Agricultural Newsletter

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

> January-February-March 2006 Volume 12 Issue 1

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Bird Flu Concerns and Precautions

Ron Kean, UW-Extension Poultry Specialist and Otto Wiegand, Area Ag Agent, Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

A great deal of information--and misinformation--is available about avian influenza or bird flu. While there is certainly reason for concern, the current situation shouldn't cause you to stop raising birds. It also should not stop you from eating poultry meat and eggs. It should, however, reinforce the idea that there is an ever-present need for good bio-security.

Currently, there is an outbreak of a highly pathogenic avian influenza in Asia and Eastern Europe. This influenza virus, which is of H5N1 type, is highly pathogenic to most domestic birds, that is, it kills many of those that become infected. It has also infected some people, about half of those who are known to be infected. (The H and N types refer to the specific strain. There are several different types of avian influenza, and they are identified by these H and N components. For more information on this, see web sites below.)

Avian influenza is likely being spread by migratory birds, which can carry the virus without showing symptoms. Fortunately, this virus is **not present** in the United States at this time.

What is avian influenza? What should I look for in my birds?

There are different forms of avian influenza, and some are worse for birds than others. Some forms may cause slight respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, nasal secretions) and a decrease in egg production. The type currently in Asia has been much more severe. In some cases, the birds die with no apparent signs. Other typical signs of avian influenza include soft-shelled or misshapen eggs; swollen head, comb, wattles; purple coloring of wattles, comb, and legs; sores on the comb and wattles; and hemorrhaging throughout the internal organs. Of course, many of these same symptoms can be caused by other diseases as well. If you see symptoms such as these, or a high percentage of your flock is dying, you should be concerned. Contact a veterinarian or your county extension office immediately.

What should I do to protect my birds?

Good **bio-security** measures are important to protect your flock. Don't allow your birds to mingle with wild birds. Don't borrow other people's equipment. Clean your shoes and clothes if you have contact with other people's birds. If you purchase birds, or if you bring your own birds home after a show or

(Continued on next page)

Agricultural NEWSLETTER

produced by University of Wisconsin-Extension and UW-Madison College of Ag & Life Sciences

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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.

(Cont. from page 1)

swap meet, keep those birds isolated from your regular flock for at least two weeks. Watch for any signs of illness in the quarantined birds. Tend to your home flock before taking care of the new or returning birds. Disposable plastic boots, especially for visitors, are a fairly inexpensive precaution.

Common-sense principles are very important to help prevent the spread of this disease as well as other poultry diseases, and should always be followed. The potential for a serious avian influenza problem just emphasizes the never-ending importance of bio-security.

What is being done to prevent this from getting to the U.S.?

Currently in the U.S., commercial flocks are being monitored for signs of avian influenza. Customs and immigration officials are watching closely for anyone attempting to smuggle birds into the country, or for anyone who has recently been in contact with poultry in countries with known outbreaks. Vaccines for the birds could be developed, but they aren't available at this time. Since this virus mutates so often, any vaccine that is made now might not be protective in the future. It would also take quite some time to produce enough vaccines to combat a widespread outbreak.

What if there is an outbreak here?

If avian influenza comes to the U.S., it likely will be devastating to the commercial poultry industry and small flocks alike. The virus might arrive in migratory birds flying in, in birds smuggled in, or in bird manure on someone's shoes, for example. The virus can remain stable for fairly long periods in the environment.

The standard method for dealing with an outbreak like this is to depopulate all birds within a certain range of an outbreak. If avian influenza is found on a farm in Wisconsin, for example, all birds within a certain distance of that farm would be euthanized. If the outbreak is caught in time, and the virus does not spread, that would be great. Unfortunately, this virus spreads easily from bird to bird. Outbreaks in the past have taken some time and the destruction of many birds before they were eliminated. There is also the temptation to hide birds or remove them from the area, but this greatly increases the risk of spreading the disease. As an example, an outbreak in Mexico in 1992 took more than three years to eradicate. It is imperative that bird owners resist this temptation and cooperate with authorities.

Finally, it's important to repeat that one cannot be infected with avian influenza by eating cooked poultry products or eggs. The heat of cooking will destroy any virus particles that may be present. As usual, proper sanitation procedures (washing hands, cutting boards, etc. with hot soapy water) should always be followed when preparing meat and eggs. It's also important to note that H5N1 avian influenza is not present in the United States at this time.

For more information, both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) have excellent materials available on the web: www.who.int/csr/disease/avianinfluenza/en/; or www.avianinfluenzainfo.com/.

