

May 2018



From Field to Barn

UW-Extension Fond du Lac County

227 Admin/Extension Building
400 University Drive
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Phone: 920.929.3171
Web: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag>

Fond du Lac County Educators:

Diana Hammer

Community Resource Development
Educator

Tina Kohlman

Dairy & Livestock Agent

Amanda Miller

FoodWise Coordinator &
Family Living Educator

Pamela Nelson

FoodWise Nutrition Educator

Alexis Newton

Interim 4-H Program Coordinator

Dr. Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing

Area Crops & Soils Agent

Vacant

Youth & Family Extension Educator

Patty Percy

Community Garden Coordinator

Melanie Phillips

FoodWise Nutrition Educator

Shelley Tidemann

Family Living Educator

Cindy Sarkady

Area Extension Director

Program Assistants:

Pam Bartoli

Tina Engelhardt

Ann Kaiser

Kelly Lamb

Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made.

It's Typical Wisconsin Weather!

From the desk of Dr. Loretta:

What does that really mean? With farming, what's probably more typical is you have to deal with Mother Nature to grow crops. UW-Extension Soybean & Small Grains Specialist Shawn Conley has some tips to help make accurate soybean stand assessments in a not so typical way. Bean Cam, funded by the Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board, is a new helpful app for making soybean replant decisions easier and free.

Please click to view information on: [Soybean Replant Decisions: Just the Facts Jack!](http://coolbean.info/2018/05/07/soybean-replant-decisions-just-the-facts-jack/) or <http://coolbean.info/2018/05/07/soybean-replant-decisions-just-the-facts-jack/>.

Speaking of weather, what about corn? It seems like every year farmers need to answer late-planting or replanting decisions. When is the date to switch to shorter maturity hybrids? It is a known fact that after May 1st yield decreases.

For this year in particular, UW-Extension Corn Agronomist Joe Lauer suggests relying on the well-established averages and recommends around May 20th switching from full to shorter season maturities by backing off the hybrid's relative maturity for 7 to 10 days. While others may push a June 1 date, Dr. Lauer believes the averages based on years of data are the most reliable. Corn silage can also be switched around May 20th as well. Silage corn can go a few days; it has less risk associated with fall grain moisture or lodging issues than with grain corn production. Larger dairies might find this important if they want to maintain typical fall manure spreading schedules. Below are UW Corn Agronomy resources to help make these decisions.

Planting Season: <http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/Management/L003.aspx>

Corn Late-Planting: <http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/Management/L010.aspx>

Corn Replanting: <http://corn.agronomy.wisc.edu/Management/L004.aspx>

In addition, UW-Extension publication A3353 *Corn replant/late-plant decision in Wisconsin*, available online at <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/A3353.pdf> provides relevant replanting information and the process for successful decision-making. 🌽

Tina Kohlman

Dairy & Livestock Agent

UW-Extension Fond du Lac County

Email: tina.kohlman@uwex.edu

Dr. Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing

Area Crops and Soils Agent

UW-Extension Fond du Lac & Dodge Counties

Email: loretta.ortizribbing@uwex.edu

Biofilms—Your Biological Foe

Biofilms are all around us. If you have ever had a dental cavity, you have experienced the effect of a biofilm.

Biofilms are defined as microbial growth on a solid surface. Bacteria, viruses, and protozoa are microbes as they cannot be seen without the help of a microscope. Many of the microbes which live in a biofilm can be a potential disease concern for calves.


In order for these organisms to live, they need nutrients in the form of carbohydrates and proteins. On the farm we have a great source of nutrition to sustain biofilm growth—milk or milk replacer. Biofilms form for a variety of reasons, but we will look at two main reasons—improper cleaning to remove the milk/milk replacer residue and imperfections in calf feeding equipment.



Removal of milk/milk replacer residue in feeding pails, bottles, and nipples is important. The following is a calf feeding equipment cleaning protocol as recommended by Donald Sockett, DVM, Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic pathologist:

1. Rinse using warm, 90 degrees F water.
2. Soak in hot water, greater than 130 degrees F, with 1 percent chlorinated alkaline detergent.
3. Wash water should be greater than 145 degrees F. Using a brush will help eliminate any other residue.
4. Rinse using cold water solution that contains 50 parts per million of chlorine dioxide.
5. Dry by letting the equipment drain and dry completely before re-use to prevent the growth of bacteria.
6. Final preparation of equipment should include spraying the inside and outside of calf equipment with a 50 parts per million chlorine dioxide solution two or less hours before the next use.

