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For more information about programs in this newsletter, call the UW-Extension office: 715-284-4257 or visit :

http://jackson.uwex.edu/

www.facebook/Jackson-County-UW-Extension-Agriculture

Weather-related cancellations will be announced on WWIS Radio 99.7



## Fall 2019 Agriculture Newsletter

September 1st 2019

Greetings from your county ag educator.....

As I write this many of you have just finished 3rd crop or are doing so in a hurry before the impending rains hit. Recent reports indicate that while our area has dried down some, it is still excessively wet compared to average (which comes as no surprise). Soybean bloom trailed a whopping 19 days behind the five year average, with corn silking also behind by about 15 days. With fall fast approaching, decisions will need to be made regarding crop maturity and harvest timing. Extension has multiple resources to help guide these decisions as well as tools to assist with determining the economic value of immature crops. In this newsletter you will find a sampling of such resources with others available upon request by contacting our office or utilizing the UW-Extension website. Wishing everyone a safe harvest!

~Jamie

#### A "Post-Mortem" of the 2019 Planting Season and What We Can Do About It

Joe Lauer-Extension Corn Agronomist

Who can forget the "Drought of 1988" or the "Father's Day Frost of 1992" or the "Flood of 2008." The 2019 corn planting season in Wisconsin will have a similar notoriety and be remembered for a long time. Corn planting progress records have been kept by USDA since the 1979 growing season. The 2019 planting season was "unprecedented." Farmers in Wisconsin typically plant about 50% of the corn acreage by May 7(Figure 1). The earliest we have hit the 50% planted acreage level was during 2010 by Week 16. Other early years were 2016, 2006, 2005, 2000, and 1999. The slowest we have hit the 50% mark was 1996 and 2014 at Week 20. That is until 2019 when we hit the 50% mark at Week 21 and what subsequently happened during June. Significant corn acres were planted in July this year. Planting date sets up your season. If you are delayed or planting is extended then workload is delayed or extended as well. Some corn will not make grain or be too expensive to dry. Some corn will not

make good corn silage due to lack of grain development prior to a killing frost.

#### Corn as a Cover Crop

Who would have thought that corn could be grown as a cover crop? Yet, due to low forage inventories and the relaxing of USDA-RMA rules, corn was allowed as a cover crop to be harvested as an emergency forage. To be sure, corn is deeprooted and by the end of the growing season can produce significant residue even when planted in July. A num-



Figure 1. Wisconsin Corn Planting Progress. The average consists of data from 1979 to 2018. Years shown are  $\pm$  1 standard deviation from the average. Data derived from USDA-NASS.

ber of management guidelines needed to be considered to qualify including: increased plant population, narrower row spacing, crop rotation, planting into residue, lower nitrogen rate, and good weed control.

FALL 2019 AG NEWSLETTER

## ~Report a Pigweed Program~



Pigweeds are annual weeds in the genus *Amaranthus*. Palmer amaranth and waterhemp are problematic pigweeds that have the ability to develop resistance to commonly used herbicides in agronomic settings. The <u>Report a</u> <u>Pigweed</u> program aims to improve understanding of the location of Palmer amaranth and waterhemp in Wisconsin and where herbicide-resistant populations exist. Image 1. depicts key characteristics to help determine what species of pigweed you have encountered.

If you encounter either Palmer Amaranth or Waterhemp on your property we encourage you to use one of the following two procedures to report your siting:

#### Option 1:

Use the Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) app. Go to the Google Play (Android users) or the App Store (Apple/iOS users) and download the GLEDN app. Find more information about reporting with the GLEDN app <u>here</u>.

#### Option 2:

You can also report your pigweed by emailing us at <u>reportapig-</u> weed@gmail.com with the following pieces of information:

1) *Location of the pigweed*: GPS coordinates (in decimal degrees; NAD83 or WGS84) or an address/road intersection

One way to find GPS coordinates is to visit Google Maps. Right click on the location of the plant(s) and select "What's Here?". A gray marker will appear and the coordinates (in decimal degrees) will be displayed at the bottom of the screen.

To report an address/road intersection, please include an additional description. For example, "100 feet southwest of the intersection of County Rd DL and Hwy 113 in Merrimac" or "200 feet east of 1151 Observatory Drive in Madison."

