

# Agricultural Newsletter

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



## Use the winter months to improve the way you do business

*Kevin Schoessow*  
Area Agricultural Development Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties

The truth is, there isn't much more farmers can do to improve their fall season. The planning time is long past, Mother Nature has more or less played out her hand, and it's time to harvest what you've got and prepare for the future. This year, like many others, has proven to be a challenging one. While the drought and armyworm attacks did not affect everyone; the jump in fuel prices, fertilizers and other inputs, and the uncertainty of markets and government programs due to hurricane Katrina did. As with any disaster, and especially one of this size, there isn't much we can do about the past, but there is plenty we can do about the future. As fall winds down and things get a little less hectic, commit yourself and your farm partners to reevaluating, analyzing and planning for ways to improve your business future.

One way to do this is to attend workshops and conferences during the coming months. This newsletter mentions several of them. These events can be great ways to recharge your batteries. I know some producers make conferences part of a paid business get-a-way. Plan to learn something new or learn about something old done a new way. Don't just go there to listen, go there to meet other farmers and engage in conversations. The contacts and first hand information you get through informal conversations is often just as valuable as the meeting itself. Hearing from other farmers who've made changes is a great way to increase your confidence to make change on your farm.

The agriculture industry is always changing, and changing quickly. If you don't keep up with the latest information and get new ideas you are going to be behind. Next time you see that workshop notice or conference announcement. consider how it might help improve your farm business.

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### We're on the Web!

You may find this newsletter, our gardener's newsletter, and additional information on our upcoming events by visiting our website:

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

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# Thousands attend 2005 Bayfield Apple Festival

*Vijai Pandian*  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Ashland & Bayfield Counties

Nearly 40,000 people attended the Bayfield Apple Festival this year 2005 in Bayfield on October 7-9. The Bayfield Apple Fest provided an arena for direct marketing to Bayfield apple growers. Fresh apples, apple jam, apple-raspberry jam, apple pie, apple brats, and apple caramels were some of the major products at the Bayfield Apple Fest. Cortland and McIntosh are some of the popular apple varieties in Bayfield. This year non-alcoholic beverage products like Blue Spritz and Raspberry Spritz were introduced in the market.

# CORET Program to benefit organic growers

*Vijai Pandian*  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Ashland & Bayfield Counties

The Chequamegon Organic Growers (COG) Association and UW-Extension are collaborating to offer a Chequamegon Organic Research, Education & Training (CORET) program for the benefit of organic growers in Ashland and Bayfield Counties. The CORET program will provide education and training for current and potential organic growers by early spring of 2006. The COG Association and UW-Extension will also charter future research trial programs in Ashland and Bayfield Counties.

As a first step, COG and UW-Extension are seeking support and input from current and potential organic growers to help structure the



CORET program. A listening session will be held on **November 16, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland.** The public and farmers are strongly encouraged to attend and provide input on structuring of the CORET program. There is no charge but pre-registration is preferred. Please call either the Ashland County Extension Office, 715-682-7017, or the Bayfield County Extension Office, 715-373-6104 Ext. 245, on or before November 11, 2005 to register.

# Results of UW-Extension agricultural needs assessment for Burnett, Sawyer & Washburn Counties

*Otto Wiegand*

*Area Agricultural Agent*

*Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties*

Many thanks to all who responded to the recent needs assessment survey sent to our newsletter mailing list for Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn. The results will help University Extension Ag Agents better focus and plan for the needs of the three-county area. We are still accepting surveys from those who haven't gotten around to sending them. We would be willing to provide additional survey forms. So far 117 respondents (23%) have mailed forms back.

According to survey results, the top five educational priorities were (1) forages / grazing management, (2) land use / environmental issues, (3) non-dairy livestock, (4) farm financial / business management, and (5) farm product marketing.

Under the forages / grazing management priority, the top choices were: weed management (27%), improving forage quality (26%), crop / variety selection (25%), growing forages (20%), harvest and storage management (18%), organic

production / certification (17%) and management intensive grazing (16%). Under land use / environmental issues, the top choices were: farmland preservation / zoning (25%), land use planning and use assessment / taxation (both at 21%), land use / environmental conflicts (20%) and non-farm neighbor relations (17%). Under non-dairy livestock, the top choices were: pasture management (30%), grazing systems (25%), nutrition (22%), and reproduction (14%). Under farm financial / business management, the top choices were: cost of production (27%), marketing (25%), financial management (19%) and recordkeeping (17%). Under farm product marketing, the top choices were: creating and maintaining new markets (22%), value-added / direct sales (18%) and developing a marketing plan (15%).

