

Agricultural Newsletter

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



January-February-March
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Farming for Profit Series to be Held *Fresh Market Vegetable Production*

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

The 3rd annual Farming for Profit Series this year will cover fresh market vegetable production. Six sessions will be held on consecutive Monday nights from 6:30-9:00 pm, January 28- March 4. Locations this year will include: Sawyer Co. Government Center in Hayward, Spooner Ag Research Station, Café Wren in Luck, Rusk Co. Law Enforcement Center in Ladysmith, Douglas County Government Center in Superior and WITC in Ashland.

Session topics include:

Jan 28 – **Perspectives on Commercial Vegetable Production:** *This session will highlight the economics, labor, and income potential of commercial production including a discussion of business planning and capital requirements.*

Feb 4 – **If you Grow It, Will they Buy It? Market Options:** *Learn from experienced market growers on how to successfully sell at Farmers Markets, to CSA members and to wholesale markets.*

Feb 11 – **Crop Production from Seed to Harvest:** *Learn from experienced market growers as they share strategies for growing several commonly grown vegetables covering all aspects of production from seed to harvest.*

Feb 18 – **Soil Management and Equipment Considerations:** *Learn strategies on how to improve soil quality and productivity, and practical advice on equipment and simple technology that can improve your bottom line.*

Feb 25 – **Integrated Pest Management: What's Bugging You:** *Learn how to identify key insect and disease pest for some of the major fresh market vegetable crops and how to effectively manage them.*

Mar 4 – **Extending Your Season from High Tunnels to Cold Storage:** *Learn how high tunnels in combination with cool season crops and cold storage can extend your marketing season.*

Vegetable Field Day: *Participants will see firsthand how some of the above practices are applied on a working market vegetable operation. Date and location to be determined.*

UWEX Area Agricultural Agents
Spooner Ag Research Station
W6646 Highway 70
Spooner, WI 54801
715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914
www.cals.wisc.edu/ars/spooner

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and
UW-Madison College of Ag & Life Sciences

Representing Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties:

Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent
715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914

Richard Otto Wiegand
Area Ag Agent
715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914

Phil Holman
Spooner Ag Research Station
Superintendent
715-635-3735

Michel Baldin
Spooner Ag Research Station
Sheep Researcher
715-635-3735

Representing Ashland, Bayfield, and Douglas Counties:

Jason Fischbach
Area Agricultural Agent
715-373-6104

Jane Anklam
Horticulture & Agricultural Agent
715-395-1515

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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.

This workshop series is for existing producers wanting to improve their operation and for beginning producers looking to build a successful business. It will be a combination of distance learning and live presentations. Instructors include UW-Extension Vegetable Specialists, County UW-Extension Ag Agents, and Experiences Growers.

The registration fee for the Series is \$75 for individuals or \$100 for a farm couple. Fees include handouts and other materials and one complimentary soil analysis. To register or get more information, please contact UWEX Ag Agents Kevin Schoessow or Otto Wiegand, Spooner area, 715-635-3506/800-528-1914, Jane Anklam, Douglas Co 715-395-1363, Jason Fischbach, Ashland & Bayfield Counties 715-373-6104 x5, Jennifer Blazek, Polk Co 715-485-8600, or Rich Toebe, Rusk Co 715-531-1910. Information may also be obtained by visiting the individual UW-Extension Co. websites or the Spooner Ag Research Station website at <http://www.cals.wisc.edu/ars/spooner/>.

Enterprise Budgets and Cost of Production Calculators

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

Understanding operating expenses for specific farm enterprises and the associated cost of production (COP) is essential for farm financial success. There are lots of different approaches for calculating COP, and for that matter, defining financial success. Simply covering out-of-pocket cash costs may be one measure of success, while full cost accounting of all fixed, and non-fixed cost is another. The devil is in the details as they say.

UW-Extension has all kinds of decision-making tools to help farmers create farm enterprise budgets and determine cost of production. Some of these are simple fill-in-the blank budgets, while others are more detailed and robust and utilize computer spreadsheets and programs.

UW-Extension has developed crop enterprise budgets--from corn, soybeans, alfalfa and winter wheat to commercial irrigated vegetables and fresh market vegetables. There are budgets for livestock, such as grass based stockers or cow-calf enterprises, or budgets for dairy sheep and goats. UWEX also has enterprise budgets and decision-making tools for nearly all aspects of dairy.