2) *The habitat where the pigweed is growing*: agricultural field (indicate what type of field, e.g. corn, soybean, etc.), home garden, roadside, or other (please describe).

3) *Indicate whether the plant may be herbicide resistant*, and if so, what herbicide has been applied.

4) *Pictures of the pigweed*, including a picture of the whole plant, a close-up picture of the plant stem to show it does not have hairs, and a picture of the petiole folded over the leaf to show the size of the petiole relative to the leaf.

More information regarding herbicide resistance and plant identification can be found at UW-Extension Integrated Pest & Crop Management website and



the Wisconsin First Detector Website. For assistance in identifying pigweed species please contact your county Extension agriculture agent.

This information was taken directly from the UW-Extension Report a Pig Weed website which can be accessed at https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wifdn/ report-a-pigweed/.



#### Calculating the Value of Normal and Immature Corn Silage Joe Lauer-Extension Corn Agronomist

Due to late planting dates and a cooler than normal growing season this year, many corn fields will probably be harvested for silage. There is even great potential for corn in these fields to be too immature for proper corn silage harvest. How should the value of corn silage be adjusted for frosted immature corn? Typical calculation methods for pricing normal corn silage include:

- 1. Relative feed value of a known forage market. Silage (\$/T) = 1/4 to 1/2 value of hay Silage (\$/T) = 6 to 8 times the price of a bushel of corn. If already harvested, then 10 times.
- 2. Feed replacement or substitution costs
- 3. Use market prices for energy, protein, and digestibility (NE<sub>L</sub> of corn, soybean meal, hay)
- 4. Contracted price above the cost of production (280-320 \$/A).

For most crops, forage quality and value **decreases** with maturity, that is fiber levels increase and digestible energy decreases. Corn is somewhat unique in that quality **increases** with maturity. In corn silage most of the digestible energy is in the grain portion. Immature corn will have a lower proportion of grain in the silage. Two approaches to consider for calculating the value of immature corn silage are:

- Reduce the value of immature corn silage by the cost of buying back grain to bring the grain:stover ratio to a more normal proportion.
- Use MILK91 to calculate the milk per acre and milk per ton that could potentially be produced from immature corn silage.

Afuakwa and Crookston (1984) described the grain yield impact of frost at different stages of development (see table in adjacent article). A killing frost at the soft dough stage of development would result in a grain yield loss of 55% and at least that much grain would be required to produce normal silage.

The relationship between kernel maturity and silage yield and quality is shown in Table 1. Milk production per acre is 35% less when corn is harvested at the immature soft dough stage compared to the optimum stage at 50% kernel milk. Milk production per ton of immature corn silage (soft dough) was 25% lower than the optimum stage of 50% kernel milk. Thus, the milk production potential would be reduced between 25 and 35% with immature corn harvested for silage. The value of the corn silage should be adjusted accordingly.

Table 1. Relationship between kernel maturity and corn silage yield and quality.								
Corn development	Silage moisture	Silage yield	Crude protein	ADF	NDF	IVD	Milk production	
	%	T/A	%	%	%	%	lb/A	lb/T
Soft dough	76	5.4	10	27	53	77	8600	1600
Early dent	73	5.6	10	24	48	79	10800	1900
50% milk	66	6.3	9	23	45	80	13300	2100
25% milk	63	6.4	9	24	47	80	12600	2000
Black layer	60	6.3	8	24	47	79	12400	1950
derived from Wiersma et al. (1993) and Undersander et al. (1993)								



#### 2019 Planting Season (Cont. from pg 1).....

#### Will the Corn Crop Make It?

Corn maturity is all over the board due to late planting, and within field variability is equally asgreat. An early frost could spell doom for a lot of cornfields. Most late-planted corn will likely be immature and killed by frost. **Patience** will be required to allow the corn to dry to the proper moisture for storage and preservation. Starch content will be most affected with late-planted corn. However, this can be easily remedied by adding more grain corn into the ration.

