

# Columbia County Ag Reporter

January/February 2020



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)
- ◆ Pesticide Applicator Training (pg. 6)
- ◆ Nutrient Management Plan (pg. 7)
- ◆ Conservation Reserve Program (pg. 12-13)

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## Ag Reporter Calendar of Events

### January

- 1 Offices Closed in observance of New Year's Day
- 7 WI Agronomy Update Meeting—DeForest
- 10 ARC/PLC Info Meeting, 1-3pm, Admin Bldg., Portage
- 14 ARC/PLC Info Meeting, 10am—noon, Admin Bldg., Portage
- 14-16 WI Agribusiness Classic—Alliant Center, Madison
- 16 Land & Water Conservation Planning, 6-8pm, Admin Bldg., Portage
- 21 Pesticide Applicator Training, Otsego Town Hall, 9am
- 27 Nutrient Management Update Class, Admin Bldg, 113/114, 8:30am
- 29 Nutrient Management Update Class, Admin Bldg, 113/114, 8:30am

### February

- 5 Nutrient Management Beginner Class #1, 9am-3pm, Admin. Bldg.
- 6-7 WI Corn/Soy/Swine Conference – Kalahari, WI Dells
- 11 DHIA Annual Meeting, Noon, Pizza Ranch, Portage
- 12 Nutrient Management Beginner Class #2, 9am-3pm, Admin Bldg.
- 13 Pesticide Applicator Training – Portage, HHS Meeting Rooms 2&3
- 18-20 Midwest Forage Association Conference – WI Dells
- 19 Nutrient Management Beginner Class #3
- 26 WI Extension Cattle Feeders Mtg. 1-4pm, Admin. Bldg., Portage
- 29 WI Hops Growers Meeting – New Glarus

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

This is also where you can find the weekly *Ag Reporter Snapshots*.

## Area 16 Winter Grazing Meeting

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020, 9:00 am to 3:00 PM**  
**Portage VFW Hall, 215 W Collins St., Portage, WI**

Program focus for 2020 is on **“Why? How? and Marketing?”** The day will kick off with a farmer panel discussing, “Why are you doing what you are doing?” Other topics on the schedule for the day include: Grassland 2.0, Grazing Cover Crops, Grazing management, and Marketing your Production by considering your options: WI Grassfed Beef Co-op, Auction Barns, private locker plants, and a panel of farmers who direct market their products and meat. We’ll tie the day all together at the end with a discussion on “Making the WHY make Money!”

Registration will be \$20 per person if paid by February 21, \$30 per person after that date. Contact Jennifer Evans to register for this event at Jennifer Evans, 112 E Edgewater St, Room #212, Portage, WI., 53913, 608-742-9682, or [jennifer.evans@wisc.edu](mailto:jennifer.evans@wisc.edu). Checks should be made payable to: Columbia County.

## 11th Annual Hop Seminar

**Save the Date! Details coming soon**

Saturday, February 29, 2020  
New Glarus Brewing Company  
New Glarus, WI

Check this website for updates on the seminar: <https://buffalo.extension.wisc.edu/agriculture/barley-and-hops/>

## Produce Safety Training Dates Announced for 2020

Food safety trainings for produce growers will be held in 6 locations around the state in January and February. The classes will be taught by University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension in collaboration with Wisconsin’s Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule requires people who grow, harvest, pack or sell about \$27,577 or more in produce (per year averaged over three years) to meet produce safety rules, including attending produce safety training. If a grower is above the threshold, there are a few exemptions that may limit your responsibilities. If you are not sure of your responsibilities under the law, call your local Extension office or go to this website: <https://fsmaproducesafety.wisc.edu/>.



The FSMA is a federal law using science-based standards to reduce the potential for fresh produce contamination that may lead to illnesses and death. The focus is to prevent food safety issues rather than react to outbreaks.

Food safety is an important issue for every farm. Contamination by food borne pathogens can make your customers ill and could have devastating impacts for farm businesses. Proper harvesting and handling techniques will minimize the risk of contamination and increase the shelf life and marketability of products.

