



CHIPPEWA VALLEY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION REPORT

University of Wisconsin-Extension

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Volume 6 Issue 1

Spring 2016

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Inserts:

- **Farm Financial Record-keeping using QuickBooks Beginner’s Workshop**
- **Request for Barn Quilts**
- **Small Scale Poultry for Beginners**

WI Farm Fun Facts

- Dairy contributes more to Wisconsin’s economy than citrus does to Florida or potatoes to Idaho.
- The majority of the \$909 million of soybeans produced in Wisconsin are used in livestock feed.
- Wisconsin is #2 in oat production with more than 7.8 million bushels processed.
- Wisconsin produces 37% of the U.S. carrot supply.
- With about 318,000 tons being processed, Wisconsin supplies more than 43% of the nation’s snap beans.

Dear UW-Extension Supporter,

Reductions to the UW System have resulted in an on-going \$3.6 million deficit in Cooperative Extension’s annual budget, making the current educational delivery structure unsustainable. A division of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension is located in each of WI’s 72 counties and three tribal nations and invests in staff on five UW campuses. Feedback and survey findings underlie Cooperative Extension’s vision for organizational change and highlight the importance of bringing together three organizational components -- local, campus and administrative -- to develop a holistic approach that addresses both budget realities and a desire to capitalize on organizational improvements. Through these efforts, Cooperative Extension will strategically reposition itself to remain accountable to clients, partners and funders, and improve its sustainability in a highly-competitive public funding environment.

As you may have read from recent articles or news stories, UW-Extension/ Colleges Chancellor Cathy Sandeen has shared a copy of the re-organization recommendations. The plan proposes many changes to UW-Extension, including reduction in county staffing positions. You can find a copy of the recommendations at <http://about.ces.uwex.edu/our-future/>

When many of us hear the word “change,” we may think about the hardships that accompany that word— loss, conflict, and stress. And while these things may come with change, there will also be new opportunities, growth, and renewed passion. As we work through the proposed changes for UW-Extension, we commit to helping you and the Dunn County community transition through these changes with renewed passion and growth while bringing you new opportunities which encompass Cooperative Extension’s mission.

UW-Extension is going to look different. There will be less support for all program areas (4H, Family Living, Agriculture) which will result in the quantity of programming decreasing. The quality of programming, however, will remain at the same high standards you expect from UW-Extension. The details of the new model are being worked on now and will be final by late 2016. Sometime late summer you may see support for our UW-Extension Dunn County programs provided by different staff members and/or different UW-Extension county offices. As we move forward, rest assured that we are committed to the people of Dunn County and we are dedicated to seeing UW-Extension programs thrive in the nEXT Generation of UW-Extension.

If you are interested in learning more about the nEXT Generation Model of UW-Extension, and sharing your thoughts or concerns, you are welcome to attend an informational meeting on **April 7th at 5:30pm in the Dunn County Community Services Building**. UW-Extension staff will be sharing the details that we know at that time. If you have questions, as always, you are more than welcome to contact staff at the UW-Extension office at 715-232-1636.

Thank you for your support of UW-Extension!

UW-Extension Dunn County Staff:
Katie Wantoch, Agriculture & Economic Development
Kristen Bruder, Department Head / Family Living
Jason Hausler, 4-H Youth Development
Karen Fritz and Sandy Tarter, WI Nutrition Education Program

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment & programming, including Title IX requirements. Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.

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Are you interested in being on the Dunn County Barn Quilt Trail?

Barn quilts are popping up across the country. You may have seen them hanging on barns, sheds, or granaries as you traveled throughout the southern and eastern sections of Wisconsin and wondered what they were. A barn quilt is a quilt block painted onto an 8' x 8' piece of plywood and hung on a barn or shed. It is an artistic way of promoting agriculture and tourism. We're hoping to create a similar agri-tourism effort in Dunn County to celebrate our county and rich agricultural history.



The Dunn County Barn Quilt Project is a cooperative effort between UW-Extension Dunn County, the Menomonie Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau. Our goal is to hang at least 20 barn quilts over the next 12 months throughout Dunn County. We hope to create a "trail" to bring tourists to the area and business along the way. A brochure of all the quilts, a description of the quilt block, and a brief history of the farm will be highlighted in a "trail" map. We hope that tourists will not only enjoy the beauty of the quilt block but gain a greater appreciation for the rich history of each farm and agriculture while traveling through Dunn County.

