

Agricultural Newsletter

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



Growing Canola for Bio-Diesel

Phil Holman
Asst. Superintendent
Spooner Ag Research Station

The University of Wisconsin has had a researcher working on developing canola varieties for the past several years. At first, the canola variety trials were done at the Ashland Ag Research Station, and the last few years have been at the Spooner Ag Research Station. Results of the variety trials can be found on the Internet at <http://osbornlab.agronomy.wisc.edu/research.html>.

I have been receiving several calls from farmers interested in growing canola. This interest in growing canola comes from publicity about bio-diesel and a local partnership making bio-diesel on the farm. When growing canola, consider the following points:

- * Canola is small seeded, slightly larger than alfalfa seeds and more round in shape than alfalfa seeds
- * Canola seed has about twice the oil content of soybeans
- * Canola plots were seeded at 6 lbs. per acre in late April or early May with a press type seeder (plot seeder but similar to a Brillion)
- * Many canola varieties are genetically resistant to glyphosate herbicides
- * Canola fertility recommendations are similar to corn
- * Canola **REQUIRES** swathing about 2 weeks prior to combining because the pods on canola ripen from bottom of the plant first and then progress to the top
- * Canola should be swathed in late July and combined in early August depending on planting date and plant maturity
- * Combine settings need to be correct or severe harvesting losses will occur due to the small seed size
- * Volunteer canola will appear in fields in future years but generally isn't sufficient enough to cause losses in other field crops
- * Lastly, if you plan to grow canola, know if you can **SELL** canola or if you will be growing for your own use (i.e. **KNOW YOUR MARKET**)

So far there is not an established area canola market or even need for more local grown canola. Using average plot yields of 1700 lbs. of seed per acre and the county FSA-PCP price of \$9.66 per hundred only gives a gross income of \$164 per acre. Based on your market price and estimated yields, you will need to carefully consider if it is economical to grow canola by determining if the gross income will cover seed, fertilizer, herbicide, machinery, hauling, land, and labor costs.

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Beef Quality Assurance training set for November 1

Otto Wiegand
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Agricultural Agent
Eau Claire County

A Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) training session will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2006 at the Spooner Ag Research Station from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Since its inception in the early 1980s, Wisconsin's BQA Program has been a cooperative effort between the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association, the Wisconsin Beef Council, beef producers, veterinarians, nutritionists and UW-Extension. There is a renewed interest in the program today because of BQA-certified sales of feeder cattle, packer acceptance and a general interest in what producers do to enhance food safety.

The BQA program is designed to assist producers as they set production standards for their operations and seek to establish systems for data retention and record keeping. Producer certification involves a classroom session and a certification test. The certification is valid for two years and producers need to be recertified every two years.

The UW-Extension Livestock Focus Team is conducting statewide producer certification. Major classroom topics will include feed-stuffs, feed additives and medications, processing and treatment records, injectable animal health products, and animal care and husbandry.

Pre-registration is required by Monday, October 30. The fee is \$15 which includes manual, test, and certification fees. Please call UW-Extension Ag Agent Otto Wiegand at 715-635-3506.

Winter wheat date of planting trial results

Phil Holman
Asst. Superintendent
Spooner Ag Research Station

We are fast approaching the end of the recommended time to plant Winter Wheat. In fall of 2004 and 2005, Winter Wheat Date of Planting trials were conducted at the Spooner Ag Research Station. This trial was also repeated at Arlington and Lancaster. For each location, planting was done in mid September, late September and mid-October. Each time two varieties and two seed treatments were also tested.

Overall grain yields at the Spooner Ag Research Station were reduced due to partial winter kill in 2005 and the drought in 2006. However, both years showed severely lower yields when planting in mid-October versus mid-September. In 2005, the yields were 20% less and in 2006 yields were 26% lower. Yields in late September were only slightly lower than yields in mid-September. Arlington and Lancaster also had yield declines with later plantings, but yields were not as severely impacted due to their location being further south.

From this research, it is our recommendation that for maximum yields Winter Wheat in northwestern Wisconsin be planted by the end of September.

