

Agricultural Newsletter

UW-Madison College of Ag & Life Science
University of Wisconsin-Extension



January-February-March 2000
Volume 6, Issue 1

Inside this Issue

- 1 1999 Milk Price Review
- 2 Agricultural survey
- 2 Early weaning of calves may not pay
- 2 "Bringing Profit Back to the Farm"
- 3 Ashland Station's canola "test crop"
- 4 Farm income tax information
- 5 Ten keys to success in value-added agriculture
- 5 This quarter's event schedule
- 6 Notes from Dairy-L
- 7 News from the Spooner Ag Research Station

Y2K

1999 Milk Price Review

Russell Kiecker
Area Agricultural Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

Two glaring headlines stand out for the year 1999. **February BFP drops \$6.00 from previous month** and **November BFP drops \$6.47 in two months.**

In a study done by the WDATCP, dairy farmers were asked if they could sell their milk up to a year in advance at a guaranteed price, would they be willing to trade the opportunity for higher milk prices against the stability of a known price with consistent production income?

The answer to that question was a resounding yes.

Right now, almost every dairy farmer in Wisconsin can pick up the phone and sell his milk a year in advance at an agreed upon price. Five years ago, that wasn't the case. In 1994, the concept of forward contracting of milk was born, and today it is a widely used marketing tool.

Seven of the nation's eight largest dairy cooperatives now offer some type of forward contracting to the dairy producer.

Dairy farmers across the country have the choice to sell their milk at a stable, agreed upon price or to sell it based on the unpredictable monthly basic formula price. Forward contracting allows dairy farmers who know their production costs to lock in a milk price that covers those costs and assures them a reasonable profit with less risk from price fluctuations.

It's a business tool. Dairy producers can choose to use it or not to use it, they now have a choice.

Under the current price system, based on the 1937 program that pays producers more for their milk the farther they live from Eau Claire, farmers have little say in how much they receive for their milk. The federal government establishes the price, which is influenced by average prices at dairies that sell cheese, butter, non-fat dry milk, and dry buttermilk to brokers and others in the food-processing business.

The futures market allows producers to have a say in what they will receive for their milk. It provides them with the ability to price their production or needs in advance.

The dairy futures program has become a reality. It provides dairy farmers with a choice and some say in the price they receive for their milk, which is something that producers didn't really have five years ago.

Talk to the buyer of your milk. Ask them how they can help you level out the dramatic ups and downs of milk prices. Maybe you will want to take advantage of this marketing tool.

Agricultural survey

*John Markus
Area Agricultural Agent
Bayfield & Ashland Counties*

The Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service will conduct two crop surveys this fall and winter. The *Acreage and Production Survey* is the only comprehensive annual county-level acreage, yield and production data the service collects. A questionnaire with a limited telephone follow-up will be sent to 27,000 Wisconsin farms.

If you receive a survey, we encourage you to take the time to complete it. This information is very valuable to assess the importance of farming in your county and in Wisconsin

Early weaning of calves may not pay

*John Markus
Area Agricultural Agent
Bayfield & Ashland Counties*

Beef cow/calf producers experimenting with early weaning should be careful. In research at Michigan State University, early-weaned calves were money losers, generating \$100 less per calf than those weaned at the normal age.

“That doesn’t mean early weaning can’t ever work,” said Dan Buskirk, assistant professor of animal science, who was part of the research team. “Early weaning may work in some situations but not in others.”

Early weaning has been looked at as a way for a cow/calf producer to make more money from his cows. If calves are weaned at 100 days of age instead of the normal 200 days, the cow should be in better condition to conceive and deliver her next calf. Nursing a calf is hard work, and cows often lose weight during the process. Taking the calf away and letting it eat grown-up food might be good for the calf, too, allowing it to eat more and grow faster.

Buskirk, working with graduate assistant Jennifer Barker and animal science col-

leagues Matt Doumit and Steve Rust, found in their study that these things are true—but they didn’t make money for the calf producers, even if they retained ownership through the feeding period and sold finished beef.

“In our study, the early-weaned calves reached slaughter weight weighing 107 pounds less than those weaned at the usual age,” Buskirk said.

