

Columbia County Ag Reporter

September/October 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)
- ◆ Dairy Situation (pg. 7)
- ◆ Nutrient Management Plan (pg. 11)
- ◆ Emergency Funding (pg. 17)

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Ag Reporter Calendar of Events

September

- 2 Labor Day—County offices closed
- 14 Water Sample bottle distribution at Townships of Columbus, Otsego, Fountain Prairie & Hampden
- 16 Water Sample bottle collection at Townships of Columbus, Otsego, Fountain Prairie & Hampden
- 20 Last Day to sign up for Dairy Margin Coverage Program
- 23 First day of Autumn
- 26 Title 15 Animal Waste Ordinance Open House

October

- 1-5 World Dairy Expo
- 7 Fall Conservation Tour
- 8 14 Columbus Day

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

Agronomy Advice

The Kernels

- The 2019 planting season was “unprecedented.”
- Harvest season will be extended this year. Corn maturity is all over the board due to late planting, and within field variability is equally as great.
- Dairy farmers will have to work closely with their custom choppers and let them know when the field was planted, when it silked, the current stage of development, and what the moisture is.
- Note silking dates to project calendar days to when a field will mature. Note order that fields silk to plan the harvest queue. It will take approximately 42 to 47 days to get to 50% kernel milk, and 55 to 60 days to get to black layer.

Joe Lauer, UW Corn Agronomist

2019 Wisconsin Soybean Yield Contest

Entries must be postmarked by December 1, 2019 to be eligible for this contest

Contest Description

Any soybean production system can enter in the contest. Two winners will be selected from each of four geographical divisions in the state. Divisions are based on long-term county soybean yield averages. WSA is not responsible for incorrect or missing entries. All rules set forth herein apply to all entries.



Contest Qualifications

More than one person in a family can enter, but each entry must have a separate entry and fee. The cost is \$25 per entry. Entrant must be at least fourteen (14) years of age or older on or before December 1, 2019.

Release of Contest Entry Field Records

If requested, the entrant agrees to provide records to WSA of their methods of handling and preparing the land; cultivation and weed control methods; insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers and rates of same that are used; the brand and variety of seed, seeding rate; date of planting, type and brand of soybean planter, row width and date of harvesting; and amount of each application and type of irrigation used. Failure to provide such records may lead to disqualification.

Contest Field and Entry Qualifications

Contest field must be in the state of Wisconsin. Contest entry must be at least 5 continuous acres of one variety. Contestant may select the best 5 acres in a soybean field larger than 5 acres and enter that variety. In the interest of Best Management Practices, grass waterways may be a part of the contest plot area. The length of any rows planted in a grass waterway will be included in the harvested row length if soybean rows are planted in the waterway. If soybean rows are not planted in the waterway, the length of each row will not include areas in the waterway. The land entered in the Contest must be owned or leased by the entrant and located in Wisconsin. The variety entered must be currently commercially available.

Multiple Contest Entries

Any individual contestant may enter more than one entry in the contest. Any individual can win only one state award.

Continued...

Entry Fee and Deadline

Entries must be postmarked by December 1, 2019 to be eligible for this contest. No late entries will be accepted. An entry fee of \$25 in the form of a personal check must be received with the Contest Entry Form or the form cannot be accepted.

Contest Awards

Trophies and cash prizes will be awarded to the first (\$1,000) and second (\$500) place winners in each geographic division (see map attached to entry form). The winner is the entry that has the highest soybean yield based on bushels per acre at 13% moisture. In the event of a tie, both entrants will be recognized as co-winners. Each entrant is eligible to win only one trophy and cash prize in the contest. If an entrant enters two or more entries and all entries place as a winner or runner-up, a trophy and cash prize will be awarded only for the highest yielding entry. Awards will be presented at the Corn/Soy Expo held in Wisconsin Dells in January 2020.

WI 100 Bushel Award

The first grower that achieves 100 bu/a or more in the WI Soybean Yield Contest will be awarded a \$2,500 check. In the case of multiple entries achieving 100 bu/a or more, the cash award will go to the highest overall yield.

Harvest Rules

The contest entry must be from a field of soybeans 5 or more acres in size of one variety. The contest area may be any shape, but must be in one continuous block of soybean.

- Entrants and harvest supervisors are responsible for giving accurate row lengths for odd shape plots.
- All end rows/turning rows and the equal number of outermost rows on each side may not be a part of the selected 1.25 acre contest plot.
- A total of 1.25 or more acres must be harvested.

