

Columbia County Ag Reporter

May/June 2019



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
COLUMBIA COUNTY

WHAT'S INSIDE...

*Agricultural newsletter for Columbia
County landowners and residents*

This issue's highlighted articles:

- ◆ Calendar of Events (pg. 2)
- ◆ Soybean/Waterhemp (pg. 7)
- ◆ Soybean Plant Arrangements (pg. 11-13)
- ◆ Dairy Situation (pg. 16-17)

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Ag Reporter Calendar of Events

May

- 10 Have all corn planted by today, begin losing 1 bu/acre/day
- 27 Memorial Day, County offices closed

June

- ?? Corn Growers Weed Scouting Clinic, with Rodrigo Werle - Arlington ARS
- 13 Green Lake County Pasture Walk, Honey Creek Farm, Green Lake, WI
- 14 WI District Holstein Show – Mauston
- 15 Moo Day Brunch – Kessenich Dairy, W6008 County Road K, Arlington, 9 am to 1 pm
- 30 From Grain to Plate Field Day, Meadowlark Organics Farm, Ridgeway

The Columbia County **Ag Calendar and Deadlines** webpage is located at <http://columbia.uwex.edu/ag-calendar-and-deadlines/>.

JOB OPENINGS

Columbia County Farm Service Agency is Hiring a Permanent Program Technician

The Columbia County Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting applications to fill a permanent Program Technician position. All candidates must be U.S. Citizens, high school graduates or the equivalent. The individual selected will be responsible for carrying out general office activities, and technical functions pertaining to FSA administered programs. Applicants should possess excellent human relations skills as well as strong clerical and computer skills. A general knowledge of agricultural practices would also be beneficial. The selected applicant must undergo a background investigation.

The full vacancy announcement can be obtained via USAJOBS at www.usajobs.gov by accessing vacancy announcement number FSACO-10483229-19-WI-016-TS. The closing date for this announcement is Monday, May 13, 2019.

Lodi Agricultural FAIR

Schedule of Events

Thursday, July 11th: 6:30-7pm Market Lamb Weigh-In
7pm Beef & Swine Market Weigh-In
Friday, July 12th: 8am Mandatory (Beef, Dairy, Sheep, Swine, Poultry, Rabbits) Exhibitor's Meeting
10am Swine Show
3pm Beef Show
4:40pm Pork Chop Dinner
Saturday, July 13th: 8am Sheep Show
8am Dairy Show
9am Poultry Show
2pm Exhibitor Meat Animal Auction
Sunday, July 14th: 10am Master Showman Competition



Schedule of Events

Sunday, July 21st: 8am Horse Pleasure Show/Trail Class
Monday, July 22nd: 6pm Open Dog Show - Ag Building
Tuesday, July 23rd: 6-8pm Junior Swine entry & Weigh-In
Wed., July 24th: noon-7pm Animal Entry
5pm Swine Judging—Swine barn
Thur., July 25th: 9am Beef Judging—Ag Building
4pm Sheep Judging/Sheep Lead Class
Friday, July 26th: 8:30am Dairy Judging—Ag Building
9am Poultry Judging—Ag Building
10am Meat Goat Judging
Saturday, July 27th: 11am-12:30pm Buyers Buffet
1pm Sale of Champions—Ag Building
4pm Steak Fry @ Farm Bureau Eat Stand
Sunday, July 28th: 10am Showman of Showmen—Ag Building
12pm Parade of Champions & Merit Awards

Green Lake County Pasture Walk

June 13th, 10:00 am ~ 12:00 pm

Honey Creek Farm
W1532 Bluffton Rd.
Green Lake, WI 54941

Join us at Honey Creek Farm for a pasture walk! Located 4 miles north of Green Lake, you can learn about Jim Quick's grass-fed beef, pastured pork and gourmet garlic production.

For more information contact:

Rachel Bouressa, Grazing Planner, Golden Sands RC&D Council, Inc.
Rachel.Bouressa@goldensandsrccd.org
715-343-6215

Nitrogen Use Efficiency: A guide to conducting your own assessment

Are you interested in monitoring Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) on your own fields?

This guide will lead you through the process of conducting your own NUE study. Calculating NUE can be relatively simple and offers insight into how N management can be altered in order to achieve economically optimum yields while reducing nutrient losses to the environment.

[ACCESS THE GUIDE](#)

Be a participant in UW Discovery Farms NUE Research!

If you plan to monitor NUE this season (either on your farm or with farmers you work with) please click "BE A PART OF THE PROJECT" to receive additional information throughout the season and your personalized NUE report at the end of the season. Please reach out to Discovery Farms' NUE Coordinator Abby Augarten (abigail.augarten@wisc.edu) with any additional questions.