Having that much less beef to sell meant lost revenue that couldn’t be made up elsewhere. The smaller carcasses were worth \$380.89 compared with \$480.08 for the heavier animals.

The early-weaned calves did perform well. They consumed less feed, converted a higher proportion of feed to beef and had a lower cost of gain. Carcass quality was equally good, in both grade and yield.

The mothers of early-weaned calves gained more weight and body fat but didn’t have any reproductive advantage. Cows are bred back by 80 days after calving, so early weaning at 100 days didn’t affect the sucking stimulus, with its effect of suppressing estrus, or the energy requirements of lactation during that period. In the second 100 days after calving, with calves weaned, cows did gain 47 pounds more weight and were in better body condition. But any effects were small and did not show up at next calving.

Cows in the study were Angus heifers, part of the MSU beef herd at Chatham, bred to Angus bulls. This is significant, Buskirk said, because Angus reach maturity earlier and at lighter weights. The heifers were bred to bulls chosen for calving ease, so their calves were also smaller at birth.

The research team supported by funding from the Revitalization of Michigan Animal Agriculture Project, plans more research to answer such questions as:

- Would breeding the Angus cows to larger, Continental beef breeds produce calves that would feed out to higher weights? To investigate that idea, the cows are now bred to Simmental bulls and will deliver next spring.

- Are there ways to capitalize on the lower demands put on the beef cow by early weaning? Beef cows are hampered in their ability to produce beef by the natural limit of one calf per year, so the researchers are looking at ways to increase the number of twins born. Perhaps multiple births, induced by techniques to super-ovulate the mothers, are part of the answer.

“Bringing Profit Back to the Farm”

*Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties*

If you are tired of commodity prices and are looking for ways to capture more of the consumer’s food dollar, then you won’t want to miss this year’s value-added conference – Bringing Profit Back to the Farm, February 11-12 at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in Eau Claire. The purpose of this annual conference is to help farmers and other rural entrepreneurs discover new ways to increase their incomes through direct marketing, value-added processing and expanding niche markets.

This year, a special emphasis will be placed on one of the keys to making money in agriculture: Marketing, Marketing, Marketing.

If you’re considering a processed food product, three workshops will cover food safety and regulations, product development, packaging, and equipment, plus a presentation from a successful specialty food processor.

In the Saturday afternoon workshops, farmers will tell their own stories about their success in a variety of niche or value added markets including dairy, meat, identity-preserved crops, food processing, horticulture, ag. tourism, and sustainable woods.

The conference registration fee is \$75 for the two day conference. Each additional family member is \$50 if registered by January 21. For registration information contact myself at 1-800-528-1914 or 1-715-635-3506. Or contact Diane Kaufmann, River County RC&D, 1101 W Clairemont Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54701.

Ashland Station's canola "test crop"

Mike Mlynarek
 Superintendent
 Ashland Ag Research Station

The Ashland Station grew canola on a field-scale (10 acres) for the first time in 1999. I'm in the process of compiling a detailed summary of our production practices and experiences with the cool season oilseed crop. You can obtain copies of that summary by contacting the Ashland Station.

My initial impression is that canola is fairly easy to produce, provided that you do your homework. The Canadian Canola Growers Manual is an excellent reference. County Extension Offices and Ag Research Stations should have a copy.

It is also available at www.canola-council.org or through:

Canola Council of Canada
 400 - 167 Lombard Avenue
 Winnipeg, MB
 Canada R3B OT6

We did fairly well despite a very wet growing season. We had 21.21 inches of rain from planting (4/29/99) through combining (8/17/99), and over 3 inches of rain between swathing (8/3/99) and combining. After drying via aeration and seed cleaning, we ended up with 1,650 pounds of seed per acre. We also baled about 0.6 tons of canola straw per acre. The brittle straw, with its pithy core, is bulky, fairly absorbent, and makes good bedding.

