



State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Ben Brancel, Secretary

Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council

9:45 am to 3:00 pm

Tuesday, October 29, 2013

WI Department of Agriculture

Board Room, Room 106

2811 Agriculture Drive

Madison, Wisconsin 53718

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Present Council members: Craig Dunnum, Harriet Behar, Steve Walker, Rebecca Goodman, Ken Seguine, Jennifer Casey, Bill Stoneman, Inga Witcher, Elena Byrne, Christine Mason

Interagency tem members: Sally Kefer, Cate Rahmlow, Laura Paine, Erin Silva, Pat Murphy, Duane Klein, Randy Zogbaum, Sally Kefer, Laurie Makos, Jack Chang, Mike Bandli, Dan Smith

Public attendees: Rick Witcher

Guest: Jimmy Bramblett,

Meeting called to order 10:03 AM

Minutes approval: Craig Dunnam moved to approved the minutes, seconded by Elena Byrne, minutes approved.

Setting dates for future meetings: Wednesday, January 15th is our next meeting. The spring meeting was set for March 18th at DATCP. The fall meeting will be set at the spring meeting but we are leaning toward October 21. Volunteers solicited to suggest summer meeting locations. Jennifer and Harriet to solicit and provide suggestions. Steve Pincus' farm was proposed, but he was not present to discuss this with him. Ken suggested Botanic Oil Innovations in Spooner would require an overnight for council members. Ken and Laura to create a proposal for an overnight stay for council members in NW Wisconsin.

Introductions and welcome to guest, Jimmy Bramblett.

PowerPoint presentation: The Council presented a short power point that provided an orientation to Jimmy on the council activities and the state of organic in Wisconsin agriculture. Laura presented the history of organics in the state, and of the Organic Advisory Council, Jennifer gave a consumer overview and Harriet provided an introduction on organic farmers using NRC offices. Harriet spoke on why farmers choose to be organic and how our standards align with NRCS goals and programs. Erin reviewed results of organic research projects in Wisconsin, including the Wisconsin Integrated Cropping Systems Trial (WICST) data, profitability of organic systems and effects on soil.

Questions and comments from Jimmy. Jimmy shared that he has a Georgia background. NRCS funding for organic farmers is trending upward, but organic numbers seem to be declining. The special organic initiative funding is not being fully utilized. Harriet suggested that many organic farmers may be using the regular EQIP program and their numbers may not get counted as organic farmers using the program. Cost share levels higher under the organic initiative, but this may not be enough to motivate people to use that program.

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Jimmy asked what interaction WOAC has with national movement; Strong national leaders are pushing NRCS toward organics. Harriet said that the OAC occasionally develops position papers but most of influence is local, although several member organizations attend NOSB meetings and do lobbying with USDA. Jimmy will advise the Council on who are the current contacts at NRCS headquarters for organics. He also suggested that a survey of organic farmers to determine who takes advantage of programs would be valuable. Laura observed that the rationale for special initiatives is to promote NRCS with special communities. Perhaps it has been effective and now organic farmers know to take part in regular NRCS programs. Jimmy asked what the trend is for numbers of organic farmers? Laura said that it has tapered off lately, now around 5% per year growth. Inga observed that there is difficulty finding land to transition, harder for dairy because larger acreages are needed. Rebecca commented that her family's experience with NRCS on a recent fencing project was very positive. Pat offered that he can help to connect farmers who have not been able to get attention. Jimmy said that contract management workload has dramatically increased with permitting required for larger projects. Training will be instituted to be able to administer these processes more efficiently. NRCS has not added additional staff while workload has increased.

Jimmy stated that 16 counties in North Central WI are applying to a \$65 million national grazing initiative pool with March/April sign up period, would like council's help to get the word out.

Status of NRCS funding (Jimmy). Currently there is a continuing resolution to Jan 15, 2014, however EQIP and CSP have full funding as a result of other legislation.

Jimmy commented that he was surprised at the soil erosion stats in Erin's presentation. Pat Murphy observed that this is due to the reliance of organic farmers on repeated cultivation for weed control. Jimmy expressed concern about mitigation with field borders. Harriet stated that biologically active soils are less prone to erosion. Jimmy said that NRCS is currently involved in a soil health initiative--every person in agency to be trained on soil health, including admin staff. Cover crops are a good practice to improve soil health, but farmers are not sure of how to incorporate them into their rotations. The price of corn is driving people to simplify their rotations. NRCS has cost share funding for cover crops. They will be doing 1-2 year contracts to allow some flexibility, there may be organic opportunities with this program. Jimmy stated that high tunnel cost share has been a popular program and that the agency now has flexibility to go back and review those installations for micro irrigation support. This may also be an opportunity for organic farmers. Harriet shared that her farm was *the* micro irrigation farm pilot project in Wisconsin.