Filling bunker and pile silos may also be a challenge where all the corn won't be ready at the same time. Decisions will need to be made as to whether to start a new pile or risk reopening up an existing pile. Some may choose to just fill a bag with any late avoid yield reductions caused by frost, corn intend--cut corn. None of this will make life easy for custom chopping operations either. Harvest season will be extended this year, and any information that can be passed along to custom operators will help with planning and proper timing of silage harvest. In-season Guidelines for Predicting Corn Silage Harvest Date

1) Note hybrid maturity and planting date of fields intended for silage.

2) Note tasseling (silking) date. Kernels will be at 50% kernel milk (R5.5) about 42 to 47 days after silking.

3) After milkline moves, use kernel milk triggers to time corn silage harvest. Use a drydown rate of 0.5% per day to predict date when field will be ready for the storage structure. See

#### http://fyi.uwex.edu/silagedrydown/

4) Do final check prior to chopping. Adjust cutter height if forage needs are adequate. Raising cutter bar 1 foot, lowers silage moisture 2 to 4 points.

Once corn silks it takes about 55 to 60 days to achieve maturity (R6). Development during grainfilling is influenced by temperature, but not as much as during the vegetative leaf emergence stag-

es. Instead the number of days between pollination and a killing frost influence the time to maturity. So, if an average killing frost occurs October 1, then subtracting 55 to 60 days means that the crop must be silking by August 2-7. Silage harvest usually begins around 50% kernel milk which is 42 to 47 days after silking, so silking must occur by August 15-20. However, remember that at some point yield does not matter anymore and that timing of silage harvest is dependent upon achieving the proper moisture for the storage structure.

At the dent stage (R5), corn has accumulated 75-85% of silage yield and 60-75% of grain yield and needs about 27-32 days to avoid significant yield reductions due to frost (Table 1). In order to ed for silage should be silking by late August, while corn intended for dry grain should reach the dent stage by September 1.

#### Management Options for Corn Grain Harvest 1) Note silking dates to project calendar days to when a field will mature. Note order that field silk to plan the harvest queue. It will take approximately 55 to 60 days to get to R6. 2) Consider selling a greater proportion of your corn acres as silage or high moisture corn. 3) Consider locking in a price for drying fuel. 4) Taking the dock for shrink at the elevator. 5) Fine-tune your dryer so that over- or underdrying does not occur. Over-heating the grain in the dryer or filling the bin too fast for drying to occur will increase costs and decrease grain quality reducing profitability.

6) Hire and train the skilled labor that will be required to monitor dryers, fans, augers, and other equipment during the drying process. 7) Consider some field drying if moisture levels are high, but do not let corn stand in the field too long or snow may increase harvest losses due to ear droppage and stalk breakage from snow.

#### Table 1. The relationship between kernel growth stage and yield of corn for normal planting dates.

	Calendar days	GDUs to	Percent o	f max yield	Moisture	content (%)
Stage	to maturity	maturity	Grain	Silage	Grain	Silage
R1: Silking	55-60	1100-1200	0	45-50		80-85
R2: Blister	45-50	875-975	0-10	55-60	85-95	80-85
R3: Milk	35-40	750-850	10-30	60-65	70-85	80-85
R4: Dough	30-35	650-750	30-60	65-75	60-70	75-80
R5: Dent	27-32	425-525	60-75	75-85	50-55	70-75
R5.5: 50% Kernel milk	13-18	200-300	90-95	100	35-40	65-70
R6: Black layer	0	0	100	95-100	30-35	55-65



Wisconsin farmers in various parts of the state experienced severe alfalfa losses this past winter resulting in forage shortages in combination with already low inventories. Additionally, a cooler and wetter than normal 2019 spring season caused delayed plantings for many Wisconsin farmers. As a result there may be an interest in selling or buying agricultural commodities from areas with surplus feed inventories to areas of the state in need of forages according to Mike Ballweg, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension Sheboygan County crops and soils agent.

The Farmer to Farmer Forage and Corn website – probably best thought of as an electronic neighborhood bulletin board – allows local farmers to get in touch with one another. The website facilitates the marketing of feed commodities where livestock producers in need of high moisture corn, corn silage, hay, or straw can easily contact sellers that have feed commodities for sale. For example, those late planted acres may serve the dairy and livestock industry well, utilizing late planted acres as silage or high moisture corn, while reducing costs for corn grain growers associated with drying, storage, transportation and marketing.