Imperfections in the form of scratches on the surface of calf feeding equipment happen most frequently on any surface made from plastic or rubber. These imperfections lead to the potential for disease causing microbes (bacteria and viruses) to live. Plastic is easily scratched by the teeth of calves chewing on the pail, a stiff-bristled brush, or stacking pails. Rubber naturally breaks down over time and is accelerated by using harsh cleaners or disinfectants. The following are ideas to reduce the ability of microbe growth:


- Place pails upside down on a drying rack instead of stacking inside each other
- Purchase a soft-bristled brush instead of a stiff-bristled brush for cleaning
- Use stainless steel calf feeding equipment instead of plastic
- Develop a schedule for replacing equipment made of plastic or rubber—mainly calf feeding pails and bottle nipples 

Source: Sarah Mills-Lloyd, UW-Extension Oconto County



Fond du Lac County Soil Health Farmer Group

Farmers met on April 24th for the first informal brainstorming meeting. Interest was expressed by all in attendance to start a Fond du Lac group and a date was set for the next meeting on Tuesday, July 10th starting at noon. The meeting location will be the

Rolling Meadows Restaurant in Fond du Lac. Lunch is Dutch treat. More details about this meeting will follow. If you are interested in attending or have questions, please send me an email, so I can add you to our email contact list. Thanks, Dr. Loretta, loretta.ortizribbing@uwex.edu. 

Revised Dairy MPP Enrollment-May 30

The Dairy Margin Protection Program (D-MPP) program logistics have been changed fairly significantly for 2018 via the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. Due to the changes, all dairy producers who want to be involved in the DMPP are required to register for coverage through their Farm Service Agency office prior to June 1. Even producers who have previously been involved in the program and registered last fall need to re-register. Any dairy producer not signing up for DMPP between now and June 1st will not be involved in DMPP for 2018.

The program is designed to allow producers to insure the margin does not get too small. The margin is the difference between the national milk price (per 100 lbs.) and a calculated cost of feeding a dairy cow to produce that milk. It is an important number as it is the money a farm has to pay for everything on the farm other than the feed. MPP allows producers to insure up to 90% of their historical milk production at margin protection levels of between \$4 and \$8. The recent changes work in producers favor by:

- Decreasing the premium costs and increasing the number of payment calculation windows from 6 to 12
- The current registration period is retroactive for all of 2018 production. The margins for January and February are known, with February's being only \$6.88; and March & April margins are also both expected to be about \$7.

- The program Tier 1 coverage has been extended from 4 million to 5 million pounds of milk production. Tier 1 has significantly lower premium levels than Tier 2 (all milk produced over 5 million lbs annually).

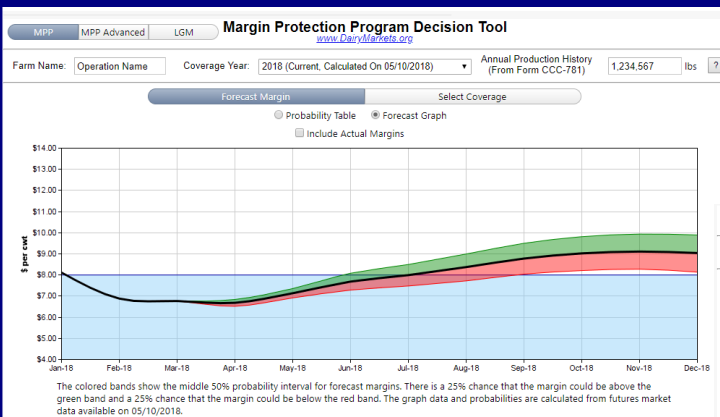
Producer Decision Point: To sign up for the MPP, the farm needs to register and decide a coverage level, in \$0.50 increments from \$4 to \$8. The \$4 basic coverage has a \$100 administrative fee associated with it and no other premiums. Tier 1 production has only the \$100 administrative fee up to \$5 margin coverage and then has increasing premiums, up to 14.2 cents per milk cwt. at the \$8 margin level. Premium charges will need to be paid by September 1.

Due to the known information for February, March, and April, \$8 coverage level for Tier 1 production will result in a net positive overall return on investment. Tier 2 production is a bit different picture, as the premiums are relatively high in comparison to the anticipated return (at least based on current data and projections).

