

Central Wisconsin Agricultural Extension Report



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Farm Bill Program Election Informational Meetings Offered

Trisha Wagner, UW-Extension, Farm Management Program, Outreach Program Manager

Madison, Wis. – University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension will offer informational meetings across the state for farmers interested in learning about the program election for Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) under the 2018 USDA Farm Bill.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced signup is underway for the PLC and ARC Program election. The FSA offices administer the program signup and have announced the signup deadline is March 15, 2020, for crop years 2019 and 2020. Many farmers will have questions regarding which program will function best for their farm. Extension has created information and resources to help farmers make informed decisions about the program they will elect for their farm.

“There are differences in the two elections that farmers should be aware of,” said Paul Mitchell, UW-Madison Ag and Applied Economics Professor and Extension Specialist. “ARC will depend on county yields and national prices, while PLC will offer a price floor at the national level, \$3.70 for corn, \$8.40 for soybeans.” Mitchell has assembled a variety of resources to help farmers (and those working with farmers) make their decisions regarding signup for the commodity support programs ARC and PLC at <https://aae.wisc.edu/pdmitchell/extension/arc-plc-signup/>

This year, farmers may want to examine Individual ARC (ARC-IC), as it may make sense for them on some of their FSA farms. In addition to electing a program, farmers will also be able to update their yield information for the program. In some cases, landlords will be required to sign program documents. As a result, farmers may want to connect with FSA to find out if they need to do this, and then start the process of connecting with their landlords.

Informational meetings offered by county Extension educators across the state this winter will provide an overview of the 2018 Farm Bill PLC/ARC program election and address the following information for farmers considering the program:

- Overview of 2018 Farm Bill PLC and ARC programs
- PLC/ARC election considerations
- Decision making tool & expected return calculations

For information about Extension informational program locations, dates and registration for on the Farm Bill PLC/ARC program please visit: <https://farms.extension.wisc.edu/events/> Registration is recommended for meeting materials.



Growing and Feeding Forages Meeting

February 24, 2020

Co-hosted by Central Wisconsin Extension Ag Agents and the Portage County Forage Council

Where: Portage County Annex, 1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

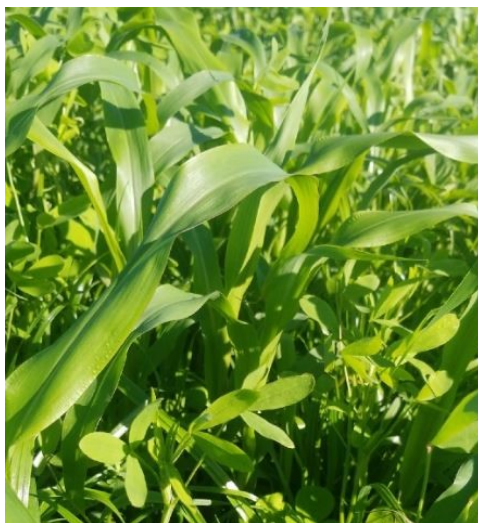
When: February 24, 2020, 11:30 am to 3:30 pm

Cost: \$10 at the door, complimentary with Forage Council Membership

Agenda

Growing and Feeding Sorghum Forages: Matt Akins, Assistant Scientist and Extension Dairy Specialist, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Dairy Science

Description: Sorghum forages can be a useful forage option when looking for either a low energy forage for pregnant heifers, or possibly higher quality forage for young heifers or lactating cows. We will cover management of sorghum forages including planting conditions, nutrient management, toxicity issues, and how harvest strategy affects forage yield and quality. Also, recent work on dairy heifer feeding and use of frost-drying will be discussed.



Can low digestibility forage be compensated for with shorter chopping length? Matt Lippert, Wood County Agricultural Agent and Clark County Dairy and Livestock Agent, UW-Madison Division of Extension.

Description: Undigested Fiber after 240-hour incubation (UNDF240) is now included on many forage tests. UNDF240 gets at the forage component that

will never be digested. Using this number and a shaker box to create rations that have different effective fiber and undigestible fiber levels has shown that forages with low digestibility can benefit from finer chopping to improve animal performance.

Growing Summer Annuals for Forage: Local Agronomist

Midwest Forage Association Update.

FSA Updates

Portage County Forage Council Annual Business Meeting.

Pre-registration suggested. To register and for additional information call Portage County Extension 715-346-1316.