This Quarter's Events

Contacts: Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow, UW-Extension, Spooner Station, 715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914, Tom Syverud, UW-Extension, Ashland Station 715-682-8393, or V.J Pandian, Bayfield Co, 715-3732-6104 for more information, brochures or how to register.

January - February, Wednesdays-Fridays, Phillips, Ladysmith, Ashland, Maple and Spooner - Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists. Further details in enclosed brochure.

January 24-25, Tuesday-Wednesday, Cedar Mall Farm Show, Rice Lake Cedar Mall.

January 27-28, Friday-Saturday, 8th Annual Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference, Eau Claire. Contact Heather Flashinski, 715-834-9672 or http://www.rivercountryrcd.org/valad.htm.

January 28, Saturday, Noon, Lehman's Supper Club, Rice Lake, Northern Wisconsin Beef Producers Association Annual Meeting. Contact Richard Wright by January 21, 715-237-2880, for membership and registration information.

January 31, Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., Balsam Lake Government Center, Beef Quality Assurance Training. Become BQA certified, topics: injection site management, biosecurity, feed additives, cattle handling, and judicious use of antibiotics. Contact: UWEX Ag Agents, Ryan Tichich at 715-485-8600, or Otto Wiegand, or Kevin Schoessow at Spooner.

February 2-3, Thursday-Friday, Upper Midwest Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show, St. Cloud MN. Contact MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or http://www.mfvga.org/.

February 2 and March 2, Thursday evenings, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Sheep Management Wisline. Contact: Dave Thomas, 608-263-4306, or your local UW-Extension Office.

February 6, Monday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Lucky's, Clear Lake, Grain Crop Seminar. Topics include nitrogen recommendations, manure value and turkey manure research, crop insurance, pest issues, and no-till systems panel, \$10 includes lunch. Contact: UWEX Ag Agents Ryan Tichich, 715-485-8600, or Kevin Schoessow.

February 9-11, Thursday-Saturday, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, GrassWorks Grazing Conference. Details at the GrassWorks website, http://www.grassworks.org/, or call Paul Nehring, 715-261-6009.

February 11, Saturday, Indianhead Sheep Breeders Association Shepherd's Clinic, WITC, Rice Lake. Full day of seminars, includes a separate program geared for youth and beginners. Contact Greg Glunz, 715-268-6286, rgsglunz@amerytel.net.

February 18, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., WITC, Rice Lake, NorthWest Graziers Winter Meeting. See enclosed brochure.

February 23-25, Thursday-Saturday, Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference and Trade Show, LaCrosse, WI. If you've every thought about organic this conference has it all. Contact Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) 715-772-3153 or http://www.mosesorganic.org/.

February 25, Saturday, Cambridge, MN, Horse Owner Education Day, Cambridge Middle School, 10-3, \$25. Subjects include: pre-purchase exam, driving 101, hay 101, bits 101, fly and pest control, vaccinations and deworming, saddle fitting, pasture management, hoof care, first aid, FAQ. Contact Kristi Martini, 763-767-3837.

February - March, PAT Trainings at various sites. See article on page 8 of this newsletter.

March 2, Thursday, Organic Growers Update Meeting, Ashland, WI. An all-day meeting sponsored by UW-Extension and the Chequamanon Organic Research, Education and Training (CORET) Program. Contact Vijai Pandian, Ashland/Bayfield Ag Agent.

March 11, Saturday, Direct Marking 101 Workshop for Direct Farm Marketers, WITC, Rice Lake, WI. The basics on getting started in direct marketing, from initial market research to regulations and pricing. Contact Kevin Schoessow, Spooner Area UW-Extension at 715-635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.

March 14-15, Tuesday-Wednesday, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW) Show, Madison. Contact Otto Wiegand, 715-635-3506, for more information.

First year transition to organic corn: date of planting and plant population results

Phil Holman Assistant Superintendent UW-Spooner Ag Research Station

Organic producers typically plant corn a little later and at lower populations than University research has shown to be economic optimal corn production practices. Approximately two acres of corn was grown organically at the Spooner Ag Research Station in 2003, 2004, and 2005. A certified organic corn variety of 85 day relative maturity (NC+0850) was planted in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Target seeding dates were the 4th week of April, 2nd week of May, 4th week of May and 2nd week of June. The planter seeding rate was approximately 40,000 kernels per acre. Four randomized replications (passes) were planted for each date with a six-row planter.

