

Price County UW-Extension Agricultural Newsletter

February, 2008

Dear Price County Farmers,

Winter is going by quickly, but there are still a number of good educational programs coming up for you to take advantage of before spring hits. Please take a look at this edition of the newsletter for more details.

I hope to see you at some of these soon—

Best wishes,



Mark Kopecky
Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent
Price County

MK:jh

WHAT'S INSIDE?

**Programs on Organic Dairy and Crop Production
coming soon**

**Pesticide Applicator Training Scheduled for March 5
North Central Wisconsin Cattlemen's Assn. Forms and
Beef Production Seminars Offered**

**ADD Grant Applications are being accepted now
John's Control Program Deadline Extended**

Programs on organic dairy and crop production coming on March 3rd and 24th

The demand for organic food nationwide has increased about 20% annually for over 15 years. Wisconsin is one of the leading states in organic production, ranking first in the nation in the number of organic dairy farms and second in the number of certified organic farms of all types. Organic production may be an attractive option for farmers who want to capitalize on value-added production in order to stay economically viable with a family-sized farm.

The Price and Taylor County UW-Extension Offices are offering two educational programs dealing with organic farming in March. On Monday, March 3rd, there will be a program at the Taylor County UW-Extension Office focusing on organic dairy production. This program, which runs from 10 am to 3 pm, will cover trends and opportunities in organic dairy production, organic dairy certification requirements, organic milk buyers that cover north central Wisconsin, and a panel discussion with certified organic dairy farmers from our area. Guest speakers for the program include Laura Paine, Grazing and Organic Agriculture Specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, Harriet Behar, Organic Outreach Coordinator with the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service, and several organic dairy farmers from north central Wisconsin. Representatives from organic dairy processors will be on hand to discuss their milk routes and opportunities for new patrons. The program includes handout materials and a lunch featuring organic foods produced here in Wisconsin. Registration for this program is \$5 per person if paid by the early bird deadline of Tuesday,

February 26th. The registration fee after that date is \$10 per person.

On Monday, March 24th, there will be a program at the Price County UW-Extension Office in Phillips covering organic crop production. This program will run from 7 to 9 pm, and will cover organic crop certification requirements, managing soil fertility in organic cropping systems, and local markets for organic crops in north central Wisconsin. Speakers will include Harriet Behar from MOSES, Mark Kopecky, Price County UW-Extension, Art Scheele or the American Organic Seed Company, and a representative of Organic Valley who will discuss their cooperative's organic feed program. Program materials and refreshments will be provided for the program. Registration for this program is \$5 per person if paid by the early bird deadline of Tuesday, March 18th. The registration fee after that date is \$10 per person.

To register for these programs, contact the Price County UW-Extension Office at 339-2555 or the Taylor County UW-Extension Office at 748-3327.



Pesticide Applicator Training Scheduled for March 5th

Farmers who purchase, transport, or apply restricted-use pesticides are required to be certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. To become certified, people must participate in a private applicator training session offered by the University of Wisconsin-Extension or complete a self-study program also offered by UW-Extension.

Price County area farmers can attend a private applicator training session on Wednesday, March 5th at the Price County UW-Extension Office in Phillips starting at 10 am. This is the only time the training will be offered in Price County this year. People who cannot attend a

training session can also become certified by studying the materials independently and successfully passing the examination.

Pre-registration for the private applicator training is strongly encouraged. The cost of the program is \$30, which includes the 5-year certification and all training materials. To register, call the Price County UW-Extension Office at 339-2555. Training session participants should bring their Private Pesticide Applicator manual, a calculator, and a lunch.

North Central Wisconsin Cattleman's Association Forms, Beef Production Seminars Offered

Price and Taylor County area beef farmers are welcome to join the **North Central Wisconsin Cattleman's Association**. We



are a new organization recently formed to promote the beef industry in our area. Increasing costs of production and specialty markets have prompted the need for sharing information among

producers. Market demand and the need for producer/consumer education are critical for the future of the beef industry.