FSMA-Produce Safety

This training fulfills the requirements of the FSMA-PSR and results in certification. The day will be spent reviewing the rule and the requirements for growers under the rule. Topics include worker health and hygiene, soil amendments, wildlife, pre-harvest and post-harvest water, post-harvest handling and sanitation and developing a farm food safety plan. Attendees will receive a training manual, a light breakfast and lunch. Attendees must attend the entire training to earn their certificate.

Produce Safety – Training Dates

- January 14, 2020 – Black River Falls, WI
- January 17, 2020 – Whitewater, WI
- January 26, 2020 – Wisconsin Dells, WI (*Link coming soon for Wisconsin Dells*)
- February 11, 2020 – Appleton, WI
- February 21, 2020 – Dalton, WI
- February 25, 2020 – West Bend, WI

For more information call Kristin Krokowski at 262-548-7768 or Jay Dampier at 920-229-6124.

Dairy Price Rick Management

Matt Lippert — Agriculture Agent, Wood and Clark Counties

As this newsletter goes into production the cash cheese barrels, to a lesser extent cheese 40 pound block prices have been in a freefall. Class III dairy prices for January have dropped over a dollar over a matter of days. Even for those that watch the markets frequently this change is dramatic and sobering. It has been five years since prices were “good” in dairy. We often talk about a three-year dairy cycle, where one year is good, one is a struggle and one is bad, on the average those dairy producers still producing have survived through this cycle. The last peak was so weak that it did not qualify as good and therefore we have had the unusually long low trend of five years. The result has been more dairy farms leaving the business, more cows being culled,

a stable to declining dairy herd and lots of stress, financial and mental for dairy producers and those who work with them.

There are some positive things and things to be thankful for. November and December prices reached into the “good” range. Milk checks have landed in mailboxes with a 2 as the first digit in the hundredweight price.

If there is a teachable moment here, there has been a good opportunity to work with crop insurance agents on the Dairy Revenue Protection program (Dairy-RP) to lock in good prices for the first two quarters of 2020 at very low prices. Under a dime per hundredweight on many days to lock in prices near the high part of the chart above. Dairy-RP is

similar to a put with a broker or a minimum price contract with your milk plant. The cost of this is underwritten by the USDA-Risk Management Agency so these price in usually about half the price of Puts. If you were on the fence in the past about this type of price risk protection, the cost to do so has gotten much cheaper, for producers that have taken advantage of this good prices will last well into the new year thanks to this program. If you are not already enrolled talk to your crop insurance agent, there are no deadlines as in FSA programs and you can take an action on most business days if the price guarantee and the cost of the program makes sense to you.

