

Unit 1 Ag News

January 2012

This issue of The Ag News is also available online at: web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw under "Ag Newsletter"

Local Program Calendar

- February 4**, Winter Trails and Naturalist Tales, Rockford, (visit our website for more information)
- February 14 & 16**, Raising Sheep & Goats on a Small Farm Webinar, Freeport (see page 6)
- February 16**, Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Stockton, (see page 2)
- February 18**, Joys of Gardening, 8:25 a.m. to 4 p.m. Freeport, (visit our website for more information)
- February 20**, Northwest Illinois Fruit & Vegetable Growers Workshop, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Rockford, (see page 4)
- February 20** Certified Livestock Manager Training, 8:50 a.m., DeKalb, (see page 3)
- February 21**, Certified Livestock Manager Training, 8:50 a.m., Mt Carroll, (see page 3)
- February 22**, Certified Livestock Manager Training, 9:50 a.m., Freeport, (see page 3)
- February 21 & 22**, Illinois Crop Management Conference, Malta, (see page 6)
- March 3** Gardening for Food and Fun, Rockford, (visit our website for more information)
- March 6**, Crop Management Update, 9 a.m. to Noon, US Bank, Pecatonica, (see page 6)
- March 15**, Private Pesticide Applicator Test Only, 10 a.m. Freeport, (see page 3)
- March 18**, Feeding Your Soil, 1-2:30 p.m., Elizabeth, (visit our website for more details)
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- April 1**, Basics of Garden Planning, 1—2:20 p.m., Elizabeth, (visit our website for more details)
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2012 Dairy Roundtables

The University of Illinois Extension in partnership with Community Bank will be offering two opportunities for dairy producers and industry professionals to attend the Dairy Roundtable program.

Community Bank of Orangeville, 401 S. Church Street, Orangeville, will be the site of the Dairy Roundtable on Tuesday, March 20 starting at 10:30 a.m. and concluding by 1:30 p.m. Lunch & meeting space will be provided by Community Bank of Orangeville.

Warren Community Center, 110 West Main Street, Warren, will be the site of the Dairy Roundtable on Wednesday, March 21 starting at 10:30 a.m. and concluding by 1:30 p.m. Lunch & meeting space will be provided by Community Bank of Warren.

At both programs dairy producers and industry professionals will have the opportunity to discuss dairy issues with fellow dairymen and with University of Illinois Professor of Animal Sciences, Emeritus, Dr. Mike Hutjens. Mike will comment on DHI data summaries for 2011, economics of by-product feeds, feed costs for 2012, looking at forages in 2012, accelerated calf feeding programs, robotic calf feeders, MUN levels, building milk protein, and shredlage corn silage. After Mike's opening comments the program will be discussion based. All dairy producers are encouraged to attend and bring discussion topics. Feed sample analysis will be available at the conclusion of the program.

Pre-registration is required by calling the University of Illinois Extension at (815) 858-2273 or online at web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw. Registration is requested by March 14.

Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference: *Dollars and Sense of Grazing*

Livestock producers can learn how to cut feed costs through grazing at the upcoming 2012 Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference: *Dollars and Sense of Grazing*. The program will be held on February 16, 2012 from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Stockton, Illinois. Registration begins at 9 a.m.

Pastures are often underappreciated as a less expensive way of meeting animal nutritional needs. Livestock can be fed less expensively when they harvest their own feed than when the producer plants, grows, harvests, stores and supplies feed to the animal. With a moderate investment in materials and some management changes, a producer can increase forage production significantly and meet animal needs for as many as nine months of the year in our climate.

Poorly distributed watering points are usually the greatest hurdle in establishing a sound grazing rotation. Jay Solomon, U of I Extension Educator, will discuss using water as a management tool. USDA NRCS Grasslands Specialist, Matt Bunger, will provide recommendations on temporary and permanent fencing strategies and materials.

Jim Morrison, retired U of I Extension Crop Educator, will lay out the process for successfully renovating pastures. Dr. Larry Tranel, Dairy Field Specialist with Iowa State University Extension, will provide a detailed analysis of how grazing reduces feed costs.

A lunch provided by Springbrook Catering will be followed by a discussion on forage species selection and alternative forages, by retired NRCS State Resource Conservationist Richard Hungerford. John Bell, NRCS District Conservationist in Jo Daviess County, will provide information on technical assistance and funding available for pasture improvements.

