



# Farm & Field

Chippewa Valley Agriculture Newsletter

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### Good Day!

It's really hard for a farm boy who grew up in the 1950's and 60's to see the reality of \$7.00 per bushel corn, \$15.00 per bushel soybeans and \$9.00 per bushel wheat as we see them today. Of course it's equally difficult to see \$4.00 per gallon gasoline and \$4.80 per gallon diesel fuel and record fertilizer prices. Hay prices are twice as high as they were a year ago and milk prices remain strong. Commodity prices have to remain strong to pay for increased input costs across the board.

Are your insurance levels keeping up with commodity prices? Replacement costs on silos, barns, machines sheds and houses need to be in line with replacement costs but the feed stored in silos, cribs and sheds is 2-3 times higher valued compared to a year ago. Higher premiums can be expected, but would alleviate some potential risk for you and your operation. In the case of an emergency, it would be good to have enough money to replace the feed that was lost.

Take some time to smell the roses this summer and be safe on the farm. See you at the County Fair!

"Continue to Farm Smarter"

*Mahlon Peterson*

Mahlon Peterson  
UW-Extension Agricultural Agent

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### Calendar

#### July

- 1 Meat Animal Project Fitting & Showing Clinic - Eau Claire County Expo Center
- 4 **Independence Day—Office closed**
- 14-15 Wisconsin State Holstein Show - Eau Claire County Expo Center
- 15-17 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days - Brown County
- 23-27 Eau Claire County Fair - Eau Claire County Expo Center
- 31 Meat Animal Project Carcass Judging - Augusta Meats

#### August

- 1 Eau Claire County Livestock Banquet - Augusta/Bridge Creek Fire Hall

Please call our office for more details, registration fees, etc.

For more Extension Information go to our website:  
[www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauc/aire/](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauc/aire/)

# Something To Chew On . . .



Mahlon Peterson Ag Agent  
Eau Claire County

## Wisconsin Farm Technology Days Features a Number of Unique Events: July 15-17

### Photo Doctor:

The University of Wisconsin-Extension Photo Doctor will hold office hours at Wisconsin Farm Technology Days.

The Photo Doctor is Wayne Brabender, Wisconsin 4-H Photography Specialist, who will be working with clinic staff doctors (UW-Extension 4-H staff and veteran photography volunteers). The doctors will set up their Photo Clinic in the Progress Pavilion. Photographers, both young and not-so-young, are invited to bring photographs that need a little fixing up for a consultation with doctors.

The photo doctors will examine your pictures and offer you tips on composition and explain other simple techniques for taking better photographs. They will also be happy to discuss buying and caring for a camera, holding a camera steady, lighting, cropping photos for more impact, and taking digital photos.

### Giant Weeds:

If you think weeds are useless, think again. Your giant specimen could be the winner in the annual Biggest Wisconsin Weed Contest at Farm Technology Days.

Jed Colquhoun, University of Wisconsin-Extension weed specialist said any kind of weed is eligible, with daily prizes going to the biggest weed brought in on that day. The largest weed entered during the three-day show will win the grand prize. The largest weed winners will be scored by multiplying the weed's height by the maximum width when held in its normal growth form. So,

"big" means tall and wide.

The contest has a few rules. Weeds must be grown in Wisconsin. They must be cut at soil level. They must be "donated" to the Weed Doctors and remain on display throughout Farm Technology Days. Each person may enter no more than two weeds.

To enter the contest, bring your weeds to the Weed Doctors booth in the Progress Pavilion before 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday during the show.

### Dairy Technology:

You can learn about cutting edge dairy technologies in Wisconsin agriculture when you stop in at the Applied Technology Tent at Farm Technology Days, July 15-17, 2008 at Country Aire Farms near Greenleaf, Wisconsin in Brown County.

University of Wisconsin-Extension dairy specialists will be available to answer questions about cow comfort, herd management, modernizing facilities, nutrition and recycling ag plastics.

The Freestall Doctors booth features six freestalls, two sand bedded, two pack matt, and two with pasture matts. Different bedding materials will be used and three Holstein cows will be housed to demonstrate stall usage. UW-Extension agents will work with dairy producers to trouble shoot housing issues and encourage improved cow comfort.