Corn was planted following alfalfa in all three years. Sheep manure from a bedded pack system was applied at approximately 15 tons per acre. No other nutrients were applied to the corn. Tillage consisted of moldboard plowing and disking twice prior to the first planting date. All unplanted areas were field cultivated prior to each successive planting. Thus, each later planting date had one more tillage operation to control newly emerged seedling weeds than the previous planting date. Depending on weed density and corn growth, corn at the various planting dates was cultivated three to six times as needed to control emerged weeds. The field sites had a cress sandy loam soil that was irrigated as needed. Late summer 2003 and mid-summer 2005 were droughty and irrigation was applied frequently.

Organic Corn Grain Yield, Moisture, Test Weight & Population by Planting Date

					Three Year Average			
	Corn Yield					Test	Plant	
Corn Planting Date	2003	2004	2005	Ave.	Moist.	Wt.	Pop.	
	(bu/A)				(%)	(lb/bu)	(no./A)	
4 th week April	88	142	74	102	20.4	53.5	29700	
2 nd week May	104	116	115	112	22.1	52.4	33900	
4th week May	99	99	145	114	26.3	50.4	36900	
2 nd week June	85	74	134	98	31.8	46.5	38900	
lsd 0.05%	NS	11	24	NS	6.5	4.1	3500	

In 2003, yield tended to be higher with the 2nd week of May planting. Earlier plantings had higher grain test weights and lower grain moistures (individual year data not shown).

In 2004, the late April planting had the greatest grain yield, grain test weight, and lowest grain moisture. With each later planting, yield and test weight declined and grain moisture increased. 2004 was a very cool, wet year and even the earliest planted corn did not reach physiological maturity as evident by low bushel test weights for all planting dates.

In 2005, the growing season was dry with a large number of growing degree units which allowed later planting dates to reach full maturity, reasonably low moistures, and similar grain test weight to the earlier plantings. High weed competition and low populations from poor seedling emergence in the early plantings greatly reduced grain yields.

Yields averaged over three years show no statistical difference between the planting dates with the mid-May (2nd & 4th) weeks tending to have higher grain yields. The yield response may vary greatly depending on the growing season. Earlier planting did have lower grain harvest moisture and higher test weights, but lower seedling survival.

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Corn Grain Yield, Moisture, & Grain Test Weight by Population

					Three Year Average		
	Com Yield					Test	
Corn Popula	2003	2004	2005	Ave	Moist.	Wt.	
(no./A)		(bu/	A)		(%)	(lb/bu)	
18,000	81	79	79	80	24.8	50.7	
24,000	86	91	94	90	24.9	50.4	
30,000	92	95	102	96	24.8	50.1	
36,000	101	102	112	105	25.1	50.6	
lsd 0	17	13	16	9	NS	NS	

In a separate part of the plot, corn was hand thinned to plant populations of 18,000, 24,000, 30,000, and 36,000 plants/acre when the corn was approximately at the V8 growth stage. Populations were replicated four times. Data for these populations is averaged across the four dates of planting.

In all three years, yields increase with increasing plant populations up to 36,000 plants per acre. There was no relationship between the plant populations and grain moisture or test weight and the plant populations.

		Weed Biomass					
Corn Planting Date	2003	2004	2005	Three Yr. Ave.			
	(lbs dry matter/A)						
4th week April	2,460	490	4,250	2,400			
2 nd week May	1,420	250	3,100	1,600			
4th week May	1,000	290	1,200	820			
2 nd week June	380	90	510	330			
lsd 0.05%	740	300	720	900			

In late August, weeds were harvested by hand from row lengths 25 ft. long and replicated four times for each planting date. Weed biomass was dried to calculate the pounds of dry matter per acre.

All three years had more weed growth in the earliest planting date, however the weed growth was considerably less in 2004 when there was a cool season with a wet spring. The reduced weed growth at later planting dates could be from: 1) quicker corn emergence when planted at warmer temperatures later in the spring, 2) more weed seedlings being controlled with the additional tillage operations prior to the later corn planting dates, and/or 3) from fewer weeds emerging in warm, dry soil with later planting dates.

Summary:

If weeds pressure is low or adequately controlled (2004), corn yields are highest with the earliest planting dates. The other two years, show higher yields with planting dates in mid to late May. These planting date correlate with lower weed competition compared to the late April planting date. Delaying corn planting into June shows relatively little weed competition and higher seedling survival but the shorter growing season results in slightly lower yield, higher corn grain moisture, and lower grain test weight. In this organic system, highest yields were achieved when harvest populations were exceeding 30,000 plants per acre.

Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network update

Otto Wiegand Area Agriculture Agent Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

The Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network received over \$45,000 in grant money from the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative to fund a grazing specialist and provide rotational grazing education over the next two years. The grant applications were made by the Northwest Graziers through the UWEX Ag Agents from Spooner, Barron and Polk, NRCS, Land & Water Conservation, and Pri-Ru-Ta RC&D. The effort will cover six counties including Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn, and will be administered by Otto Wiegand at Spooner.

Attendance at Northwest Graziers pasture walks and meetings has been excellent. Besides rotational grazing and forages, topics covered at those events include fencing and waters, marketing and value-added, different animals species, leasing arrangements, interseeding, weed control, budgets, organic production and others. Some of topics will be discussed at the upcoming Northwest Graziers winter meeting on Feb. 18 at WITC in Rice Lake. A needs assessment survey sent to over 500 newsletter recipients last June indicated that the top educational priority for respondents was forages / grazing. Respondents also indicated that their preferred types of meetings were demonstration workshops and field

days. Both the topic and meeting types are standard practice for Northwest Graziers. At least six pasture walks will be held this year including a milking sheep pasture walk at the Spooner Ag Research Station. Dairy cow, beef and horse pasture walks are also being planned.

Farmers: An invitation to get away from the daily grind

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

Working farm families and individuals have an opportunity to getaway from the daily grind this winter, thanks to a coalition of private and public agencies.

The Sowing the Seeds of Hope coalition is sponsoring seven no-cost getaway weekends: four for farm couples; two for farm women; and for the first time, one just for men.

According to Kathy Schmitt, Community Services Specialist with the Wisconsin Farm Center, participants learn a variety of coping strategies, work on plans for the future and enjoy a break from the demands of farming.

The Farm Couple Weekend Getaways are limited to nine couples each and are scheduled for:

- * Dodgeville, Jan. 21-22 The House on the Rock Inn
- * Shawano, Jan. 28-29 The Comfort Suites
- * Rib Lake, Feb. 11-12 Camp 28 Resort
- * Black River Falls. March 11 12 Holiday Inn Express

The application deadline for the

Century or Sesquicentennial Farm and Home Recognition

at the Wisconsin State Fair in 2006 is March 1, 2006

Contact Jill Albanese at 414-777-0580 or your local Agriculture Agent for forms or information.

The Farm Women Weekend Getaways are limited to 15 women each and are scheduled for:

- * Fennimore, Jan. 28-29 Fenmore Hill Motel
- * Black River Falls, March 11-12 Location to be announced

The Farm Men Weekend Getaway is limited to 20 men:

* Wausau, Feb. 11-12 Stoney Creek Inn

There are no costs while attending the weekend, but registration is required--first come first served. Farmers may be eligible for some financial assistance to offset the cost of labor or childcare while away.

To register or for more information, contact Kathy Schmitt, Wisconsin Farm Center at 800-942-2474 or Mary Bub, women's getaways, at 262-723-4156.

Sowing the Seeds of Hope is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - SAMHSA, with assistance from state partners.

New nitrogen rate guidelines allow flexibility

Carrie Laboski Dept. of Soil Science University of Wisconsin-Madison

While the yield response of corn to applied N has not changed, the economics of corn production have. For years producers have made decisions on applying added nitrogen (N) fertilizer based on a relatively favorable price ratio of fertilizer N to corn. Using a price of N at \$0.15/lb N and a price of corn at \$2.50/bu, this ratio would be 0.06. In recent months and perhaps for the foreseeable future, farmers are looking at less favorable price ratios (perhaps 0.15 to 0.20) as N prices have increased and corn prices have remained constant or perhaps declined. As a result, farmers may find themselves contemplating lowering N fertilizers rates on corn to maintain profitability.

The basics of fertilizing corn have not changed. When N fertilizer is applied, corn yield increases and then levels off. Such that the first units of N applied produce the greatest yield increase and the last units applied produce the least yield increase. For example, on a very high yield potential soil when corn is grown following corn, yield increases from the 1st through 4th additions of 40 lb. N/a are as follows: 21, 16, 11, and 7 bu/a. For this site, it would then take another 30 lb N/a to obtain the last bushel of corn (at total of 190 lb N/a applied). With today's N and corn prices, in some situations, it is difficult to justify going after that last bushel of corn, and maybe also the 2nd or 3rd to last bushels as well.