A supervisor must be present at harvest. The supervisors are responsible for completing all computations and field measurements and must be present during harvesting, weighing (gross and tare), and moisture testing. The entrant is responsible for mailing the information. The supervisor must require the entrant to run their combine and any transfer augers to be certain they are empty prior to harvesting the contest area. All wagons or trucks must be checked to make certain they are empty.

A full combine swath width shall be harvested, then two times that width skipped, another swath harvested and two times that width skipped and so on until a minimum of 1.25 acres has been harvested.

Contest contact: Dr. Shawn Conley 608.800.7056

Contest web page: www.coolbean.info

WISCONSIN CORN YIELD CONTEST

The Wisconsin Corn Growers Association (WCGA) Corn Yield Contest is organized to encourage the development of new and innovative management practices that highlight the importance of using sound cultural practices in Wisconsin corn production systems.

Contest contact: Nicole Wagner, Executive Director
Contact information: 262-372-3289 or nicole@wicorn.org

CONTEST DESCRIPTION

Any corn production system can be entered in the contest. WCGA is not responsible for incorrect or missing entries. All rules set forth herein apply to all entries. Three winners will be selected from each of five geographical divisions in the state. Divisions are based on active county corn grower organizations. Active county organizations include those that have met at least twice during the calendar year.

CONTEST ENTRANT QUALIFICATIONS

There is no cost to enter, but the entrant must be a Wisconsin Corn Grower Association member in good standing. Only one entry per membership, but there could be more than one entry per farm if additional memberships are purchased.

CONTEST FIELD AND ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS

Contest field must be in the state of Wisconsin. Contest entry must be at least 10 continuous acres of one variety. Contestant may select the best 1.25 acres in a corn field larger than 10 acres and enter that variety. In the interest of Best Management Practices, grass waterways may be a part of the contest plot area. The length of any rows planted in a grass waterway will be included in the harvested row length if corn rows are planted in the waterway. If corn rows are not planted in the waterway, the length of each row will not include areas in the waterway. The land entered in the Contest must be owned or leased by the entrant and located in Wisconsin. The variety entered must be currently commercially available.

ENTRY FEE AND DEADLINE

Entries must be postmarked, emailed or faxed by December 31, 2019 to be eligible for this contest. No late entries will be accepted. There is no entry fee for this contest. Completed forms* may be emailed to nicole@wicorn.org, faxed to 262-372-3289 or mailed to Wisconsin Corn Growers Association, W226N5956 Lynwood Drive, Lisbon, WI 53089.

CONTEST AWARDS

Cash prizes will be awarded to the first (\$500), second (\$250) and third (\$100) place winners in each geographic division (see map below). The winner is the entry that has the highest corn yield based on bushels per acre. In the event of a tie, both entrants will be recognized as co-winners.

CONTEST RESULTS

No information on the Contest results will be released until all results are finalized. There will be no exceptions. Results will be released during the WCGA Annual Meeting (held during Corn/Soy Expo). Decision of WCGA's Contest Committee in all matters are final. The WCGA committee reserves the right to disqualify any entry without a refund for violation of any rules.

HARVEST RULES

The contest entry must be from a field of corn 10 or more acres in size of one variety. The contest area may be any shape, but must be in one continuous block of corn.

- Entrants and harvest supervisors are responsible for giving accurate row lengths for odd shape plots.
- A total of 1.25 or more acres must be harvested.
- All end rows/turning rows and the equal number of outermost rows on each side may not be a part of the selected 1.25 acre contest plot.

A supervisor must be present at harvest. The supervisors are responsible for completing all computations and field measurements and must be present during harvesting, weighing (gross and tare), and moisture testing. The entrant is responsible for mailing the information. The supervisor must require the entrant to run their combine and any transfer augers to be certain they are empty prior to harvesting the contest area. All wagons or trucks must be checked to make certain they are empty.

Milk prices have shown improvement since early in the year. Class III was a low of \$13.89 in February and increased \$3.66 by July to \$17.55. Class IV was \$15.48 in January and increased \$1.52 to \$16.90 in July. But, with small changes in dairy product prices August will see a small increase in the Class III price and a small decrease in the Class IV price.