Finally, a panel of grazers will evaluate their operations from an economic standpoint and respond to questions from the audience. Dairy will be represented by producer/Iowa State Extension Specialist Dr. Larry Tranel, beef and sheep by producer/University of Wisconsin Extension Specialist Gene Schriefer, and sheep by Illinois producer Elton Mau.

The registration fee is \$20 per person through February 10th and \$30 thereafter. Contact **U of I Extension in Jo Daviess County at 815-858-2273** for registration information, or register online with a credit card at web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw.

Program Sponsors include:

- NW IL Forage and Grassland Council
- Illinois Forage and Grassland Council
- Illinois Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Jo Daviess Soil and Water Conservation District
- Stephenson Soil and Water Conservation District
- Carroll Soil and Water Conservation District
- University of Illinois Extension
- Blackhawk Hills RC&D

Suppliers of pasture-related materials or services, or of livestock-based local food, who wish to help sponsor the event or set up a booth at the conference should call the Jo Daviess Soil and Water Conservation District at 815-858-3418 ext. 3 by February 10.

On-Line Resources

Variety Testing Program

Soybean, Corn, Small Grain, and Forage Crop Test Plot Results.

Vt.cropsci.illinois.edu

Sweet Corn Disease Nursery

www.sweetcorn.illinois.edu

Illinois Livestock Trail

www.livestocktrail.illinois.edu

Certified Crop Advisor Website

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cca>

Private Pesticide Applicator Test Only Session Offered

Private Pesticide Applicators that need their license renewed can take the Private Applicator test on Thursday, March 15, 2012, at the Highland Community College Student Conference Center Room 201 starting at 10 a.m. This is a **TEST ONLY** site and there is no charge but pre-registration is requested by calling the University of Illinois Extension at (815) 235-4125 or on-line at web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw.

Private Applicators Self Study via the Internet

Private applicators that need to renew their license can complete an on-line training via the internet. The training include 8 modules that can be completed at your convince. This training can be viewed at www.pesticidesafety.illinois.edu. There is a \$15 fee to register for the on-line training. The license examination is not offered via the internet and must be completed in person at one of the testing sites.

Private Applicator Manuals & Workbooks Available

The U of I Extension offices in Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties have Private Applicator manuals and workbooks available for purchase. Manuals are \$10 and Workbooks are \$2. The Stephenson County office is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Winnebago & Jo Daviess Offices are open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A limited number of commercial applicator books are available in each of the offices. Call ahead to check on availability.

Publications including manuals and workbooks for pesticide applicators can be purchased on-line at:
<https://pubsplus.illinois.edu>

Pesticide safety training and testing clinic schedules can be found on-line at:
www.pesticidesafety.illinois.edu

Certified Livestock Manager Training Workshops Offered

The Illinois Livestock Management Facilities Act, passed in 1996, requires producers with more than 300 animal units in their operation to be certified in livestock manure management. Certification issued by the Illinois Department of Agriculture is valid for three years and then must be renewed.

All workshops will be presented by University of Illinois Extension specialists, and Brad Beaver, manager of the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) Livestock Facilities Program, will discuss regulations and rules in the Livestock Management Facilities Act. The IDOA Certified Livestock Manager exam will be offered at the conclusion of the training program.

Workshop pre-registration is strongly encouraged, as seating may be limited.

To register or purchase a CLM Training Manual call (800) 345-6087. If producers have a 2003 CLM manual or newer, they will not need to purchase a new manual. The Illinois Department of Agriculture certification exam is based on the CLM manual.

CLM Training Workshop Registration: \$30 per person; same farm registration \$30 for the first person and \$20 for each additional individual if registered at the same time. Workshop Walk-Ins: \$45 per person.

The complete 2011-12 CLM Training Workshops brochure is available at www.livestocktraining.com. For additional information contact Dale Baird, Extension Specialist, Certified Livestock Training Program at clmt@illinois.edu or call (815)978-2844.

Locally CLM training will be held:

- February 20 at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau Building starting at 8:50
- Tuesday, February 21 at the Carroll County Farm Bureau starting at 8:50 a.m.
- **Wednesday, February 22 at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau Building at 9:50 a.m.**
- The final opportunity will be held on Wednesday, March 7 at the Illinois Department of Ag in Springfield, IL starting at 8:50 a.m.