How can you get involved in this exciting initiative? An application is attached or can be found on the UW-Extension's website at <http://dunn.uwex.edu>. Simply complete and mail the application before March 5. A member of the Project Team will contact you with more information. The Project Team is planning to paint Barn Quilts on March 17-19 at the Dunn County Community Services Building in Menomonie.

We encourage local businesses to join in this project through a monetary sponsorship of a Barn Quilt or by donating supplies to the Project Team. Please contact the Dunn County Barn Quilt Project Team for further details.

Strategies to Consider with Tight Margins

By Richard Halopka, UW-Extension Clark County Crops & Soils Agent

With decreasing grain prices, how can I produce a profitable crop? The decrease in the grain market will have farm managers "scrambling" to remain profitable in 2016. With the past market prices, many planted, harvested, and sold crops without much thought to cost of production or marketing. Let's review some basic steps to provide a profit on your farm.

Soil test

- For ~\$1.50 per acre this may be one of the least cost management tool available, yet it at times is the least considered. A soil test will provide a snapshot of available crop nutrients and recommendations for the crops you have selected.
- Remember, soil is alive, dynamic, and in some state of flux. View soil as your savings bank which will provide and store nutrients for your growing crop.
- Cover the basics first (pH, macronutrients), then review secondary and micronutrients. Remember, correcting pH will provide a greater amount of available nutrients from the soil nutrient bank. If a soil test is below optimum levels, apply fertilizer at crop removal to reduce fertilizer inputs, if the soil test is above an optimum level little additional fertilizer may be required by the crop.

Account for your "on farm" nutrients

- Livestock manure and legume credits are the on farm nutrients. Livestock manure should be applied to fields that will have the greatest response from the fertilizer application (low or optimum nutrient levels). Remember manure is a fertilizer that contributes plant nutrients to the soil nutrient bank and become available to the crop. It will reduce purchased fertilizer and allow sustainability of the farm.

Complete a crop budget

- A crop budget including cost of inputs, farm yields and a local selling price for your crop will be required. Farm managers must know their cost of production to establish a market price to sell their crop. UW-Extension has a number of spreadsheets or factsheets to assist farm managers in developing a budget.

Market crop or look for an alternative crop or markets

- Marketing a crop can be complex or simple. If you have a livestock enterprise the majority of the grain and forage will be marketed through livestock products sold off the farm at a higher price compared to the current cash market.
- Developing a marketing plan for grain would be the next consideration. A grain marketing plan is developed to capture additional income from grain sales during the year. Successful grain marketing will require an understanding of markets and resist fear/panic sales during the year. The goal of a plan is to capture additional income during the year by following some strict guidelines and/or incorporating risk management tools to return greater income from the grain you produce. To develop a marketing plan you must know your cost of production.
- Alternative crops may be another consideration, remember you must have a market for an alternative crop before you consider planting the crop.

Remember, you can't manage the environment. You can only manage what is measured. Year after year management decisions are made as a result of the previous year's environment. Plan for what is normal in your area. Ask questions of your agronomy professionals, UW-Extension agents, and UW specialists and make decisions from non-biased information.

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Pick the Right Cover Crop

By Heidi Johnson, UW-Extension Dane County
Crops and Soils Educator

Cover crops continue to grow in popularity, even in the face of depressed commodity prices. This is likely due to farmers' desire to protect their farm's soil and water, particularly in a time when there is increasing public scrutiny of the sustainability of agronomic practices.

As more farmers are trying cover crops, it is increasingly important that cover crop recommendations set them up for success. Overly optimistic recommendations can lead to a negative experience which may turn a farmer off to cover crops. A realistic recommendation can build small successes for the farmer and potentially lead to more acres covered and less soil lost to erosion.

Cover crops should be selected based on a farmer's goals and which cover can realistically meet those goals under Wisconsin growing conditions. Examples of farmer goals might be erosion control, growing nitrogen, producing an alternative forage and/or increasing organic matter. Typically, erosion control is one of the primary goals for using cover crops but this can be in combination with other goals.