Other items that received high mention in the lower priority categories included: soil testing

(34%), commercial fertilizers (27%), nutrient management plans (26%), manure management / application (23%) and no-till / conservation tillage (20%). Weed management ranked first or second in three priorities. Grazing was also second under dairy.

The most preferred way of receiving educational information was newsletters (52%), followed by newspapers (31%), group meetings (27%) and one-on-one consultation (20%). The most preferred type of meeting was demonstration workshops (36%), followed by field days / barn meetings (34%), local meetings with less than 50 people (33%), interactive farm walks (27%) and small group / community meetings (26%).

Respondents were willing to travel an average 47 miles to meetings, although the range was 2-100 miles. The preferred time of year for meetings was winter (29%). The preferred days of the week for meetings were combinations of weekdays (30%). Many had no preference (16%). Preferred times of day for meetings were daytime (33%) vs. evening (14%).

The principal types of operations owned by respondents were beef (36%), dairy (23%), horses (15%), cash-croppers (10%), chickens (9%), sheep (7%), or swine (5%). Keep in mind that the newsletter survey reached primarily agricultural operations.

Again, thanks for your participation!

## Keep an Eye Out for Mycotoxins

This year's drought and insect damage will most likely increase the incidence of molds found on corn during the harvest. Not all molds found on corn are toxic; however, some molds have the potential to produce mycotoxins. Mycotoxins present in feed cause livestock health problems including reduced weight gain, reduced fertility, suppressed disease resistance, and even death. Very little can be done to reduce mycotoxin levels once present in stored feed. Producers putting up high moisture corn and corn silage should keep an eye out for dark green, pink or red fungal growth. These mold colors are indicative of potential mycotoxin production. If you suspect mycotoxins in your feed, consult your nutritionist or veterinarian to ensure the feed is safe for feeding.

# Pest Management Update meetings scheduled for this fall

*Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties*

University of Wisconsin-Extension will host eight Pest Management Update Meetings around the state this fall. Topics will include weed and insect management and disease control. The two closest locations to our area are November 2<sup>nd</sup> in Bloomer and November 3<sup>rd</sup> in Marshfield.

UW-Madison/Extension specialists Chris Boerboom, weed scientist, Eileen Cullen, field crop entomologist, and Craig Grau field crop plant pathologist will speak at each session.

All sessions start at 10 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m. The registration fee is \$25. This fee covers the cost of the information packet and the noon meal. The information packet will contain the 2006 Pest Management in Wisconsin Field Crops bulletin, with weed, insect and disease control recommendations for corn, soybean, small grains and forages, as well as other pest management reference materials.

If you wish to register, contact Jerry Clark for the Bloomer location at 715-726-7950, or Matt Lippert for the Marshfield location at 715-421-8440.

# NRCS announces early EQIP signup

*Tom Fredrickson  
Natural Resources Conservation Service*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be having their annual Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) much earlier than in the past. In previous years the EQIP signup has taken place from early spring to late summer. This year the signup will occur during the fall/ early winter of 2005 prior to the 2006 crop year in hopes of getting conservation practices applied sooner to the land. In Burnett, Washburn and Sawyer Counties, the signup will occur in November and end sometime in early to mid-December. It is best to check with the local NRCS offices in these counties as to acquire the exact dates of the signup as they may vary slightly from county to county.

There are many conservation practices available this year again in these counties. Some of the more popular practices in the past have been Prescribed Grazing, Pasture and Hayland Planting, Fencing, Grassed Waterways, and Nutrient Management. The traditional Nutrient Management practice has changed somewhat as it is available only to cash grain farmers. A practice called Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning (CNMP) is also available which would apply to individuals who have livestock in their operation.

For more information regarding the 2006 EQIP signup in Burnett and Washburn Counties call 635-8228, Extension #3. In Sawyer County, call 532-7629 Extension #3.