To Register for this program please call ACES Marketing at 1-800-345-6087.

16th Annual Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference

University of Illinois Extension presents the 16th Annual Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference on Monday, February 20 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Midway Village Museum, Rockford. The cost per person is \$40; each additional family member or business colleague can register for \$30. After February 16, the registration cost is \$50 per person.

The conference fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, four general education sessions, as well as a choice of two breakout sessions. To register or for a complete conference schedule,

visit: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw> or call 815-986-4357.

“This annual conference provides relevant, practical information for the fruit and vegetable specialty grower - it’s a great opportunity for both learning and networking,” says U of I Extension Local Foods and Small Farms Educator Maurice Ogutu, PhD.

The annual Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference sessions are led by educators and experts from University of Illinois Extension, USDA-NRCS, Royal Oaks Farm Orchard and more. Education topics include small farm risk management, direct marketing, farm to school programs, pest management, use of cover crops, organic soil amendments and more.

On-Line Resources

Web Soil Survey:

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov> for relevant soil information to make land-use and management decisions.

Optimum Productivity Ratings for Illinois Soils Bulletin 811: <https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/1027/Bulletin811.pdf?sequence=2>

Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers and *Illinois Farmland Values and Lease Trends*: www.ispfmra.org

Ultrasound Pregnancy Exam Demonstration Featured in Replacement Heifer Development

Ultrasound has been used in the livestock industry for over 25 years, however its use for pregnancy examinations has grown recently. A 20-28 day-old embryo can be visible to a trained veterinarian, however most prefer to wait a little longer to be able to both age the fetus and determine the sex. For the average commercial cattleman raising his own replacement heifers, just knowing the heifer is bred may be enough, but for those producers selling bred females knowing the age, sire and sex of the developing fetus is important information that can result in increased sale value. Knowing the age of the developing fetus can also be useful in planning for calving time.

A demonstration on using ultrasound pregnancy exams and determining the age and sex of the beef fetus, will be featured in the **Iowa State University Extension Heifer Development Programs** on Feb. 7 at the Postville Vet clinic and Feb. 9 at the Jackson County Extension office. Both programs start at noon and will be done around 4 pm. **Registration is \$15, and is due Feb. 1 by calling 319-721-9624.**

Co-sponsors of the program include the Postville Vet Clinic and Maquoketa Embryos, along with the Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, ABS Global, Accelerated Genetics, Genex Cooperative, Select Sires, and Land of Lakes/Purina .

The drought in the southwestern cow states has resulted in the sale of a significant amount of the US beef cow herd, meaning there will be opportunities for entrepreneurs who have bred heifers or cows for sale whenever range country gets enough rain to grow grass. Attend one of these programs to find out how you can be prepared when this opportunity arises.

For more information about this program please contact Denise Schwab, Iowa State University Extension Beef Program Specialist at 319-721-9624.

Agriculture Update for Northern Illinois

By Russ Higgins

Even though the snow is falling today it is not unrealistic to think that within 100 days we could be planting our 2012 crop. This observation is not meant to shock growers out of their winter doldrums, but a reminder to make use of the remainder of our "preseason" to prepare. Have you given adequate thought to the issues faced in 2011?

Let's review several things that happened to corn producers in Northern Illinois. Goss's wilt was confirmed in 31 counties in Illinois this past growing season, with almost all counties in central or northern Illinois. We learned that fields that were corn-on-corn, fields that had detected Goss's wilt from previous seasons, fields with high corn residue, and fields with weed hosts such as green foxtail or shattercane are at a higher risk for infection. Prior to 2011, Goss's wilt had been observed only sporadically in Illinois, according to University of Illinois Extension plant pathologist Carl Bradley. Leaf symptoms of this disease appear as large tannish to gray lesions that run lengthwise on the leaves. Within the lesions are dark flecks that are dark forest green or black in color. These flecks are frequently referred to as "freckles." If you experienced Goss's wilt in 2011 Dr. Bradley shared the following advice. "No in-season control options are available to protect against Goss's wilt infection or to reduce disease spread within a field. Foliar fungicides are not effective for bacterial infection either. The best method of controlling Goss's wilt is to plant corn hybrids with high levels of resistance."