The Farmer to Farmer website facilitates making the connections. The site is developed and supported by UW-Madison Extension and can be found at: <u>https://farmertofarmer.extension.wisc.edu/</u>. The website is free of charge for both buyers and sellers. Users can search for, or list for sale, hay, haylage, straw, high moisture corn, corn silage or corn grain. Buyers can search for farmers in just one Wisconsin county or in any number of counties at once.

"This site has been an excellent way for buyers and sellers to get in-touch locally. Neighbors often within short distances have been able to buy and sell as a result of the website", says Ballweg. "All transactions and negotiations are handled directly between buyers and sellers."

## Focus on Energy<sup>®</sup> Grain Dryer Tune-Up Incentive



Increase energy efficiency and reduce down time by performing a grain dryer tuneup this fall. If you are served by a participating Focus on Energy cooperative you are eligible to receive a \$150 reimbursement after your dryer maintenance is performed. A complete list of requirements and application form can be found at www.focusonenergy.com/programs/agribusiness.

<u>The following maintenance items must be included during your tune-up:</u> -Cleaning fans and lubricating bearings associated with ventilation systems -Cleaning screens (drying floor and columns)

- -Cleaning burner, checking pressure regulator and inlet air adjustment -Cleaning and calibrating temperature sensors
- -Cleaning and calibrating moisture sensors

-Optimizing control settings including plenum temperature set points

For more information call 888.947.7828 or visit https://www.focusonenergy.com/programs/agribusiness

#### FALL 2019 AG NEWSLETTER

## Responding to Stress: Connecting Rural Communities with Resources to Recognize and Manage Stress

Madison, Wis. – Feeling stressed? You're not alone. A recent Gallup poll found that 55 percent of Americans said they had experienced stress during a lot of the day. The farming community is not immune to stress; ongoing economic conditions in agriculture are taking a toll on farm families and their rural communities according to Trisha Wagner, Farm Management Program Outreach Director, University of Wisconsin-Madison-Extension.

"Understanding stress and how chronic stress impacts all aspects of life and then learning how to manage stress are essential for one's health and our rural communities" said Wagner. Extension resources, available online at https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/farmstress/, help farmers, families, businesses and communities remain resilient by learning how to manage stress by recognizing and working to positively address, not avoid, the causes of stress. Resources include planning tools to make sound decisions and create a roadmap for the future.

"Stress can negatively affect health, sleep, relationships and communication with others," said John Shutske, Extension ag safety specialist at UW-Madison. "Probably the most crucial impact is the way in which chronic stress, developed through the combination of duration and intensity, impacts decision making."

Thinking carefully about a situation and clearly understanding it, so you can decide what to do, is a first step to addressing the stress caused by uncertainty, and it puts you on the path to take control of decisions.

Resilient families view crisis as a shared challenge, instead of having each person be a "tough, rugged individual," getting through hard times. They believe that by joining together with family members and others who are important to the family, they can strengthen their ability to meet challenges. It is also important that people stay connected to the resources, friends, neighbors, and support systems in their community; those can include your church, schools, ag service providers and experts.

"Sometimes people can't recognize signs of stress in themselves; others might sense something is wrong



but may not know how to bring it up," said Joy Kirkpatrick, Extension farm succession specialist at UW-Madison. "Start the conversation by talking with family and friends about stress and the changes that might need to happen."

If any person expresses the signs and symptoms of extreme stress and talks about harming themselves or ending their life, it is important to provide help and support. The most important resource for support anywhere in the U.S. is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, accessible for English-speaking people at 800-273-8255 or in Spanish at 888-628-9454. See suicidepreventionlifeline.org for more information. Those working in rural communities and providing services and support to farmers and their families should also consider completing a course in "Mental Health First Aid" or "QPR," a suicide prevention program that has been shown to save lives.