Producers interested in learning more about radio frequency ID (RFID) technology and how it can work on their farms are invited to a special demonstration session at the

show. This demonstration offers a hands-on look at new ID technologies available for daily herd management needs. Demonstrations will feature several head of dairy cattle - identified with RFID ear tags - and an explanation of herd management software, handheld data collection equipment and ID readers.

Experts will answer questions about the ID tags, software, pending country of origin labeling, integrating RFID into existing dairy management programs, and participating in official ID programs for disease traceability.

The tent will also feature a model of a modern low cost parlor system, an opportunity for anyone who hasn't toured a dairy with a parlor to see how this equipment works to improve efficiency and speed of milking while it improves cow comfort and dairy workers' health and safety.

Are you interested in learning how to estimate expenses associated with raising calves and heifers? On most dairy farms, the cost of raising calves and heifers is the second largest expenditure in the cost of producing milk. Calculating those costs is an essential part of dairy business management. UW-Extension agriculture agents collected producer-specific data from dairy farms and custom calf and heifer raisers across the state to determine an average cost of raising heifers. A similar study done ten years ago allows for cost increase comparisons over the past decade.

The nutrition display in the ATC tent will consist of an "Ask the Forage Specialists" panel. These specialists will be available to address questions relating to the production, processing, storage and feeding of dairy forages. In addition, you can get the latest information on the effect of feeding flax in dairy rations on milk production, milk components and reproductive performance.

Ever wonder how to recycle ag plastics? Come to the Applied Technology Center tent and see a commercial machine used to chip plastic containers in preparation for recycling. View products made from recycled plastic such as telephone poles, railroad ties, lumber and fence posts. Learn about legal methods for disposing of or recycling ag plastics.

Farmers can also learn how to increase the density of silage and cut silage losses. High-density silage is important to limit dry matter losses during storage and feedout. At this exhibit people can see silage packed to three different densities

#### **GPS and You:**

Whether it is seed, fertilizer, or spray, farmers need to document their work and keep more precise records than ever before. Increasing costs and regulations require agriculture to become more efficient and accountable when it comes to placement of inputs in the field. Visitors to the Global Positioning Systems (GPS) demonstration at Farm Technology Days can find out how this technology can be used to protect farmers' bottom lines while protecting the environment at the same time.

Visitors will be get the hands-on experience of operating a tractor with a light bar and autosteer system that together take the

guesswork out of fieldwork. They will see first-hand how the parallel tracking eliminates overlap and lost efficiency. Participants will also be able to experience how the autosteering system can be used to follow adaptive curve patterns like "S" curves that are found in many Wisconsin fields.

Producers will have a chance to work with the software programs that will allow them to manage their cropping practices/history from the convenience of their laptop or desktop computer. This system allows people to tailor an application program to meet the needs of specific fields. Traditionally, farmers use the same fertilizer application rate for a whole field. But soil in some areas of the field may require more fertilizer, while some areas may not benefit at all from any fertilizer application.

By using GPS, producers can increase profits by reducing fertilization in high testing areas or increasing crop yields in areas of fields that were not receiving enough fertilizer.

The system is also environmentally friendly since it reduces the application of fertilizer where it's not needed, reducing the possibility that nutrients will be lost in runoff.

#### **Progress Pavilion Highlights:**

Visitors to Farm Technology Days are invited to sample a variety of educational exhibits from University of Wisconsin-Extension and several state agencies at the Progress Pavilion at Farm Technology Days.

In the Pavilion, you can get your drinking water tested, visit with Extension Master Gardeners, learn about ideas that could add value to your farm business and visit with alumni and friends. You can also schedule "appointments" with an entire clinic of "doctors" ready to diagnose and suggest treatments

for everything from ailing plants to less-than-vibrant photographs.

Here are a few of the things you can do at the UW-Extension exhibits in the Pavilion this year:

Learn about how AgrAbility provides counseling and adaptive equipment to help farmers with disabilities or chronic illness stay in farming.