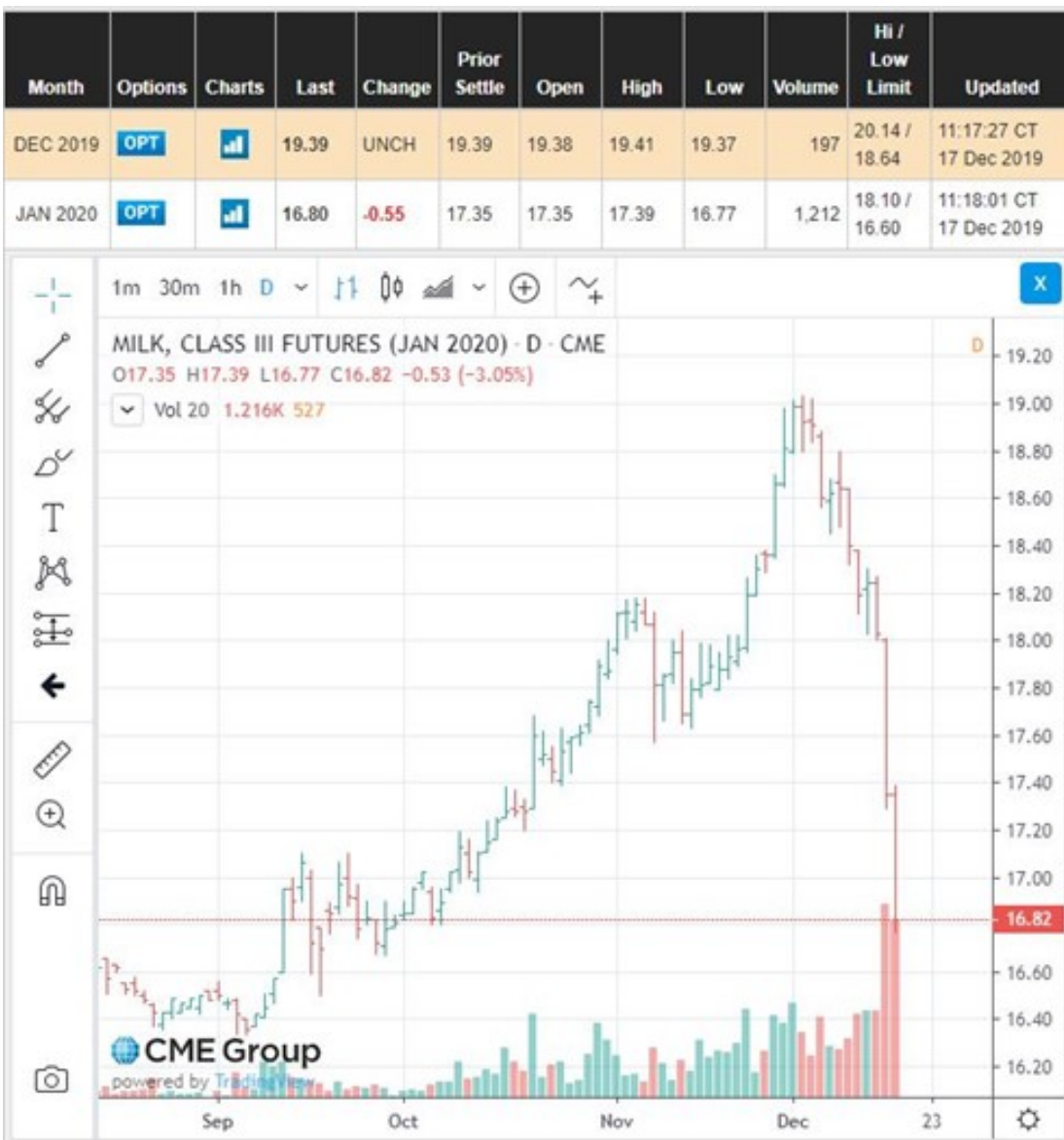


Photo Courtesy CME Group

Abbotsford City Hall, Abbotsford, WI



BUILDING OUR DAIRY FUTURE: ROBOTIC MILKING SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY

MORNING

Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 10 am-12 pm

ROBOTIC FACILITIES DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Jouni Pitkäranta, Architect, 4dbarn



Jouni Pitkäranta is specialized in dairy, youngstock, and calf barn design especially focused on robotic milking barn design. He has designed about 600 dairy barns in total mostly in Finland, but also in Sweden, Estonia, Russia, Lithuania, Holland, and Germany.

ECONOMICS OF AUTOMATIC MILKING SYSTEMS

Jim Salfer, Regional Dairy Educator, University of Minnesota Extension



Jim Salfer specializes in financial analysis of all types of dairy farms; dairy facilities, low cost milking parlors, and cow comfort.

AFTERNOON

Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 1 pm-3 pm

LABOR EFFICIENCY IN AMS BARNES

Jouni Pitkäranta, Architect, 4dbarn



Jouni Pitkäranta developed an international robot barn labor efficiency project monitoring robot barn performance in numerous barns in Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and the United States.

ROBOTS: THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UNKNOWN

Panel Discussion: David Trimner, Miltrim Farms, Mitch Malm, Malms Rolling Acres, and Jake Peissig, Peissig Dairy Farm



BUILDING OUR DAIRY FUTURE: ROBOTIC MILKING SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY

Tuesday, January 21, 2020
Abbotsford City Hall
203 N. 1st St., Abbotsford, WI

- 10:00 am Registration
- 10:30 am **Automated Milking System Design Considerations**
Jouni Pitkäranta, Architect, 4dbarn
- 11:15 am **Economics of Automatic Milking & User Experiences**
Jim Salfer, Regional Field Specialist, MN Extension
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 1:00 pm **Labor Efficiency in AMS Barns**
Jouni Pitkäranta, Architect, 4dbarn
- 1:45 pm **Robots: The Good, The Bad, The Unknown**
Panel Discussion: David Trimner, Miltrim Farms, Mitch Malm, Malms Rolling Acres, and Jake Peissig, Peissig Dairy Farm
- 3:00 pm **Wrap up**

**Financial Support
Provided By:**



Building Our Future: Robotic Milking Systems - January 21, 2020

Registration Cost: \$50 per person

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State: _____
 Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please make checks payable and mail to:

UW-Extension
 Attn: Robotic Milking Systems
 212 River Dr. Suite #3
 Wausau, WI 5443

To pay by credit card: <http://bit.ly/ExtensionCredit>
 Service charge of \$2.50 applies

Pre-registration requested by Wednesday, January 15.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Diversification in Grain Marketing

Ben Jenkins—Agriculture Agent, Green Lake County

From the outside marketing grain looks quite simple: you grow it, you harvest it, you store it, you wait for a good price and then sell it. Not so fast! Have you done your homework? How do you know you are selling at the right price? In the words of the grain broker “waiting to sell grain until you have bills to pay is not a marketing strategy.” Before you can do anything in marketing your grain you need to know your cost of production. If you’ve never done a cost of production for your crops before your county-based University of Wisconsin Educator can help you put one together. You should update your cost of production after every season. This way you will know what your breakeven is. Knowing your breakeven will help you become a better farm manager. It is only after you know what your cost per bushel is that you should begin to market your crop. If this seems daunting, then you might want to consider hiring a marketing manager.

Hiring a grain market manager can help you avoid the hidden traps of marketing grain. Grain marketing managers act as a representative for producers of commodity grains. The job of the grain market manager is to get the best price possible for the producer who hires them. Usually the cost to the producer is only a few cents/bu but the payoff for their service is much more. A grain market manager watches the markets very closely and works with both local and regional buyers. The grain marketing manager can help you to forward contract your product or can help you get the best price on the spot market. They will know which terminals are paying more that day and can help you weigh out the cost vs. the benefit of possibly trucking your commodity a further distance away. They will also help you develop a strategy using puts, calls, and options. While it helps if you know these terms you don’t have to fully understand them when using a grain marketing manager. You can call your local University of Wisconsin-Madison County Agricultural



Educator to find a grain marketing manager in your area.

If you prefer to go it alone direct selling feed grade could be an option for you. If you are a grain producer with a cattle operation nearby you may contract with that livestock operation to sell all or a portion of your product at a certain price. This can also give a farm without harvesting equipment the option to sell standing crops. This is beneficial to the livestock operation in that they will have a local supply

of feed available for the course of the contract at a set price. This is good for the producer in that a contract with another farmer tends to capture more value that might otherwise be lost at the elevator. Make sure however that you have an agreed upon system of measurement in place to protect yourself from some product getting “lost”. And again, make sure if you contract with this system to contract knowing what price you need to get in order to both hit and exceed your break-even price. As a side note this can also be a way for a farm without livestock to get some valuable nutrient in the form of manure on its land. The farm can sell a given amount of product to a livestock facility in exchange for some amount of manure as

a portion of payment. Your University of Wisconsin-Madison County Agricultural Educator can help you determine a fair exchange in that system. Lastly although too late for this year something you might want to consider for next year would be food grade.

Food grade is usually more involved for the producer. The specialized production of food grade often requires the producer to follow certain rules, grow specific varieties, add specialized machinery, or handle the product in a different way to prevent damage or loss. Which ever method you choose the goal must be to capture as much profit from your product as you can. Although not always easy, the risks and pitfalls can be mitigated.

Equine Blanketing?

Evan Henthorpe—Agriculture Agent, Adams County

As colder weather approaches, some horse owners may wonder “ Does my horse get cold?” The answer is maybe! As most horse owners have the joy of each spring brushing and brushing tons of winter hair from their animal. This is because as the days get shorter horses develop winter coats. They use this thick winter coat to trap and warm air. In some cases, there are situations where horses need to be blanketed. The University of Minnesota Extension points out the following examples of when blanketing is important:

- No shelter is available during turnout periods and the temperatures or wind chill drop below 5 degrees
- There is a chance the horse will become wet (e.g. rain, ice, and/or freezing rain--usually not a problem with snow)
- The horse has had its winter coat clipped
- The horse is very young or very old
- The horse isn't acclimated to the cold
- The horse has a body condition score of three or less

If an owner is going to blanket, make sure to keep up with daily inspection looking for any rubs, sores, and readjustments.

Other tips for helping our equine friends handle the colder temps.