My final summary will include economics of production, but for now I'll use numbers from 1999 production acres in Iron County, MI. Thanks to Steve Nelson, MSU Extension, Crystal Falls, MI. Steve indicates:

Price

Price paid for canola delivered to ADM Windsor, Ontario \$0.1205/lb

Loan deficiency payment through FSA \$0.0251/lb

(Check with local FSA Office about your eligibility before planting)

Total price received by farmer \$0.1456/lb

Expenses

Fertilizer, seed, chemicals \$57/acre

Labor, fuel, machinery \$55/acre

Trucking to Windsor, Ontario \$0.019/lb

Our 1,650 lb/acre crop would return \$96.89/acre to land and management, without including the straw.

I'm optimistic about canola in northern WI for many reasons, including:

- The crop was quite uniform despite variable soil types in our field (clay loam or sandy loam).
 - It tolerated a wet summer, showing little evidence of sclerotinia (white mold), a disease I expected would cause problems.
 - Weather delays at swathing are unlikely. It is best to cut while pods are damp, or even wet, and tough in order to avoid seed loss.
 - Windrows, placed high on tall stubble, and oily seed, which does not readily absorb moisture, assist drydown.
 - The tough pods dropped very little seed despite heavy rain on windrows which sat for two weeks. This time period is typical of what is needed in order to get uniform seed ripening and adequate drydown.
 - Direct combining is possible.
- Additionally, as I noted in the March 1999 Newsletter:
- Necessary implements (grain drills, swathers, combines) are common.
 - A U.W.-Madison plant breeder is developing higher yielding canola varieties which are better adapted to the region's conditions.
 - Michigan State University is working to educate and organize growers in the Great Lakes Region.

- Canola demand and price have been quite strong over time--far less volatile than most feed grains. This should continue as edible oil demand continues to increase and as alternative uses/products are developed. Our seed will go to Badger Oil Company. They're developing plant-based oils for use as lubricants and fuels, in cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, etc.

Of course there are a few cautions, including:

- Distance to large established markets is a concern. Have your marketing planned in advance and hopefully closer seed crushing facilities will be built.
- Ideally, canola should be stored in bins designed for small seed, with aeration capability.

Thanks to many willing cooperators who assisted with our canola project.

We're on the Web!



You may find this newsletter, our gardener's newsletter, and additional information on our upcoming events by visiting the websites of the **Spoooner Agricultural Research Station**:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/index.htm>

and the **Ashland Agricultural Research Station**:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/aars/>

Farm income tax information

*Prepared by: Gene Sollman
WITC Farm Business and Production
Management Instructor, Polk & Barron Co.
Edited by: Russell Kiecker
Area Agricultural Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties*

W-2 Forms

If you are preparing W-2s for your hired labor, make sure that you split the 7.65% social security withholding between social security (6.2%) and Medicare (1.45%). Social Security taxes are due on the first \$72,400 of earned income, Medicare taxes are due on all earned *income*.

You can waive federal withholding income tax on wages you pay to your spouse if 2/3 of your gross income is received from farming and you file a joint return.

1099 Forms

1099s still cause farmers a lot of difficulty—both the ones you receive and the ones you send out. Most of you know right now if you need to send out 1099s to anyone. Tax preparers have the forms and are ready to go. They must be in the hands of the recipient by January 31. The months of December and January are an excellent time to get them done. Requirements for you to send out 1099s is \$600 or more that was paid to an individual for services, rent, interest, or custom work. Feed purchases or sales do not require 1099s.

Deduction for self employed health insurance

The health insurance deduction for self employed persons is available as a deduction on your Federal Tax Return for 1999. The deduction is 60% of the premium you paid for health insurance. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue has adopted the same provision as a deduction. Beginning in 2003 the cost will be fully deductible.

Employee meal expense

Meals fed to farm employees are deductible as a farm expense if the meals are provided for the employer's convenience. Meals are deductible at \$2.30 per meal for adults and \$2.10 for minors. Lodging is also deductible for the same reason. The allowable deduction is \$4.65 per day for adults and \$4.25 for minors.

Income averaging

Congress in 1998 passed legislation that has made income averaging for farmers permanent. This provision allows farmers to move part or all of their farm income from the current tax year over the previous three years (1996,1997,1998). A new form (Schedule J) will need to be used to calculate this option.