### August 2019 Dairy Situation & Outlook

Professor Emeritus Bob Cropp-University of Wisconsin

Milk prices have shown improvement since early in the year. Class III was a low of \$13.89 in February and increased \$3.66 by July to \$17.55. Class IV was \$15.48 in January and increased \$1.52 to \$16.90 in July. But, with small changes in dairy product prices August will see a small increase in the Class III price and a small decrease in the Class IV price. On the CME, barrel cheese was as high as \$1.78 per pound in July, started August at \$1.6925 and is now \$1.750. The 40-pound blocks were as high as \$1.86 per pound in July, started August at \$1.82 and are now \$1.9075. Butter will average lower in August. Butter was as high as \$1.435 per pound in July and is now \$2.33. Dry whey was \$0.32 per pound in July and has improved to \$0.370. Nonfat dry milk was as high as \$1.05 per pound in July, but has decreased to \$1.03. The little improvement in cheese and dry whey prices will put the August Class III price near \$17.60. Lower butter and nonfat dry milk prices will put the August Class IV price lower to near \$16.60.

Class III futures shows September peaking at about \$17.80 and then declining fourth quarter and ending in December about \$17.00. Class IV futures remain below \$17 for the remainder of the year. But, milk prices could do better than this for the fourth quarter for several reasons. Butter and cheese will be in the strong seasonal sales period thanksgiving through the holidays. Schools will be starting increasing fluid milk sales leaving less milk for dairy product production. Compared to a year ago, the June Dairy Product report showed butter production up some to 3,1%, but cheddar cheese 1.9% lower, dry whey 6.3% lower and nonfat dry milk just 2.7% higher. The dairy stock situation has tightened. Compared to June 30<sup>th</sup> a year ago, butter stocks were 2.6% lower, American cheese stocks declined May to June as did total cheese stocks and were 1.9% and 0.5% lower respectively. Dry whey stocks were 0.9% lower and nonfat dry milk stocks 4.8% lower. Milk production will show some seasonal strength but remain below year ago levels.

Lower dairy exports have dampened the increase in milk prices some. But, with lower milk production exports don't need to be as high to support milk prices. According to US Dairy Export Council loss of exports to China due to retaliatory tariffs and African swine fever, plus strong competition from European and New Zealand resulted in the volume of exports for the first half of the year to be down 14% from last year. Cheese exports have been the bright spot with exports 4% higher than a year ago for the first half of the year with record volumes to South Korea, Southeast Asia, and Central America. But, June cheese exports took a turn to 12% lower. For the first half of the year, nonfat dry milk exports were 15% lower, the result of losing market share to European suppliers and New Zealand. For the first half of the year dry whey exports were 25% lower due almost entirely to exports to China down 58%.



On a total milk solids basis, U.S. Exports were equivalent to 14.1% of U.S. milk solids production for the first half of the year compared to 16.7% a year ago.

USDA's milk production report estimated July milk production to be down 0.2% from a year ago, the net result of almost one percent fewer milk cows and an increase in milk per cow of just 0.9%. Milk cow numbers continue to decline dropping 9,000 head June to July. Of the 24 reporting states 14 had fewer milk cows than a year ago and milk per cow was lower in 11 states. Relatively large production increase continued in Texas and Colorado with increases of 5.8% and 5.9% respectively. California and Idaho had increases of 2.5% and 2.1%. Production was down 6.7% in Arizona and 0.9% in New Mexico. In the Northeast New York's production was up just 0.3%, Michigan 0.6%, but down 7.6% in Pennsylvania and 6.0% in Ohio. In the Midwest production was down 1.0% in Wisconsin, 0.7% in lowa and up just 1.0% in Minnesota. In the Southeast production was down 1.1% in Florida and 11.2% in Virginia with Georgia up 2.8%.

Milk prices in 2020 will depend a lot on the level of milk production. USDA's is forecasting milk production to be 1.6% higher due to milk cow numbers averaging 0.2% higher and milk per cow 1.4% higher. But, this level of milk production could be on the higher side. There may be no increase in the number of milk cows. Dairy cow slaughter continues to run higher than a year ago. Dairy herds exiting the industry continues to run relatively high. Financial stress for more than four years will hinder dairy expansions. The number of dairy replacements are lower standing at 44.1 per 100 milk cows, the lowest since depressed milk price in 2009. There is concerned about feed quality. Stocks of quality hay are tight. Corn and soybean meal prices will be average higher. The result may lower the increase in milk per cow. There is some concern as to whether the U.S. economy will slow and impact dairy product sales. There is also concern that the world economy could slow impacting dairy exports. USDA is still forecasting 2020 exports to be 5.3% higher on a milk fat basis than 2019 and 4.4% higher on a total milk solids basis. So there is a lot that can sway milk prices higher or lower. Dairy futures are currently not overly optimistic about 2020 milk prices. Class III futures stay below \$17 through July and only get to the low \$17's the reminder of the year. Class IV futures are in the high \$16's first quarter than the \$17's the remainder of the year. USDA likewise is not overly optimistic as to how much higher milk prices will be in 2020. USDA forecasts Class III to average \$16.55, just \$0.25 higher than the forecast for this year, and Class IV to average \$16.45, just \$0.15 higher. But, there still is a good probability milk prices could strengthen the last half of the year and end averaging better than this.