Dairy-L

comments on hairy heel warts

*Tom Syverud
Extension and Outreach Educator
Ashland and Iron Counties*

What are the best practices to use in “disinfecting” a barn that has cattle infected with hairy heel warts or as more commonly known as strawberries? In the near future I will have the rare opportunity to empty out a barn that has infected cows before repopulating it with heifers from the same herd, never before exposed to the disease. I would like to prevent the spread of warts. Is it simple enough to clean out all the manure? Is a good job of scraping sufficient or is cleaning with water better? Would pressure washing be required? Will idle time after cleaning be of any help and how long? Would a chemical disinfectant be of any help?

The replies started with a description of the disease: Papillomatous Digital Dermatitis (PDD) is the scientific name for hairy warts, first identified in 1974. It is also referred to as hairy heel warts, hairy foot warts, digital warts, strawberry foot, raspberry heel. The cause of the disease is unknown but believed to be of bacterial origin. Spirochete bacteria have been isolated from the lesions of affected cows. The fact that 90% of hairy warts lesions are cured when treated with antibiotics support the involvement of a bacterial component.

The disease is mainly diagnosed in cows that are housed in confinement. It is less common in cows on pasture. The occurrence in

beef cattle is minimal. Lesions are usually located on the heel. PDD first appears as an inflammation of the skin between the bulbs of the heel. Mature lesions appear as a cauliflower-like or strawberry-like protrusion with whitish edges. The outgrowth of the dermal tissue resembles hair. This is why PDD is commonly named “hairy heel wart”. Affected cows are reluctant to move and shift their weight to the toe. This usually causes locomotion problems and pain. Optimal animal production and performance are reduced depending upon the severity of each case. Affected cows avoid walking because it is painful. The number of hours they spent at the feed bunk is reduced. As a direct effect, cows usually have reduced estrus signs, decreased milk production, reduced body weight, and a longer than normal interval between calving and conception. This is associated with an increase in involuntary culling.

Muddy conditions favor hairy warts. Dairies having a greater proportion of Holstein cows are also at a greater risk to be affected by hairy warts. Incidents of PDD are also higher in the first and second lactation animals than in older animals, which may suggest the existence of an immunological factor. Overcrowding and purchasing heifers are very important predisposing factor.

I was told by our vet that just scraping was not enough and that the

same solution to prevent the warts would have to be sprayed in the barn and then let it sit idle for a few months. I haven’t tried this but that is what he told me after I got a cow back with the warts after never having it. Our barn has been idle for a year, heifers have been in it occasionally to get shots and sorting, and they haven’t been infected. We never washed it after removing the last of the milking herd.

I can’t answer the how to disinfect the barn but I would suggest a footbath with your preferred wart solution might be a good idea, at least for a time after the heifers are moved in. I know you will do a good job of cleaning but I question how well anything that’s been exposed to cow manure can truly be cleaned.

These websites can be contacted for more information:

<http://www.moomilk.com/archive/u-health-18.htm>

<http://cvm.msu.edu/extension/docs/heelwart.htm>

<http://cvm.msu.edu/extension/docs/heeltx.htm>

<http://www.traill.uiuc.edu/dairy/paperDisplay.cfm?ContentID=292>

<http://www.traill.uiuc.edu/uploads/dairy/papers/HairyHeel%2Epdf>

http://www.livestock.novartis.com/diseases_heelwarts_dairy.html

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>

Listening and information session with Laura Paine

Thursday, October 26, 1-4 p.m. Spooner Ag Research Station

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

*Linda Zillmer
Northwest Graziers Network*

Last spring Laura Paine was named to the newly created position in the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Division of Agricultural Development as the Organic & Grazing Coordinator. Laura is taking the lead in implementing the Governor’s Grow Wisconsin plan to make the state a leader in grazing and organic food production.

Laura has considerable knowledge and experience in both grazing and organics. She previously served Columbia County as a UW Extension agent and has served on the GrassWorks Board of Directors. Laura has received several Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative grants. Along with her husband, she manages a small beef grazing farm in the Columbus area and direct market beef. Laura has also been a guest speaker at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference and coauthored a chapter in *Organic Dairy Farming: A Resource for Farmers*.