Earned income credit

Farmers selling cows and reporting the sale on Form 4797 are no longer disqualified from receiving earned income credit. The IRS has reversed itself from the earlier position of calling the sale of cows investment income. Investment income of more than \$2500 disqualifies anyone from earned income credit. Farmers denied EIC for the years 1996-97 can file amended tax returns.

Education credits

The 1997 Tax Relief Act established two education tax credits that may be claimed.

Hope credit - can provide up to \$1500 per qualifying student in each of the first two years of college.

Lifetime Learning credit - has a \$1000 a year per family maximum credit (\$2000 after 2002).

Lower capital gains tax

In 1997, the top rate on long-term capital gains tax was cut to 20% from 28%. For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2000, the maximum capital gain rates for assets which are held more than five years are 8-18% (rather than 10-20%). This new lower 18% maximum capital gains tax (only

8% for those taxpayers in the 15% income tax bracket) gives dairy farmers selling cows a break from the previous higher rates. Also those farmers selling their farms and having an auction to sell cattle and equipment will have less tax to pay.

CRP payments

CRP payments are now to be reported as rental income instead of ordinary income saving the farmer 15.3% in social security taxes. This ruling was made recently in U.S. Tax Court.

Social security taxes

Farmers often complain about having to pay self-employment tax (social security tax). Social security benefits are much more than a retirement check for a time later in life. Social security provides the equivalent of a \$203,000 disability policy should you become disabled. The average wage earner with a family of four also has the equivalent of a \$295,000 life insurance policy for his or her family if he were to die. These benefits are very important by themselves regardless of the retirement check.

Will you be audited?

The IRS audits about 1% of the 16 million individual returns filed annually. However,



2.85% of returns with income over \$100,000 were reviewed in 1996 (the most recent available figures). One of the biggest culprits to receive IRS attention are mismatched W-2s and 1099s. The IRS sent out 1.6 million computer generated notices to taxpayers whose returns did not match income as it was reported by employers and banks. While most of these audits are "paper" audits, they can be avoided with proper documentation and reporting. So save those 1099s and W-2s!

Ten keys to success in value-added agriculture

Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

Value-added seems to be the buzz word these days. As farmers search for ways to increase profitability, some are adding value to their crops or livestock before they are sold, either directly to the consumer or to other markets. Instead of letting their profits be eaten up by high input costs and low wholesale prices, many farmers have decided to take a bite out of the middlemen, and bring the dollars for those activities home.

Adding value isn't limited to processing milk into cheese or berries into jam, although those are two excellent ways to make more money from your crop. Value is being added through cooking, combining, churning, culturing, grinding, hulling, extracting, drying, smoking, handcrafting, spinning, weaving, labeling, packaging, and through adding information, education, or entertainment.

Farmers can also increase returns by creating a regional or unique identity for their products and marketing them directly to the public. If farmers aren't able to do these activities alone, they can work cooperatively with neighboring farms or in partnerships with other business people in their community.

There is no simple blueprint for success when you're trying to add value to your farm products. It takes hard work, ingenuity, and a financial investment no matter what you do. Below is a list of some key fundamentals found in a publication titled *Making it on the Farm; Increasing Sustainability Through Value-Added Processing and Marketing* by Keith Richards & Deborah Wechsler. This list came from interviews with dozens of successful value-added farms. Many of these fundamentals are true for any successful small business, while some are unique to farm-based, value-added enterprises.

1. *Choose something you love to do.* Nearly all value-added business grows out of love for making the product, not out of a calculated plan to make money.
2. *Create a high quality product.* Farmers have to take pride in the quality of their product. High quality sells.
3. *Start small and grow naturally.* Invest your ingenuity first, labor second and money third.
4. *Make decisions based on good records.* Base business decisions on what is, not on what you hope or guess the situation to be.
5. *Follow demand-driven production.* Keep adjusting your products according to the tastes and purchases of the people who count most – your customers.
6. *Establish a loyal customer base, preferably local.* Identify your niche in the marketplace and focus on serving those customers.
7. *Provide more than just food or product.* Make your product transcend their material worth. Provide and experience.
8. *Get the whole family or partners involved.* By involving others each person can contribute their unique talents and specialize for efficiency.
9. *Keep informed.* Be able to articulate why your product is better than the competition.
10. *Plan for the future.* Know what you want from your business and have a clear vision for the future.