[BE A PART OF THE PROJECT](#)



From Grain to Plate Field Day, Sunday, June 30

Including small grains such as wheat, rye, barley and oats in a farm's cropping rotation can help reduce nutrient runoff and protect water quality. But how can farmers add these crops to their farms and access the market for food-grade grains? Join the Uplands Watershed Group and Pecatonica Pride Watershed Association for the From Grain to Plate field day on Sunday, June 30 from 10:30 am to 3:30 pm. The event takes place at Meadowlark Organics Farm near Ridgeway. Lunch is provided and RSVPs are requested.

For more information, see <https://www.cias.wisc.edu/from-grain-to-plate-field-day/>.

Goat AI Clinic Offered, June 19 & 20, 2019

Artificial Insemination has been a powerful tool in the agriculture industry for many years. AI allows producers to improve the genetic progress of their herd by using top quality sires from around the world. A goat Artificial Insemination course will be held on June 19 and June 20 at the Fond du Lac County Fairgrounds, located in Fond du Lac, WI. The course will be taught by leading goat AI company BIO-Genics of Salmon, ID.

The course will in focus on management and effects on AI success, basic male and female goat anatomy, proper AI procedure, semen handling and storage, and record keeping. The course will be a two-day program with classroom and hands-on experience. Class registration is \$285 per person and includes meals and educational materials. Course space is limited and class will fill on a first come, first served basis. A \$100 non-refundable deposit is due by May 10 and full payment is due by May 28.

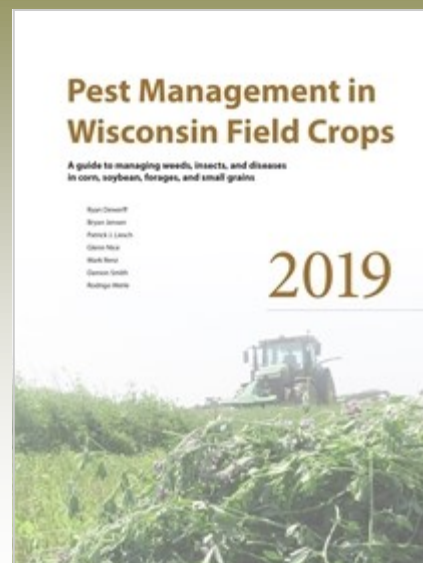
For more information on the course or to register, visit <http://bit.ly/2019GoatAIWI> or contact Extension Kewaunee County at 920-388-7141.

Agronomy/Soils Field Day August 28, 2019

AT THE ARLINGTON AG RESEARCH STATION

Mark your calendars now to save the date, more details will be published for presentations on corn, soybeans, wheat, soils and pest management. A special afternoon only tour will feature research on hemp grain and fiber production. Look for more information in late May. If your company is interested in sponsoring this event, contact Joe Lauer, jglauer@wisc.edu.

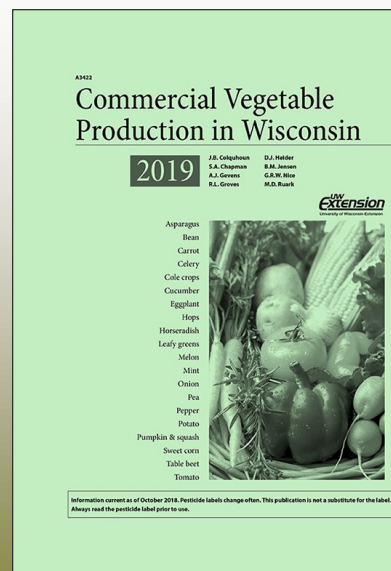
Learning Store Publications



"2019 Pest Management in Wisconsin Field Crops" A3646 is available in the Columbia County UW-Extension Office.

This is a guide to managing weeds, insects, and diseases in corn, soybean, forages, and small grains.

Price is \$10.00 picked up at the Columbia County UW-Extension office, can be purchased on-line for \$25.00, or can be downloaded for free at: <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Pest-Management-in-Wisconsin-Field-Crops2019-P155.aspx>



2019 UW-Extension "Commercial Vegetable Crop Production Management Guide"

The 2019 University of Wisconsin Madison Extension Commercial Vegetable Crop Production Management Guide is now available.

Our production guide is updated every October with release of a new guide in January. The book can be downloaded for free as a pdf at the link below, or can be purchased online for \$12.50. <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/A3422.pdf>

ARE YOU PRE-PARED FOR THE SOYBEAN (AND WATERHEMP) GROWING SEASON?