- Making sure water is available at all times
- Feeding extra hay
- If no shelter is available creating windbreaks out of branches
- Making sure to check body conditions by feeling horse's ribs

Sources: Marcia Hathaway, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences; Krishona Martinson, Extension equine specialist; Chuck Clanton, College of Food, Agricultural



**Driftless Region
Beef Conference**

January 30-31, 2020 – Dubuque, Iowa

www.aep.iastate.edu/beef

Presented by:

I ILLINOIS

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& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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2020 Private Pesticide Applicator Training Classes Offered

Private Pesticide Applicator Training classes will once again be offered by your local UW-Extension office. Anyone who intends to purchase, mix, load, apply, or direct the use of restricted use pesticides as a private applicator must be certified. Certification is good for five years. There are two ways to become certified. Purchase and study the training manual and attend an all-day training class offered by your local Extension office. These classes consist of presentations followed by a written exam at the end of the day. If you are unable to attend one

of the classroom sessions, the second option is to self-study and schedule time through the Extension office to take the exam on your own. Training manuals are available at your local UW-Extension office and must be purchased prior to exam day.

Please register at least one week prior to the exam date at the UW-Extension office where you will be taking the exam. Call the office where you plan to take the exam for more details on start and finish times.

January 15	- Green Lake County	February 19	- Marathon Co. Township of Johnson
January 22	- Waushara County	February 27	- Waupaca Co. (Courthouse)
January 30	- Adams County	February 28	- Portage County
February 5	- Sauk Co. West Sq. Building	March 4	- Waushara County
February 12	- Marquette County	March 4	- Clark County (Neillsville)
February 14	- Juneau Co. Health Dept.	March 6	- Clark County (Thorp Fire Hall)
February 14	- Portage County	March 11	- Clark County (Abbotsford)
February 14	- Wood Co. (Marshfield ARS)	March 13	- Portage County
February 18	- Marathon County (Wausau)	March 13	- Sauk Co. West Sq. Building
February 19	- Green Lake County	March 19	- Adams County

Dear Wisconsin farmer,

Take 10 minutes to participate in a national agritourism and direct sales survey! If you have visitors on your farm, ranch, vineyard, or fishery, you are invited to take part in a national survey about agritourism and direct sales. Whether you have a farmstand, u-pick, CSA, tastings, school field trips, events, tours, hunting, overnight stays, or open your farm to the public in any other ways, your experiences are important! This survey is confidential and should take about 10 minutes to complete. Results will be used to develop tools and resources for farmers. **The survey will close January 31.** Questions can be directed to Lisa Chase, lisa.chase@uvm.edu or 802-257-7967.

The survey is available at: tinyurl.com/agritourismsurvey

This survey is part of an integrated research and extension project funded by a USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative grant.

Processing Vegetable Crops Meeting March 4th

Ken Schroeder—Agriculture Agent, Portage County

Extension University of Wisconsin-Madison is sponsoring the annual Processing Vegetable Crops Meeting on Wednesday March 4, 2020 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm (lunch included), at the Hancock Agricultural Research Station, N3909 County Rd V Hancock, WI 54943. Registration from 8:30 to 9:00 am. This seminar will concentrate on issues affecting vegetable production in Wisconsin. Your Extension vegetable specialists will participate in this production/IPM meeting. Save the Date – more details to come!

Vegetable production is a vital part of the economy of Central Wisconsin. The counties of Portage, Waushara, Adams, Green Lake and Juneau produce 68% of the state's potato production, 49% of the state's sweet corn production, 62% of the state's snap bean production and 38% of the state's pea production.

Please pre-register by February 26. Registration is \$20 to cover refreshments and lunch. Certified

Crop Advisor Credits will be applied for. There is ample free parking available. To register by mail, make check payable to Portage County Treasurer and send to Extension Portage County, Attn: Ag Programs, 1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481. For additional information call Portage County UW-Extension 715-346-1316.



SAVE THE DATE

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend

AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL

February 4, 2020

Ag Day at the Capitol is an annual event open to Wisconsin farmers and agriculturists to learn more about state issues affecting agriculture and meet with their state legislators.

Rural Mutual Insurance Company and GROWMARK, Inc., are major sponsors of the event. Co-sponsors of the event, with Wisconsin Farm Bureau, include a variety of dairy,

WISCONSIN COVER CROP CONFERENCE

**FEBRUARY 20, 2020
HOLIDAY INN • STEVENS POINT, WI**

Join us for a pre-conference dinner and discussion:

Ice, Wind, & Water - Exploring Soil Diversity in Wisconsin
February 19, 2020 • 5:00 PM

Taking place after the DATCP Producer-Led Workshop

Farmers and agricultural professionals from around the state are coming together again to share and learn about all things cover crops. Whether you're a seasoned cover crop expert or an absolute beginner, there will be something for everyone!