If required to by the Rule, growers must attend an FDA-approved produce safety training. Participants only need to attend one training and will receive a certificate confirming completion of the course. Trainings are scheduled for the following dates and locations:

Jan. 14, 2020: Black River Falls  
Jan. 17, 2020: Whitewater  
Jan. 26, 2020: Wisconsin Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference (pre-conference), Wisconsin Dells  
Feb. 11, 2020: Kimberly  
Feb. 21, 2020: Dalton  
Feb. 25, 2020: West Bend

To register go to <https://fsmaproducesafety.wiscweb.wisc.edu>. Language interpretation services are available upon request but must be made 15 business days in advance of the training date. As this is a federal certification, equivalent courses in other states also fulfill this requirement.

If you have questions about your status under the FSMA Produce Safety Rule, or would like advice on practices that promote produce safety, please contact your local UW-Madison Extension county office. The county Extension office will be able to connect you to an Extension educator who can assist you.

## ***Extension Beef Producers Meeting***

Columbia County Extension will be hosting a Beef Producers Meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM in the Administration Building in Portage. We will have presentations on:

- Building integrity vs snow load from 2018-19
- Beef Market Outlook for 2020
- Selling Finished Beef – Right size, quality, time...
- Q & A time

Please contact Jennifer Evans to register for this event at 608-742-9687, [jennifer.evans@wisc.edu](mailto:jennifer.evans@wisc.edu)



George Koepp, Columbia County Agriculture Educator will be hosting two meetings to be held at the Columbia County Administration Building to assist grain farmers in making the decisions on choosing either ARC (Agriculture Risk Coverage) or PLC (Price Loss Coverage) with the Farm Service Agency for their grain crops grown in 2019 and 2020. There is no cost to grain farmers to attend these meetings or for signing up for these programs with FSA. Decisions must be made and contracts signed with FSA prior to March 15, 2020.

Choose one of these two meetings:

Friday, January 10 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm  
Tuesday, January 14 from 10:00 to noon

Please sign up to attend one of the two meetings to be held in Columbia County. Farmers from Sauk, Columbia, Dodge, Adams Friendship, Marquette and Waushara counties are being invited. Please call ahead or email to reserve a seat at these meetings by contacting Jennifer Evans at 608-742-9687 or [jennifer.evans@wisc.edu](mailto:jennifer.evans@wisc.edu). Attendance is limited to 50 people at each session.

## **Columbia County Pesticide Applicator Training—2020**

Stop in to our office to purchase your manual and schedule the training session that works best for your schedule. If you are unable to attend one of these sessions you still have the option of studying the materials on your own and then schedule a time to take the exam on your own. The Self-study exam requires that you score 70% or higher. When you participate in the training sessions you need to score 50% or higher on the exam.

### **2020 Training Sessions - 9:00am—3:30pm**

Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2019 - \$30

Site: Otsego

Lunch: Sponsored by Landmark Rio Co-op

Location: Otsego Town Hall  
W3199 State Road 16  
Columbus, WI

Limit: 50

Date: Wednesday, February 13, 2020 - \$40

Site: Portage

Lunch: Catered in (\$10.00 for lunch)

Location: Columbia County Health & Human Services Building  
Meeting Rooms 2 and 3  
111 East Mullett Street  
Portage, WI 53901

Limit: 40

**Contact Jennifer Evans to register at:  
608-742-9687 or [jennifer.evans@co.columbia.wi.us](mailto:jennifer.evans@co.columbia.wi.us)**

## Nutrient Management – Snap Plus Trainings for 2020

Call or email now to reserve a seat for the Columbia County Nutrient Management/Snap Plus training opportunities in 2020. Contact Jennifer Evans to register for the appropriate class and date by calling 608-742-9687 or sending her an email at [Jennifer.evans@wisc.edu](mailto:Jennifer.evans@wisc.edu). Lunch will be provided for all class sessions along with a stipend for attending and updating or completing your Nutrient Management Plans. All classes are held at the Columbia County Administration Building in Portage. Bring along your own laptop or we can provide one for you to use at all classes.