Jimmy observed that, in GA, he received feedback from producers that organic record keeping process is a burden. Steve and Harriet both responded that NOP has initiated a 'sound and sensible' initiative to simplify record keeping and ease the certification process. Ken stated that consumer retailer demand remains strong. Bill stated that, as an inspector, he works with farmers and understands limitation of record keeping for farmers. Harriet observed that the loss of certification cost share is a problem. Elena observed that smaller farmers are seen as not needed, and that attacks on organic come from all sides including the WI-based Cornucopia Institute.

Jimmy shared information on the NRCS pollinator habitat program. ND, SD, MN, WI are home to 80% of overwintering honey bees. NRCS is starting a Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program for pollinator habitat.

Sally asked if NRCS have interest in urban, micro farms. Jimmy stated that NRCS is size neutral. Bill asked Jimmy to allow or encourage NRCS staff to attend MOSES Conference.

Old Business

Overview organic grain prices: Mike Schulist joined the meeting by phone. Another round of introductions was done for Dan Smith, the new Agricultural Development Administrator. Dan was a dairy farmer in northern Illinois before he moved to Wisconsin. His immediate past work has included two years with DATCP's Farm Center as a farm financial advisor and two years as CEO at Midwest BioAg.

Mike shared an update on harvest and prices. The long fall we are having has allowed the corn to mature, but it still has some moisture--20%+, so there will be drying costs. Combining will go on into December, late planted corn has made it, and supply should be decent. Hay is at \$250/ton. For soybeans, late planting will hurt yields. Demand is high, but not as good as last year. Small grains: wheat supply is good, barley scarce, oats decent supply and prices are stronger than in the past, \$7 bushel. Dairy production is down, less than 50# per cow. Craig observed that with conventional prices dropping, are organic prices holding? Mike shared that the risk for growing organic corn and soy is high, weed control problems reduce yields, so it's difficult to compare organic & conventional. Organic producers are less likely to buy crop insurance and instead are managing rotations to avoid high insurance premiums.

Inga asked about Organic Valley's base price. Discussion was held about OV's quota system. Harriet said that amounts over quota were paid at the conventional milk price. Bill asked if OV is still short on producers? Harriet thought they had a waiting list, and were prioritizing new members based on proximity to existing routes.

12:09 Lunch

12:53 Meeting called back to order

New Business

The Organic Status Report

Erin shared that we have decided to postpone publication of the biennial status report until January 2015. That will allow us to incorporate new data from the 2012 Ag Census, which will be released in February 2014. It will also put us on a schedule to be able to have timely access to NASS data for future reports. In the meantime, we will publish a smaller report this winter focusing on organic research, stories and how this research has impacted the organic industry.

2014 Nominations

Terms ending this year include Rebecca, Ken, Harriet & Christine. Laura reviewed the council application process. Secretary Brancel had suggested that "new blood" would be good, so those who have been on the Council for more than a couple of terms may want to consider recruiting a replacement. Laura requested volunteers for the nomination committee. Interagency team members are welcome on the committee. Volunteers to review the applicants are: Bill, Christine, Duane, and Steve Walker. Materials will be put out in January and applications will be due week or two after the Organic Farming Conference. Recommendations of the nominations committee will be reviewed and voted on at the March OAC meeting.

Christine indicated that she will step down as a council member. Ken observed that we will have to look hard to find a similarly qualified replacement, thank you Christine!

Randy suggested putting together a brief introductory training program for new members.

Agency Reports

Pat Murphy, NRCS. Comments on Jimmy's visit. Jimmy is seeking to learn, interested in WI growing seasons. NRCS staff are busy with cost sharing requests and working on funding for improvement of grazing systems. Although the Farm Bill has expired, cost share for EQIP was renewed last spring in a

separate bill. Dec 20 is the deadline for 2014 applications. Financial assistance funding is in good shape. Mississippi watershed funds will bring \$ to state. Bill asked if landowners have to withdraw from CRP to then re-enroll? Pat said this is not necessary. Contracts may be renewed in many cases.

Program Funding and Signups in 2012 and FY 2013 to date

Program		FY12	FY13
EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program	FA (\$)	\$26 million	\$32.4 million*
	# Contracts	1523	1550
CSP Conservation Stewardship Program	FA (\$)	\$3,057,308	\$1.7 million
	New Contracts	476	308 contracts
	Acres	162,138	94,424
WRP Wetlands Reserve Program	FA (\$)	\$7.5 million	\$4.7** million
	# Easements	24	12
	Acres	1950	817.7
WHIP Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program	FA (\$)	\$23,989	\$30,270
	# Contracts	2	1
FRPP Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program	FA (\$)	\$850,500	\$998,000
	# Easements	7	3
	Acres	1494	1,291

*includes all initiatives and special funding

** includes acquisitions, restoration and maintenance funds

Farm Bill Programs

Applications are being accepted for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for FY2014, with ranking date set for Nov. 15, 2013. Applications for practices needing state or local permits will be ranked high priority if permit is complete; medium priority if permit is in process; and low priority if permit process is not yet underway.