RODRIGO WERLE AND SHAWN CONLEY

Spring has arrived rather quickly in Wisconsin and the planting season is right around the corner (or perhaps it has already started for some growers). Before getting their soybeans in the ground, farmers should make sure they have solid weed management plans for the growing season, particularly if waterhemp is present in their operations. According to our 2018 Survey, several Wisconsin soybean fields get only treated with a one-pass POST-emergence herbicide program (keep in mind that pre-plant tillage is a common practice adopted in Wisconsin cropping systems and that helps farmers “start clean”). Because of the widespread occurrence of waterhemp populations resistant to glyphosate and/or other POST-emergence herbicides (e.g., ALS- and PPO-inhibitors; see article: “Herbicide Resistance in Wisconsin: An Overview”) combined with its extended emergence window (mid-May through July), a one-pass POST-emergence program in soybeans is likely not a viable strategy in fields infested with waterhemp. Moreover, research conducted across the Midwest has demonstrated the importance of keeping the soybean crop weed-free from establishment through the V3 growth stage (3rd trifoliolate). Weeds emerging after the V3 growth stage will likely not impact soybean yield; however, they should still be proactively managed to prevent them from reproducing and replenishing the seedbank (remember “no seed, no weed”). Thus, effective PRE-emergence herbicides can help farmers maintain their fields weed-free during initial establishment of the crop (= achieve full yield potential) and also reduce the selection pressure on POST-emergence herbicides (due to fewer weeds to be controlled POST-emergence), helping on the fight against herbicide resistance.

Read the full article at: <http://www.wiscweeds.info/post/are-you-prepared-for-the-soybean-growing-season/>



UW-Extension partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection along with the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute to produce a webinar on Hemp on April 17th. If you missed it, you may view individual parts of the presentation at your convenience at anytime of the day or night. It has been broken up into four one hour segments so that you may choose to view the sections that you are most interested in. The sections include:

Agronomics of Hemp: DATCP Rules and Licensing

Agronomics of Hemp: Grain and Fiber Hemp

Agronomics of Hemp: CBD Production

Agronomy of Hemp: UW-Madison Research Plans and Final Q&A

There is also a one hour segment that was recorded in Brown County on February 23, by Dr. David Williams.

All of these videos may be accessed on-line at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRajwFBcj7rIcXAD7ZXMnCG>

Assessing Alfalfa Stand Condition in the Spring

by Dr. Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin

As alfalfa comes out of dormancy in the spring we should evaluate stands for condition and yield potential. The earlier we make a determination the more possibilities we have for remedial action. This stand assessment should occur in three parts:

1. Are individual plants alive?

This assessment can begin as soon as the frost is out of the ground and continue until spring greenup occurs. The process is to dig a few plants 4 to 6 inches deep and look at the condition of the taproot. If the taproot is turgid (like a potato, leftmost plant), it is alive and healthy. If the root is browned, dehydrated, and ropery (like two plants on the right), it is dead or dying. This assessment can be repeated until greenup occurs and stand can be assessed on that basis.



Live taproot on left, 2 dead on right

2. Are plants injured?

Alfalfa forms buds in the fall for spring growth. If these buds are killed the plant must form new buds in the spring, delaying growth and reducing yield. The three taller stems in the picture (above line) are from buds formed in the fall and the shorter stems are from buds



Tall shoots from fall buds; Short shoots from spring buds

formed in the spring. The delayed, shorter growth will reduce yield of first cutting and then plants will recover. If you see this, consider management to reduce this in the future, such as adequate soil pH, fall application of potassium, more winter-hardy varieties.

3. Are there thin spots in the field?

A healthy stand should have 55 stems/ft². Early assessments, before stems are visible, may need to assess based on plant count. A high yielding alfalfa stand seeded last year should have 20 plants/ft², counts as low as 12 will produce good yield but result in shortened stand life. Stands, seeded last spring or fall with less than 12 plants/ft² should be disked and reseeded.



Thin Stand (left) vs. Adequate Stand (right)

A high yielding alfalfa stand over 1 year old should have at least 6 plants/ft². If plant density is less than 6, oats (2 bu/a) or Italian ryegrass (10 lbs/a) can be overseeded to increase yield this year. Stand should be turned over immediately or at end of year.

For more details and information check out this UW-Extension Document: A3620 "Alfalfa stand assessment: Is this stand good enough to keep?" Follow this link or call the extension office to have a copy printed and mailed to you. <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/A3620.pdf>

Contact George at 608.742.9682, if you would like help in evaluating your alfalfa stand.

Soybean Plant Arrangement - Dimensions of Planting

PLANTING DATE

Plant soybeans as early as possible after April 25 as soil conditions permit; if possible, complete planting by May 20.

Soybean response to planting date is important not only in years when planting is delayed by inclement weather, but also when weather does not disrupt the normal planting season.

Early season freezes, hail storms, flooding, and other situations can reduce crop stands to a point where late planting is necessary.

The Photoperiod Effect

The concept of planting shorter season corn hybrids as planting date is delayed is a proven practice in most management systems. However, this concept needs modifying when applied to soybeans.

Soybean varieties respond much differently to delayed planting than corn hybrids.

This is because soybean flowering is more closely related to photoperiod (the length of the daily light and dark periods) than corn.

The shift from the vegetative to the flowering stage in soybeans is caused mostly by changes in the length of darkness.

Adapted varieties flower soon after the

dark period begins to lengthen in late June.

Soybean flowering is also influenced to some extent by temperature.