There are numerous possibilities for making more income from agriculture production; however, creating value-added products and marketing them successfully doesn't come free. The farmer is doing more management, more work, and investment in equipment and supplies and developing entrepreneurial skills; but it is the farmer and his farm that are being paid for the extra work and making a profit, not someone else.

This Quarter's Events

January 11, 2000, 25th Annual Minnesota Forage Conference, 6 p.m. - 10 p.m., Grand Casino, Hinkley, MN.

January 13, 2000, Use Value Meeting, ETN, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., local County ETN sites.

January 19-20, 2000, Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists. Various locations.

January 26-27, 2000, Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists. Various locations.



February 2-3, 2000, Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists. Various locations.

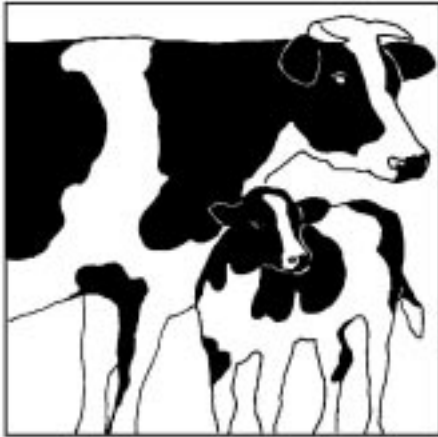
February 9-10, 2000, Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists. Various locations.

February 11-12, 2000, "Bringing Profit Back to the Farm" value-added conference, Ramada Inn Conference Center, Eau Claire.

March 14, 2000, Private Pesticide Applicator Training, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station.

Notes from Dairy-L

Tom Syverud
Extension and Outreach Educator
Ashland, Douglas, & Iron Counties



What are the early signs of acidosis?

After a bout with laminitis, a farmer has been adding straw and long fiber into the TMR, and has seen a dramatic reduction in lameness and improvement in overall herd health. But now, laminitis, pneumonia, and nose bleeds are back. He asks, How can you tell a week or so in advance, that laminitis is coming? The main cause of laminitis is either a sudden massive ingestion of high-energy feed (acute) or the sustained intake of high levels of carbohydrate (subacute or subclinical). Dairy cows usually show the first signs after calving. Replacement dairy heifers are at risk as well. The animals are reluctant to move, have diarrhea, stand with four legs tight under the body and the hooves have heavy ridging. Mid-lactation lameness, white lines lesions, and sole ulcers confirm the disease.

Dr. Terry Howard offered a few suggestions to avoid this problem.

1. Pay attention to the diet specifics: forage analyses and weekly dry matter analyses;
2. Diet formulation: if less than 18 - 19% ADF and 28 - 29% NDF, expect a problem;

3. Check the particle length of the TMR, is it mixing too long?;
4. Watch for sorting, especially if the diet is on the dry side. Diets to support high production are close to fiber limits and acidosis is always a concern.

How can you control hairy heel warts?

A vet in Canada has a client having a hard time controlling the spread of hairy heel warts (or hairy-foot warts) in his herd. The treatment program is successful; however, new cases occur and sore legs and low intake lead to lost body condition and lower milk production. Only first reported in New York herds in 1974, this disease is now a major concern of cattle producers. Over 40% of Wisconsin herds report problems with this disease. The cause is unknown; however, the infection is probably caused by a spiraled bacteria. The disease is contagious.

In response to his question of what works for others, several farmers responded with footbath formulas.

1. Ten pounds Copper Sulfate mixed in 5 gallons of hot water, a package of Lincomycin and 25 gallons of soap wash water.
2. Equal parts of 5 pounds Copper Sulfate and 25 pounds hydrated lime in water until a blueish white paste forms.
3. Five pounds Copper Sulfate in 40 gallons of very hot water. The hot water helps keep more copper in solution. Use the footbath 3 days every 10, or 5 days per month.
4. An alternative footbath by a Vermont dairyman, is 15 gallons of Clorox a day without dilution, change it every two milkings. Do this once a month for seven days.