In addition to seed selection management for 2012 includes tillage operations to bury infected residue, weed host management, and consider the option of rotating problematic fields in 2011 to soybean in 2012.

An insect issue that had many producers walking their corn fields was the news of Bt resistance with the Western corn rootworm beetle. The rootworm resistance to Cry3Bb1 was confirmed in NE Iowa in 2011. On Aug 16th Dr. Mike Gray, University of Illi-

nois Extension entomologist responded to growers concerns and discovered severe corn rootworm pruning on some Bt hybrids that express the Cry3Bb1 protein in Henry and Whiteside counties in northwestern Illinois. Lodged plants were common in many areas of the fields, and western corn rootworm adults were numerous and easy to collect. He also found plants with two to three nodes of roots completely destroyed. Later in the season similar fields were identified in LaSalle County. The fields were in continuous corn production systems for many years, and the producers had relied upon Bt hybrids that expressed the Cry3Bb1 protein as their primary protection against western corn rootworm injury. It is important to note that insects were collected and lab studies verifying resistance to the Cry3Bb1 event in Iowa, a step that has yet to take place in Illinois.

If you experienced problem fields this past year Dr. Gray had the following recommendations:

- Consider rotation to soybeans or another non-host crop.
- Consider the use of a corn rootworm soil insecticide at planting.
- Consider the use of a Bt hybrid that expresses a different corn rootworm Cry protein than one which may have performed poorly in your fields during 2011.
- Consider the use of a pyramided Bt hybrid that expresses multiple Cry proteins targeted against corn rootworms.

As we approach the growing season we will continue to share information and research to benefit the growers of northern Illinois.

Russ Higgins is a University of Illinois Extension Commercial Agriculture Educator located at the Northern Illinois Agronomy Research Center

Printable Cash Farm Leases

http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/legal/Farmdoc_Form_CL01_0912.pdf

Machinery Cost Estimates

can be found at: www.farmdoc.illinois.edu under the management tab. Provides information about the cost of operating tractors, harvest equipment, tillage tools, & forage equipment.

2012 ILLINOIS CROP MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Discover the latest information on crop production and management issues at the University of Illinois Crop Management Conference this winter. This two-day conference is designed to address a wide array of topics pertinent to crop production, pest management, and natural resources issues. Several of this year's topics include Micronutrients in Corn and Soybean production, Impacts of Climate Variation on Illinois Crop Production, and Strip Intercropping: Lessons Learned from Chinese and U. S. Research. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a forum for discussion and interaction between participants and university researchers. Certified Crop Advisers can earn up to 13 hours of CEU credit. A \$130 conference registration fee is due one week before each conference. Late and on-site registration is \$150.

In Northern Illinois the Crop Management Conference is February 21 and 22 at Malta. The Kishwaukee College Conference Center provides the venue for the 2012 conference.

Use the following link to view a full conference schedule, registration form, and on-line registration: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/blmp/downloads/41498.pdf>
Pre-registration deadline is February 13.

For additional information please contact Russ Higgins at the Northern Illinois Agronomy Research Center, via email at rahiggin@illinois.edu or by phone at 815-274-1343.

Blue Gold.... Water Our #1 Liquid Asset

The public is invited to attend the 25th Anniversary Rotary Roundtable "Blue Gold...Water Our #1 Liquid Asset" sponsored by the Rotary Club of Galena in cooperation with the Galen Gazette and the University of Illinois Extension. The program will be held on Wednesday, March 21 at the Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This year's Rotary Roundtable features a panel of "water experts" focusing on important water issues that will soon

affect all of us.

- Sources of potable water with emphasis on the tri-state area.
- Threats to our water supply.
- Social, environmental, and economic impacts of these threats.
- What can we do to ensure that we have clean safe water.

For questions or to register call the Galena Rotary Club at (815) 777-3895 or visit www.galenrotary.org. Registration is \$35 in advance or \$40 at the door.

Crop Management Update

Join Russ Higgins, University of Illinois Commercial Agriculture Educator from the Northern Illinois Agronomy Research Center for a review of the 2011 growing season at the NIARC and the latest information on Western corn rootworm resistance and disease issues for Illinois crops. The Crop Management Update will be held on Tuesday, March 6 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The program will be held at the US Bank, 430 Main Street, Pecatonica. Registration is \$5 and can be made by calling U of I Extension at (815) 235-4125 or on-line at web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw.