High temperatures hasten flowering. Given a very warm vegetative period, flowering can start before the dark period begins to lengthen.

Since flowering response of corn is more temperature dependent than that of soybeans, accumulated growing degree days are reliable for estimating corn growth stages but not for estimating soybean growth stages.

Planting Date Considerations

Soil temperature is an important aspect.

- The optimum temperature for soybean germination is 86°F.
- Seed planted into soil that is 50°F germinates slowly, and emergence will probably be reduced.

Planting into seedbeds that are in the low fifties is not advisable unless soil temperatures are rising rapidly.

Sixty degrees Fahrenheit is a good target at which to begin planting.

Soybeans have a unique ability to yield well when planted over an extended time period. This permits them to complement other crops in cropping systems. Soybeans planted in May are the most productive. Yields were considerably lower after mid-June.

- Plant heights were greatest from mid-May to mid-June and are shorter with earlier and later planting dates. Podding height dropped off considerably in July.

- Earlier planting may reduce stands because of the inability of emerged beans to tolerate freezing temperatures. If you intend to plant soybeans after mid-June, your best variety choice is an early to mid-season, adapted variety. Non-adapted varieties do not have the yield potential given a later than average freeze date, and later varieties might not fully mature. Indeterminate varieties are much more suited to the stressful conditions associated with late plantings and have greater yield potentials than determinate varieties for late plantings. These recommendations apply to double crop situations as well.

Late-April to early-May planting dates are more beneficial to corn than to soybeans. Planting soybeans in mid-May after corn provides the best results.

Late Planting Cultural Practices
When soybeans are planted later than mid-June, vegetative growth is reduced.

- Without changes in planting patterns a large portion of the available light energy is lost, evaporative water losses are greater, and weeds are more competitive.

- Row widths less than 20 inches, combined with plant populations 20 to 25 percent higher than normal will provide a more rapid canopy closure and will maximize yields.

Late-planted soybeans are shorter and sometimes have lower podding heights. Narrow rows and slightly higher planting rates provide a better chance of maximizing yields.

ROW SPACING

Reduction of row spacing to between 7 to 15 inches will increase yields and reduce competition due to weeds.

Skip row soybeans

- narrow row concept with cultivation.
- spaces are left during planting for tractor tires 15 inch row width and 30 inch skips.
- primary advantage is weed control by both cultivation and chemicals.
- provides flexibility for controlling other pests without damaging plants.
- have yield advantage of narrow rows while having tracks to work fields.
- skip row soybeans may yield slightly less than solid seeded soybeans if chemical weed control in solid seeded soybeans is successful.

PLANT DENSITY

Soybeans do not have a large yield response to a wide range in seeding rates because soybeans can compensate by branching.

- For this reason, most soybeans in the Midwest are seeded at a rate of 50 to 70 lbs of seed per acre.
- An adequate seeding rate, rather than a high seeding rate, reduces the possibility of lodging and makes more efficient use of the seed that is planted.
- Because soybean varieties differ substantially in seed size, many growers determine seeding rate in number of seeds/acre or number of seeds/foot of row. This number can be converted to pounds of seed/acre for calibrating the planter.

Increase seeding rates on light colored soils and decrease seeding rates on dark colored soils. For rows wider than 20 inches, use tall, bushy soybean varieties. Regardless of planting date and row spacing, select varieties with good tolerance and/or resistance to Phytophthora root rot. Research indicates seed treatments aid in Phytophthora control and are highly economical.

A commonly recommended rate in the Midwest is 150,000 plants/acre

- 40 inch rows = 10 to 11 seeds/foot of row
- 30 inch rows = 8 to 9 seeds/foot of row

20 inch rows = 5 to 6 seeds/foot of row

The following equations can be used to calculate seeding rate in pounds/acre:

- $43,560 \text{ sq ft/acre} \times \text{plants/ft of row} = \text{seeds/acre divided by row width}$

in feet times % germination

- $\text{Seeds/acre} = \text{seeding rate in pounds/acre divided by seeds/pound}$
- Example: suppose that Hardin soybeans will be planted in 30 inch rows at 150,000 seeds/acre. Let's say that Hardin has 80% germination and has 2870 seeds/pound. What is the seeding rate in pounds/acre?

$$43,560 \times (8.5 / ((30/12) \times 0.80)) = 187,308 \text{ seeds/acre}$$

$$187,308 / 2870 = 65.3 \text{ pounds/acre}$$

Seeding rate adjustments

- Use 175,000 plants/acre as a base if planting in 10 inch row width or less.
 - Add 10% if planting very early or very late.
 - Add 10% if planting short, narrow canopy varieties or early maturing varieties.
 - Add 10% if planting in a poor seed-bed.
 - Subtract 10% if planting in deep, fertile soils where lodging is a likely problem.
- Subtract 10% if planting in ideal conditions for the area (planting date, seed-bed, soil moisture and temperature).