If you have been previously trained to use SnapPlus and wish to update your Nutrient Management Plan for 2020 sign up for one of the following dates:

**Monday, January 27, 2020 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

or

**Wednesday, January 29, 2020 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

You must attend an update class at least every four years to remain certified to write your own Nutrient Management Plan. Nutrient Management plans are an important component of the Farmland Preservation Tax Credit program in Wisconsin.

If you would like to be trained to develop your own nutrient management plan using SnapPlus, you will need to attend three days of Training. These classes will be held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on three Wednesdays in February, 5, 12, and 19.

Please bring current or updated soil test results to all classes. Current soil test data is within the last four years. Contact Harold McElroy in the Land and Water Conservation Office or George Koepp in the Extension Office for questions about soil testing or the training sessions.



## ***Taking the Pulse of Your Farm Business***

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension's *Farm Pulse Continuum* is a new program for farmers interested in learning how to use farm financials to explore their farm business decisions. Introductory workshops offered in four regional locations will outline the program and provide examples of the value of using farm financial analysis to make informed management decisions.

"The *Farm Pulse Program* provides the framework for informed decision-making for the farm manager to know where to start immediately," says Kevin Bernhardt, Extension Farm Management Specialist. "The introductory workshops will build awareness of 'Why Financial Management' and how enrolling in the full *Farm Pulse Program* will help Wisconsin farmers evaluate their finances and take the pulse of their business and goals for the future."

Other topics in the introductory workshop include an overview of the financial model and the purpose and value of the basic financial statements: Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flow. At the end of the workshop, participants will learn how they can enroll in the *Farm Pulse Continuum Program*.

The following Division of Extension county offices will be hosting the introductory workshops, registration fee of \$20 per person or \$30 per farm (2 people sharing materials). The workshop will also be offered via a web-based platform (\$10 per farm). For additional information and to register contact one of the Extension offices below or please visit: <https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/programs/farm-pulse/>



Jan. 14, 2020: 10 a.m. Baldwin, St. Croix County Agriculture Services and Education Center. 1960 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 140. Information and registration: Extension St. Croix County (715) 531-1930.

Jan. 15, 2020: 10 a.m. Abbotsford City Hall, 203 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Abbotsford. Information and registration: Extension Marathon County (715) 261-1239.

Jan. 21, 2020: 10 a.m. Darlington, Multi-purpose Building, 11974 Ames Road. Information and registration: Josh Kamps, Extension Lafayette County Agriculture Educator, [joshua.kamps@wisc.edu](mailto:joshua.kamps@wisc.edu) or (608) 776-4820.

Jan. 22, 2020: 6:30 p.m. Live, on-line webinar. More information and registration for the live webinar: <https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/programs/farm-pulse/> or contact Agriculture Educator 262- 335-4477.

## Hemp and Farm Bill Programs

Hemp producers growing in accordance with USDA guidelines are eligible for certain USDA programs in 2020. USDA's Farm Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk Management Agency (RMA) are updating guidelines on several programs to support growers of hemp, which was reclassified by the 2018 Farm Bill. Once production plans are approved and licenses are issued, hemp producers may be eligible for many USDA programs for the 2020 crop year.



### What could hemp producers be eligible for?

- Whole-Farm Revenue Protection
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
- NRCS Conservation Programs
- Farm Loans

USDA is working to make available program options for hemp producers. As information is available, USDA will post on [farmers.gov/hemp](https://farmers.gov/hemp). If you have additional questions, contact your local USDA service center, which you can find at : [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).



COLUMBIA  
COUNTY

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

## Land & Water Conservation Department Updates & Program Information

### 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. The committee met for the first time on December 17, 2019. We had great well-rounded representation, if you were not able to make the first meeting, you are still welcome to attend the 2nd meeting. The next meeting being held January 16, 2020 from 6:00-8:00 pm. At this meeting we will review and prioritize the priority issues and continue a brain storming discussion on action items to help us move forward.

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.

