

*In September the annual Agronomy/Soils Field Day was held at the station. Below are summaries of three of the presentations given at the field day.*

## **Using Crushed Scrap Drywall as a Soil Amendment**

*Dick Wolkowski, Soil Science*

Recent estimates show that over 15 million tons of new gypsum drywall is used in the USA annually, of which 10 to 15% is wasted during installation as cut-outs, end cuts, and broken boards. This material is primarily gypsum (calcium sulfate) with small amounts of other elements, plus the paper covering that comprises approximately 2 to 3% of the total weight. Typically the wasted material is deposited in land fills, but there is increasing interest to land apply crushed product to avoid tipping fees and potentially provide benefits to crops. Recent studies conducted in Wisconsin demonstrated that crushed drywall had a neutral to positive response when applied to alfalfa. Studies conducted at four locations showed positive yield responses at two of four locations when rates up to 16 tons/acre were applied prior to seeding. Soil test levels of Ca and S were increased, as were the contents of these nutrients in the harvested forage. Soil test levels of Mg and soil pH tended to decrease when high rates of drywall were applied. Crushed drywall application rates should be limited to 2 or 5 tons/acre on sands or silt loams, respectively.