SEEDING DEPTH

Depth is more critical than with wheat and corn.

Depth should be about 1 inch.



Popup/Starter Fertilizer Challenge



Contact George Koepp if you would like to participate.

George.koepp@wisc.edu or 608.742.9682

The Situation

Banding fertilizer around the corn seed during planting is a common practice in the northern Corn Belt. Corn planting is frequently delayed in this region due to cold and wet soils, which result in slow root growth and limited uptake of nutrients during early developmental stages. Growers question whether starter/pop-up fertilizer is even necessary for modern corn hybrids and production practices, yet, often they apply it as "insurance." The last major evaluation of corn response to starter fertilizer in WI was conducted between 1995 and 1997. No response to starter fertilizer was measured, except for late-maturity hybrids planted late. Since then significant production changes have occurred producing higher yields through the use of transgenic crops, improved planting machinery and implements, and continued increases in soil nutrient levels.

Objective

The Wisconsin Corn Growers Association and the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board have provided funding for farmer-agent-consultant teams to evaluate the agronomic and economic response of corn to popup/starter fertilizer in Wisconsin.

Successful completion of the trial by farmer-agent-consultant teams includes:

- 1) Soil testing the plot area just before planting
- 2) Assisting in planting, management and harvesting of treatments (3-6 reps= 6 to 12 plots) with and without Popup/Starter fertilizer (whichever the farmer uses in his production system).

- 3) Completion of two forms (a Plot Management form and a Data form).

Treatment selection

Before establishing the plots, soil sample the experimental area.

- 1) Send samples to the UW Soil & Forage Analysis Lab, 2611 Yellowstone Dr, Marshfield, WI 54449
- 2) Let Joe Lauer know how many locations you will have and he will provide you with a laboratory account number to use.

The target production environments of these trials are the major corn growing regions of Wisconsin during 2018 and 2019. These trials will be conducted on farms by farmer-agent-consultant teams. The trials should be conducted with field-scale equipment and have two basic treatments (with and without popup or starter fertilizer).

The popup/starter fertilizer product and rate used in the trial should be the same product and rate as the farmer typically uses. The suggested Wisconsin recommendation for popup fertilizer rates is 5 lb N/A, 10 lb P2O5/A, and 10 lb K2O/A, and for starter fertilizer the recommended rate is 10 lb N/A, 20 lb P2O5/A, and 20 lb K2O/A.

Experimental design

The treatments should be installed in strips arranged in a randomized complete block design with three or more replications (ideally six) in production fields. It is not important which treatment goes where, but it is important to **write down the order of the treatments in the replicate at the time of seeding.** The plots should be seeded wider than the combine width so you can cut a

full combine width from the plot at harvest.

Site Selection

The strips will be dimensioned according to farmer field equipment and field length. **No P or K other than starter/pop-up fertilizer or manure should be applied**, and total N applications will be based on the N recommendation for corn at individual sites. All other production practices will be determined by the individual cooperators.

Machinery and Equipment

All operations, including seeding and combining, will be done by each collaborating farmer with the same equipment used on the rest of the farm.

Data Collection

Plant density at harvest, Plant lodging, Harvested plot length and width, Grain yield, Grain moisture

Trial Location on the Farm

The plots should be situated within a field that is also seeded to the crop. The replicates should be placed perpendicular to the natural variability in the field so the yields in the treatment plots will approximate the average yield of the field. Ideally, the treatments should uniformly include the natural variation that is found in the field, without any one treatment being favored or disfavored by some field condition. The plots should not border a creek, fence line, road, or edge of the field to avoid favoring or penalizing one treatment due to its position in the replicate. Nor should the plots run along the field contour, such that treatments are on different positions along the slope of the field. In this situation, treatments on the lower slope positions would be favored by higher moisture levels. On the other hand, the plots should be less than a five minute walk from a road.

Hybrid selection

Use only "full season" hybrids in the trial. A "full season" hybrid is defined as a hybrid that uses the entire available

growing season to reach physiological maturity before killing frost or cool temperatures end the growing season. The Wisconsin corn relative maturity belts in the figure depend upon well drained soils, fall tillage, planting by May 5, and average growing conditions.

Plot Arrangements

The most reliable results are obtained from plots that are at least several feet wider than the combine width and about 1000 to 2500 feet long. This arrangement permits producers to combine full header widths per plot at the time of harvest.

Soil Preparation, Fertilization, Weed and Pest Control

The on-farm test should be managed like the larger crop field surrounding it for all practices except seeding and harvesting of the different treatments.

Harvest

Try to harvest more than 0.1 acre. The exact length and width of each plot must be measured and recorded by each producer or on-farm testing coordinator. The width reported will likely be the width of the combine. **Don't assume that the length of each plot is the same.** Slight differences in the rolling landscape or contour can result in 5 to 10 percent differences in the length of the plots, which will throw off yields. **So be sure to measure the length of each plot.** Each treatment is cut separately and the combine is emptied into a weigh wagon. If a truck is used, the truck will go to the scales with each treatment for a separate weight. An alternative approach is to use bulk seed bags in a truck and unload the harvested plot into separate bulk bags and then weigh them individually at the elevator.