#### FALL 2019 AG NEWSLETTER

## A Guide to Making Soybean Silage Dan Undersander Et. Al

Adverse weather such as drought or early frost sometimes raises the issue of harvesting soybean fields for forage due to forage shortage and/or low yield grain yield potential of the soybean crop. Soybean forage can be harvested as either silage or hay. Harvesting as hay requires much longer field drying times, increases shattering losses, and can be very dusty. No information was found concerning production and feeding of soybean silage. Therefore, eight farmers who had made soybean silage in Wisconsin during the fall of 2005 were surveyed and the silage was sampled for analysis. Following are recommendations for making soybean silage as reflected by the farmer experience.

Soybean should be harvested for silage at the R3 stage [when one of the four top nodes with a fully developed leaf has a 3/16 inch long pod (1)] for dairy animals. It is possible to harvest as late as R7 stage (one pod on main stem has reached mature color; 50% of leaves yellow; physiological maturity, no more dry matter accumulation). Yield at the later stage is increased compared to R3 and R4 stages and plant dry matter is near to that required for ensiling (2,3,5). While overall forage quality at the R7 is similar to the R3 or R4 stage and to alfalfa, the plant is significantly different as far as the animal is concerned. The R3 and R4 stage soybean have high forage quality from green leaves and much more digestible stems. The R7 stage soybean has high forage quality because of seeds in the pods while having fewer leaves and much lower quality stems. Therefore, seed shatter during harvesting at the R7 stage, resulting in loss of forage quality, is a significant issue. Secondly, the high oil content of the beans at the R7 stage may cause erratic fermentation in the silo, reducing palatability and forage intake. Most of the farmers surveyed had harvested the forage at the R3 to R4 stage.

Standing soybean forage at the R3 to R4 stage was generally at about 80% moisture and needed to be mowed and wilted to dry down to 65% moisture for ensiling (Table 1). Farmers were able to mow and condition with their standard mower/conditioners, though they often needed to go slower than normal. Farmers also noted that flail conditioners caused more damage to the soybean than roller conditioners. Drying time to 65% moisture generally took 2 to 3 days in the late fall.

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum			
Component	(%, dry matter basis)					
DM	37.1	30.8	45.8			
СР	20.7	18.1	24.0			
ADF	31.9	29.7	36.2			
NDF	39.0	33.0	47.5			
NDFD	44.3	42.0	48.4			

Table 1. Forage quality of soybean silage not mixed with other crops

Forage yield averaged 1.5 ton/acre, ranging from 1.0 to 2.25 ton/acre. This is significantly less than many published reports but reasonable when the soybean is stressed from drought or late planting. Silage was made in oxygen limiting silos, plastic bags, and bunkers. Forage should be chopped with a 3/8inch theoretical length of cut for good packing. Silage produced by the farmers surveyed was generally in the correct moisture range (Table 1) and fermented well. Forage quality was similar to alfalfa haylage as reported by others when soybean is harvested at the R3 stage (2,4).

Some farmers mixed the soybean silage with other crops including 3rd crop alfalfa, corn silage, sorghum-sudangrass, and triticale. Alfalfa mixed with the soybean silage had no effect on forage quality. Sorghum-sudangrass, corn silage, and triticale all lowered the quality of the silage by reducing crude protein content and increasing fiber content (data not presented).