Several farmers went the recommended route of using topical antibiotics, such as Victory Topical, Restore Hoof Concentrate or Hoof-Mate. One strongly recommended using an antibiotic like Tetracycline 1000, on a clean cotton strip, then wrapping the

open sore area well using duct tape. In addition, several others highly recommended a good hoof trimmer as well. Lincomycin is also a recommended antibiotic. When using an antibiotic, saturate the bandage with antibiotics and wrap for 7 to 10 days. Currently there is no test for this disease; therefore, strict biosecurity measures are needed to avoid introducing it into your herd. A new vaccine is also available.

Any suggestions for treating a winter dysentery outbreak?

Last year, a farmer had an outbreak of dysentery that affected 80% of the herd and caused a 30% drop in milk production.

He treated with Kaopectate and electrolytes. He asked, what more could he do? Winter dysentery is a worldwide disease, first identified in 1931. No diagnostic test is available; however, diagnosis is done by considering the signs of affected animals and the herd outbreak history.

Winter dysentery or winter scours is an acute, highly contagious disease. Signs include a brief attack of severe diarrhea, dehydration, loss of body condition and drop in milk production. Most animals in a herd will get it, but few die. Although not known, it is probably caused by the corona virus and generally occurs every three to four years. The potential risk factors for winter dysentery include increasing animal density and the use of manure handling equipment to mix or deliver feed. In fact, in a Ohio study, an increase in cow density over one cow per 100 square feet increased the risk of winter dysentery occurring in a herd by six times. The risk for dysentery was 5.5 times greater if the herd used manure handling equipment to handle feed.

Treatment includes separating affected animals and maintaining the cleanliness of equipment and footwear. Most cattle will recover on their own; however, severely affected animals can be given oral astringents along with fluids and electrolyte therapy.

News from the Spooner Ag Research Station

Bob Rand
Superintendent
Spooner Ag Research Station

Notes: Variety trial results for corn, soybeans, alfalfa, small grains, and grasses are now available either from your County Ag Agent or as published in the major farm papers. I have seen the results in the "Country Today" and the "Agri-View." Results from trials conducted statewide are published. Information is provided listing parameters to consider when choosing varieties for your farm. The grass section is particularly good, providing information about species characteristics and variety differences. This section is very valuable for growers in the north, as they can see huge benefits, both in yield and quality, from growing the new varieties of forage grasses compared to growing unimproved pastures. Check it out!

Corn row spacing x population x variety trial

Much interest has been given to row spacing in corn and population, mostly because of development of new varieties that have more upright leaves, which results in less area covered per plant. A trial to measure corn grain yield as it might be affected by wide (36") or narrow (18") rows was done at Spooner in 1999, as has been done in previous years. In 1999, corn grain yields were significantly affected by row spacing, 162 vs. 138 bushels per acre, in favor of 18" rows. This was also the trend in 1996. However, in '95, '97, and '98, there was no difference due to row spacing. This trial has shown that corn planted for grain in 18 inch rows may not necessarily produce higher yields in all years, but that yields will not be significantly less than when planted in 36 inch rows.

Population goals were 23, 28, and 33 thousand plants per acre. In '96, '97, and '98, highest corn grain yields originated from

high populations. In '95 and '99, there was no significant difference in grain yields due to population. Without being significant, high populations had higher grain yields. It can be concluded that under irrigated sandy loam soils in Northwest Wisconsin with today's hybrids corn populations should be at least 28 thousand plants per acre for maximum yields.

Variety differences have been noted throughout the years. However, varieties by population interactions have seldom been significant. This indicates that all varieties respond the same way, i.e., produce higher yields when populations are higher. Varieties by row spacing interactions have been noted. Some varieties respond differently to row spacing and can produce good yields when planted at either narrow or wide rows. Corn varieties did not have significantly lower corn grain yields when planted in narrow rows in any year; not the case with wide rows. Therefore, if varieties produce good yields in wide rows, they will also produce good or better yields in narrow rows.