Raising Sheep & Goats on Small Farms Webinar Offered

The University of Illinois Extension in Stephenson County will be offering a webinar titled "Raising Sheep and Goats on a Small Farm". The webinar will be offered Tuesday, February 14 at 7 p.m. and on Thursday, February 16 at 1 p.m. The presentation will be presented via the University webinar system.

There are many reasons for raising sheep or goats, whether the motivation is economic, environmental concerns, or quality of life. Consideration of raising these livestock will be discussed with special attention paid to issues affecting production including nutrition, health, pasture management, predator control, housing, and marketing. On small acreage, sheep and goats are particularly well-suited and easy to manage.

This presentation will be led by Small Farms and Local Foods Extension Educator Dr. James Theuri. Pre-registration for this webinar is required by calling the University of Illinois Extension at (815) 235-4125. Registration is \$5.

Midwest Dairy & Beef Husbandry Conference

The care and well-being of dairy and beef cattle will be the focus for the upcoming Midwest Dairy & Beef Husbandry Conference to be held on March 1, 2012 in Madison, WI. The conference is being offered by University of Wisconsin-Extension and will be held at the Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison, WI. The conference is designed for dairy and beef producers, their employees, Veterinarians, and anyone working with cattle.

The Midwest Dairy and Beef Husbandry Conference will include live dairy and beef cattle handling demonstrations by Dr. Ben Bartlett who will share the why and how of low stress cattle handling. Dr. Bartlett is a veterinarian and cattle producer who has worked with cattle for over 50 years. He will demonstrate and discuss his philosophy on handling cattle which includes less is more, slower is faster, and it is possible to out-think a cow.

The conference will include presentations by several nationally know experts on cattle comfort, and pain management. Featured speakers at this year's conference include Dr. Nigel Cook, a Clinical Associate Professor in the School of Veterinary Medicine, who will discussion strategies to reduce lameness and increase cow comfort. Dr. Cook will also present an overview of the Dairy Initiative introduced at the University Of Wisconsin School Of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Hans Coetzee, an Iowa State University Associate Professor will also be on the program to discuss pain management in cattle along with management practices that can be used to reduce pain in cattle. Dr. Coetzee will also lead a break out session on castration pain management.

Other breakout sessions offered at the conference will include Dehorning and Pain Management presented by Sandy Stuttgen, UW-Extension Ag Agent, and Edie Brandt, DVM, De Pere Vet Service; Caring for Compromised Cattle by Amy Radunz, UW-Extension Beef Specialist; and a presentation on Dairy Beef Residues by Dr. Dave Rhoda, DVM, Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association.

The conference will conclude with a producer paned moderated by Pam Jahnke, Farm Director of the WI Report Radio, that will focus on "Telling Agriculture's Story." The producer panel will give insight to understanding the public's perception and what can be done to boost consumer confidence in animal agriculture products.

Cost to attend this workshop is \$50 per person and includes a noon meal. The registration deadline is February 20, 2012. An additional \$5 late fee will be charged for registrations received after this date. A registration discount is available for groups of 20 or more. Six veterinary CEU credits will also be available for an additional fee of \$25. Participants can register for the conference directly on-line or print out a brochure and registration form at the Midwest Dairy and Beef Cattle Husbandry Conference web site at:

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/animalhusbandryconference>

Program supporters for this conference include the UW-Extension Dairy and Beef Teams, WI Farm Bureau, Equity Livestock and Priefert Ranch Equipment.

More information about the program can be found at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/animalhusbandryconference/> or by contacting:

Mark Mayer, Green County Dairy & Livestock Agent at mark.mayer@ces.uwex.edu or **608-328-9440**.

Hay Auctions Offered in Orangeville

The Northwest Illinois Forage and Grassland Council continues to offer hay auctions. The auctions will be held the **second and fourth Saturday** of the month through April. Auctions will take place at the BoCo Mini Mart in Orangeville starting at 11 a.m. Auctions will be conducted by B & M Auctions. For more information contact B & M Auctions at (608) 938-4822.

USDA Hay Market Reports

http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/gx_gr310.txt

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web.extension.illinois.edu/jsw

If you need reasonable accommodations to participate in any of the programs in this newsletter, please contact the hosting office.