

**May/June
2009**

Winnebago County Agriculture Activities & Advice



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Hello Winnebago County Producers,

This newsletter has details for a few events on soil quality and conservation. I try to keep my mind open to new practices and tools available that reduce the amount of soil disturbance while maintaining profitable yields. During a recent group discussion, the leader encouraged those at the table to identify operating principals to adhere to. While the discussion was not related to agronomy, these crop production principles came to my mind:

1. Profitably grow crops with the least amount of mechanical tillage possible.

This doesn't necessarily mean no-till. Perhaps strip till or chisel plowing is the least tillage possible on your farm. Why do we till? Most often the answer is to prepare the seedbed. However, many tillage systems manipulate the seedbed and root zone, even when the root zone already has good structure. A soil science rule of thumb is an acre of land to the depth of 6 inches contains 2,000,000 pounds of soil. If the field is worked 3 times to prepare the seedbed, then 6,000,000 pounds of soil per acre is moved. If comparable profit can be achieved while moving only 1,000,000 pounds of soil, doesn't it make sense to consider this practice?

Continued on page 3.

Calendar of Events

May

19th		Wayne & Kay Craig: Pasture Irrigation N600 Plymouth Trail. New Holstein
26th	10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Fencing Walk, 23028 Hillcrest Rd. Brillion
26th	10:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Movable Poultry Pens, W920 Harvestore Rd. Brillion
30th	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Conservation Expo, Sunnyview, Oshkosh

June

2nd	Noon to 2:00 p.m.	Custom Heifer Grazing. Gerald & Barb Jaeger. N1387 Rolling Dr. Campbellsport
5th	9:00 a.m. to noon.	Soils and Tillage Field Day, County K. D. Marohn and C. Bongert Farms
9th	10:00 a.m. to noon	ACRE Meeting, JPCC, Oshkosh
10th	7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	ACRE Meeting, JPCC, Oshkosh
10th	7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Bus trip to Hay Expo, Hixton
11th	1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	ACRE Meeting, JPCC, Oshkosh
18th-20th		Nation Bison Conference, Oshkosh Convention Center
24th	10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Grazing During Drought, David Geiser N3287 Mill Rd. New Holstein with Jim Gerrish
27th	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Certified Organic Dairy Grazing, Kevin and Bonnie Ferguson, W9400 Cty. T Rosendale

July

14th	Noon to 2:00 p.m.	Low Cost Parlor/Grazing Transition, Dan Flood Farm. Hwy 151, Fond du Lac
15th		FSA Updates Deadline
21st-23rd		Farm Technology Days, Crave Brothers, Waterloo
23rd-24th		Wisconsin State Holstein Show, Oshkosh Fairgrounds

Three soil principles continued...

2. Keep plants growing throughout the year when possible.

For dairy and livestock producers, this is a little easier because of perennial forages. There also is a lot of winter wheat grown here. However, the common corn-soybean rotation leaves the soil bare for about six months out of the year. Granted four of these six months are too cold for much growth, there typically is enough growing season in the fall to establish one of the many cover crops and reap some growth in April and early May.

3. Cycle nutrients to the greatest extent possible.

Again, for livestock producers there is more opportunity for nutrient cycling with manure. Combine this with the possibility of growing cover crops and legumes, and leaving residues, then a large portion of nutrients can be cycled on the farm. Writing a nutrient management plan ties nutrient cycling concepts together.

Nick Schneider
Winnebago County Agriculture Agent
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In need of water tank / liquid fertilizer tank to rent or purchase

A water / liquid fertilizer tank mounted on a trailer or running gear, approximate capacity of 500 to 1000 gallons, is wanted to rent or purchase. Perhaps renting after planting only is an option. Please call 232-1975 if this is possible.

Or

purchase a 3 to 5 ton trailer or flat rack running gear/hay wagon. If you would like to part with any of these items, please call the Extension office at 920-232-1975.

Field Day to Explore How Tillage Systems Influence Infiltration, Organic Matter and Yield

Friday June 5th, from 9:00 am to noon.