## Soil & Water and Fertilizer Dealer Meetings

This year's Soil & Water Management and Fertilizer Dealer meetings will be held at the Eau Claire County Expo Center on Thursday, December 1. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. and will conclude at 3 p.m. Separate \$12 registration fees will be charged for each of the meetings. Certified Crop Adviser CEU credits (2 hours in soil and water management and 2 hours in soil fertility) have been requested. To register, contact Mahlon Peterson at the Eau Claire County Extension office, 715-839-4712.

### Soil & Water Management

1. CNMP, CSP, EMS, and Writing it Down - Bill Bland
2. Drainage Tile Outflow Trouble - Bill Bland
3. Soil Quality & Crop Production Systems - Dick Wolkowski
4. Winter Manure Applications: Sound Practice or Risky Business? - Chris Baxter

### Fertilizer Dealer

1. Wisconsin Soil Test Summary (2002-2004) - John Peters
2. Maximizing Profitability with Nitrogen Management - Larry Bundy, et al.
3. Fine-Tuning Corn Nitrogen Application Rates Based on Maximizing Economic Return - Carrie Lobowski
4. Short Subjects on Soil Fertility:
  - \* Starter Fertilizer Composition
  - \* Potassium Issues
  - \* Nitrogen Carryover - Larry Bundy

## Interest in farmers markets continue to grow

*Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties*

This summer marked the first successful season for the Spooner Farmers Market. Every Saturday morning from 8:00 am until noon food vendors have been selling their Wisconsin grown goods at the Railroad Museum parking lot in downtown Spooner. The Spooner Farmers Market is one of several area farmers markets in northwestern Wisconsin that have allowed consumers to buy fresh locally grown food direct from the people who raise it.

Statistics show that farmers markets are becoming increasingly popular in communities all across the country. Twenty years ago there were only a few hundred markets in the nation, today there are more than 3,100. This increase in farmers markets and consumers interest in purchasing quality fresh locally grown food is also evident in Wisconsin. Currently there are just under 200 farmers markets located in the state.

Most farmers markets in northwestern Wisconsin are classified as small, with less than 20 vendors, yet they still serve a vital link to connecting people to their food. Local markets also strengthen local economies.

Most farmers will not be able to make a living selling at our local farmers markets; however, they do offer an opportunity to direct market and add value to locally produced food. With the market season winding down, now would be a good

time to contact farmers market managers and enquire about vending for next year. Most markets are happy to take new vendors and especially welcome farmers selling meat, poultry, eggs, and other out of season products. For more information on farmers markets located in northwestern Wisconsin contact either Vijai Pandian at the Ashland/Bayfield UW-Extension Office at 715-373-6104 or Kevin Schoessow at the Spooner Area UW-Extension Office at 1-800-528-1914 or 635-3506.

## New alfalfa establishment trials are seeded

*Phil Holman  
Asst. Superintendent  
Spooner Ag Research Station*

This spring, two new alfalfa establishment trials were seeded at the Spooner Ag Research Station.

The first trial involved seeding 15 lbs. per acre of alfalfa alone or alfalfa with 2, 4, 8, or 16 lbs. of Italian ryegrass per acre. The Italian ryegrass is a high forage quality grass but lacks winter hardiness. Two varieties of Italian ryegrass were used. One variety heads out the seeding year while the other only grows vegetatively.

Results so far show little difference in forage yield; however, the highest rates of ryegrass with alfalfa have less alfalfa from the competition. Some plots will be harvested yet this October while others will be left with vegetation to improve the chances of winter survival. Yield data next year will determine the effect of late fall harvesting on yield and winter

survival. Samples are, also, being saved to determine if there are any differences in forage quality in the treatments.

The second trial compares direct-seeded alfalfa, alfalfa and oats for forage, and alfalfa with ryegrass. Some plots are not fertilized with nitrogen, while others are fertilized with 30 lbs. per acre of nitrogen at seeding, and the third fertilization treatment is 30 lbs. per acre of nitrogen both at seeding and after first cutting. Alfalfa with oats had the highest forage yield in first cutting but had the lowest number of alfalfa stems per square foot. Forage quality results and nitrogen application effects will help producers decide which alfalfa seeding system and nitrogen rate provides the best alfalfa stand.