### Reminder For 2019 Farmland Preservation Tax Credits To Be Claimed

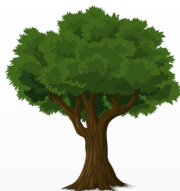


When you file your 2019 Farmland Preservation Tax Credit, remember you only need your unique Certificate number when filing your taxes. If you received this number last year on your Certificate of Compliance, it would still be applicable to your land, **unless** you have removed or added any land which would change the description on your previous Certificate of Compliance. That would require

you to obtain a new certificate, obtainable with a new certificate fee of \$25.00. If you continue to meet eligibility requirements including meeting all applicable conservation standards each year and submitting your postcard due to our office every July 15th, that certificate number will still valid. The date on the bottom of the certificate refers to the date your certification started, you do **NOT** need a new Certificate of Compliance each year. If you have any questions, please contact our office.

### Tree Sales Program 2019-2020-Reserve ASAP!

Just a reminder we are processing orders for the 2019-2020 year. If you submit your order to our office (or postmarked) by January 31, 2020, you will also have your name entered into a drawing where we will pick one name for a free bundle of trees to be picked up on Tree Day. All order forms were mailed out in November, if you are on our mailing list you should have received yours already. You can also find the order form online at: <http://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/lwcd/TreeProgram>. If you are NOT on the annual mailing list, feel free to contact us to be added. There is also an online purchasing option through paypal with the above link or you may use your credit card submitting your order in person or over the phone. To reserve the trees you want, order sooner than later. Tree pick-up day is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 23, 2020. You can also find us on facebook. Thanks for your continued support in this program. If you have questions, please contact us at 608 742-9670.



### Nutrient Management Plan Writing Workshop

We still have spots available for our 2020 Nutrient Management Plan development classes as well as the One Day Workshop for participants from the past that are due for their review training. Please contact the LWCD if you are interested. This a great low cost option to learn to develop your own 590 Nutrient Management Plan. Past participants are reminded that they need to participate in update class to keep self-written plan certification current. The review class should be done a minimum of every 4th year. We provide class room incentives and lunch through a grant we have from DATCP. Please call LWCD at (608)-742-9670.

#### Class Dates:

**Review/Update Class:** January 27th and January 29th

**New Plan classes:** February 5th, February 12th and February 19th



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

### United States Department of Agriculture

### *USDA Announces Opening Signup for Conservation Reserve Program on December 9, 2019*

USDA is opening signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on December 9, 2019. The deadline for agricultural producers to sign up for general CRP is February 28, 2020, while signup for continuous CRP is ongoing.

Farmers and ranchers who enroll in CRP receive a yearly rental payment for voluntarily establishing long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands.

CRP has 22 million acres enrolled, but the 2018 Farm Bill lifted the cap to 27 million acres. This means farmers and ranchers have a chance to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

By enrolling in CRP, producers are improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and restoring habitat for wildlife. This in turn spurs hunting, fishing, recreation, tourism, and other economic development across rural America.

#### **CRP Enrollment Options**

##### **General Signup**

CRP general signup will be held annually. The competitive general signup will now include increased opportunities for enrollment of wildlife habitat through the State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative.

##### **Continuous Signup**

While some practices under SAFE will remain available through continuous signup, CRP continuous signup will focus primarily on water quality with the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, and Rivers (CLEAR) Initiative. The 2018 Farm Bill prioritizes water quality practices such as contour grass strips, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetlands and a new prairie strip.

USDA will also be working with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) partners to relaunch CREP continuous options in each state under new statutory provisions. CREP will continue to target high-priority local, state or regional conservation concerns.

##### **Grasslands Signups**

CRP Grasslands signup helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including

rangeland, and pastureland and certain other lands while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. A separate CRP Grasslands signup will be offered each year following general signup.

### **Pilot Programs**

Later in 2020, (FSA will roll out pilot programs within CRP: CLEAR 30, which allows contracts expiring with CLEAR practices to be reenrolled in 30-year contracts and in the Soil Health and Income Protection Program (SHIPP) in the prairie pot-hole region. More information on these programs will be announced in the new year.