The Northern Wisconsin Beef Producers Association is offering two \$250 scholarships for students enrolled in a Farm & Industry Short Course Program, Vo-Tech Ag Program, or University of Wisconsin or Minnesota Ag School. The application deadline is April 30, 2006. Contact Lori Lyons, 2958 1st Ave., New Auburn, WI 54757, 715-237-2746 or Otto or Kevin, 715-635-3506.

Recently soil fertility specialists in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois have agreed to use the same philosophy to develop N rate guidelines for corn (grain). The philosophy used is based on maximizing return to N fertilizer. Thus, the new N rate guidelines were developed as a means to provide growers guidance on how much they might reduce their N application rates and maintain or enhance profitability.

In order to determine the N application rate using the new guidelines, one must first know:

- ✓ Soil yield potential. See UWEX A2809 "Soil Test Recommendations for Field, Vegetable, and Fruit Crops" for details.
- ✓ Previous crop.
- ✓ N:corn price ratio. This is the price of N per pound divided by the price of corn per bushel.

Using these three pieces of information, a N rate can be identified that will, on average, maximize economic return to N. A range of N rates that will produce economic profitability within one dollar per acre of the maximum can also be identified.

Within the new guidelines, four N:corn price ratios are provided with a N rate and range of profitable N rates for each price ratio. In general, there is a quite a bit of overlap in the range of profitable rates between the price ratios. This means that a grower can choose one N rate that will likely

do well over a range of economic conditions.

An example of the new guidelines is as follows. If the outlook for corn is \$2.40/bu and the price of N is \$0.36/ lb N, the N:corn price ratio is 0.15. At this price ratio on a high/very high yield potential soil when corn follows corn the N rate is 120 lb N/a with a profitable range of 100 – 130 lb N/a; for corn after soybean the rate is 100 lb N/a and range is 85 - 115 lb N/a. On a medium/low yield potential soil 85 lb N/a (70 - 100 lb N/a) isappropriate for corn following corn, while corn following soybean is 50 lb N/a (40 – 60 lb N/a). On irrigated sands and loamy sands for corn following corn or soybean, the rate is 195 lb N/a (180 - 210 lb N/a). These rates are the total amount of N to apply, including N in starter fertilizer.

Nitrogen credits for animal manures, green manures, forage legumes, and leguminous vegetables should still be taken. Soybean credits have been eliminated, they now show up as a rotation credit within the guidelines table. It should also be noted that these guidelines assume no N losses. Thus, Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be followed to minimize N losses.

For additional information regarding these N application rate guidelines, please contact your County Extension Agent or visit the following web site: http://www.soils.wisc.edu/extension/ hottopics/.

Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings to be held

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

Local UW-Extension Offices will be conducting private pesticide applicator training sessions in the upcoming months. People who participate in a training session and successfully complete an evaluation will be certified as private pesticide applicators by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. Certification allows applicators to purchase and use restricted-use chemicals such as atrazine, alachlor, and others. Certified applicators are also allowed to spray up to 500 acres each year for hire without having to be a licensed commercial applicator.

Materials for the General
Farming category can be picked up at county UW-Extension Offices and at the Spooner Ag Research Station.
For private applicators specializing in fruit crops, greenhouses or nurseries, training materials and registration must be purchased through the Private Pesticide Applicators office in Madison by calling 608-262-7588 or PAT-program@wisc.edu.

The training fee is \$30 per private applicator. This amount covers training materials and certification for five years, with no additional fees incurred during the certification period.

Following is a list of training dates and locations for Northwestern Wisconsin:

Tuesday, February 14, Barron Co. Courthouse, Barron (Tim Jergenson 715-537-6250).

Thursday, February 16, UW-Extension Office in the Normal Building, Phillips (Mark Kopecky 715-339-2555).

Wednesday, February 22, Rusk Co. Courthouse, Ladysmith (Aliesha Crowe 715-532-2151).

Wednesday, March 8, Kris' Pheasant Inn, Siren (Kevin Schoessow 635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914).

Thursday, March 16, Spooner Ag Research Station, Spooner (Kevin Schoessow, same as above).

Tuesday, March 21, Polk Co. Courthouse, Balsam Lake (Ryan Tichich 715-485-8600).

Tuesday, March 28, Bayfield Co. Courthouse, Washburn (Vijai Pandian 715-373-6104).