Following are some examples of how cover crops can successfully fit into Wisconsin crop rotations.

After wheat

There is plenty of growing season left after wheat harvest, allowing a wide range of cover crop options that can provide erosion control and other services such as growing nitrogen. Grasses, such as oats and barley, brassicas such as the oilseed radish (tillage radish), and several legumes are all options at this time of year.

Radishes deteriorate quickly in the spring so they should always be combined with a grass to provide enough spring residue to protect the soil. Barley and oats both make excellent partners for radishes with the added benefit of them all dying out naturally over winter. There have been claims that radishes provide "bio-tillage" to the soil. Research in Sheboygan County comparing radishes to a chisel plow pass suggests that the radish doesn't have the same impact as a plow but many farmers claim anecdotally that soil condition improves after radishes.

There are two annual legumes, crimson and berseem clovers, that can be planted after wheat and provide a nitrogen credit to a following corn crop. Extension research plots in Sheboygan County have shown berseem clover has a thicker stem that leaves more spring residue to better protect the soil. The plots have also been designed to analyze the nitrogen contribution that these clovers provide to corn but there haven't been enough study years for a recommendation. The general Extension recommendation would be about a 40-60 pound credit from an annual clover.

After silage

Grass cover crops are generally the only options after corn silage since there is not enough time left in the growing season for oilseed radish or legumes. The date that the corn silage comes off should drive the selection of a grass cover crop. Barley and oats provide excellent fall cover and spring residue if they are planted early enough in the fall. In

southern Wisconsin, they should generally be planted before Sept. 15 to provide enough residue to protect the soil in the spring. Barley puts on more fall growth than oats so if there is a choice between the two, barley is preferable.

After Sept. 15, rye, wheat and triticale are the best choices since they continue to grow in the spring. For farmers who may take a spring forage cut, triticale and wheat both provide higher feed quality than rye. Triticale produces more tonnage than wheat so this is the better option of the two. Either way, farmers will need to plan on managing these cover crops the following spring with a herbicide ahead of planting their cash crop.

After corn and soybeans

Rye, triticale and wheat are the most reliable cover crop options after corn grain and soybeans. If soybeans come off early enough, the cover crop can be planted with a drill. For soybeans that come off later and for corn grain, farmers should consider using a highboy or airplane to plant the cover crops prior to harvest. In soybeans, cover crops can be planted by airplane when they are 50% senesced. In corn, the crop should be brown up to the ear before cover crops are planted. For optimal cover crop success, the corn or soybeans should be harvested less than two to three weeks after cover crop planting. Otherwise, the cover crop stand will be reduced.

Problems using rye

Agronomists in Wisconsin and surrounding states have observed some stunting in corn that followed a rye cover crop in certain years. Some USDA research in Iowa has found that there is likely a multitude of reasons for this. Physical planting problems into the thick rye residue and roots may be one of the major factors impacting the corn. The residue can prevent the seed slots from closing completely and cause sidewall compaction (particularly in wet soil), both leading to stunted corn. The research also suggests there is a slight increase in the prevalence of corn seedling diseases in corn that has been planted after rye, likely because rye can serve as a green bridge for some of the seedling diseases. And lastly, nitrogen deficiency may also cause the stunting if rye is tying up some of the soil nitrogen.

To avoid these stunting issues, farmers should be sure to plant their corn no sooner than 10-14 days after the rye has been terminated, apply some nitrogen at planting, and make sure not to plant in wet conditions. Having a corn planter with good down pressure on the press wheel can also help to close the seed slot completely and prevent some of these issues

Cover crop selection tool

For more information on selecting cover crops, farmers and agronomists can use the Midwest Cover Crop Council cover crop selector tool. This tool provides realistic recommendations tailored to a farmer's geographical region. This tool can be found at: <http://www.mccc.msu.edu/selectorintro.html>

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Focus on Agriculture: New Year – New Energy Saving Opportunities for 2016

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, has a program dedicated to agriculture customers. The Agriculture, Schools and Government (AgSG) program offers both custom and prescriptive incentives for energy efficiency projects. These incentives are designed to motivate customers to upgrade equipment, or implement energy efficiency projects that otherwise would not be completed.