Soil Health Initiative

The Soil Health Initiative is a partnership effort to focus attention on improving soil health through sound field conservation practices. Focus will be on training for staff and partners in early FY2014.

Landscape Initiatives

NRCS is targeting conservation assistance to critical resources through a number of landscape scale initiatives. In Wisconsin, the **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**, **Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative** and the **Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative** are allowing NRCS and partners to focus staff and financial assistance on water quality issues in selected watersheds.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Lower Fox Phosphorus Reduction Priority Watersheds. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, a special signup for farmers in the Lower Fox in the Green Bay area will focus on reducing phosphorus entering Lake Michigan. Over 75 contracts anticipated to be obligated, for \$3 million in financial assistance to farmers for phosphorus reduction.

In addition, 25 contracts are anticipated to be obligated in FY13 through the GLRI general signup for \$1 million in assistance to farmers. This area includes the Lower Fox, Manitowoc-Sheboygan, Milwaukee watersheds

Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative

The Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative was approved by NRCS in FY13. This designation targets additional funding for erosion control and fish and wildlife habitat projects in the four-state area. In year one of the five year initiative, Wisconsin obligated \$2.37 million in 198 contracts on working lands, forestland, prairies and savannas, as well as cold water streams. Applications for practices in 2014 will be ranked **Nov. 15, 2013**

National Water Quality Initiative

The National Water Quality Initiative was offered in three Wisconsin watersheds in FY13: Horse Lake-Horse Creek in Polk County, Pigeon Lake-Pigeon River in Waupaca County, and Big Green Lake in Green Lake County. The initiative utilizes EQIP funds to target water quality problems stemming from excess nutrients and sediment in select 12-digit HUC watersheds. In FY13, Wisconsin obligated \$1.6 M in 35 contracts in these watersheds.

Other Notes

Wisconsin received \$1.4 million in Emergency Watershed Protection Program funds for 2012 storm damage in Douglas County.

FSA Laurie Makos

Offices Closed

All Farm Service Agency offices in Wisconsin were closed due to a lapse in federal government funding from October 1 through October 16. Customer service and general operations resumed on October 17th.

DCP Program Payments

The 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) provides crop related payments to farmers. Payments have been delayed but are projected to be sent out through direct deposit to most customers by the end of October.

CRP Program Payments

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) annual payments should be made to almost all participants by the end of October. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the State.

Perennial Forages and Fall Seeded Crop Reporting Deadline is November 15th

Perennial forages, such as alfalfa, alfalfa grass mixture and red clover, as well as all fall seeded small grains (winter wheat, etc.), need to be reported to FSA offices by November 15, 2013. Producers have been encouraged to report all perennial forages and fall seeded small grains by November 15th to ensure compliance with any future disaster programs or other available programs. To date, there has not been an extension of the November 15, 2013 deadline to allow additional time due to office closures.

GovDelivery

FSA is transitioning away from the traditional mailing of newsletters and program announcements to a new electronic delivery system known as GovDelivery. E-mail addresses are used to deliver messages and keep people up to date on FSA program information. Farmers, agri-businesses, and anyone interested in receiving the e-mail information available can register at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi>

Microloans

Microloans are available to help small, niche and beginning farmers and ranchers meet their goals. The simplified loan process allows producers to apply for a maximum of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses, essential tools, irrigation, delivery vehicles and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing and distribution expenses. Loans are typically for periods of 1-7 years and the October interest rate for loans approved or closed in the month (lower interest rate is used to determine the payments based on the rate in effect at either approval or closing) is set at 1.875%.

Guaranteed Conservation Loans

The Farm Service Agency has made available Guaranteed Conservation Loans. Conservation loans allow farmers and producers to implement conservation practices on their land that will help protect natural resources. Guaranteed Conservation Loans are a useful alternative to help operators implement any Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) approved conservation practice including, but not limited to, waste management systems, conservation structures or water conservation measures.

Unlike other FSA guaranteed loan programs, Conservation Loans are not limited to family size farms. Operators who may not normally qualify for an FSA guaranteed farm operating or ownership loan could be eligible for a Guaranteed Conservation Loan. The Guaranteed Conservation Loan limit is \$1,302,000 and interest rates and terms will vary. The maximum guarantee FSA can issue is 75 percent.

Interested applicants who do not already have a conservation plan approved by NRCS work with their local NRCS staff to develop a conservation plan. As with other guarantees, lenders can reduce risk, increase liquidity and offer lower rates by selling the guaranteed portion in the secondary market.