As of January 1, 2007, Wisconsin has 265,000 beef cows. This represents a 6% increase of

15,000 head. Farms with beef cows number 12,700. The average herd size is 21 head. Compare your herd size to these numbers. We can make a larger impact when we bring small producers together. This is the intent of the NCWCA. Specific programs and goals of NCWCA have yet to be finalized. This organization will be responsive to the needs of the members. We need your input. We need your opinions. This is your opportunity to invest in the area's beef production. For more information on the association, please call Jack Johnson at 715-785-7777, or your county UW-Extension Office (below).

We are joining with UW-Extension to bring the following beef education seminars to our area:

- February 28 – **Basic Nutrition Recommendations for the Cow-Calf Herd** (Offered at Phillips and

Price County UW-Extension Agricultural Newsletter

March, 2008

Medford—contact the UW-Extension Office where you'd like to attend no later than February 26th to register)

- March 27 – **Estrus Synchronization Protocols** (only offered in Medford)
- April 17 – **Program Requirements for the State Preconditioned Feeder Calf Program** (Offered at Phillips and Medford—contact the UW-Extension Office where you'd like to attend no later than April 15th to register)

The program on February 28 will begin at 6:30 pm. Jeff Lehmkuhler, Extension beef specialist will join us via the internet and teleconference. Discussion will follow the educational program.

For more information, contact UW-Extension agents Mark Kopecky at 715-339-2555 or Sandy Stuttgart at 715-748-3327.

ADD Grant applications are being accepted now

Farmers, other individuals, associations, agribusinesses and industry groups are invited to submit proposals to the 2008 Agricultural Development and Diversification (ADD) grant program. The ADD grant program was created in 1989 to stimulate Wisconsin's farm economy. Based on post-grant surveys, the



program has generated more than \$100 million in economic returns, including annual sales increases, annual cost reduction, and additional

economic returns. Economic activity that has resulted from the success of grant projects includes more than 600 new jobs; more than \$30 million in new capital investment and more than 400 new products developed.

The ADD program is looking for projects that will add value to Wisconsin agriculture and invest in the state's future. These highly

competitive grants return millions of dollars to the state in increased profits, new markets, and new technologies. Grant funds come from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Agricultural Development and Diversification grant program.

Sixteen agricultural development projects ranging from renewable energy to organic agriculture received about \$450,000 in 2007. Last year's grant projects ranged from helping to increase sales for Wisconsin farmers' markets to developing biomass for fuel to cashing in on the demand for fresh fruits and vegetables by developing cold-hardy plants.

DATCP will award \$380,000 total this year; the maximum grant amount is \$50,000. Proposals must be received in the Division of Agricultural Development by March 15 at 5:00 p.m. The 2008 RFP, guidelines, template, evaluation sheet, tips and past projects are available online at www.datcp.state.wi.us, search 'ADD grants' or call Mike Bandli at 608-224-5136 for more information.

Johne's Control Program Deadline Extended; Apply Now For 2008 Cost Reimbursement

The deadline has been extended to Feb. 29 for dairy, beef and goat farmers who want to receive reimbursement for their 2008 costs of participating in Wisconsin's Johne's disease control program.

To participate this year, producers must have worked with their veterinarians in 2007 to complete a risk assessment and management plan, or RAMP. Reimbursement will be for costs incurred in 2008. Those who have completed the RAMP and expect to incur costs this year should apply now. They do not need to have already incurred the costs.

Application forms for the reimbursement program are available online at <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/ah/agriculture/animals/disease/johnes/index.jsp> or by calling 608-224-4352. Participants must keep their RAMP active by having it renewed each year.

The deadline was previously set for Feb. 1, but confusion among producers led to extending it.

The Johne's disease reimbursement system has changed in the past several years. Farmers can now receive partial reimbursement for eligible testing costs without officially classifying their herds. They may also be eligible to receive partial reimbursement for their RAMP, and other veterinary costs related to Johne's disease control on their farm.

Johne's disease is a chronic bacterial infection that strikes ruminants such as cattle and goats, and is transmitted via fecal contamination of the environment, food, water, and teats. The infection causes intestinal walls to thicken so animals can't absorb nutrients, causing weight loss, diarrhea, reduced milk production and lower fertility. Animals are commonly infected early in life, but don't usually show any symptoms until they are older – often soon after they calve. This means they may be spreading the disease before the producer is aware of it.

For more information, call Dr. Andrea Foley, 608-224-4352.