These enterprise budgets and decision-making tools can be extremely helpful in playing out the “what if” scenarios. They allow farmers to play around with numbers on paper and see the outcomes of different assumptions.

The WI Center for Dairy Profitability <http://cdp.wisc.edu/> and WI Beef Information Center, <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wbic/> websites are two places to look as are the UWEX Farm and Risk Management (FARM) team, or the Forage Team websites. An internet search on ‘enterprise budgets UWEX’ will also yield helpful examples of enterprise budgets.

If you do not have access to a computer or the internet, contact your local county UW-Extension Ag Agent and they will gladly help you out.

Dairy Sheep Program Continues at the Spooner Agricultural Research Station With New Researcher

*Michel Baldin
Sheep Researcher
Spooner Agricultural Research Station*

The Spooner Agricultural Research Station is located in northwest Wisconsin and is a unit operated throughout the state by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The dairy sheep program at the Spooner Station started in the summer of 1993, with the collection of the first milk yield data shortly after April of 1996. The Spooner Station is now the largest known dairy sheep research facility in North America. During the sixteen years of dairy sheep research, several studies were conducted at the station. The results obtained have improved the efficiency of dairy sheep production throughout the country.

Research conducted at the facility has covered various topics such as breed comparisons, weaning systems, fat supplementation, grazing and supplementation on pasture, prepartum photoperiod and milk production.

Much of this industry-changing research was conducted by Yves Berger who retired after 24 years as the station's sheep researcher on June 30, 2012. To continue the dairy sheep program and outreach at the Spooner Station, UW-Madison added a sheep researcher, Michel Baldin, to its team on October 1st.

Baldin comes from the south of Brazil, where his family farms a dairy, beef and grape operation. Growing up on his family's farm motivated Baldin to pursue a career in agriculture. He completed his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Animal Science from Santa Catarina State University in Brazil in 2010 and 2012. Baldin brings hands-on experience in lactational physiology, nutrition, livestock research facility management, and academic training. As his first research project, Baldin is collaborating in a trial on lamb survival coordinated by Dr. Dave Thomas, University of Wisconsin-Madison sheep specialist. Through the study, genetic tools to determine the incidence of lamb pneumonia and mortality will be used.

Trials involving nutrition, milking intervals and milk composition have been planned as upcoming projects for the next milking season. Currently, ewes are in the middle of the



Michel Baldin, Sheep Researcher

gestational period or in the end of the breeding season. This season, 285 ewes ranging from purebred East Friesian or Lacaune to several levels of East Friesian/Lacaune crossbred animals (and some also containing Katahdin blood) were mated to pure East Friesian, Lacaune, Siremax and East Friesian/Lacaune rams.

From late January to late April, around 500 lambs are expected to be born on the station. Following lambing, the flock will be milked in a double-12 milking parlor twice a day with lactations continuing until late September.

Michel Baldin can be reached at the Spooner Agricultural Research Station, W6646 Hwy 70, Spooner, WI 54801 (715-635-3735) or emailed at baldin@wisc.edu.



Additional information can also be found on the Spooner Station website (<http://www.cals.wisc.edu/ars/spooner/>) and on Facebook (www.facebook.com/spoonerag).

NRCS Offers New Opportunities for Farms, Woodlands and Wildlife

Tom Fredrickson
NRCS Spooner

The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced that farmers interested in new farmland conservation practices must apply by Jan. 18 to be considered for 2013 funding.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is the primary program available to farmers for farmland conservation work, offering flat-rate payments for over 80 conservation practices. EQIP can help all types of farmers - livestock and dairy, grazing, or cash crops, including specialty crops, organic, and agro-forestry. EQIP also offers additional assistance for beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers.

All eligible applications received by Jan. 18 will be evaluated and ranked for funding. Farmers can sign up at the NRCS offices in USDA Service Centers statewide. Last year, Wisconsin received about \$26 million in funds for EQIP. Common conservation practices in the past have included prescribed grazing, fence, grassed waterways, heavy use protection, critical area treatment and tree and shrub planting.

Special opportunities are also now open for on-farm energy, organic, and seasonal high tunnel conservation practices. All three initiatives offer technical and financial assistance. All applications must be received by Jan. 18 to be considered for funding in 2013.