In 2015, the AgSG program provided more than \$1 million in incentives to nearly 600 agriculture customers. The most frequent equipment upgrades included high efficiency lighting, upgraded circulation and exhaust fans, adding variable frequency drives to irrigation and process pumps, efficient grain dryers and high efficiency heaters.

Focus on Energy is offering enhanced incentives for agriculture customers in 2016. For a complete list of incentives, visit focusonenergy.com/business/efficient-equipment or call 888.947.7828 to speak with an AgSG representative.

Expert Energy Advisors are available throughout the state to help guide you through energy savings projects and provide an unbiased third party source of information to improve the efficiency of your facility. To find the Energy Advisor in your area, visit focusonenergy.com/agsgEA.

Dunn Energy Cooperative Farm Incentives Available—<http://www.dunnenergy.com/content/rebates-and-incentives>

- Plate coolers - \$500
- Dairy Refrigeration heat recovery system with electric back up - \$300
- Low/Zero energy livestock waterer - \$50 per unit (must be less than 500-watts, insulated tank)
- Scroll refrigeration compressor - \$30 per HP – max rebate \$1,000/compressor
- Variable speed/frequency drives - \$30 per HP – max rebate \$1,000/drive; min. 1HP
- Ag Fan –exhaust - \$1 per inch diameter (36" fans must be rated 18 CFM/watt+; fans over 36" must be at or above 21 cfm/watt)
- Ag Fan-circulation - \$1 per inch diameter (Fans under 36" must be rated 18 ft-lb/kW - 36"+ fans must be rated at or over 21 ft-lb/kW)
- Commercial Vending machine controls - \$25

Custom Farm and Commercial incentives are available. Contact the office for more information.

Save the Date

March 4-5, 2016

Madison Marriott West, Middleton



WISCONSIN
Ag Women's
SUMMIT

#WAWS16
WiAgWomensSummit.com

RED CEDAR WATERSHED CONFERENCE
LAND, WATER AND PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER

Thursday, March 10, 8:30 am—4 pm
University of Wisconsin-Stout,
Memorial Student Center
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Featuring Keynotes by Gabe Brown, farmer and pioneer in soil health movement; Tim Davis, Ph.D., research scientist for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Maude Barlow, author *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water*, and past Senior Advisor on water to the United Nations

Learn more at www.uwstout.edu/profed/redcedar

Registration will be paid if you are a Farm Bureau or Farmers Union member. Please contact your local chapter for more details.

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Wilson and Annis Creek Initiative Seeks to Improve Water Quality and Fish Habitat

Wilson and Annis Creeks lie in western Dunn and eastern St. Croix Counties and are classified as class II trout streams, with some tributaries being class I. After their confluence, the two waterways flow together into Lake Menomonie just above the dam before joining the waters of the Red Cedar River. Sadly over 11 miles of Wilson Creek and 3.4 miles of Coon Creek, a tributary to Annis, have been 303(d) listed for reasons of excess sedimentation, phosphorus, and other pollutants. A 303(d) listing means that these streams are impaired and the water quality does not meet the minimum standards set by the EPA. Wisconsin DNR has submitted to increase the upper stretch of the impairment another 3.4 miles of Wilson Creek for 2016. The impairments to the creeks have caused elevated water temperature, degraded habitat, and degraded biological community. Small changes to land management and use can have a big impact on water quality and fish habitat. To encourage this to happen, the Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division (LWCD) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) recently submitted two separate grant applications to create a community-based initiative and fund the installation of best management practices on land in these watersheds. If successful, the grants will allow NRCS and LWCD to offer financial incentives to landowners who would like to voluntarily install "best management practices" to address resource concerns on their land. The practices supported by these grants may include grassed waterways, stream bank restoration, cover crop establishment, manure storage structures, and much more. Voluntary sign-up for funding could begin as early as January for the NRCS funding, and August for the LWCD funding. If a landowner is interested in making improvements to their land, a conservation planner would be happy to come out and do a site walkover to identify areas that may be resource concerns. There is no obligation and landowners can choose to implement some, all, or none of the suggested practices.