Park at 5262 County Trunk K

Host Farms: Dan Marohn and Chuck Bongert

UW Soil Specialist in tillage systems, Dick Wolkowski, and retired USDA Soil Scientist, Doral Kemper, will be the guest speakers at an event near Oshkosh on June 5th. They will be discussing how tillage systems including conventional methods, strip-tillage, and no-till interact with soil structure, earthworm activity, soil moisture and temperature, yield, and profitability. The majority of time will be spent in fields and soil pits. Attendees will be able to see how different types of tillage and crop management affect rooting depth and soil water holding capacity.

Questions that will be discussed include the following:

- How can we enhance our soils?
- Can we make better use of our current precipitation?
- Can we improve the profitability of our crop production systems?

Tillage Field Day continued...

This field day is brought to you by Winnebago County UW-Extension, Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation, UW Soils Department, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Agriculture Research Service of the USDA.

When and Where?

Friday June 5th, from 9:00 am to noon.

Neighboring farmers Chuck Bongert and Dan Marohn will be hosting this event. Travel 3 miles west of Oshkosh on County Trk. K. Park at the farm of Dan Marohn: 5262 County Trk K.

Please contact Nick if you have questions or plan to attend. 920-232-1971. nick.schneider@ces.uwex.edu

Young Couple Wishes to Transition Into a Wisconsin Dairy Farm

A young couple is looking to move to Wisconsin and transition into operation and potential ownership of a current dairy farm. They are open to tie-stall or parlor, grazing or confinement. If you are starting to think about retirement but would like to see the farm continue, this may be worth a conversation. Please call Nick at the Extension office for contact information.

Looking for a couple of new Sentinel Farms

A few years ago a new nationwide crop scouting program was initiated to document the spread of soybean rust. While scouts were looking for soybean rust it became clear this was also a good opportunity to track the annual densities of soybean aphid. This endeavor was referred to as the soybean sentinel plot program.

I have found this creates an opportunity to scout not only soybeans, but track potato leafhoppers, corn rootworm and numerous other pests. As a County Ag Agent, this also becomes a great way to meet more farmers in the county. The information is then included in a weekly crop update, typically emailed on Monday or Tuesday. If you would like to host a sentinel farm location, please contact Nick. There is no effort on the producers part beyond granting access to a few fields.

Weekly Crops Update

As a follow up to the sentinel farm pest surveying, a Winnebago County weekly crops update is now being prepared from planting through harvest. Items included in the 2008 updates were alfalfa forage quality tracking, corn silage dry-downs, USDA crop progress report highlights, Department of Agriculture state pest survey findings, local pest updates, and excerpts from the soy report blog. If you would like to receive this report, typically emailed on Monday or Tuesday, please email nick.schneider@ces.uwex.edu. Crop updates have started but some spam blockers are not letting them through. Please permit messages from my email if you would like the update.

**Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board Offers
Free Soybean Cyst Nematode Testing**

By Shawn Conley, Paul Esker, and John Gaska

Contact Winnebago County UW-Extension if you would like assistance with sampling.

The UW-Madison Agronomy Department, in cooperation with the Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board, is again offering free soybean cyst nematode (SCN) soil testing for Wisconsin growers. This program is intended for growers to sample several of their fields in order to identify if SCN is present and at what levels. Growers will be responsible for collecting soil from fields suspected to have SCN and then sending the sample to the SCN testing laboratory for analysis. They will receive a lab report back with the SCN egg count and a brochure to help plan future rotations and other cultural practices to lower SCN infestation if they exist.

We have a limited number of these free kits available and will furnish them on a first come - first served basis at up to four per farm. Crop consultants, advisors, and crop input retailers are encouraged to request kits for their client's farms. Each kit has a bag and a prepaid mailer for one soil sample, which should represent about 10-15 acres. Both the postage and lab fees are prepaid. Anytime before, during, or right after the growing season are great times to collect soil samples for routine soil fertility analysis and for SCN monitoring.

Soil sample test kits are available now and can be requested from Colleen Smith at clsmith8@wisc.edu or at 608-262-7702.

What does the 2007 Ag Census Tell Us About Winnebago County?

Number of Farms: 1,001, 4% increase since 2002

Land in Farms: 164,014 acres, 4% decrease since 2002

Average Farm Size: 164 acres, 7% decrease since 2002

Average Market Value of Production: \$107,655

Average Net Cash Income: \$38,700

Average Government Payments: \$3,843

Average Age: 57.3 years old

Gender of principal operator: 855 male, 146 female

Principle Operation: 445 farming, 556 other. More than 1/2 receive there primary income off the farm.