Class III futures shows September peaking at about \$17.80 and then declining fourth quarter and ending in December about \$17.00. Class IV futures remain below \$17 for the remainder of the year. But, milk prices could do better than this for the fourth quarter for several reasons. Butter and cheese will be in the strong seasonal sales period thanksgiving through the holidays. Schools will be starting increasing fluid milk sales leaving less milk for dairy product production. Compared to a year ago, the June Dairy Product report showed butter production up some to 3.1%, but cheddar cheese 1.9% lower, dry whey 6.3% lower and nonfat dry milk just 2.7% higher. The dairy stock situation has tightened. Compared to June 30th a year ago, butter stocks were 2.6% lower, American cheese stocks declined May to June as did total cheese stocks and were 1.9% and 0.5% lower respectively. Dry whey stocks were 0.9% lower and nonfat dry milk stocks 4.8% lower. Milk production will show some seasonal strength but remain below year ago levels.

Milk prices in 2020 will depend a lot on the level of milk production. USDA's is forecasting milk production to be 1.6% higher due to milk cow numbers averaging 0.2% higher and milk per cow 1.4% higher. But, this level of milk production could be on the higher side. There may be no increase in the number of milk cows. Dairy cow slaughter continues to run higher than a year ago. Dairy herds exiting the industry continues to run relatively high. Financial stress for more than four years will hinder dairy expansions. The number of dairy replacements are lower standing at 44.1 per 100 milk cows, the lowest since depressed milk price in 2009. There is concern about feed quality. Stocks of quality hay are tight. Corn and soybean meal prices will be average higher. The result may lower the increase in milk per cow. There is some concern as to whether the U.S. economy will slow and impact dairy product sales. There is also concern that the world economy could slow impacting dairy exports. USDA is still forecasting 2020 exports to be 5.3% higher on a milk fat basis than 2019 and 4.4% higher on a total milk solids basis. So there is a lot that can sway milk prices higher or lower. Dairy futures are currently not overly optimistic about 2020 milk prices.

But, there still is a good probability milk prices could strengthen the last half of the year and end averaging better than this.



Fall Harvest Safety



Can we remind each other about safety too much? Probably not. Here are a few Fall Safety Hints to review:

1. Keep equipment in good repair. Steering, brakes, and lights always seem to need attention. Choose to use tractors and equipment with ROPS (rollover protective structures) when ever possible. Make sure all guards are in place and working properly. Be sure lights are in good working order before you end up in the dark or try to travel down the road early or late in the day.
2. Turn off the engine and machine before you get off the tractor or power unit in order to unclog or repair a piece of equipment. Be aware of equipment that is under pressure that might be released quickly when making repairs.
3. Get plenty of Rest and take breaks. Getting off of the tractor periodically is very helpful to refresh your mind and check to make sure all tires and equipment are operating properly. Eat nutritious snacks and stay hydrated.
4. Train all helpers and workers. If you accept help from family and friends or neighbors, be sure they are instructed on safety for the tasks you are giving them. Especially be sure that any youth workers are mentally and physically able to accomplish the tasks safely. Check on their progress regularly.
5. Be sure to take care of your own health. Get plenty of rest and sleep so that you can be at the top of your game each day.
6. When getting on and off a tractor, be sure to maintain 3 points of contact. Avoid jumping off a combine or tractor steps to protect your joints over time. Consider using a hitching system to get on or off a tractor fewer times.
7. Wear proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when appropriate. Ear plugs or muffs, proper gloves, safety glasses, and proper breathing masks will help you work longer and smarter over time without damaging vital senses.
8. Be especially careful when operating on roadways. Other drivers don't always understand the dangers of larger, slower equipment. Busy morning and evening commute times are especially dangerous because of possible darkness, fog, or blinding sun at the horizon.

Do I need a Zoning Permit?

This is a common question for land owners.

Title 16-150-080 of Columbia County's Zoning Ordinance requires a zoning permit **before**:



- Any structure is erected, affixed, moved or structurally altered to increase its floor area or footprint. (any structure under 100 square feet does not require a zoning permit but must still meet all minimum setbacks)
- Any area of one acre or more may be disturbed by excavation, grading, filling or earth moving activities, resulting in the loss of removal or removal of protective ground cover or vegetation.
- A land disturbing activity over more than 5,000 square feet is to occur on slopes greater than 12%.
- Any substantial alteration in the heating plant, sanitary facilities or mechanical equipment which would affect a change of existing sites or structure's use.
- Any conditional use permit granted commences operation.
- The commencement of any structure modification or structural repair of an existing nonconforming structure, or to a structure housing a non-conforming use.
- Any large-scale temporary use or structure, defined as a temporary use or structure proposed to occupy more than 20 acres of land, attract more than 500 visitors within a one week period of time or less
- The creation of any surface water feature of over 5,000 square feet in area, such as a lake or pond.