Laura will conduct a listening and information session at the Spooner Ag Research Station on Thursday, October 26th from 1:00 to 4:00. She will discuss her role in providing economic, business and market development and coordination for several interagency advisory councils and teams, as well as assisting producers in fostering new investment in the organic and grazing industries. Laura is researching and identifying training or education needs of Wisconsin producers and agribusiness companies in order to recommend strategies and actions to enhance organic agriculture and grazing development. Participants are encouraged to share their ideas for moving forward in the areas of grazing and organic agriculture.

Other topics for the day will be to explain grants and other assistance available through DATCP, help for beginning farmers, and evolving issues with grass-fed and organic standards. UW-Extension Ag Agents will explain grant programs for other types of agriculture as well. Linda Zillmer will discuss recent efforts to promote grazing by the Northwest Wisconsin Graziers Network.

Looking for hay or forage?

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

While hay and forage supplies may be a little short in the drought affected areas of NW Wis. there appears to be plenty of hay and forage available from other parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota. There are several internet lists set up to help both buyers and sellers. The two that are most often used are the Upper Midwest Haylist <http://www.haylist.umn.edu/> and the Farmer to Farmer Hay, Forage and Corn list <http://farmertofarmer.uwex.edu/>.

A recent visit to both these sites showed dozens of seller listings. The upper Midwest Haylist for example listed the following: Your search of seller lots for Alfalfa in Large Square bale from within 400 miles of the zip code 54801 (Spooner) returned **37** lots which are displayed below. These search results contain a total of 5,589 Tons at an average price of \$98/Ton.

If you have access to the internet it is fairly easy to post your request to either buy or sell. If you do not have Internet access, contact your local UW-Extension Office for assistance.

Emergency Assistance Programs Available

In addition to the emergency loan assistance program offered by local Farm Service Agency for drought stricken producers, the USDA recently announced a Livestock Assistance Grant Program (LAGP). This grant program is to help livestock producers partially recover forage production losses due to certain drought conditions during 2006. Eligible counties in WI include Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Polk, Price, Rusk Sawyer Taylor and Washburn. USDA appropriated \$50 million in state block grants, with Wisconsin receiving \$395,000. In Wisconsin the funds are being administered through the Department of Agriculture. Sign up applications, for both the emergency loan assistance program and LAGP can be picked up at your local USDA Farm Service Center.

Dairy Road Show seminar to be held in Rice Lake on January 10

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



The 2007 Dairy Road Show will be held in 15 locations around the state in January. The Road Show is a good opportunity to hear the latest developments in hot topics for dairy farmers. The subjects to be covered will include: managing cows with mastitis, strategies to improve profitability, twinning and neonatal calf mortality, and compost and bedded-pack housing.

The nearest location in NW Wisconsin will be WITC at Rice Lake on Wednesday, January 10, from 10:30 to 3:00. The cost, which includes lunch and materials, will be \$20 if pre-registered by January 8, or \$30 for late registrations. Other sites in northern and central Wisconsin include Menomonie, Loyal, Medford and Plover.

For more information and registration, contact Otto or Kevin at Spooner UW Extension, 800-528-1914 / 715-635-3506, Tim at the Barron County UW Extension, 715-537-6250, Ryan at Polk County UW Extension, 715-485-8600, or Aliasha at Rusk County UW Extension, 715-532-2151.

This Quarter's Events

September 28, Thursday, Abbotsford, Clark/Marathon – Dairy Pasture Walk – Dave and Sandy Lueddecke, profitably rotationally grazing 28 Holsteins on 100 acres since the mid-1990s, organized by Central Wisconsin River Graziers, contact Paul Daigle, 715-261-6006.