For more information, contact: John Sippl, District Conservationist, NRCS: (715) 232-2614 ext. 3 or Chris Gaetzke, Conservation Planner, Dunn County LWCD: (715) 231-6540



Left to Right: Coach Jim Powers, Krista Styer, Ben Powers, Brooke Brantner, Luke Powers and Coach Scott Nelson

DINNER BENEFIT

supporting the

National Champion Dunn County 4-H Dairy Judging Team

All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner - \$10

When: Saturday, March 5th, 2016

Where: Dean and Sue's - Menomonie

**Time: Social Hour - 4pm-5pm
Dinner - 5pm**

Silent Auction will open at 4pm and close at 7pm

The Dunn County 4-H Dairy Judging Team brought home the title of National Champions last fall at the World Dairy Expo, and have earned the right to represent the United States at the International Competition this summer. Please come and help support them as they continue to prepare for this wonderful opportunity.

LOCAL & STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2016

- 3** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Dunn County UW -Extension, Menomonie
- 4** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Unity Bank, Augusta
- 4-5** Wisconsin Corn—Soy Expo, Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells
- 6** Indianhead Sheep Breeders Association Shepard's Clinic, Rice Lake
- 6** Ready, Set, Grow Eau Claire Master Gardener's Winter Garden Seminar, Eau Claire
- 16** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Eau Claire County UW -Extension Office, Altoona
- 17** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Farmers Kitchen, Cadott
- 18 and 25** UWEX Becoming the Employer of Choice, Loopy's Grill & Saloon, Chippewa Falls
- 22** UWEX Cattle Feeders Workshop, 10:30 am, Olson's Farm Service, Mondovi
- 22** UWEX Cattle Feeders Workshop, 5:30 pm, Farmers Kitchen, Cadott
- 23** UWEX Raising Quality Heifers, Clarion Hotel, Eau Claire
- 25** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Dunn County UW -Extension, Menomonie
- 25-27** MOSES Organic Conference, LaCrosse

MARCH 2016

- 4-5** Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit, Madison Marriott West, Middleton
- 5** Spring Begins! With Dunn County Master Gardeners, Dunn County Community Services Building, Menomonie
- 5** UWEX Dinner Benefit supporting the National Champion Dunn County 4-H Dairy Judging Team, 4 p.m., Dean & Sue's, Menomonie
- 8-9** Eau Claire Farm Show, Menards Conference Center, Eau Claire
- 10** Red Cedar Watershed Conference, UW-Stout, Menomonie
- 11** UWEX Farm Financial Recordkeeping using QuickBooks Beginner's Workshop, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Menomonie
- 16** UWEX Private Pesticide Applicator Training, Chippewa County UW -Extension, Chippewa Falls
- 17-19** UWEX/Dunn County Barn Quilt Painting Workshop, Dunn County Community Services Building, Menomonie
- 19** Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association Conference, UW-Stout, Menomonie
- 23** UWEX Small Scale Poultry for Beginners, 6 pm, Dunn County Community Services Building, Menomonie
- 24** UWEX Small Scale Poultry for Beginners, 1 pm, Chippewa County Courthouse, Chippewa Falls
- 24** UWEX Small Scale Poultry for Beginners, 6 pm, St. Croix County Ag Service and Education Center, Baldwin
- 24** **UWEX Implements of Husbandry (IoH) Update Meeting, 1 pm, Dunn County Community Services Building, 3001 U.S. Hwy 12 East, Menomonie.** Farmers, agriculturists and local town officials are invited to attend a seminar to discuss 2016 changes to Wisconsin Act 377. Wisconsin Act 377 forges a compromise between the agricultural community and local officials that balances the need for farm equipment to operate legally and safely on roads with the need to protect local infrastructure. It was signed into law on April 23, 2014. 2016's Senate Bill 448 looks to clarify terms and intents of Implements of Husbandry laws passed in 2014 and 2015.
Cheryl Skjolaas, University of Wisconsin-Extension Ag Safety and Health Specialist, and Rob Richard, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Senior Director of Governmental Relations, will be presenting about these changes on Thursday, March 24. In addition, farm tractors and equipment will be on hand to answer questions related to weight and length as well as new lightning and marking requirements that went into effect November 1, 2015.
Registration is not required for this presentation. Contact Dunn County UW-Extension for more information at (715) 232-1636 or visit our website at <http://dunn.uwex.edu> for a copy of the meeting flyer.
- 25** Dunn County offices closed