Keynote Speaker: Rick Clark

*2019 American Soybean Association Conservation Legacy Award Winner
2019 Land O' Lakes Sustainable Stewardship Award Winner
Presented at the United Nations, countries abroad, & numerous farmer to farmer discussions*

REGISTRATION:

Registration open until February 14, 2020

	Early Bird Rate (Through February 5)	Regular Rate (After February 5)
Conference ONLY	\$60.00	\$70.00
Conference PLUS Soil Health Dinner	\$80.00	\$95.00

For more information & registration:
<http://fyi.uwex.edu/covercrop/>



Calendar of Upcoming Programs

January 7	Grain Marketing Strategy Meeting, 8 am, Sandy's Diner 51 Water St, Markesan, WI 53946
January 8	Agronomy Update: http://bit.ly/Agronomy2020
January 9	Alternative Enterprises: Food Grade Grain with DeLong Company, 1-3 pm, Green Lake County Government Center
January 15	Farm Pulse Kick off: http://bit.ly/farmpulse
January 16	Paving the Way - farm stress meeting for agribusiness professionals, 1 - 4:30 pm at Baraboo West Square Building. Pre-registration is required. Event flyers will be shared through Juneau and Sauk counties.
January 17	Beef Quality Assurance, 8 am -12 pm at Baraboo West Square Building. Pre-registration is required. Event flyers will be shared through Juneau and Sauk counties.
January 21	Building our Dairy Future: Robotic Milking Systems Performance: http://bit.ly/Robotics20
January 22	Cultivate Yourself beyond the Farm: https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/2019/11/25/cultivate-yourself-beyond-the-farm/
January 28	Farm Succession Meeting: http://bit.ly/FarmSuccession20
January 31	Bale Grazing Class, Green Lake, 9-3.
February 4	Grain Marketing Strategy Meeting, 8 am, Sandy's Diner 51 Water St, Markesan, WI 53946
February 5	Farm Pulse Continuum: http://bit.ly/PulseContinuum20
February 12	Beef Quality Assurance, 12:30 – 3:00 pm at Baraboo West Square Building. Pre-registration is required. Event flyers will be shared through Juneau and Sauk counties.
February 17	Farm Pulse Continuum: http://bit.ly/PulseContinuum20
February 18	Pesticide Applicator Training - Wausau: http://bit.ly/PAT2020
February 19	Pesticide Applicator Training - Athens: http://bit.ly/PAT2020
February 21	Animal Well-being Conference: https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/animalhusbandryconference/
February 25	Farm Succession Meeting: http://bit.ly/FarmSuccession20
March 3	Grain Marketing Strategy Meeting, 8 am, Sandy's Diner 51 Water St, Markesan, WI 53946
March 3	Grazing Meeting: Topics include the why, how, and marketing, 9:00 am– 3:00 pm, Portage VFW, 215 W Collins St., Portage
March 4	Farm Pulse Continuum: http://bit.ly/PulseContinuum20
March 24	Farm Succession Meeting: http://bit.ly/FarmSuccession20
March 27	Beef Quality Assurance, 12:30-3 pm at Adams Community Center. Pre-registration is required. Event flyers will be posted.
March 31	Dairy Reproduction Strategies: http://bit.ly/Fricke20
TBD	Central Wisconsin Heart of the Farm – for women involved in agriculture. If interested in more details please contact Alana Voss at Alana.voss@wisc.edu or 608-847-9329. Otherwise watch for information on your local Extension offices website and Facebook page.



Wow, it's hard to believe that it is a new year already!

With a new year comes transitions. As of December 2019, I have relocated to a new county to take on the Extension Agriculture Educator role there. For those of you that have worked with me in the past, know that

there will be a guiding document in the Marquette County office to help direct your inquiries to another nearby educator until a new educator (hopefully) is hired on in the county.

I wish you all the best in your farming endeavors and hope that in the future our paths cross again.

Lyssa Seefeldt

Agriculture Agent, Marquette County





Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
GREEN LAKE COUNTY

Green Lake County
571 County Road A
Green Lake WI 54941-8630

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CENTRAL WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE SPECIALIZATION (CWAS)

A cooperative effort of seven
Central Wisconsin Counties and
Wisconsin Extension.



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Our Mission

To be the primary source of research based
agricultural information and education for the
agricultural community in Central Wisconsin.

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