- Get an expert to diagnose and prescribe treatments for ailing plants or sick soils, or to suggest the best way to manage insects and weeds.
- Consult with a photography specialist about simple things you can do to take better pictures.
- Find out if your well water contains dangerous contaminants.
- Extension Master Gardeners will answer your gardening questions and offer examples of UW-Extension Horticulture publications.
- Visit a booth where you can learn about Wisconsin wildlife that may live on your farm.

The pavilion will also hold other University of Wisconsin booths as well as informative exhibits from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

# Horticulture News

Erin LaFaive ~ Eau Claire County Horticulture Educator

## Tree Fungus in Town

What is wrong with my tree?

The Eau Claire Extension office has received many calls on leaf problems on maple, oak, and ash trees this year. Most of these problems are due to anthracnose and tar spot which thrives in cool and moist conditions that we experienced during the beginning of this season.



Anthracnose on a maple leaf

Anthracnose is a name for several common fungal diseases that affect tree leaves. Symptoms range from irregular dark brown spots, dead areas on the surface and near veins, curling leaves, to more severe cases of leaves defoliating. Anthracnose is caused by a fungus from the genus *Gloeosporium* that survives on leaf litter.

Don't Panic!

Trees with anthracnose simply have a cosmetic issue. Severe cases of death occur if the tree is losing leaves for many years or if the tree is a sycamore, where twig infections can occur, then a fungicide could be used for disease control (see UWEX Bulletin A2509 or visit <http://wihort.uwex.edu/gardenfacts/X1001A.pdf>). Avoid anthracnose by removing and discarding leaf litter where the fungus lives and over winters.



Tar spot on a maple leaf

Tar spot is another fungal disease that affects big leaf, mountain, red, Rocky mountain, sugar, and sycamore maple, but mainly affects silver maples in Wisconsin. It can also affect boxelder (also known as ash-leaved maple), willow and tulip-tree.

The symptom of tar spot appears on leaves as a yellow spot from 1/8 to 3/4 inch diameter. As the fungus progresses a raised black spot forms in the middle of the spot resembling a blob of tar. Several fungi in the genus *Rhytisma* are responsible for this fungus.

As with anthracnose tar spot does not kill the tree nor does tar spot defoliate the leaves as with anthracnose. Again, remove leaf litter around the base of the tree to prevent further breakouts. For more information see (<http://pddc.wisc.edu/factsheets/TarSpot.pdf>).

Brian Hudelson of the UW-Madison Plant Pathology Diagnostic Clinic describes the differences with tar spot and anthracnose in this way: "With tar spot you'll see a raised structure that's growing on the leaf, which is actually the reproductive structure of the tar spot fungus, and with Anthracnose you get tissue death. On silver maple, it seems to be a very dark color, almost black in comparison to things like ash or sugar maple, where you tend to get more of a rusty brown sort of discoloration of the dead tissue".

## Jerry Jargon

Jerry Clark

Chippewa County Soil & Crops Educator



# PLANTING CORN IN JULY ?

With a shortage of forage and feed in Chippewa County the past two years due to drought, interest has peaked in planting corn later to gain additional dry matter for livestock. The following tips come from Joe Lauer, UWEX Corn Agronomist.