Signing Off

Two signatures are required on the data sheets, one of which must be designated and approved.

Dairy Situation and Outlook, April 22, 2019

By Bob Cropp, Professor Emeritus

University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Milk production in March fell 0.4% below a year ago. This follows a 0.9% more milk than a year ago in January and just 0.1% more milk for February. Milk cow numbers which have been declining since June of last year, declined by 10,000 February to March and were 86,000 head or 0.9% lower than a year ago. This decline in cow numbers reflects cow slaughter running about 6% higher than a year ago and continued exiting of dairy producers. Milk per cow was also just 0.5% higher than a year.

March milk production compared to a year ago for the top five dairy states which produced 52% of the milk last year was: California +0.7%, Wisconsin +0.4%, Idaho +1.4%, New York +2.3% and Texas 5.8%. Milk cow numbers were down by 9,000 in California, and 4,000 in Wisconsin, but up 9,000 in Idaho, 2,000 in New York and 27,000 in Texas.

Arizona had 10,000 fewer milk cows resulting in 4.9% less milk. Milk cow numbers were down 12,000 in New Mexico resulting 3.9% less milk. Milk production was just 0.4% higher in Michigan. In Pennsylvania 29,000 fewer milk cows and lower milk per cow resulted in milk production being down 6.9%. Iowa had 3,000 fewer cows and 1.3% less milk. Higher milk per cow more than offset 4,000 fewer cows in Minnesota netting 0.5% more milk. South Dakota had 4,000 more cows and 3.5% more milk. More milk per cow in Florida was not enough to offset 7,000 fewer cows netting 4.7% less milk.

Fluid (beverage) milk sales declined 2% last year and sales were down another 1.2% January through February this year. Reports are that butter and cheese sales show only modest growth. Compared to February a year ago nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder, whey products and lactose exports were down 17%, 29% and 19% respectively. Lower nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder exports were due primarily to China down 78%, South East Asia down 11% and Middle East/North Africa down 85%. Whey exports were down 58% to China, the lowest since February 2011. Butterfat exports were up 34% and cheese exports up 16% and the second highest total ever, falling just below the record high in March 2014. Cheese exports were up 71% to South Korea, 41% to Southeast Asia, 24% to Central America and after being 20% lower in January cheese exports to Mexico in February were up 9%. On a total milk solids basis, February exports were equivalent to 14.3% of U.S. milk production.

With lower milk production dairy product production is also lower. Compared to a year ago February butter production was 2.9% lower, cheddar cheese 4.3% lower and total cheese production up just 0.5%. Stock levels

are also improving. Compared to March 31st a year ago, butter stocks were down 1.4%, American cheese stocks up just 2.3%, other cheese stocks up 7.0% and total cheese stocks up 4.3%.

Milk production lower than a year ago, lower dairy product production, strong cheese and butter exports and improved stock levels all point to higher milk prices. While fluid (beverage) milk sales continue to decline butter and cheese sales are expected to continue modest growth. The level of dairy exports will be an important factor in how much milk prices improve. While dry whey prices have been in the \$0.33 to \$0.35 per pound range cheese prices have strengthened to increase the Class III price. The Class III price was below \$14 for both January and February, improved to \$15.04 in March and will be near \$15.95 for April. Cheese prices should continue to improve pushing the Class III price in the \$16's as early as May with a good possibility of reaching \$17 by October. Class III futures have improved, but currently are not quite this optimistic with a high in the \$16.60's by October. Butter has held around \$2.25 per pound, but should show strength by fall. Nonfat dry milk prices may hold in the high \$0.90's per pound. As a result the Class IV price which was \$15.48 in January continues to improve with March at \$15.71 and April will be near \$15.80. The Class IV price should be in the \$16's by May and for the remainder of the year. Class IV futures is even more optimistic with a price in the \$17's August through November. In summary milk prices are shaping up to be much improved over the low milk prices in 2018.



Columbia County Corn Growers Presents:

2019 Summer Grain Crop Scouting Clinics

Watch for details in future Friday Ag Reporter Snapshots. We are working on the details of dates and locations for these events for 2019. They will usually be held on a Wednesday or Thursday mornings from 9-11 am. Our general topics and time frames are listed below. As soon as we can identify availability from UW-Extension specialists and locations we will share that info.