- The establishment of any specific land use description for which a stormwater management plan, grading plan and/or erosion control plan is required.
- Any other land disturbing activity occurs where the zoning administrator determines that high levels of erosion or run off is likely unless an erosion control plan, stormwater management plan, or both is developed.
- Any sign which requires a zoning permit is installed
- Any other instances that have been indicated in the Columbia County Zoning Code.

Applications for zoning permits should be filled out by the owner of the property on which the zoning permit is being requested. For zoning permits located within the Shoreland Wetland and Floodplain districts, separate applications will be required. Contact the Planning & Zoning Department at 608-742-9660 for any questions you may have about the Columbia County Zoning Code or to verify if your proposed project needs a zoning permit.

Fall Weed Management

Harvest season is a great time to start your weed management program for the 2020 growing season. Take a little time as your harvest your fall crops to identify weed hotspots in your farm fields.

- Keep a notebook of and particularly weedy spots or locations in your fields
- Make a positive identification of the offending weeds
- Determine if it was a poor herbicide selection, timing, or failure due to weather conditions
- Begin the thought process of making changes. Consider some options:
 - Crop rotation
 - Tillage changes
 - Herbicide changes
 - Application timing



Land & Water Conservation Department Updates & Program Information



Classroom Instruction So You Can Write and Maintain Your Own Nutrient Management Plan

We are happy to report that Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Department has been awarded a 2020 Nutrient Management Farmer Education Grant from DATCP. This grant allows us to run a series of winter training classes for landowners who want to learn to develop their own 590 Nutrient Management Plan. In addition to providing an opportunity to develop your first plan, we will again be offering a chance to complete a review and update of your existing plan. This cooperative opportunity between UW-Madison Extension, Columbia County LWCD, NRCS and DATCP will again allow landowner the opportunity to learn to develop their own Nutrient Management Plan that will meet the 590 NMP standard. This year we will offer 2 different days in January for landowners to complete updates to existing plans and stay certified. This is a 1 day course, with 2 different days to pick from. We also offer a larger 3 day workshop for new landowners who have not previously done a plan. The grant allows us to provide class attendance incentives along with soil testing stipend. Land owners could be eligible for first time plan developments stipends greater than \$1000. Having current soil tests is an important first step to being prepared to participate in the class. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity and **want to get on the registration list** contact the Land & Water Conservation Department @ **(608) 742-9670**.

The 2019 Columbia County Fall Conservation Tour

Held on Monday, October 7, 2019, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

This year Columbia County LWCD will again be hosting our Fall Conservation Tour. The final details are still being worked out, but one stop we are sure to make will be a stop at the County Park located on Hwy 44 on Park Lake. The Land and Water Conservation Department in cooperation with the County Highway Department completed and extensive restoration and upgrade to the Park. We will discuss the specifics of the project.

2019 Wisconsin Deer Donation

Columbia County is pleased to announce that they will again be participating in the Wisconsin Deer Donation Program for 2019. Lodi Sausage & Meats (Lodi, WI) and Johnson Sausage Shoppe (Rio, WI) will both be accepting deer for donation from area hunters from August 19, 2019 through February 1, 2020. Hunters must contact either of the 2 processors in advance of dropping off their legally harvested deer to assure that the business is open and able to accept the deer. Information on them:

1. **JOHNSON SAUSAGE SHOPPE**, 416 State Road 16, Rio
920-992-6328
2. **LODI SAUSAGE & MEAT MARKET**, 150 South Main Street , Lodi
608-592-3534



Hunters have to follow these 6 requirements for donating deer:

1. Legally harvest a deer.
2. Properly field-dress the deer and assure that the meat is in good condition to the best of your knowledge.
3. Register the deer and record the registration confirmation number and CWD barcode number, if applicable. PLEASE NOTE: Processors CANNOT accept any deer that have not been legally registered or without this required information.
4. Drop-off the deer at the participating processor, during business hours, by February 1, 2019.
5. Sign a log-in sheet at the processor facility and complete all required information on the donation log sheet. Hunters will be asked to provide:
 - a. Their DNR Customer #, (this number must be the person who harvested and registered the deer, not the person dropping it off at the processor).
 - b. The deer registration confirmation number (ie: W12-123-4567),
 - c. The County of Harvest
 - d. The CWD Bar Code # (if applicable).
6. Hunters must donate the entire deer to receive the processing costs for free, but the head and antlers may be removed for mounting.