Reporting Federal Crop Insurance Fraud, Waste or Abuse

FSA supports the RMA in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA refers all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse

directly to RMA. Producers and others can report suspected cases to the county office staff, the RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

Emergency Loans

Many Wisconsin counties have been declared primary or contiguous disaster areas this year. FSA is responsible for reporting damages and losses to agricultural crops, land, and infrastructure. These reports can result in obtaining the Federal Disaster designations needed to get disaster assistance. Under the 2013 disaster designations, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans. Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine. Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

The following counties were determined eligible for emergency (EM) loans:

County or Counties Eligible	Disaster Event(s)	Deadline to apply for EM loans
Barron, Brown, Buffalo, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Door, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green Lake, Jackson, Jefferson, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Langlade, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Milwaukee, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Pepin, Pierce, Portage, Price, Rusk, Shawano, Sheboygan, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood	"damage and losses caused by excessive rain, excessive snow, and multiple periods of thawing and refreezing resulting in in winterkill that occurred beginning January 1, 2013 through May 21, 2013"	March 3, 2014
Crawford and Grant	"damage and losses caused by severe storm, tornadoes, and flooding that occurred ... between May 19, 2013 and June 14, 2013"	March 3, 2014
Buffalo, La Crosse, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties	"damages and losses caused by the combined effects of heavy rainfall followed by freezing temperatures and multiple periods of thawing and refreezing, resulting in winterkill that occurred Jan 1-May 15, 2013"	March 10, 2014
Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Rock, Sauk, and Jefferson	"damage and losses caused by severe storms and high winds that occurred on May 14 and May 30, 2013"	March 17, 2014
La Crosse and Vernon	"damages and losses	March 25,

	caused by severe storms, straight line winds, and flooding that occurred in eighteen Minnesota counties beginning June 20, 2013”	2014
Crawford, Grant, and Vernon	“damage and losses caused by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding that occurred in ten primary Iowa counties between June 21, 2013 and June 28, 2013”	March 31, 2014
Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Crawford, Dane, Douglas, Dunn, Grant, Green, Iowa, Iron, Juneau, La Crosse, Lafayette, Monroe, Pierce, Polk, Price, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Bayfield County, Richland, Sauk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Vernon, and Washburn	“damage and losses caused by severe storms, flooding and mudslides that occurred June 20 through June 28, 2013”	April 8, 2014

Marketing Assistance Loans

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse. Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for loss because of damage to the commodity and title to the commodity. The October 2013 interest rate is set at 1.125%.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of seven, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. For FSFL’s approved in October, the following interest rates are locked in for the life of the loan: for a 7-year loan 2.25%, for a 10-year loan 3.00%, and for a 12-year loan 3.00%.

University of Wisconsin CALS

Erin Silva

In October, the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences honored Roger Blobaum, a long-time advocate for organic farming for his contributions to Wisconsin agriculture. The Honorary Recognition Award, established in 1909, recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to their professions, their communities and the university. Here’s his biography:

Roger Blobaum, an agricultural consultant, has been a leader in organic farming research, education, advocacy and policymaking since the early 1970s. He has served on boards of more than 30 regional, national and international organic and sustainable agriculture organizations, including Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES). His contribution to MOSES includes developing the Organic University, which provides short courses to more than 500 participants annually, and the

MOSES farmer-to-farmer mentoring program. He was a founding director of the International Organic Accreditation Service, a founder and associate director of the World Sustainable Agriculture Association, and a participant in the 5-year process of setting international organic guidelines. He co-chaired a coalition of national organizations that helped shape the 1990 Organic Foods Production Act and that successfully advocated its enactment. His organic research contributions include developing and coordinating Ceres Trust programs that have awarded more than \$6 million in grants to land grant university faculty and graduate student researchers.

**UW Extension–Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension (ANRE)
Report to Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council, October 29, 2013
Submitted by Kevin Shelley, 608-575-4746**

New Faces

Erin Silva, State Specialist, Organic Production Systems

Erin Silva is an associate scientist in the UW-Madison Department of Agronomy and an associate director with the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems. She will be officially joining UW-Extension this month to work on Extension programming connected to organic production systems. Many colleagues know Erin and her work in applied research and producer education for organic cropping and food systems. Erin received her Ph.D. in Horticulture from Washington State University in 2002 and spent three years on the faculty at New Mexico State University where she worked on issues connected to vegetable crop physiology. She began her work at UW-Madison in 2006. In the last few years, Erin's research and outreach programs have focused on cover crops, organic no-till, and variety selection and development for organic systems. She has also developed a strong working relationship with Organic Valley in La Farge, Wisconsin. Erin's appointment will be at a level of approximately 40% Extension for at least two years.

Julie Dawson, State Specialist, Urban and Regional Food Systems

Julie Dawson, the first UW-Madison plant scientist hired to specialize in urban and peri-urban agriculture, will focus on the needs of Wisconsin's small, diversified, direct-to-market farms — including those located in and around urban areas — that sell their produce at local farmers markets, restaurants and grocery stores, and through Community Supported Agriculture shares. Her program will also support the state's community gardens, particularly those in urban areas where residents have limited access to good-quality, fresh produce. Her work, in both cases, will take into account the whole food system — including growing, processing, storing, distributing, transporting and selling. Julie joined the university as an assistant professor and extension specialist in the [Department of Horticulture](#) in July. She came here from Cornell University, where she helped develop small grain varieties for organic farming systems. Julie says, "My previous research was with the same type of farmers that I'll be working with here. They are all interested in value-added, organic, small-scale production," she says. "And the participatory research I was involved in — where I worked directly with farmers to develop and answer research questions — is applicable to any crop."