October 3-7, Tuesday-Saturday, Alliant Energy Center, Madison – World Dairy Expo

October 10, Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station – Pork Quality Assurance (PQA) - training for adults, no charge, instructor Dan Short of UW-Extension, please pre-register by October 6 (see article)

October 24, Tuesday, North Central Technical College, Wausau – Future of Farming Forum

October 26, Thursday, 1-4 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station – Listening and Information Session with Laura Paine, DATCP Organic and Grazing Specialist (see article)

October-January – Tentative EQIP Cost-Share Signup Period – In Burnett & Washburn Counties contact Tom Fredrickson 715-635-8228, in Sawyer contact Mike Koehler 715-532-3786, in Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Iron contact Tom Cogger 715-682-9117

November 1, Wednesday, 6:30-9:00 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station – Beef Quality Assurance Training - UWEX trainers Mahlon Peterson and Bill Halfman, pre-registration by October 30, \$15 (see article)

November 8, 1-5 p.m., Wednesday, Spooner Ag Research Station - Grape Management and Pruning Workshop. Indoor classroom topics, followed by outdoor hands-on pruning of grapes. Must pre-register. Contact Spooner Area Ag Agents office at 1-800-528-1914 or 715-635-3506.

November 8-9, Wednesday-Thursday, Holiday Inn, Steven's Pt. – Dairy Herd Health Conference (see article)

November 9-11, Thursday-Saturday, Best Western Midway Resort, LaCrosse - 12th Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium. Contact Lorraine Toman at 715-635-3735 for more information.

January 10, Wednesday, 10:30-3:00, WITC, Rice Lake – Dairy Road Show – (see article)

January – February, Wednesday-Friday, Phillips, Ladysmith, Ashland, Maple and Spooner - Northern Wisconsin Safari of Ag Specialists - January 17-19, January 24-26, January 31-February 2 & February 7-9, tentative topics include agro-forestry and alternative energy

February 2-3, Friday-Saturday, Holiday Inn, Stevens Pt. - GrassWorks Wisconsin Grazing Conference Contact: Paul Nehring, 715-261-6009, mail@grassworks.org

February 23-24, Friday-Saturday, LaCrosse Center, LaCrosse – MOSES Upper Midwest Organic Conference Contact: 715-772-3153, www.mosesorganic.org, info@mosesorganic.org

Pork Quality Assurance training offered October 10

*Dan Short
Otto Wiegand
UW-Extension*

A number of years ago the National Pork Producers Council introduced a very successful voluntary food safety education program for swine producers called Pork Quality Assurance (PQA). Training at this program emphasizes best management swine production practices that not only enhance consumer's confidence in pork, but has the ability to decrease producer costs, and enable some producers to market hogs at slaughter plants that have announced that they will no longer purchase hogs from producers that are not PQA-certified.

Dan Short, UW-Extension Swine Specialist, will be conducting a regional PQA training and recertification session for pork producers on Tuesday evening October 10th, 7-9 p.m. at the Spooner Ag Research Station.

Participant and instructor dialogue about such issues as farm bio-security, production facility management and the appropriate proper use of animal health products, etc. are typically part of this program. This program is for adult certification, but youth may also attend.

You can receive more information about this regional PQA training or pre-register by contacting Otto Wiegand at the Spooner Station, 715-635-3506. Pre-

registration by Friday, October 6 is necessary to accommodate educational materials needs. There is no charge.

Reports of smut in corn

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

Questions about corn smut have been common in the past few weeks as corn is being chopped for silage. In some fields up to 75% of the corn is being reported infected with smut. In heavy infestations smut is leaving chopping equipment and wagons covered in a black dust. Corn smut is caused by fungus spores found in the soil. The fungus is most commonly found on ears although it will also grow on tassels, stalk nodes and leaf midribs. Conditions that favor infection include drought, hail, and low fertility.

One of the most common questions is, "Is corn smut toxic for livestock?" Past studies have shown that the fungus that causes corn smut has not been shown to produce mycotoxins that are harmful to livestock or end consumers. Livestock have been observed sneezing when eating smutty corn grain or corn silage. The smut spores act as an irritant in nasal passages and can be an allergen. For this same reason we encourage farmers to wear some type of dusk mask to avoid over exposure.

Conditions that favor corn smut may also favor ear molds such as aspergillus and fusarium which can be toxic to livestock. If you suspect either of these molds it may be a good idea to have the feed grain or silage tested for mycotoxins.

Midwest Dairy Herd Health Conference November 8-9 in Stevens Point

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

The Midwest Dairy Herd Health Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn at Stevens Point on Wednesday-Thursday, November 8-9.