What deer cannot be donated through the program?

- Wisconsin Deer Donation will not pay for the processing of:
- Deer killed in car-vehicle collisions.
- Deer harvested in another state.
- Deer harvested from deer farms or non-native species of deer.

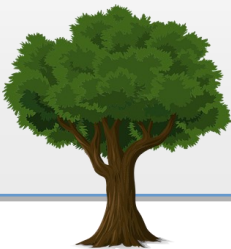
- Untested deer from CWD-affected counties.
- Deer without required hunter information. This includes deer abandoned by hunters at the processing plant.
- Deer removed by sharpshooters or contractors under municipal deer removal programs

The Wisconsin Deer Donation program is funded through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and designed to use existing Wildlife Damage Abatement & Claims Program (WDACP) funds to pay for the processing of deer harvested and donated by hunters in Wisconsin. The venison is then processed and distributed (free of charge) to needy people across the state of Wisconsin. The intent of the program is to increase the deer harvest in areas of high abundance and to reduce future agricultural damage. Through the program, needy families receive ground venison, and hunters help manage Wisconsin's deer herd by donating harvested deer to a worthwhile cause. For all involved, the program promotes a positive public image of deer hunting, the organizations involved, and those who participate in and promote Wisconsin deer hunting.

Food pantries in Columbia County interested in learning more about the program or interested in receiving any of the donated ground venison through the Wisconsin Deer Donation program must first contact USDA-Wildlife Services (Laurie Koeck) at 920-324-4514. None of the donated venison will be distributed to any pantry or charitable organization without prior approval and completed paperwork on file. Approved pantries/charitable organizations are responsible for picking up the ground venison within 48 hours of notification by the processor. The food pantry then distributes the frozen ground venison to needy individuals in Columbia County/adjointing counties at no charge.

2019-2020 Columbia County LWCD Tree Sales Program

The Columbia County Tree Sales Program for 2019-2020 will begin in November, the order forms should reach anyone on our mailing list by the 3rd week of November. You will be able to find the order form online, mid-November, at: <http://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/lwcd/TreeProgram> or you can contact our office to receive a tree order. Tree pick up day is tentatively scheduled for April 23, 2020. If you want to be added onto the mailing list, please contact us at 608-742-9670. Thanks for your continued support.



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 2019/2020. 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 2019/2020. We are still looking for citizen members interested in participating. Please contact Kurt R. Calkins, if interested. (608) 742 9670.

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.

Title 15 Animal Waste Ordinance Revision— Open House September 26, 2019



The Columbia County Land & Water Conservation Department will be hosting an open house on September 26th, 2019 to give citizens an opportunity to discuss, review and provide input on a proposed revision and update to Columbia County Ordinance Title 15 Animal Waste Management Ordinance. The ordinance as a whole, has not been updated since 1998, except one minor revision in 2018. This proposed ordinance revision would update our current ordinance to align itself with the most current statewide Agricultural Performance Standards and Agricultural Waste Management Standards. **The open house will be held from 1:00PM to 3:00PM, with a presentation starting at 2:00PM.** The open house will be held at the Columbia County Administration Building located at 112 E. Edgewater Street in Portage. We will be using conference rooms 113 & 114, they are located on the first floor near the main entrance. I would encourage you to take time to stop by and discuss the content of the proposed revisions and ask questions. Our timeline for completing this update will be December 2019, so now is a great time to get engaged on the topic. If you have questions, please feel free to call Kurt R. Calkins, Director of LWCD at 608 742 9670. Hope to see many of you stop in.



Lexie Meyer, Acting County Executive Director,
USDA - Farm Service Agency,
2912 Red Fox Run, Portage, WI 53901

United States Department of Agriculture

USDA Opens Signup for Market Facilitation Program

Enrollment Now Open through Dec. 6

WASHINGTON, July 30, 2019 – Signup opened July 29, 2019 for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program to assist farmers who continue to suffer from damages because of unjustified trade retaliation from foreign nations. Through MFP, USDA will provide up to \$14.5 billion in direct payments to impacted producers, part of a broader trade relief package announced in late July. The sign-up period runs through Dec. 6.