Come spring, Dawson plans to run variety trials to start identifying the best-tasting, highest-quality produce that can be grown on the state's urban farms. "The goal is to add value to farmers' products, either through growing better varieties or by differentiating by quality, so they bring a higher return," she explains.

A sampling of events

- Hoop house workshop

A fall hoop house workshop was offered on Monday Oct. 21 from 8:30 a.m. – noon at Tiny Tempest Farm in Lake Geneva, WI. The workshop included a tour of Tiny Tempest hoop houses followed by a

panel discussion featuring new and experienced hoop house growers. Topics included how hoop houses fit into an existing farm operation and both production and hoop house construction questions. The workshop was sponsored by UW-Extension, SEED (Sustainable, Edible Economic Development) and Tiny Tempest Farm.

For information on that event, contact Rose Skora, UW-Extension Kenosha/Racine Counties, 262-857-1945 or 262-767-2905, rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

- Local foods tour - Farms and orchards in Florence and northern Marinette counties
There are currently 40 producers located throughout Florence, Marinette, and Oconto counties listed in the extension's home grown produce guide. Tour stops on Saturday include the following farms and orchards: Armstrong Creek Bison Co., located at 8109 County Line Road in Armstrong Creek; Pleasant View Orchard, located at W6050 Chapman Road in Niagara; The Broullire farm, located at 1281 Broullires Road in Aurora; Rural Girls Orchard, located at 2317 Montgomery Lake Road in Florence; Sunnybrook School Farm & CSA, located at 4246 Blome Helgren Road in Florence; Florence Maple Farm & the Rock Garden, located at 4814 First Crossing Road in Florence; For more information on these farms and orchards, as well as others in Florence, Marinette, and Oconto counties, visit marinette.uwex.edu, look under the "Agriculture" heading, and click on "Guide to Locally Grown Produce."

- Affordable Care Act Workshop
The University of Wisconsin-Extension Dane County will offer an overview of what the Affordable Care Act (ACA) may mean for farms, both as small employers and the self-employed on Nov. 4, from 6-8pm, at the UW-Extension Dane County office at 5201 Fen Oak Drive, Madison, WI. The workshop provides highlights of what ACA requirements are already in place and the changes beginning in 2014 and 2015. The workshop will also cover how to access the marketplace online to shop for health insurance for individuals, families and for employers considering offering insurance to their employees.

Heidi Johnson, UW-Extension Dane County crops and soils educator, will discuss what the law will mean for both farm families purchasing their own health insurance and farms, as small businesses, exploring the option of providing health insurance for their employees.

Phil Harris, UW-Extension/Madison farm tax law specialist will explain the tax implications of the health care law.

For more information or to register, visit <http://dane.uwex.edu/> and go to the post on Farm Families and the Affordable Care Act program. For non-web users, please call Heidi Johnson at 608-224-3716

- Reproducing Profitability Workshop – various locations in November
University of Wisconsin-Extension's Reproducing Profitability Workshops will feature information about the latest innovations in dairy reproductive practices to improve reproductive efficiency and profitability?

Topics and speakers include:

- Update on reproduction research at UW-Madison and MSU; Paul Fricke, UW-Extension, UW-Madison and Richard Pursley, Professor, Michigan State University
- Controlling Domino Effect: Building Better Breeding Criteria for Dairy Replacement Heifers; Pat Hoffman, UW-Extension dairy herd management specialist at Marshfield Research Station
- Using Cattle Behavior to Maximize Health: Production and Reproduction; Amy Stanton, UW-Extension dairy specialist at UW-Madison
- Tried and True: The ReproMoney Program Can Increase Your Net Income by Enhancing Your Herd's Reproductive Efficiency; Connie Cordoba, UW-Extension reproductive specialist

Participants in the workshop will also have the opportunity to learn about and enroll in the Repro Money Program, a free UW-Extension program offered to all Wisconsin dairy farmers that are willing to work to improve their herd's reproductive performance.

The workshops will be held at eight locations. All meetings run from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and include the same content. Please choose the location best for you.