549 have sales of less than \$10,000.

It appears Winnebago County has and increasing number of “small” farms where farming is a secondary source of income.

According to Wisconsin ranking by county where does Winnebago County rank for these commodities.

Pullets for laying flock replacement: 5th

Wheat for grain: 6th, Colonies of bees: 8th

Corn for grain: 33rd, Corn for Silage 32nd

Soybeans: 17th, Forage: 47th

Milk: 28th, Cattle and Calves: 42nd, Hogs: 52nd

What was the average cropland rent in 2008? \$79

According to milk licenses, how many dairy farms are in Winnebago County today? 119

Shared Harvest in Winnebago County -Free Vegetable Seed to Grow for Donations

Shared Harvest, Victory Gardens, Second Harvest-Plant a Row for the Hungry. Programs like these have been around before, coming and going to address the needs of the time. With high unemployment rates, many people are in need of help right now.

Last summer you may have heard a little about the Oshkosh Shared Harvest program through which people were able to donate fresh produce to area food pantries. These difficult economic times stress food pantry needs even further. I am a big believer in locally grown, fresh produce. Rather than receiving all their vegetables from a can, people who need food but can't afford it should be able to get fresh produce too.

As part of a Winnebago County Master Gardener project, in collaboration with Shared Harvest and the Oshkosh Area Food Pantry, Winnebago County UW-Extension has initiated a produce variety trial with the intent that the extra produce grown will be donated to the food pantry of your choosing. Participants will be asked to take notes on factors such as plant vigor, produce quality and most importantly, yield. Seed and/or plants are available for tomatoes, sweet peppers, bell peppers, kohlrabi, cucumber, zucchini, winter squash, green beans, muskmelon, sweet corn and onions.

If you are interested in volunteering to grow and donate produce for this project, please contact Nick for seeds.

ACRE INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS
**ACREAGE CROP REVENUE ELECTION
PROGRAM (ACRE)**

Tuesday, June 9, 2009, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Wednesday, June 10, 2009, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Thursday, June 11, 2009, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

All of the above meetings will be held in the meeting rooms of the JP Coughlin Building, at 625 East County Road Y, Oshkosh, which is the same building where the Winnebago County FSA Office is located. The presenters will be Sue Ziegler, Program Tech, FSA, Peter Peters, CED, FSA, and Nick Schneider, UW Ext Ag Agent. The FSA office will send out another notice prior to the meetings along with an agenda.

ACRE is a component of the farm bill safety net that protects against crop revenue shortfalls resulting from price and/or production declines at state and farm levels. Signup for ACRE is beginning, but the choice is an irrevocable election from the date of election through the 2012 crop year and all producers and/or owners on a farm must agree. There is also a 20% reduction in the direct payments and a 30% reduction in crop loan rates. Payments are driven by national average market prices. At the meetings we will explain the details of ACRE, present some payment examples, and answer your questions.

**AS SOON AS YOU HAVE COMPLETED
PLANTING REMEMBER TO REPORT YOUR
CROP ACREAGE TO FSA.
(THE DEADLINE IS JULY 15, 2009).**

**BELOW ARE TIPS FOR UPDATING YOUR RECORDS
AT FSA**

- Notify FSA of any farm operation changes before you sign up
- Form a LLC or other entity?
- Buy or renting more land?
- Drop or sell Land?
- Reconstitution? (10 acres or less bases)
- Conservation Plan, HEL/Wetlands?
- Change Banks? Revise Direct Deposit
- Does the name on your crop insurance policy match your FSA records?
- These are all things that will save you time when you visit the FSA office to sign up for a program.

Visit or call the Winnebago FSA Office at 625 E County Rd Y, Suite 200, Oshkosh, (920) 424-0329 for more information or an appointment.

Emerald Ash Borer in Wisconsin

From R. Chris Williamson, UW-Entomology

With a second Emerald Ash Borer confirmation in Wisconsin (Vernon County), people are become anxious to perform treatments on their trees and there are businesses willing to offer the service. As you read through the information provided by Chris Williamson, UW-Entomologist, please remember that Winnebago County is not in an EAB quarantine area.