Topics will include removing bottlenecks from transition cow grouping and housing, caring for teats in the winter, limit feeding heifers to improve efficiency, bedding for sleeping and mastitis control, tuberculosis update, housing special needs cows, producer panel on animal ID and tracking, what food distributors want from livestock producers, packer perspective on what is wanted from cull cows, dealing with salmonella update and producer panel, and optional Marshfield Research Station tour.

Early Registrations must be in by November 1, 2006. Costs are as follows:

- \$150 - Conference
- \$165 - Conference and tour
- \$35 - Tour only

Late registration fees are as follows:

- \$170 - Conference
- \$185 - Conference and tour

Contact Leah Leighty, CALS Conference Services, 608-263-1672, to register, or UW-Extension Agent Otto Wiegand at Spooner, 715-635-3506, for details.

Buying and selling corn silage: What's a fair price?

Kevin Schoessow

Area Agricultural Development Agent

Burnett, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties

Questions about pricing standing corn silage have been more common this year due to the drought. As with any pricing question there are general rule's of thumb, and several "it depends" scenarios.

As with most pricing issues, we first need to start with a base price. The general rules of thumb for the price per ton of corn silage at 65% moisture are; 7-9 times the price of #2 shell corn, 1/4 to 1/3 the price of baled hay, or production cost per ton of corn silage plus some rate of return (usually 8-10%). Given these rule's of thumb corn silage at 65% moisture could be valued anywhere from \$16-25/ton as fed.

Adjustments for moisture differences must be made. For example: \$24.50 per ton of 65% moisture silage has been established. Each ton at 65% moisture contains $(2000 \times .35) = 700$ lbs of dry matter. Value per cwt DM = $\$24.5/7 = \3.50 . If, however, moisture content is 70%, then each ton contains only 600 lbs of dry matter. To have comparable value, this silage would have to be priced at \$21.00 ($6 \times \3.50) per ton. On the other hand, if moisture content were 60%, then a comparable price would be $(2000 \times .40 = 800; 8 \times \$3.50 = \$28.00$ per ton).

$(\$ \text{ per ton} \times \text{actual dry matter}) / \text{dry matter for referenced silage}$

Another adjustment that needs to be taken into account is silage quality. Research shows that the highest milk yield per ton of silage occurs when the corn is chopped at 1/2 milk line. If corn is chopped before or after this maturity level a discount of up to 15% should be taken. Given this year's growing conditions, drought stressed corn could be discounted as well. Some general discounts for drought-stressed corn would be 0-10% for 20 - 40 bu/acre corn, 10-20% for 0 - 20 bu/acre corn and 20-30% for short barren stalks.

To determine the value of silage standing in the field we need an estimate of what is standing in the field. There are two "quick and dirty" ways to estimate corn silage yield are:

Based on Grain Yield...for stressed corn, about one ton of silage per acre can be obtained from each 5 bushels of grain per acre. For example, if you expect a grain yield of 50 bushels of grain per acre, you will get about 10 ton/acre of 30 percent dry matter silage. For corn yielding more than 100 bushels per acre, about one ton of silage per acre can be expected for each 7 to 8 bushels of grain per acre.

Based on Plant Height...If little or no grain is expected, a rough pre-harvest estimate of yield can be made by assuming that one ton of 30 percent dry matter silage can be obtained for each foot of plant height (excluding the tassel). On this basis, "waist-high" corn 3-4 feet tall will yield about 3 to 4 tons per acre of silage at 30 percent dry matter.

Of course, a more accurate way to estimate yield is to weigh the corn plants from a portion of an acre (1/100th) in several spots of the field. Another method would be to count the number of loads taken off the field and estimate the tons per load.

In order to obtain actual tons harvested, weigh each wagon load or count how many feet of silage went into a silo after settling. If you know the silo size, how many feet of silage was put up and what the moisture was, silo charts can be used to calculate tons stored. Dividing stored tons by acres harvested will give you yield per acre.

Finally, multiply your adjusted base price with yield and acre to determine total value. If the buyer is responsible for harvesting, these cost must also be taken into account. Silage harvest costs range anywhere from \$25 - \$90 acre depending on harvesting equipment and hauling.

For more information on pricing corn silage or other drought related issues gives us a call 800-528-1914 or visit our website at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag>.