Dates and locations:

Nov. 12:

- Kiel at Millhome Supper Club, 16524 Lax Chapel Road
- Denmark at Beverly Gardens, 5911 Pine Grove Road

Nov. 13:

- Shawano at Angie's Main Café, 132 South Main Street
- Abbotsford at Allison's Steakhouse, 503 E. Spruce Street

Nov. 14:

- Eau Claire at Eau Claire County Expo Center, 5530 Fairview Drive
- Whitehall at Whitehall Public Golf Course, 35635 West Street

Nov. 15:

- Spring Green at The Shed, 123 N. Lexington Street
- Belmont at Convention Center, 103 Mound View Road

The registration fee for the program is \$15 which includes program materials, refreshments and lunch. Registration at the door, please make checks payable to Department of Dairy Science/UW-Madison, c/o Repro Money Program. For more information about these workshops or the ReproMoney program, please contact Connie Cordoba at 608-219-5297 or mccordoba@wisc.edu or visit the ReproMoney website at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/repromoney/>

- Grant writing workshop for agriculture production and food processing enterprises related to direct marketing of the product.

UW Extension will be hosting a workshop on October 22nd at the Radisson Conference Center in La Crosse to help interested people learn more about potential grant sources and the whole grant application process. The workshop's focus is on grants in the agriculture production and food processing area related to direct marketing of the product. Topics covered will include: Designing a sound project and grant writing basics, Hands on Grant Proposal Evaluation and Development, and Other financing options. Specific grant programs that will be addressed include USDA's Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG), Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), Speciality Crop Block Grant (SCBG), and Wisconsin DATCP's Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Grants. The workshop will begin at 9:00 am with registration and presentations beginning at 9:30 and will conclude at approximately 4:00 pm. There is a cost of \$15 per participant to partially cover the costs of the workshop. For more information or to pre-register contact the UW Extension Office in LA Crosse County at 608-785-9593.

- Wisconsin Dairy Well-Being Conference

UW-Extension will be hosting its fifth annual conference on March 7, 2014 in Eau Claire, WI to address the emerging issue of animal handling and well-being.

Program Learning Objectives and Intended Outcomes:

- Increase knowledge or understanding of improved dairy and beef cattle animal handling practices.

- Expand awareness and improve understanding about the science and politics of farm animal care here in the Upper Midwest, throughout the United States and around the world.
- Build new or existing partnerships between dairy and beef producers, veterinarians, related agencies and organizations to address the emerging agriculture policy issue of animal welfare in Wisconsin.
- Identify and connect key individuals interested in addressing future educational/policy efforts related to animal care or welfare.

ANRE Employment opportunities (For more information: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/hr/>)

- Agriculture Agent (100%) Specializing in Dairy and Animal Sciences- Brown County
- Agriculture Agent, Crops and Soils Emphasis (100%) - Dodge County
- Agriculture Agent (100%) Specializing in Dairy and Animal Sciences- Clark County

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Reminder: Two sources of current information on state and county UW Extension news, events and timely topics in Wisconsin crop and livestock production and marketing are:

UW Cooperative Extension-ANRE website <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/>

UW ANRE Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UWExtensionANRE>

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

Cate Rahmlow shared information on a project she's working on. In August she learned of an organic farm investment group, Iroquois Valley Farms (IVF) from Illinois that has a program to purchase farmland and contract with organic farmers on a long-term lease to farm it organically. It also provides opportunities for new farmers to get started without the capital investment in land. They have never invested in WI because it is not legal for corporate entities to own farms here. The law is not stringently enforced and several people expressed awareness of companies that do own farmland in Wisconsin, such as canning companies. Cate was interested in the council's opinion on this law--if it were not in place, it could provide opportunities for more land to be certified organic. Cate has been in contact with the organization, but WEDC is not allowed to provide guidance to an entity from out of state on a matter like this. The issue passed on to the Governor's office, where it will be investigated. Cate asked if there are other programs in the organic world that help farms with access to land. Cate asked if IVF could help to increase organic acreage in the state of Wisconsin and be a source of "patient capital". Harriet has concerns about larger entities controlling organic land that would spray because it was not stipulated in the lease.

WI DATCP

Agricultural Resource Management

Duane Klein, ARM: 608-224-4520, Duane.Klein@Wisconsin.gov

ATCP 50

The department is proposing some changes to the pasture requirements in the final draft of ATCP 50 regarding nutrient management (NM) in light of the number of public comments we received on this topic area. The changes are intended to provide additional flexibility and reduce costs associated with developing NM plans for well-managed pastures. The final draft rules were presented to the DATCP Board on September 10th. It will next go to the legislature and Governor's office for approval with the potential of becoming effective in the summer of 2014.