- ◆ **On-Farm Energy Initiative:** NRCS and producers develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. Audit data is used to develop energy conservation recommendations. The Landscape AgEMP assesses equipment and farming processes. The farm headquarters AgEMP assesses power usage and efficiency in livestock buildings, grain handling operations, and similar facilities to support the farm operation. Examples of energy conserving practices available include crop rotation, legume cover crop, and no-till planting.

- ◆ **Organic Initiative:** NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification install conservation practices to address resource concerns on organic operations. A wide range of practices are available in this initiative.
- ◆ **Seasonal High Tunnel Pilot Initiative:** NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels, steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops. More than 4,000 high tunnels have been planned and implemented nationwide through this initiative over the past two years. Supporting conservation practices such as grassed waterways, and diversions are available to address resource concerns on operations with Seasonal High Tunnel structures.

For more information, visit www.wi.mcs.usda.gov, for Burnett and Washburn Counties, contact Tom Fredrickson at 715-635-8228, x3 in Spooner, or call your local NRCS office.

Beginning Farmer Course Still Has Openings

LCO College, Hayward – Jan. 26 - Mar. 15
8 Sessions - Thursdays, 11:00-1:15

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

There are still openings to attend the Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers course offered locally at the LCO Community College in Hayward. The remaining sessions are \$120 or \$15 each. You can also take the course on-line at your convenience.

The course began on Nov. 8 and is offered by the University of Wisconsin Farm and Industry Short Course. Class sessions are held on Thursdays from 11:00-1:15. Additional discussion and questions following each session are encouraged. Delivery will be done through interactive Power Point and audio. The course applies to both grass-based and conventional farming. An important focus of the remaining sessions is business planning. Since the course began in 1995, over 450 students have enrolled and a third of them have gone on to start their own farms.

This is the remaining schedule, focusing on business planning and management. Sessions for Jan 24 to Feb 7 are scheduled, the remaining sessions are tentative.

Jan. 24 – farm-driven market strategies, local, organic and grass-fed

Jan. 31 – USDA/FSA beginning farmer loans, farm start-up financial record-keeping

Feb. 7 – risk management, farm business startups, lessons learned

Tentative: Feb. 16 – low-cost dairy parlor design, dairy / livestock wintering strategies

Tentative: Feb. 23 – grazing management, natural resource management

Tentative: Mar. 1 – emerging markets: biomass for renewal energy, organic and grass-based markets

Tentative: Mar. 8 – principals of organic dairying, herd health

Tentative: Mar. 15 – bringing it all together, farmer perspectives on start-up dairy / livestock businesses

To register or obtain information, contact Otto Wiegand at UWEX Spooner, 715-635-3506, or Dick Cates at 608-265-6437, or Steve Neary, 262-617-0941 at Beg. Farmer. The course is a collaborative effort between the UW-Center for Integrated Agricultural Studies, UW Cooperative Extension, the Lac Courtes Oreilles Community College, CALS, DATCP, the Technical Colleges and GrassWorks.

Free Holiday Gift

Looking for the perfect gift for yourself or your favorite farmer? The Spooner Area UW-Extension Office has four copies of the 2012 Pest Management in Wis Field Crops Guide A3646 (\$10 value) to give away FREE of charge to the first four people who call and request a copy.

This 258 page guide covers weed, insect and disease management for corn, soybean, forages, and small grains. What makes this guide so handy is that it describes all the latest available control options and describes their application method and timing, rates, adjuvants, rotational restrictions, and helpful remarks to maximize effectiveness. There are also some very handy tables that list weed, insect and disease control ratings of dozens of products for each crop.

This guide is a must for the crop farmers on your holiday list. We only have four copies, so call us today at 1-800-528-1914 to get your free copy.

Irrigated vs. Non-Irrigated Corn Yields Over the Years

*Phil Holman
Superintendent
Spooner Agricultural Research Station*

With several droughts the past 10 years, I have been asked if irrigation pays. That will depend somewhat on soil type, future rainfall and the initial and yearly cost of irrigation.

The data from the corn grain variety trials since 1990 can help to show what the yield difference would be. Each year companies submit varieties to the University for submission into the variety trial program. The varieties are grown in 3 or 4 locations with different environments. The Spooner Ag Research Station has an irrigated sandy loam site, a dryland sandy loam site and a silt loam site that is off station south of Spooner. There are some yearly differences in field location, tillage system and previous crop, but over a number of years these differences should average out. There have even been a few years where the dryland had a higher yield than the irrigation due to tillage or previous crop differences. The whole plot averages over the years give a picture as the yield advantage of irrigation.