Early June, Arlington ARS	Weed ID and Weed Escapes
July	Waterhemp Control in Soybean Research Plots
July 11, 9-11 am Location TBD	Insect ID and Control – Bryan Jensen
August 15, 9-11 am – Arlington ARS	Corn and Soybean Diseases – Damon Smith
Late August/early September	Scott Holland Impact Plots

Land & Water Conservation Department Updates & Program Information

By Kurt Calkins, Director of Columbia County Land & Water Conservation

2019 Farmland Preservation Update

Over several years the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection has implemented a series of changes for the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP). Our process continues through 2018 as such for FPP participants to maintain their eligibility:

- Annually submit a FPP Self Certification Postcard (June)
- Annually submit a 590 NMP Checklist and SNAP-Plus Plan
- Receive an onsite NR 151 compliance status review once every 4 years (Year determined by LWCD)

The self-certification postcards will be mailed to the Farmland Preservation Members by the first week of June.

Participants will have the option to complete the postcard through an online log-in process or return the postcard to the Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department. All postcards must be postmarked before July 15, 2019, or they will be charged a \$10.00 late fee.

FPP Participants who do Not maintain their eligibility by submitting the annual self-certification postcard, annually providing a 590 Nutrient Management Checklist and maintaining NR 151 Compliance can have their Certificate of Compliance ID # voided with the Department of Revenue, thus removing their ability to claim the Farmland preservation Tax Credit for the applicable tax season.

NR 151 conservation compliance reviews will begin for a fourth of the FPP participants in 2019. For questions, please contact the LWCD office at 608-742-9670.

2019 Tree Sales Program-Success Continues

On April 25, 2019, the Columbia County Land and Water Conservation Department successfully completed our 38th Annual Tree and Shrub sales program. This program began in 1981 and has continued to be a great tool to help promote tree planting throughout our area. This year are sales increased again to almost 44,000 trees and shrubs; and our sales for tree supplies (tubes, stakes) had a significant increase as well. We sold out of all extra trees we had available early afternoon of pickup day. We have very limited supplies leftover, however, these are available year-round (tubes, stakes, mats, spray). We appreciate the support of the 400 plus individuals who purchased trees this year. If you have not purchased from us in the past, this is a great program with great prices. Please contact us immediately to be on our mailing list when the information for 2019-2020 sale gets mailed out in

November, 2019. People who have ordered in the last 4 years will automatically be on our mailing list. Thanks again to all of you and a special thanks to Kelly Maginnis, our Administrative Secretary here at the LWCD. She works hard to put all the pieces together each year to make this program work almost effortlessly. If anyone has some thoughts on how we can make the program even better, please feel free to give us your thoughts.

Reminder Nutrient Management Plan (590 NMP) Checklist Submission

A reminder that annually, in the spring, your updated Nutrient Management Plan AND Checklist documenting completion and updates to your 2019 growing season plan should be submitted to the Land & Water Conservation Department. We require landowners to work with their agronomist to get that information to us by **April 15** of each year. The submission of these documents are important to maintain eligibility for several cross-compliance conservation programs. Overall, we continue to do an excellent job of increasing compliant acres covered by plans. This is great news for our agricultural producers and important to document increased commitment towards strong agricultural agronomic planning. Also, please contact us by December of each year if you wish to be on the mailing list for our annual Nutrient Management Plan trainings. There is a stipend paid for this training and lunch provided. Whether you are a new participant or looking to construct a plan using the SNAP-Plus system or need to review your plan, we have openings available yet. If you have question about your status, feel free to contact our office.

Chance To Participate in Citizen Advisory Committee (LWRM Plan Revision):

Columbia County LWCD will be going through a State required update to our DATCP approved Land and Water Resource Management Plan in 2019. This is a very important process that will help guide our Land and Water Conservation programming for the next 10 years and more. We will need to populate a citizen advisory committee to help us through the process. If you are interested in serving on the Citizen Advisory Committee, or have questions about the role, please contact Kurt Calkins to discuss this. Commitment will include a number of evening meetings in 2019.

The plan provides long & short term guidance of departmental programming and areas of emphasis. The plan also provides eligibility for the County to gain access to financial resources from state and federal sources. The 2 prong approach is a valuable opportunity for citizens to have direct impact in local decision making and priority setting regarding a wide range of natural resource management priorities, including the regulatory management of animal waste and general agricultural nonpoint source pollution abatement.



United States Department of Agriculture

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News Release

USDA Announces New Decision Tool for New Dairy Margin Coverage Program

WASHINGTON, April 30, 2019 — Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue announced today the availability of a [new web-based tool](#) - developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin - to help dairy producers evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through the new [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) program.

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized DMC, a voluntary risk management program that offers financial protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. It replaces the program previously known as the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Sign up for this USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) program opens on June 17.

“With sign-up for the DMC program just weeks away, we encourage producers to use this new support tool to help make decisions on participation in the program,” Secretary Perdue said. “Dairy producers have faced tough challenges over the years, but the DMC program should help producers better weather the ups and downs in the industry.”

The University of Wisconsin launched the decision support tool in cooperation with FSA and funded through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist. The tool was designed to help producers determine the level of coverage under a variety of conditions that will provide them with the strongest financial safety net. It allows farmers to simplify their coverage level selection by combining operation data and other key variables to calculate coverage needs based on price projections.