1. Corn can be planted for grain until June 1-5 in northern Wisconsin and until June 10 in southern Wisconsin. Risk has increased from earlier planting dates and is as great as average yield, with increasing downside risk and frequent yield extremes caused by the environment.
2. After June 10, the only viable grain option is soybean until the last week of June.
3. Corn can be planted for silage uses until about June 24.
4. During the last week in June, the objective of growers needs to change from planting crops for grain and silage production to emergency dry matter production.
5. Numerous emergency forages have been tested. <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/forage/wfc/proceedings2003/emergencyforage.htm>. These results indicate that corn can be good emergency forage when planted in June and July.
6. Experiments during 2005 and 2006 determined what could be expected by planting corn in June and July. Three corn hybrids (brown midrib, full-season, and shorter-season) were planted on five different dates from April 28 to August 1 at Arlington, WI. The 2005 growing season had a killing frost on October 26, which was three weeks later than normal.
7. Season dry matter production after planting during July ranged from 0.7 to 7.5 Tons DM/A, while the same hybrids planted April 28 to June 1 produced 8.7 to 10.0 T DM/A. Milk per Acre is significantly lowered 9% to 17% to levels ranging from 2,300 to 24,000 lbs Milk/A for planting dates in July. Crude protein, NDF and NDFD increased with later planting dates. Although little starch content was measured in later planting dates, overall Milk per Ton tended to decrease slightly. Thus, relatively small changes in Milk per Ton occurred during planting dates in July, with levels ranging from 2600 to 3200 lbs Milk/T, which was a 16% to 22% decrease from corn planted April 28 to June 1.
8. Full-season hybrids produced the greatest dry matter yield and Milk per Acre when planted during July (Table 1). No significant interaction among corn hybrid types was measured for Milk per Ton, although brown midrib hybrids tended to produce the best quality.



9. Corn can produce significant dry matter yield when planted during July, but the amount produced depends upon when a killing frost occurs. Growers need to check on options available from their insurance companies before taking action and planting corn in late June and July for emergency forage. Herbicide labels must be adhered to before switching to other crops. A small amount of fertilizer may be justified in replanted areas. There is no guarantee that flooding and ponding will not occur again later during the growing season.

**Table 1. Corn silage yield and quality response to planting date at Arlington, WI. Values are averages of 2005 and 2006.**

| Planting date                          | Forage yield | Crude protein | NDF  | NDFD | Starch content | Milk (2006) |       |
|--|--------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|-------------|-------|
|  |              |               |      |      |                | lb/T        | lb/T  |
|  | T/A          | %             | %    | %    | %              |             |       |
| <b>Full-season hybrid (108 d RM)</b>   |              |               |      |      |                |             |       |
| April 29                               | 10.0         | 7.4           | 43   | 56   | 35             | 3300        | 33300 |
| June 1                                 | 10.3         | 7.3           | 44   | 55   | 34             | 3300        | 33800 |
| June 30                                | 7.5          | 8.0           | 56   | 60   | 17             | 3000        | 22600 |
| July 15                                | 5.3          | 9.4           | 61   | 63   | 8              | 2900        | 15300 |
| August 1                               | 2.1          | 11.1          | 64   | 72   | 1              | 2800        | 5600  |
| R2                                     | 0.87         | 0.82          | 0.76 | 0.87 | 0.88           | 0.57        | 0.87  |
| <b>Shorter-season hybrid (94 d RM)</b> |              |               |      |      |                |             |       |
| April 29                               | 9.4          | 7.4           | 42   | 55   | 37             | 3300        | 31500 |
| June 1                                 | 9.4          | 7.7           | 41   | 54   | 39             | 3300        | 31300 |
| June 30                                | 7.0          | 8.6           | 50   | 57   | 23             | 3100        | 21900 |
| July 15                                | 4.7          | 9.5           | 60   | 63   | 8              | 2800        | 13500 |
| August 1                               | 1.9          | 11.3          | 63   | 72   | 1              | 2800        | 5000  |
| R2                                     | 0.89         | 0.79          | 0.82 | 0.91 | 0.88           | 0.54        | 0.90  |
| <b>Brown midrib hybrid</b>             |              |               |      |      |                |             |       |
| April 29                               | 8.4          | 7.9           | 47   | 63   | 28             | 3400        | 28500 |
| June 1                                 | 8.3          | 8.2           | 47   | 64   | 27             | 3400        | 28200 |
| June 30                                | 5.9          | 8.3           | 53   | 69   | 17             | 3300        | 19300 |
| July 15                                | 3.8          | 9.0           | 62   | 73   | 3              | 2900        | 10900 |
| August 1                               | 1.4          | 10.6          | 65   | 79   | 0              | 3000        | 3800  |
| R2                                     | 0.89         | 0.78          | 0.79 | 0.89 | 0.89           | 0.47        | 0.88  |

# *Farm & Field Newsletter*

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