The farmer has the choice of mixing forages when ensiling or ensiling forages separately and mixing them when feeding. Forages should only be mixed at ensiling if the mixture will have better fermentation characteristics (proper moisture, better substrate for bacteria, etc.) than either silage alone. When forages are mixed at ensiling, often one is not at the optimum stage for ensiling

which reduces overall silage quality and/or yield. Further, ensiling the two forages separately, gives the operator has more flexibility balancing the ration according to needs of the animals being fed and quality of the ensiled material.

Farmers generally fed the soybean silage as 15 to 20% of the ration. They were asked how animals consumed and

Table 2. Effect of soybean silage on feed intake and milk production from eight Wisconsin farms.

Number of farms surveyed	Type animals fed	Feed intake	Effect on milk production
6	Milking cows	Stayed same	None
1	Milking cows	decreased	None
4	Dry cows and heifers	Stayed same	N/A

performed on soybean silage. Of the farms surveyed (Table 2), in only one case was feed intake decreased. Thus, while soybean silage is less palatable than alfalfa or corn silage, it can be used as a significant portion of the ration without influencing animal intake. There was no problem with sorting stems from leaves, likely due to the fine chop used. Most importantly, in no case was there any discernable difference in performance when animals were fed soybean silage. Dairy cows are particularly sensitive to their ration, so feeding soybean silage to other category of animals should be no problem in a balanced ration. Some reports of feed intake problems may have been caused by ensiling soybean at later stages, when high oil content from the seed may have affected palatability. (Continued on Page 9)

## Jackson County Ag Census Data

Recent census data reports that Jackson County is home to 855 farms which account for over \$154 million in sales. Average farm size in the county has increased moderately from 278 acres to 290 acres over the past five years with a total of over 248,000 acres in farmland. Additional highlights from the 2017 census are as follows:

- Jackson County leads the state in Christmas tree production with 3,607 acres planted equating to over 165,000 trees cut annually.
- Fruit, nut, and berry sales were reported at over \$23 million annually making Jackson County the 3rd largest producer in the state.
- Annual hog and pig sales reached \$4,180,000 making the Jackson the 5th largest pork producing county in Wisconsin.
- 95 farms report having a young farmer , age 35 or less, as a principal operator.
- 95% of farms in the county report being family owned, with only 28% hiring farm labor.

To view Jackson County's 2017 Ag Census profile in full, please visit https:// www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online\_Resources/ County\_Profiles/Wisconsin/cp55053.pdf or contact the Extension office for a print copy.

#### Soybean Silage (Cont. from Pg 8)

In summary, making soybean silage may be a good opportunity for farmers short of forage. The following recommendations will provide successful soybean silage experience:

• Talk to your crop insurance adjuster before harvesting any insured soybeans for forage to make sure that all requirements for insurance are met.

• Make sure any herbicides used on the soybeans are cleared for feeding to cattle.

• Harvest soybeans at R3 stage, when one of the four top nodes with a

fully-developed leaf has a 3/16-inch-long pod.

• Wilt forage to 35% dry matter before ensiling. Note: producers felt soybean whole-plant moisture was difficult to judge in the field, therefore testing is well worth the expense.

• Chop at 3/8-inch theoretical length of cut, pack well, and seal in airtight, covered pile, tube, bunker, or vertical silo.

# Coulee Grazier Network Pasture Walk

September 12th at 12pm W15503 Kelly Rd Taylor, WI 54659

Join us at the Nate & Karen Kling dairy farm. Topics for discussion include infrastructure to handle heavy cow traffic in wet years and dealing with saturated pastures.



Individuals interested in learning more about the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program are invited to a pre-walk meeting beginning at **11am**.

"Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship is dedicated to providing a guided pathway to dairy farm business ownership, developing grazing careers, and strengthening the economic and environmental wellbeing of rural communities and the dairy industry.

For more information contact the Jackson County Extension Office at 715-284-4257 or Steve Kling at 715-662-5053. Light lunch provided.

Extension Jackson County 227 S 11th Street Black River Falls, WI 54615 Fax: (715) 284-4257

Non-Profit Organization U.S. POSTAGE PAID Permit No. 187 Black River Falls WI 54615 Return Service Requested

Save the date! RESILIENT FARMS CONFERNCE

Tuesday, December 12, 2019 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Wisconsin Dells

Extension