Year	# of Varieties	Sandy Loam Irrigated bu/A	Sandy Loam Dryland bu/A	Silt Loam bu/A
2012	70	203	64	137
2011	60	168	171	147
2010	59	210	178	181
2009	55	119	171	143
2008	56	207	93	80
2007	56	197	91	71
2006	49	115	0	35
2005	48	180	17	85
2004	41	158	122	130
2003	33	187	70	108
2002	40	158	160	157
2001	54	166	153	137
2000	54	148	114	113
1999	63	175	173	157
1998	70	175	120	139
1997	68	168	157	121
1996	65	128	133	120
1995	65	148	126	134
1994	51	129	120	124
1993	62	96	81	64
1992	74	110	71	72
1991	69	132	123	136
Ave.	57	158	114	118

News from Douglas County

*Jane Anklam
Horticulture & Agricultural Agent
Douglas County*

Thank you to all who participated in or hosted a field day, demonstration, or research plot this past growing season. I will be looking for more of the same in 2013. Please let me know if you are interested in being a part of the planning or hosting for this coming year.

Douglas County will be moving ahead with a grazing program that will emphasize sustainability and best management for new and established operations. Contact me, Jane Anklam (715-395-1515), if you are interested in an on-farm visit and/or would like to host a pasture walk. Remember, you do not need to have a picture perfect pasture to host a walk...just a vision and willingness to share.

I will have a hay probe available starting this winter to sample forage and test for nutritional value. Samples can be sent to the UW-Soil Testing Lab in Marshfield for analysis and report. I encourage you to add forage sampling to your management list. We may well be in the situation where there will be a need to purchase hay in the upper Midwest again this year. Knowing your hay's tested value can make it more marketable, not to mention add to your livestock management success.

We do have more of you introducing cover crops to your rotation. A field tour will be scheduled this spring to discuss what worked and what would work better. If you have a field that you have planted to a cover crop, or would like to in the summer of 2013, please contact me so we can add to the tour.

A Dairy Round-Table will be held on March 6. Tentative agenda will include valuing your dairy manure and legume management in your hay and pasture. Hold the date. More information will be forthcoming. We have been asked by the Dairy Promotion Board if Douglas County would be interested in hosting another Dairy Breakfast in June. Consider the possibilities!

I am very excited that we will be joining our neighboring counties in offering :

- ◆ "Fresh Market Vegetables for Profit" (January 21-February 11)

- ◆ Northern Safari of Agriculture Specialists (February-March)
- ◆ Heart of the Farm conference for farm women (February 21, 2013)

Finally, let me know if you need to discuss your soil test results before applying fertilizers this spring or if you are in the process of setting up a soil testing rotation. Remember, the finer the lime, the faster it reacts, the sooner its impact wanes.

Heart of The Farm Conference for Women Will Highlight Farm Succession, Farm Safety

*Otto Wiegand
Area Agricultural Agent
Burnett, Washburn & Sawyer Counties*

*Jenny Vanderlin
UW Center for Dairy Profitability*

A Heart of the Farm-Women in Agriculture Conference will be held at the St. Croix Inn in Solon Springs, WI in on Thurs, Feb 21 from 9:00-3:30.

The Heart of the Farm Conference Series is a UW-Extension program committed to addressing the needs of farm women by providing education on farm business topics, connecting them with agricultural resources and creating support networks. Since 2002, a total of 40 one-day conferences held across the state reached over 900 participants. As a result of these programs, participants improved their record-keeping, made changes to insurance coverage, implemented production changes, made decisions on retirement, and more!

The conference will include sessions on farm succession, farm safety, managing records and a farmer panel on balancing your life on a farm. A chair-massage therapist will be on hand for much of the day. Come and share your questions and experiences on these topics and meet new people.

Registration for the workshop is \$20 per person. To register, obtain a brochure, or for more information, contact UW-Extension Agents Jane Anklam, 715-395-1363, Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow, 715-635-3506 or 800-528-1914, or Jenny Vanderlin, jmvander@wisc.edu, 608-263-7795, website at: www.uwex.edu/ces/heartofthefarm.