Emerald ash borer insecticide treatment considerations.

A variety of insecticide products are available to homeowners for control of emerald ash borer (EAB). Based on current research however, treatments are suggested only for ash trees located within 10 to 12 miles (recent discussion indicates increasing to 15 miles) of a confirmed EAB site, or for trees located within a quarantined area. Insecticide treatments are **not** necessary for ash trees located outside of these areas. Even within the recommended mile radius, not all trees should be treated. Due to the expense of yearly insecticide treatments, one should consider the value of a particular ash tree in relation to insecticide treatment costs before making any treatments. In addition, consider the health of each tree before treating. Research suggests that insecticide treatments are significantly more effective on EAB-infested ash trees with less than 40% canopy dieback. Insecticide treatments are **not** suggested for trees with greater than 40% canopy dieback. Trees with greater than 40% canopy dieback should be removed and destroyed in accordance with established guidelines.

Emerald Ash Borer Continued

Emerald ash borer insecticide treatment options. Insecticide products available for use by homeowner include:

- Bayer Advanced Garden Tree and Shrub Insect Control (imidacloprid)
- Ferti-lome Systemic Tree and Shrub Drench (imidacloprid)
- Bonide Bullets (acephate)
- ACECAP 97 Systemic Insecticide Tree Implants (acephate)

Both Bayer Advanced Garden Tree and Shrub Insect Control and Ferti-lome Systemic Tree and Shrub Drench are systemic insecticides applied as soil drenches around the base of an ash tree in mid-April to mid-May. Because there are several Bayer Advanced Garden products, be sure to select the “Tree and Shrub Insect Control” that contains imidacloprid as the active ingredient. Per the label instructions of both the Bayer and Ferti-lome products, use one fluid ounce of product (i.e., insecticide) per every inch of distance around the tree trunk (i.e., circumference).

These products are available at most local hardware and garden stores. More information about these products is available at www.bayeradvanced.com and www.fertilome.com.

Emerald Ash Borer Continued...

Research from Michigan State University indicates that a soil drench of imidacloprid provides excellent EAB protection for small ash trees (less than six inches diameter at breast height or about 18 inches in circumference) in the first year following treatment. Larger trees may require two years of treatment before they are effectively protected. Thus, treatment of large trees should begin before the trees become infested. Insecticide treatments must be repeated each year.

Maximum Return to Nitrogen (MRTN)

What is the most profitable rate to apply nitrogen to corn? For the past three year UW Madison has been working with agronomists and county agents to establish on farm research for nitrogen on corn. There continues to be a shortage of data from eastern Wisconsin. The process I use to perform this research is very simple for the cooperating farmer. They just need to set aside about 1/4 acre where no nitrogen is applied (aside from starter). I apply treatments at 0,40,80, 120, 160, and 200 pounds per acre. In the research performed last year, 120, 160, and 200 pounds of nitrogen resulted in equal profitability. I have supplies for one more location this year. If you would like to host a MRTN location, please contact Nick.

Do you want to receive the most current University of Wisconsin research information by e-mail? The Winnebago County agriculture list receives a weekly update during summer on crop conditions, pests to watch out for, and events. If you would like to be included on this list please send an e-mail to nick.schneider@ces.uwex.edu.

Waupaca County to Host Forage and Farm Technology Day Bus Trips

Let me know ASAP if you are interested in joining the Waupaca County Forage Council for a coach bus ride on Wednesday, June 10 to the Hay Expo at Trinity Farms near Hixton in Trempealeau County. Trinity farms grows corn, soybeans, alfalfa and small grains on their farm; manage a 2,400-head custom dairy heifer operation; and operate a custom planting, chopping and baling business and grain trucking company. The 500+ acres of field demonstrations includes: mowing and tedding (10-11 a.m.); forage chopping (11- 12 noon); raking (1-2 p.m.; baling and forage handling (2-3 p.m.). Pick-up sites will be Outagamie Co. UWEX office at 7:00 a.m. and Waupaca Travel Plaza (Hwy 10&54) at 8:00 a.m. They plan to arrive at the Expo site around 10:30 a.m. The bus will leave by 3:15 p.m. and return by 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$20 per seat. Payment must be received by the Winnebago County Extension office by May 21st so we can forward the Winnebago County payment to Waupaca County no later than Friday, May 22.