Resources for buying and selling hay

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

As a result of last summer's lessthan-ideal growing conditions, many farmers are in the market to purchase hay. In the past, much of this hay buying was done through hay distributors or through local word-ofmouth. The business of selling and buying hay hasn't changed much; however, the access to hay markets and market information has.

Through the Internet, farmers have access to a wide range of information on buying and selling hay. In an effort to help farmers sort through this information, UW-Extension along with other midwestern state extension services, have consolidated many of these sources onto one website (http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/haybuying.html). From this website, farmers can get the following questions answered:

What do I need to know before I buy or sell hay? What is hay and straw currently selling for? Where can I buy or sell hay and straw?

Farmers can also view current online directories for buying and selling hay. If you don't have access to the Internet, most public libraries and certainly your local UW-Extension Office have computers with Internet access.

For those without access to a computer and the Internet, the article on the following page will help answer the "What is hay and straw currently selling for?" question.

YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO REGISTER YOUR PREMISES!

Premises registration is state law for those who own livestock.
Contact WLIC at 1-888-808-1910 or register on-line at
www.wiid.org, or call your local UW-Extension Office for forms.

Registration is free of charge.

Hay market demand & price report for the upper midwest

Data compiled by Ken Barnett UW-Extension Ag Agent

All hay prices quoted are dollars per ton FOB (free on board) point of origin for alfalfa hay unless otherwise noted.

The information presented in this report is compiled from public and private sales and reports in the Midwest.

Demand and Sales Activity

Compared to the previous week, small square bale prices were up 3%. Large square bale prices were up 2%. Large round bale prices were up 14%. Sales activity was mostly light to moderate.

In *Nebraska*, hay prices were steady to \$1.55 lower. There was light to moderate trade activity and demand. For dairy quality hay, demand and trade activity was very good. For *Iowa*, hay prices were mixed. Demand and sales activity were light to moderate. In *South*

Dakota, hay prices were mixed to \$2.70 lower. Demand was light to good. In Missouri, hay prices were steady. Demand and sales activity were moderate. Despite the fact most of the winter thus far has been very mild, sellers have remained very busy. As has been mentioned in the past few weeks, the dry conditions to the southwest were keeping the hay market going this year. Even with the increased demand, hay prices just don't seem to be able to push above price levels that they have been stuck at all year. A small number of sellers were moving high quality hay and getting good prices for that, but they were few and far between. Most movement continued to be of the mid quality, mixed grass with some bromegrass or alfalfa in it. In Southwest Minnesota, hay prices were mixed to \$2.20 higher. Sales activity was moderate.

For *Wisconsin*, prices were 38% higher than the rest of the Midwest. Sales activity was light. The demand for *Illinois* hay was good, with moderate to active sales activity. Prices were steady to firm. The

supply of Illinois hay was light to moderate. Many producers of hay have enough in inventory to cover their regular customers, while there are others still looking to fill needs. There was hope that the start of the New Year would bring new supplies of hay to the market. Many hay users were hoping the above normal temperatures would continue through the month to help curb demand. Demand for straw was moderate to good, with light to moderate supplies and prices steady to 10.00 higher. While landscapers were taking some time off, the livestock industry had stepped forward to create interest in the straw market.

Straw prices in the Midwest averaged \$2.21 per small square bale (range of \$1.40 to \$3.50); \$31.40 per large square bale (range of \$10.00 to \$80.00); and \$23.54 per large round bale (range of \$12.00 to \$27.00). Compared to the previous week, straw prices for small square bales were down 10%. Large square bale prices were up 18%. Large round bale prices were up 15%.

Hay Price Summary

		Price (\$/ton)		
Hay Grade	Bale type	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Prime (> 151 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	124.77	87.50	160.00
	Large Square	110.96	65.00	145.00
	Large Round	92.54	55.00	120.00
Grade 1 (125 to 150 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	112.50	60.00	160.00
	Large Square	86.95	60.00	120.00
	Large Round	81.43	40.00	102.50
Grade 2 (103 to 124 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	75.97	60.00	80.00
	Large Square	75.76	47.50	125.00
	Large Round	62.24	42.50	90.00
Grade 3 (87 to 102 RFV/RFQ)	Large Round	90.00	90.00	90.00



March

2006

How do the recent outbreaks of bird flu in Asia and Europe affect you?

University of Wisconsin Specialists go on safari to meet northern Wisconsin farmers

Resources are available to help you buy or sell hay

It's not too late to register your premises!

Kevin A Achinemon Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Agricultural Agent

<u>Extension</u>

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