Pasture Requirements in Proposed Final Draft of ATCP 50

- Pasture standards = Soil loss to "T" and Phosphorus Index via nutrient management planning

- Public hearing comments identified concerns related to:
 - use-value assessment
 - soil testing costs
 - pastures with very low animal densities
 - calculations of soil loss and PI on pastures
 - woodlot pasturing practices
- How did we address these concerns in the final draft rule?
 - Removed the Phase-in for pastures and replaced it with both a Stocking Rate Threshold and a Soil Testing Alternative
 - Stocking Rate Threshold that:
 - Is based on PI values calculated from worst case scenarios to determine if a stocking rate existed that we can confidently assume will not be a resource concern
 - Was derived by working with a number of leaders in the grazing community
 - Exempts NM requirement when both of the following are met:
 - No mechanical applications of nutrients on pasture
 - Average stocking rate is 1 AU/acre or less during grazing season
 - SnapPlus's Grazing Calculator can help determine your herd's stocking rate
 - Soil Testing Alternative - means that farmers can use assumed soil test values listed below instead of soil testing their pastures. Soil testing alternative can be used when all of the following are met:
 - No mechanical applications of nutrients on pasture
 - Average stocking rate is more than 1 AU/acre over grazing season
 - NMP is developed that assumes soil test values of 150ppm P and 6% OM
- ATCP 50 Timeline moving forward:
 - Submitted the Governor-approved draft rule to the legislature for legislative committee review & Joint Comm. on Adm. Rules (30 day review)
 - If the legislature does not act, sign final rulemaking order and transmit the rule for publication
 - Takes effect on the 1st day of the 3rd month following publication (~Summer 2014)
 - Pasture requirements will take effect:
 - January 1, 2016 for farmland preservation program participants
 - Immediately for all others
 - DATCP NM Staff are actively working on guidance for farmers and counties when determining if NM is required and when a pasture should really be considered a feedlot
- For more information, contact Sara Walling, DATCP at 608-224-4501, or sara.walling@wi.gov

Agricultural Development Division

Laura Paine, DAD: 608-224-5120/Laura.paine@wi.gov

- **New Administrator for DAD.** Dan Smith started as the new administrator of DAD on October 21st. Most recently, Smith was the Chief Executive Officer of Midwestern BioAg in Blue Mounds. As the CEO since July 2011, he implemented a strategic plan to accomplish the company's long-term goals and served as

the company spokesperson. Previously Smith had worked at DATCP in the Wisconsin Farm Center as an economic advisor assisting farmers in difficult financial situations. He analyzed loan portfolios, cash flows, balance sheets and farm management plans for individual farmers. Smith operated his own dairy farm in northwestern Illinois for more than thirty years. He now lives with his wife, Cheryl, on a farm in Iowa County. Smith has a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

- **Organic Certification Cost-Share.** As a farm bill has not yet been passed, we do not have funds to distribute. I continue to receive 2 or 3 calls and emails a week from organic farmers and companies inquiring about the program.
- **Organic Farming Conference.**
 - I am coordinating the redesign of the DATCP booth at the Organic Farming Conference. We will continue to have material on organic programming and the Council nomination solicitation in the booth, but we have identified several other DATCP programs that are interested in having materials in the booth, including Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin; the Farm to School Program, Something Special from Wisconsin, our food safety program, Ag Resource Management (nutrient management, pest survey, and driftwatch), Animal Health materials (biosecurity, Johnes disease, etc.), and our Farm Center resources. It should be a great booth!
 - I will be conducting a workshop on Extending the grazing season with annuals and perennials at the conference.
- **Update on DAD grant programs:**
 - **Dairy 30x20:** Another round of funding for the Dairy 30x20 is available. Applications are due by December 2nd. Grants are for \$2500 to \$5000 and can be used for hiring expertise to assist with business planning, transition planning, farm transfers, engineering, design, layout of new barns, parlors or other farm structures, or herd health, nutrition, milk production, managed grazing planning, or transition to organic production.
 - http://datcp.wi.gov/Farms/Dairy_Farming/Grow_Wisconsin_Dairy_Grant/index.aspx
 - **Buy Local Buy Wisconsin grant program** has received more than 50 pre-proposals. From these, approximately 15 will be selected to submit full proposals. About \$200,000 is available for the program.
 - The **Grazing Grant program** was eliminated from the state budget. A separate bill to re-fund the program has been introduced but has not been taken up by the legislature. I am meeting with RC&D Councils from around the state on October 30th to assess where they are with their programs and assist with identifying funding and other resources to continue their programs.
- **Buy Local Buy Wisconsin workshop series.**
 - Scheduling Information
 - Tuesday seminars will be held in Ashland beginning at 8:15 a.m.
 - Wednesday seminars will be hosted in Black River Falls beginning at 8:45 a.m.
 - Thursday seminars will be held in Green Bay and begin at 8:15 a.m.
 - Friday seminars will be held in Madison beginning at 8:15 a.m. (also offered by webinar.)
 - Workshop Topics:
 - November 5 - 8, 2013: Put Your Local Food Business Idea to the Test
 - Carl Rainey, business consultant for DATCP, will take your business idea from inception to product launch in this three and a half hour seminar. Learn about practical strategies for testing your business idea in the marketplace, hear examples of other local food business start-ups and gain knowledge in the principles of lean business strategies.
 - December 3 - 6, 2013: Understanding the Legalities of Your Business

