting the manure on the fields before the frost goes out can greatly increase the potential for nutrients losses,
- √ Producers who must haul manure during this high risk period should identify fields that are away from streams or lakes and have minimal risk of manure running to surface or groundwater.

Producers need to listen to the weather forecast and make good management decisions. If we work together we can reduce the risk of manure runoff events and continue to protect our farms as well as our water resources.”

Here is DATCP and DNR’s warning:

Officials Warn Against Manure Spreading; Conditions Create Extreme Risk of Runoff

MADISON- “State agriculture and water quality officials urge Wisconsin livestock farmers to avoid spreading manure in coming days in those areas where forecasted rain and snowmelt are expected to increase the risk of runoff.

While most farmers carefully

manage manure, manure spread on fields can be carried into lakes, rivers and groundwater by rain or melting snow. Farmers lose the manure as a valuable fertilizer and the manure can cause water quality problems that can include killing fish and contaminating drinking water wells.

Manure spills and runoff are required to be reported immediately to the Department of Natural Resources’ 24-hour spill hotline: 1-800-943-0003. [County Land Conservation Departments](#) are a valuable source of manure management information and can help find alternatives if you are running out of storage capacity but want to avoid spreading during high risk conditions.

If manure must be applied, the following steps can reduce the risk of runoff:

- Do not spread manure on fields where their location and slope presents a high risk of manure running off. View online maps showing high risk fields through the [Manure Management Advisory System \(MMAS\) - Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection](#). Contact your County Land Conservation Department, certified agronomist or manure hauler to help find alternatives or to identify fields with the lowest risk of runoff.

- Monitor weather forecasts and avoid spreading if rain or snowmelt conditions are predicted.
- Apply manure on fields with little or no snow cover if possible. Contact with soil reduces the risk of runoff as does incorporation into the soil if conditions allow.
- Avoid fields that are near drinking water wells or that have sinkholes or exposed bedrock to reduce the risk of groundwater contamination.

Even if these precautions are followed, runoff events may still occur. Minimize the impact by immediately reporting the runoff to DNR’s 24-hour spill hotline: 1-800-943-0003.”

What can we do if the manure is already out there? I would hope for a slow thaw with little rain on frozen ground/snow. Or more snow to cover-up the application (so nobody can see it).

What can we do if manure is not out there? Contact the Land Conservation Department and work with us to determine the best manure management strategies for your farm. As always, we can be reached at 715-743-5102.



CLARK COUNTY

517 Court Street, Room 104
Neillsville WI 54456

Phone: 715-743-5121
Fax: 715-743-5129

**Address Service
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**Corn and Soybean Growers
Educational Event**

**Tuesday, March 10, 2009
Marshfield Research Station
9:00 a.m.**

- Management Decisions for Profitable Corn Production in the Northern Corn Belt, *Joe Lauer, Corn Extension Specialist*
- Maximizing Soybean Yields in the North, *Shawn Conley, Soybean & Wheat Extension Specialist*
- Soybean & Corn Disease Management—Understanding Both Below and Above Ground Components, *Paul Esker, Field Crops Extension Plant Pathology*
- Managing Western Bean Cutworm in Corn and Soybean Aphid Threshold and Late Season Population, *Eileen Cullen, Field Crops Extension Entomologist*
- Back to Basics to Optimize Return on Fertilizer Dollars, *Donald Genrich, Agriculture Agent, Adams County*

Registration fee: \$10.00. Mail to Adams County UW-Extension Office, Corn & Soybean Growers, Educational Event, 569 North Cedar Street, Suite 3, Adams WI 53910