“Our team at USDA reflected on what worked well and gathered feedback on last year’s program to make this one even stronger and more effective for farmers. Our farmers work hard, are the most productive in the world, and we aim to match their enthusiasm and patriotism as we support them,” said Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue.

MFP payments will be made to producers of certain non-specialty and specialty crops as well as dairy and hog producers.

Non-Specialty Crops

MFP payments will be made to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat. MFP assistance for 2019 crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm’s total plantings to the MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per acre payments are not dependent on which of those crops are planted in 2019. A producer’s total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. View payment rates by county.

Dairy and Hogs

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019.

Specialty Crops

MFP payments will also be made to producers of almonds, cranberries, cultivated ginseng, fresh grapes, fresh sweet cherries, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Each specialty crop will receive a payment based on 2019 acres of fruit or nut bearing plants, or in the case of ginseng, based on harvested acres in 2019.

More Information

Payments will be made in up to three tranches, with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third tranches will be made in November and early January.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than



\$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000, or 75 percent of the person’s or legal entity’s average AGI for those tax years must have been derived from farming and ranching. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

More information can be found on farmers.gov/mfp, including payment information and a program application

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

NRCS Offers more than \$ 200 Million in Emergency Funding to Restore Flood-Prone Lands

In response to recent flooding impacting many parts of the United States, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces the availability of \$217.5 million dedicated to funding conservation easements on certain lands damaged by flooding and other natural disasters.

Funds are made available through the floodplain easement component of the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP-FPE). The 11 states currently identified for funding include: Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin.

"Landowners across the United States have faced—and continue to face—significant challenges from flooding and natural disasters," said NRCS Chief Matthew Lohr. "To provide relief and assist agricultural landowners during this difficult time, this easement program offers an option that alleviates the stress of operating in a floodplain while still retaining ownership of their property." On June 6, 2019, President Trump signed an emergency supplemental appropriations bill providing relief and support to America's farmers and ranchers. This bill provides \$4.5 billion to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for agricultural-related losses, emergency timber restoration, farmland repair and watershed recovery work to help America's farmers and ranchers.

The EWPP-FPE program is a voluntary program through which eligible applicants agree to sell a permanent conservation easement to the United States through NRCS. Compensation is based on the value of the easement as determined by an appraisal or market analysis. These easements may occur on public or private agricultural land or residential properties damaged by flooding and natural disasters. NRCS will work to restore the easement to its natural floodplain condition.

Individuals and communities in any state are encouraged to contact their local NRCS field offices for more information on these floodplain easement opportunities.



Property owners interested in applying for EWPP-FPE can review program information on the [Floodplain Easement webpage](#). More information about the EWPP-FPE can be obtained from [your local USDA NRCS Field Office](#).

2019 USDA-NRCS Public Conservation Meetings Announced

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin has announced the schedule for 2019 Local Working Group (LWG) meetings. Eighteen meetings will be held across Wisconsin in August and September to gather input and help set priorities for U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs under the 2018 Farm Bill.

"Local Working Groups offer a seat at the table for interested individuals and groups to advise NRCS on how best to set priorities and locally implement conservation programs," said Angela Biggs, Wisconsin State Conservationist. "Members are diverse, with an interest and focus on local agriculture and various natural resource issues," added Biggs. Farmers representing a variety of crops and livestock raised within the local area, private woodland owners, representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations, and representatives of other agriculture and natural resource agencies are welcome and should be represented.

Wisconsin LWGs represent two or more counties grouped together by geography, similar land use, resources, and type of agriculture. See a map of Local Working Groups. This will allow greater flexibility and access to funding for the groups.

One of the main programs discussed at the meetings will be the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a federal conservation program that helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. EQIP offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners with needed conservation practices for water quality, soil health, wildlife and other natural resources.

Local Working Group meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested in becoming a member in LWGs should contact their local NRCS Service Center. Contact your local NRCS District Conservationist if you are interested in participating. For detailed information on local work groups, see What are Local Working Groups and see the Schedule of Meetings.



Date	Time	Counties	Location	Address	Lead District Conservationist
Sept. 16	1:00-3:00pm	Columbia, Dodge, Jefferson	Dodge County Admin Building Lower Level Conference Room	127 E. Oak Street, Juneau, WI 53039	Kathy Turner kathy.turner1@usda.gov

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
PORTAGE WI 53901
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Helping People Help the Land
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