- Rachel Armstrong of Farm Commons and Courtney Berner from the UW Center for Cooperatives will cover the legal issues involved with starting and running your own food or farm business in an interactive setting. Through the course of the workshop, attendees can plan to:
 - Learn basic legal principles of business entities and employment.
 - Recognize potential legal issues in forming a business and hiring employees.
 - Discuss insights and opinions on forming a business and hiring.
 - Create draft legal provisions for an operating agreement agenda.
- February 2014: Planning the Best to Avoid the Worst - Food Safety
 - Covering licensing, labeling requirements, hazard control and recall plans for food processing businesses. On-farm food safety resources will also be shared for fresh fruit and vegetable farms.
- March 2014: Marketing 201 - Packaging/Labeling, Social Marketing, E-Commerce and Web Presence
 - Marketing your products starts with your brand. Learn about the importance of branding and package development. From there, learn how social marketing can increase your local food sales.
- April 2014: Know your Buyer
 - A panel discussion from buyers of restaurants, food-service directors and grocery stores. Find out what they are looking for and how to best approach them with your products. Hear from successful case studies of producer/buyer relationships.
- May 2014: Selling through a Distributor
 - A panel discussion from a number of distributors, food hubs and aggregators. Find out what model works best for you and your business.
- Videos of past workshops are available in the Webinar Archives.
http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/BLBW_Workshops/Webinar_Archives
- If you have any questions or would like to be informed when the archives become available, please contact Callie LaPoint at callie.lapoint@wisconsin.gov or (608)224-5112.

Wisconsin Technical College System

Randy Zogbaum, WI Technical Colleges—Reviewed the Dairy Grazing Apprentice Program. North Central Technical College is operating a dairy farm and hosting several of the Apprenticeship courses. The SW region is changing their curriculum to match the Madison program. Opportunities for teaching, people like Christine and Harriet would be very well qualified. Randy mentioned Milwaukee Technical College food manufacturing programs. Jennifer commented on new Milwaukee based urban agriculture and nutrition organization. Cate—FEDN Food Enterprise Development Network under WEDC. The goal is to find what form of food hub could be developed there.

WI DNR

Sally Kefer, DNR, mentioned the status of AG bag recycling project. There are two demo projects that have been documented in a webinar. The DNR ag plastic recycling page is:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/recycling/agplastics.html>.

Discussion was held on the status of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), which has appeared in some counties. More information can be found at the following site: <http://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/eab/index.jsp>

Andrea Torrence is the DNR staff contact for EAB.

The new invasive species rules are being put out for comment until Dec 31:
http://invasivespecies.wi.gov/section_detail.asp?linkcatid=3530&linkid=1704&locid=59

Sally shared an interest in working with municipalities to establish bee keeping ordinances to encourage conservation of pollinators.

She provided a handout on the Glacial Heritage Area project. DNR is looking to tie good conservation to economic development. The goal is to start similar activities throughout state. There is funding available: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/other/glacialheritagearea.html>

Council Priorities 2014

Farm Bill Harriet informed the Council that the first meeting of the conference committee is tomorrow (October 30th). It appears that the nutrition program will continue to be a point of contention between the House and the Senate. Food safety programs are currently without funding. Ken asked if there is a timeline or financial milestone? Harriet said that there is none, the Farm Bill is in limbo, nothing like this has happened before. She encouraged members to call their representatives. If you call, always ask for AG liaison.

GMO labeling laws. 26 states are looking at laws requiring labeling. Connecticut passed the first law, with the stipulation that laws need to be passed in four other states in the region and one must border.

FSMA deadline Nov 15 for comments. NSAC, <http://sustainableagriculture.net/>, does an excellent overview of act and position to take. Harriet encouraged all council members to contact their representatives and to submit comments. As proposed, the act will make it difficult for small and midsize organizations to comply. Bill observed that the law only affects operations with >\$500K revenue? Harriet pointed out that FDA can remove this exemption without due cause or process. Laura will send our WOAC previously submitted comments.

Last Comments:

Elena suggested that we learn more about the MN pilot program on cost share developed by their organic task force. There was a suggestion that we could have a joint meeting, perhaps by phone.

Laura suggested that we think of topics to address next year. Possible topics:

Reports on WI infrastructure for organic processing.

Climate change impacts on WI agriculture (to be covered at our January meeting)

Pat suggested that soil health could also be a focus.

Inga asked about programs for beginning farmers, high school, grade school activities? Ideas:

- Randy: FFA versus Ag teachers. Get a booth at the WAAE conference in June (it is here in Madison). Contact Jeff Hicken about becoming part of the Council.
- Harriet: Joe Pedretti has talked with state and federal FFA. Randy: there hasn't been much response.
- Laurie: how about 4-H groups?
- 4th grade ag curriculum: Farm Bureau distributes materials. Need 50,000 pieces. Randy: start with 10,000. Don't need to start with 50,000.

Adjourn 3:02 PM