The University has been criticized for constantly promoting "high yields" resulting in a glut of corn grain. I like to think of the goals of our work as promoting efficiencies; growing more on less ground, getting maximum crop for the inputs expended. It is up to the grower to determine how many crop acres will be planted and numbers of bushels in the bin at harvest.

Farewell

I will retire effective January 7, 2000. I have been with Ag Research Stations for slightly over 30 years, beginning my career as Assistant Superintendent of the Hancock Research Station in 1969. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work for the University of Wisconsin, it has been challenging and rewarding. It has been a pleasure knowing and working with the many great people, both at work and in the public sector. Thank you and good luck.

I have listed 11 of the greatest changes that I have observed during my last 30 years with Ag Research Stations. I have also listed 10 things that have stayed the same, not necessarily in any order. You may or may not agree or have your own list.

Changes:

1. The proliferation of information sources for ag news.
2. Decline in farm numbers and farm infrastructure such as feed mills, equipment dealers, milk plants, etc.
3. Increase in numbers of professional women in agriculture.
4. Use of computers in many aspects of ag, ie. tractors, field mapping, fertilizer application, record keeping, farm planning, information gathering, etc.
5. Farm price failure to keep up with inflation, ie. \$9.79 milk and \$1.50 corn in 1999.
6. Improvement in farm equipment quality along with corresponding increase in equipment prices.
7. Increase in number of hobby farms.
8. Urban sprawl sucking up farmland to be lost forever for food production.
9. Advances in the highway, electric distribution, and telephone systems.
10. Increased numbers of people that are two or more generations removed from agriculture.
11. Genetic engineering on crops and animals.

No Changes:

1. Alfalfa yield increases have not kept up with the pace of corn and/or soybean yields.
2. Applied agricultural research is still underfunded.
3. Farm woodlots are very slow to be improved.
4. Farmers don't like to come to meetings.
5. The number of unimproved pasture acres remains very large.
6. The Minnesota Vikings are still not my favorite football team.
7. Drivers don't have much respect for farm equipment on the highways.
8. Lots of people, both young and old, are still enthusiastic about the present and future of agriculture.
9. The University of Wisconsin is still one great university.
10. Northern Wisconsin does not have a good economical source of aglime.

AGRICULTURAL NEWSLETTER

PRODUCED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EXTENSION
AND
UW-MADISON COLLEGE OF AG AND LIFE SCIENCES

BURNETT • SAWYER • WASHBURN COUNTIES

RUSSELL KIECKER, AREA AGRICULTURAL AGENT 635-3506
KEVIN SCHOESSOW, AREA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENT 635-3506
BOB RAND, SPOONER AG RESEARCH STATION SUPERINTENDENT 635-3735
YVES BERGER, SPOONER AG RESEARCH STATION SHEEP RESEARCHER 635-3735

PHONE: 1-800-528-1914, 715-635-3506, or 715-635-3735

ASHLAND • BAYFIELD • DOUGLAS • IRON COUNTIES

JOHN MARKUS, AREA AGRICULTURAL AGENT 373-6104
MIKE MLYNAREK, ASHLAND AG RESEARCH STATION SUPERINTENDENT 682-7268
TOM SYVERUD, EXTENSION AND OUTREACH EDUCATOR 682-7268

PHONE: 715-682-7268, or 715-373-6104

JANUARY • FEBRUARY • MARCH 2000 VOL. 6, ISSUE 1

*University of Wisconsin, United States Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin Counties Cooperating.
UW-Extension provides equal opportunity in employment and programming. Including Title IX and ADA requirements.*

*If you have any special needs or require special accommodations, please write to UWEX Area Agricultural Agent, Spooner Ag Research Station,
W6646 Highway 70, Spooner, WI 54801 or UWEX Area Agricultural Agent, Ashland Ag Research Station, 68760 State Farm Road, Ashland, WI 54806.*



UWEX Area Agricultural Agents
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties
Spooner Agricultural Research Station
W6646 Highway 70
Spooner, WI 54801

BULK MAIL
US POSTAGE &
FEES PAID
USDA
PERMIT NO. G268