### **Land Transition**

The CRP Transition Incentives Program (TIP) is an option for producers interested in transitioning land to a beginning farmer or rancher or a member of a socially disadvantaged group to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production. CRP contract holders no longer need to be a retired or retiring owner or operator to transition their land. TIP participants may have a lease less than five years with an option to purchase, and they have two years before the end of the CRP contract to make conservation and land improvements.

### **Previously Expired Land**

Land enrolled in CRP under a 15-year contract that expired in September 2017, 2018 or 2019, may be eligible for enrollment if there was no opportunity for re-enrollment and the practice under the expired contract has been maintained.

### **CRP Rates and Payments**

FSA recently posted updated soil rental rates for CRP. County average rates are posted on the CRP Statistics webpage. Soil rental rates are statutorily prorated at 90 percent for continuous signup and 85 percent for general signup. The rental rates will be assessed annually. Under continuous signup, producers also receive incentives, including a signup incentive payment and a practice incentive payment.

To enroll in CRP, contact your local FSA county office or visit [fsa.usda.gov/crp](https://fsa.usda.gov/crp). To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).

## ***FSA Can Help with On-Farm Storage***

Winter months in Wisconsin can be long and cold. For several years, farmers have faced propane storage shortages. FSA's [Farm Storage Facility Loan \(FSFL\) program](#) provides funding for on-farm liquified petroleum tanks.

FSFL low-interest financing can be used to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment, storage and handling trucks. Liquified petroleum tanks are covered for eligible commodities for the use of fuel for grain dryer equipment.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including conventional operations, small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about FSFLs and how these loans can help with your on-site propane tank storage needs, contact your local FSA county office.

# LOANS

## ***USDA Safety Net Program Enrollment Open 2019 & 2020***

Agricultural producers now can enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs – two U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety net programs – for the 2020 crop year.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and updated both programs.

Signup for the 2020 crop year closes June 30, 2020, while signup for the 2019 crop year closes March 15, 2020. Producers who have not yet enrolled for 2019 can enroll for both 2019 and 2020 during the same visit to an FSA county office.

ARC and PLC have options for the farm operator who is actively farming the land as well as the owner of the land. Farm owners also have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields beginning with crop year 2020. If the farm owner and producer visit the FSA county office together, FSA can also update yield information during that visit.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the ARC and PLC webpage.



# OGRain

## 2020 OGRain Winter Conference

Friday-Saturday Jan. 24-25 on the UW-Madison Campus

We will be offering Continuing Education Units for Certified Crop Advisors.

Cost for the two-day conference is \$80 if paid by January 10. A light breakfast, snack, and lunch are included. Evening meal is on your own and not included in the registration fee. Cost will be \$90 between Jan 11 and Jan 20, payment at the door will be \$100. Sorry, there is no one-day fee.

For more information and registration please visit: <https://ograin2020.brownpapertickets.com/>

### STAFF DIRECTORY

#### UW-Extension Columbia County Agriculture Staff

George Koepp, Agriculture Agent.....(608) 742-9682  
[george.koepp@wisc.edu](mailto:george.koepp@wisc.edu)

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m. Monday–Friday

Office: (608) 742-9680; Fax: (608) 742-9862; <https://columbia.extension.wisc.edu/agriculture/>

#### UW-Extension Columbia County (UWEX) Office Staff

Jennifer Evans, Administrative Assistant (Admin, Ag, CRD, HDR).....(608) 742-9687  
Kathleen Haas, Community Resource Educator .....(608) 742-9683  
Amanda Coorough, Human Development & Relationships Educator.(608) 742-9686  
Pat Wagner, Positive Youth Development Educator.....(608) 742-9685  
Sarah Millard, Administrative Assistant (4-H).....(608) 742-9688  
Caitlin Richardson, WI FoodWise Coordinator.....(608) 742-9693

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If you have a change of email, address or would like to be removed, please call the UW-Madison Extension Columbia County office at (608) 742-9687 or email your request to: [jennifer.evans@wisc.edu](mailto:jennifer.evans@wisc.edu)

UW-Madison Extension Columbia County  
Columbia County Ag Reporter  
112 E. Edgewater Street, Room 212  
Portage, WI 53901  
608-742-9680

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