## Hort classes offered to tribal communities

*Vijai Pandian  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Ashland & Bayfield Counties*

The Home Horticulture Business Program is a special outreach program offered to Tribal Communities in Bad River in this coming spring 2006. This program is sponsored jointly by UW-Extension and Gitiganing. The program offers two months of training to grow potential cash crops which are well suited to Chequamegon region. In addition, UW Specialists will also be offering general spring Gardening classes for the tribal communities in Bad River.

Registration is limited and priorities will be given to Native Americans. For further information, please call the Bayfield County Extension Office at 715-373-6104.

## Resources for beginning farmers abound

*Adapted by Otto Wiegand  
Area Agricultural Agent  
Burnett, Sawyer and Washburn Counties*

If you dream of farming but feel overwhelmed by the obstacles and complexities of getting started, take heart. Resources abound to help you, including networks of farmers of every variety who want to see you succeed.

That is the message of the Grow Wisconsin Farmers Working Group, a coalition of public and private agencies dedicated to helping beginning farmers. "Wisconsin needs new farmers," said Gwen Garvey with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Farm Center, a coalition partner. "Whether you are interested in traditional crop farming, organic farming, dairying or even urban farming, there are successful farmers out there who want to help you succeed."

Following are some of the resources available:

**Stateline Farm Beginnings**™ offers winter seminar sessions on planning for profit plus hands-on opportunities in the growing season at area farms. It starts October 22, 2005 at the Michael Fields Agriculture Institute in East Troy. For more information visit: <http://www.cslearningcenter.org/farmbeginnings.html>.

The **Grow Wisconsin Farmers Working Group** offers workshops on farm entry and transfer plus opportunities to network with

farmers and agriculture service providers. The workshops are scheduled for December 10, 2005 in Wausau, January 7, 2006 in Menomonie, January 14 in Green Bay, and January 21 in Mineral Point. For more information contact Joy Kirkpatrick, Center for Dairy Profitability at 608-263-3485, or email: [joy.kirkpatrick@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:joy.kirkpatrick@ces.uwex.edu), or Gwen Garvey at the DATCP Farm Center, 800-942-2474, or email: [gwen.garvey@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:gwen.garvey@datcp.state.wi.us).

The **Fourth Annual Grow Wisconsin Farmers State Conference** will be held in Wisconsin Dells on Tuesday, January 17, 2006, at the Chula Vista Conference Center/Resort. Panel presentations and round table discussions will allow beginning farmers as well as those who work with farm families to become familiar with farm succession resources and information. For more information contact Gwen Garvey, DATCP Farm Center, 800-942-24-74 or email [gwen.garvey@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:gwen.garvey@datcp.state.wi.us).

**Returning to The Farm** is a pilot program for students and their families entering multi-generation farm businesses within 5 years after college graduation. College juniors/seniors and their families will have an opportunity for professional help in evaluating the potential for bringing the next generation into the family farm business. Two weekends: November 11-12, 2005 and February 10-11, 2006 in Platteville. For further information contact Joy Kirkpatrick, Center for Dairy Profitability 608-263-3485 or email [joy.kirkpatrick@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:joy.kirkpatrick@ces.uwex.edu).

The **UW School for Beginning Dairy Farmers (WSBDF)** and **UW Farm and Industry Short Course** provide excellent and convenient

opportunity for up-to-date practical management skill development for beginning farmers. WSBDF also offers internships and makes course material available via compact disc. For more information visit [www.cias.wisc.edu](http://www.cias.wisc.edu) or [www.cals.wisc.edu/students/ASAweb/FISC/FISC.htm](http://www.cals.wisc.edu/students/ASAweb/FISC/FISC.htm).

**Dairy Herd Management** one-year programs are offered at three Wisconsin technical colleges. For more information visit:

Indianhead: [www.witc.edu](http://www.witc.edu),  
Southwest: [www.swtc.edu](http://www.swtc.edu), or  
Lakeshore: [www.gotoltc.edu](http://www.gotoltc.edu)

**Farm Link** program helps match farmers looking to retire with farmers looking to begin. It also provides information on farm transition issues. For more information visit DATCP's Web site, [www.datcp.state.wi.us](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us) and search "Farm Link Program".