Heart of the Farm is supported by grant from the USDA Risk Management Agency. It is partially funded by the Center for Dairy Profitability, UW-Extension Farm and Risk Management Team, and Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

Northwest Graziers Annual Conference

LCO College, Hayward, Saturday, March 2

*Otto Wiegand
Area Agricultural Agent
Burnett, Sawyer & Washburn Counties*

The Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network will hold its Annual Conference in Hayward in 2013 at the LCO College on Saturday, March 2, from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Watch for future newspaper articles or mailings.

The agenda is still being planned, but topics will include grazing operation startup, beef genetics and multi-species grazing. The keynote speaker will be Brian Thomas of the Soshone Tribe in Idaho who raises purebred Black Angus beef, works for the USDA, Indian Nationals Conservation Alliance and is an advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture. Another is Kara Berlage from Hayward, co-owner of North Star Homestead Farm that has several enterprises including sheep, poultry, pigs, fish, a CSA garden, a dairy plant and an on-farm restaurant.

The cost of the conference is \$20. For more information or to register, contact UW Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow at Spooner 715-635-3506, or Randy Gilbertson at NW Graziers 715-520-2112.

This Quarter's Events

Contacts: UW-Extension Ag Agents Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow, Spooner Station, 715-635-3506/800-528-1914, Jane Anklam Douglas Co, 715-395-1363, or Jason Fischbach, Ashland & Bayfield Counties, 715-373-6104 x5 for more information.

Jan 3, Thurs – Western Wis Ag Lenders Conference, Menomonie – contact Katie Wantoch, UWEX Dunn Co. 715-232-1636, \$50 includes lunch

Jan. 8, Tues, 7:30-Noon - 2013 Wisconsin Agronomy Update Meeting, Eau Claire – Holiday Inn, Campus Area, pre-registration and fee required, contact Jerry Clark 715-839-4712

Jan 9, Weds – Reproducing Profitability Workshop, Barron – Barron Electric Coop, Repro Money Program, \$10 early registration by Jan 9, contact Tim Jergenson, 715-537-6250

Jan 17-19, Thurs-Sat – GrassWorks Grazing Conference, Rothschild/Wausau – Patriot Center, contact **Lanice Szomi** 715-965-8324

Jan 28, Feb 4, 11, 18, 25, Mar 4, Mondays, 6:30-9:00 PM – Fresh Market Vegetable Series, Hayward, Spooner, Luck, Ladysmith, Superior & Ashland – contact Kevin Schoessow or Otto Wiegand, 715-635-3506 (See article)

Jan 22-23, Tues-Weds, 10-3:30 – Rice Lake Farm Show – Red Cedar Mall

Jan 24–Mar 14, Thursdays, 11 AM to 1-2 PM – Beginning Farmer Course Parts II & III, LCO College, Hayward - contact Otto Wiegand, 715-635-3506 (See article)

Jan-Feb – Northern Safari - Spooner, Luck, Ladysmith, Maple – 3 sessions, watch newspapers for specific information, contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506

Feb 1, Fri – Wis Local Food Network Conference, Ashland – Northland College, contact Jason Fischbach 715-373-6104 x5

Feb 2, Sat – Indianhead Shepherds Clinic, WITC, Rice Lake – contact Tim Jergenson 715-537-6250, or register on-line at www.indianheadsheep.com

Feb 15, Fri – Regional CAFO Meeting, Rice Lake – UW-Barron Campus, contact Tim Jergenson, 715-537-6250

Feb 21, Thurs, 9:30-3:30 - Heart of the Farm Women's Conference, Solon Springs – St. Croix Inn, contact Jane Anklam, 715-395-1363, Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 (See article)

Feb 21-23, Thurs-Sat – MOSES Organic Conference, LaCrosse – discount if registered by Jan 16, contact MOSES at 715-778-5775, or www.mosesorganic.org

Feb 23, Sat – Small Ruminant Workshop, Polk Co – contact Jennifer Blazek 715-485-8600

Mar 2, Sat, 9:30-3:30 – NW Graziers Annual Conference, LCO College, Hayward – focus on beef, other livestock, contact Otto Wiegand or Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 (see article)

Mar 13, Weds, 9:00-3:00 – Pesticide Applicator Training, Spooner – contact Kevin Schoessow 715-635-3506 – other sites are Balsam Lake Jan 29, or Barron Mar 21



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W6646 Highway 70
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Kevin Schoessow
UWEX Area Agricultural Agent