Waupaca County also is working on a coach bus to Wisconsin Farm Technology Days on Wednesday, July 22. Pick-up points will be Outagamie Co. UWEX at 7:00 a.m.; New London Park & Ride (Hwy 45 & 15) at 7:30 p.m.; Oshkosh (Butte des Morts Park & Ride) at 8:00 a.m. Estimated price of \$20. Winnebago County needs to provide Waupaca County with a county by June 26th.

**2009 Conservation Expo
Sunnyview Expo Center
Saturday, May 30, 2009
9 am to 5 pm**

Organized by Winnebago County Land and Water
Conservation

Meet with exhibitors and vendors to discuss, learn, and share experiences regarding: wildlife habitat, prairie seed, native plants, tree planting supplies, private well sampling, well abandonment, instillation of prairies, forestry topics, vegetative shoreland buffers, rain gardens, rain barrels, yard care including composting, invasive species id, wetlands, water quality, wildlife, bird, conservation clubs, organizations, sportsman/sportswomen clubs etc.

EXPO activities include:

- Get a habitat plan, visit the Pheasants Forever Habitat Help Desk
- Purchase tree planting supplies
- Build a rain barrel demo
- Visit the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association experts
- Free well test kits, first 25 Winnebago County residents
- Native plant sale
- Outdoor photography tips

2009 Conservation Expo Continued

SPEAKERS include

- Jennifer Baker, Prairie Nursery, on native plants
- Jon Huser, Marshland Transplant Nursery, shoreland restoration
- Lisa Reas, LJ Reas Environmental, rain garden installation
- Dan Rudebecj, Lake Poygan Sportsmen's Club, Lake Poygan
- Lene D'Hondt, Fox River Academy, rain barrel
- WPS Focus on Energy, saving energy at home

Local Food Assessment Direct Marketers: Your input is needed!

Do you market agriculture products direct to the consumer?
Are you interested in starting up a new agriculture related business?

As part of a new education initiative designed to promote the sales of locally grown and process food products, we plan to begin by creating a picture of the current food marketplace and then discuss what the needs are to help value added agriculture businesses remain profitable. Please contact the Winnebago County Extension office if you are willing to participate in a short interview.

What's new on the UWEX webpages?

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/winnebago/ag/index.html>

Please call the Extension office if you would like any item but don't use the internet.

Winnebago County Agriculture Extension

- Crop Condition Updates

UW Dairy Team Blog: <http://dairyteam.uwex.edu/>

- Midwest Manure Summit Presentations
- 2008 AgFa Benchmarks

Extension Responds—Farming in Difficult Times

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/farmingindifficulttimes.html>

Livestock and Crop Enterprise Budgets, Liquidity and the Cash Crunch, CULL Decision Tool, Switching Milking Frequency, Farmstead and Milkhouse Savers, Capital Assets, LGM Insurance, Commodity Storage, Farm Succession, and Much More!

UW Soybeans and Small Grains: <http://soybean.uwex.edu/>

- Predicting when soybeans will emerge
- Factors to consider when lowering soybean seeding rates
- Wheat stand assessment, winter kill, and nitrogen rates
- Do I need a foliar fungicide in wheat in 2009

Recycling silo bags and other agricultural plastic films (A3875):

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/search.aspx>

Corn Agronomy: <http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/>

World's Best Milk Quality Website: <http://www.uwex.edu/milkquality/>

Livestock: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/animalscience/>

UW Soil Science Extension: <http://www.soils.wisc.edu/extension/>

Field Crop Plant Pathology: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/croppathology/>

IPM: <http://ipcm.wisc.edu/>

Farm and Risk Management: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/farmteam/>

Bioenergy and Bioeconomy: <http://bio.uwex.edu/>

Winnebago County UW-Extension

Agriculture/Horticulture	920-232-1971
Community Development	920-232-1972
Family Living	920-232-1973
4-H Youth Development	920-232-1974
Water Basin Educator	920-232-1972

Website: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/winnebago/>

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