**Building a Vision**, a UW Extension financial management workshop, offered in early 2006 to beginning farmers as well as experienced farmers interested in mentoring beginners. Workshops will be offered in Clark and Barron counties. Watch the Center for Dairy Profitability web site for dates and locations, [cdp.wisc.edu/Welcome.htm](http://cdp.wisc.edu/Welcome.htm).

Local UW Extension Agents and agribusiness groups may offer programs or opportunities for networking. Contact them through your phone book.

### Contacts:

Robin Engel 608-224-5002, or  
Gwen Garvey 608-224-5049

# This Quarter's Events

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**October 18**, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m., WITC, Rice Lake - Ethnic and Religious Food Markets: Opportunities for Sheep and Goat Producers, free, contact Larry Jacobi, 715-265-7637.

**October 27**, Thursday, 10-3, Country Aire, Stratford, Central Wisconsin Grazier Fall Meeting, pre-registration \$15, walk-ins \$20, includes biodiversity of pastures and grazing behavior.

**November 1 – Premises Registration**, “The Wisconsin Premises Registration Act is effective November 1, 2005. The rule requires anyone with livestock not currently licensed by the department to register by January 1, 2006. Those entities currently licensed by the department must register by their license renewal date.” See attached form. Register online at [www.wiid.org](http://www.wiid.org), or key in “WLIC”, or contact Leanne Ketterhagen, 888-808-1910, or your local Ag Agent for information or forms.

**November 2-3**, Wednesday - Thursday, Kahlor Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN – North Central Region Dairy Beef Conference, \$150, to register: Wis. Agri-Service Association. 608-223-1111, or [www.wasa.org](http://www.wasa.org), for info: key in “Iowa Beef Center” or call Jeff Lehmkuhler, 608-263-7761.

**November 8-9**, Tuesday - Wednesday, Luther Park, Chetek - Management Assessment Center for Dairy Farm Owners and Managers, contact Carl Duley, 608-685-6256.

**November 8-10**, Tuesday - Thursday, UW-River Falls - Cheesemakers Conference, “DBIC Turning Chaos into Control: Milk to Artisanal Masterpiece Conference”, UW River-Falls, Wis. For more information or to register, contact Rane May, 715-425-3702.

**November 10**, Thursday, 5:30 p.m., Club 8, Ladysmith – Cow-Calf Seminar, UW Extension and Northern Wis. Beef Producers Association, topics include beef herd diseases, risk management and premises registration, \$8 includes dinner, contact Aleisha Crowe, 715-532-2151.

**January 7**, Saturday, UW-Stout, Menomonie – Beginning & Exiting Farmers Workshop, Memorial Student Union, 9:30-3:00, minimal charge. This event has been very popular. Held at Rice Lake and two other locations last time, it has now expanded to five, including Wausau on Dec. 10, and Green Bay, Mineral Point and Fond du Lac all in January. Contact Joy Kirkpatrick, 608-263-3485, Gwen Garvey, 800-942-2474, or your County Ag Agent for more information.

**January 11**, Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., WITC, Rice Lake – Dairy Road Show, topics include improving conception rates, nutrition hot topics such as Rumensin<sup>®</sup>, starch and MUN, biosecurity, crossbreeding and the new TCI index, advance registration \$20, also at Menomonie on same day. Contact UWEX Ag Agents Tim Jergenson, 715-537-6250 or Otto Wiegand, 715-635-3506.

**January – February 2006**, Wednesday - Friday, Phillips, Ladysmith, Ashland, Maple and Spooner - Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists, further details in next newsletter.

Jan. 25-27 – Getting the most out of your farm woodlot

Feb. 1-3 – Alternative dairy housing

Feb. 8-10 – Nutrient management

Feb. 15-17 – Dairy nutrition, feed management

**February 9-11**, Thursday - Saturday, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point – GrassWorks Grazing Conference, details later at the GrassWorks website, or call Paul Nehring, 715-261-6009.

**February 25**, Saturday, Cambridge, MN – Horse Owner Education Day, Cambridge Middle School, 10-3, \$25, contact Kristi Martini, 763-767-3837.

**March 1**, Application deadline for Century or Sesquicentennial Farm and Home Recognition at the Wisconsin State Fair in 2006, contact Jill Albanese, 414-777-0580 or your local ag agent for forms or information.