The decision tool assists producers with calculating total premiums costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. It also forecasts payments that will be made during the coverage year.

“The new Dairy Margin Coverage program offers very appealing options for all dairy farmers to reduce their net income risk due to volatility in milk or feed prices,” said Dr. Mark Stephenson, Director of Dairy Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin, Madison. “Higher coverage levels, monthly payments, and more flexible production coverage options are especially helpful for the sizable majority of farms who can cover much of their milk production with the new five million pound maximum for Tier 1 premiums. This program deserves the careful consideration of all dairy farmers.”

For more information, access the tool at fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool. For DMC sign up, eligibility and related program information, visit fsa.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Announces Sign-Up Period for Updated Conservation Stewardship Program

The next deadline for Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications to be considered for funding in fiscal year (FY) 2019 is May 10, 2019. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to invest up to \$700 million for new enrollments and contract extensions in fiscal year 2019. The 2018 Farm Bill made several changes to this critical conservation program, which helps agricultural producers take the conservation activities on their farm or ranch to the next level.

CSP continues to be a very effective tool for private landowners working to achieve their conservation and management goals. It is the largest conservation program in the United States with more than 70 million acres of productive agricultural and forest land enrolled.

While applications are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by May 10, 2019, to ensure their applications are considered for 2019 funding.

Changes to the Program - The 2018 Farm Bill authorizes NRCS to accept new CSP enrollments from now until 2023, and it makes some important improvements to the program. These updates include:

NRCS now enrolls eligible, high ranking applications based on dollars rather than acres. For fiscal 2019, NRCS can spend up to \$700 million in the program, which covers part of the cost for producers implementing new conservation activities and maintaining their existing activities.

Higher payment rates are now available for certain conservation activities, including cover crops and resource conserving crop rotations.

CSP now provides specific support for organic and for transitioning to organic production activities and a special grassland conservation initiative for certain producers who have maintained cropland base acres.

About the Program - CSP is offered in Wisconsin through continuous sign-ups. The program provides many benefits including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to weather extremes. CSP is for working lands including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of a tribe.

More information - For additional information about CSP, contact your local USDA service center.

USDA Announces Second EQIP Sign-Up Period for 2019 Funding, Apply by May 17, 2019

Farmers and forest landowners can apply now for a second round of USDA conservation funding. Farmers and forest landowners interested in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) need to apply by May 17, 2019, for funding in 2019. Applications are being taken at all USDA Service Centers in Wisconsin for select special initiatives. Don't delay; contact your local USDA Service Center NOW to get started.

EQIP is the primary program available to farmers for farm and woodland conservation work, offering payments for over 110 basic conservation practices. Last year, Wisconsin received over \$35 million in funds for EQIP practices. By getting applications in early, it provides time for staff to visit individual farms to help plan all practices needed and offer advice.

All eligible applications received by May 17, 2019, will be evaluated for funding in 2019. Farmers may contact their local USDA Service Center to get started on producer eligibility and planning. Applicants with shovel-ready projects (designs completed and permit applications submitted) will receive higher priority.

Sign up by May 17, 2019, for several special initiatives focusing on conservation efforts. Special sign-up opportunities are now open for Beginning Farmer, Farmstead, and Soil Health, as well four landscape-based initiatives. All offer technical and financial assistance through EQIP.

Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers: The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act continues to address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers. Funds have been set aside to assist new and beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers to develop and maintain economic viability on their farm operations.

Farmstead: NRCS helps livestock producers improve nutrient handling and clean water separation by implementing practices supporting manure storage, feedlot and barnyard runoff, and clean water diversion. This special opportunity also provides technical and financial assistance for roofs and covers placed over, for example, open cattle lots with runoff issues.

Soil Health Initiative: Soil is a living and life-giving natural resource. By farming using soil health principles and systems that include no-till, cover cropping and diverse rotations, more and more farmers are increasing their soil's organic matter and improving microbial activity.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI): Through GLRI, NRCS offers financial assistance to agricultural producers for implementing practices that improve water quality in selected watersheds. Eligible watersheds in Wisconsin include the Door-Kewaunee Rivers, Lower Fox River, Manitowoc-Sheboygan Milwaukee River, Upper Fox River, Wolf River, and Lake Winnebago. Financial assistance is also available in the entire Lake Superior and Lake Michigan basins of Wisconsin to address invasive species.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP): The RCPP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements, program contracts, and easements in some project areas. Current active projects for water quality improvement are located within the Oconomowoc River watershed, the Baraboo River watershed, and the Milwaukee River watershed. Stream and riparian habitat improvements in the Driftless Area as well as efforts in the Little Plover River watershed to conserve water and improve habitat are also eligible. Landowners interested in applying for EQIP funding should contact their local NRCS office at the USDA Service Center in their county. For more information, visit www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov.

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