If you are considering any type of buy up coverage, it is worth your time to visit either the official USDA MPP resource at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/Dairy-MPP/index> or the UW web page focused on this information at <https://dairymarkets.org/MPP/>, so that you get the complete range of current projections and premium options. 🐄

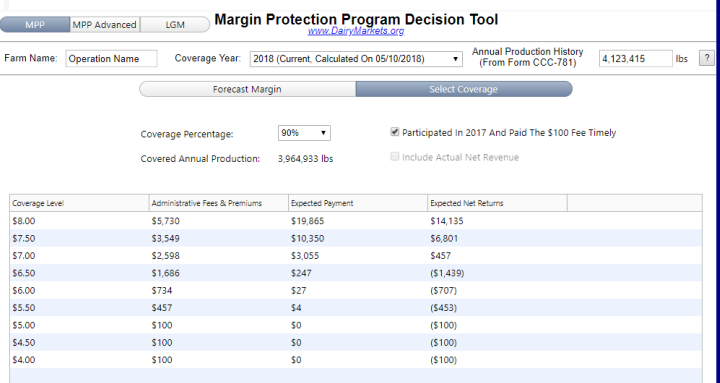
Source: Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Marinette County

Margin Protection Program Decision Tool at <https://dairymarkets.org/MPP/>



The graph above is a forecast margin. This graph forecasts the margin and is updated daily. January through March's margin has been determined, with April's soon to be announced. April-December are forecasted.

The chart below is an example of the expected payment and net returns for various coverage levels for 4,123,415 pounds of milk annually. Utilize the decision tool to determine your expected payment and return, or contact the Fond du Lac County FSA office at 920.929.3033.



The Expected Payments and Net Returns are based on probabilities calculated from futures market data that were available on 05/10/2018. The values are based on the actual margin calculations on 05/10/2018 as well as the forecast payments for remainder of the year.

Pricing 2018 Standing Alfalfa



One of the challenges when pricing standing hay is the lack of an established market like corn or soybeans. Another challenge is multiple cuttings of hay versus a single harvest for a grain crop. No wonder the price for standing hay can vary greatly between farms, even between fields. Here's one approach for

pricing standing hay in 2018.

Example: assume four ton dry matter (DM) per acre for the entire year of dairy quality alfalfa hay worth \$150 to \$200 per ton baled (\$0.09 to \$0.12 per pound DM); half the value is credited to the owner for input costs (land, taxes, seed, chemical and fertilizer) and half the value is credited to the buyer for harvesting, field loss, and weather risk. To estimate total annual DM yield potential, determine average stems per square foot at several locations in the field, the calculate using this formula:

$$\text{DM Yield potential} = (0.10 \times \text{stems per ft}^2) + 0.38.$$

Wait until stems are at least four to six inches and count only stems tall enough to be cut by the mower. Actual yield may be lower due environmental conditions and individual harvest/management practices.

Using yield distribution data based on UW-Extension field research for both three cut (43% / 31% / 26%) or four cut (36% / 25% / 21% / 18%) harvest system, the following price range (rounded to the nearest \$5) may offer a starting point for buyers and sellers to negotiate a sale of good to premium quality standing alfalfa in 2018:

Price range for 2018 good to premium quality standing alfalfa.		
	4 cut system	3 cut system
	-- price per acre --	
1st crop	\$130-\$170	\$155-\$210
2nd crop	\$90-\$120	\$110-\$150
3rd crop	\$75-\$100	\$95-\$125
4th crop	\$65-\$85	n/a

In this example, the sale or purchase value for all cuttings would range from \$360 to \$475 per acre. That's why the same price is not always the right price for everyone. Ultimately, a fair price is whatever a willing seller and an able buyer can agree to. 🐄

Source: Greg Blonde, UW-Extension Waupaca County Agriculture Agent

An App Makes It A Snap!



To help farmers and landowners better evaluate their options when it comes to pricing standing hay, UW-Extension Waupaca County Agriculture Agent Greg Blonde developed a mobile app for pricing standing hay.

It offers quick access to baled hay reference values with projected sale/purchase price for each cutting using your own yield and harvest cost information.

The Android app is free to download at the Google Play store (search for **Hay Pricing**) or by going to:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.smartmappsconsulting.haypricing>

This free app will also be available for iPhones and iPads later this spring through the Apple App Store. 🐄

When Do I Cut? Predicting Pre-Harvest Alfalfa Quality



Determining when to cut first-crop alfalfa is often difficult because alfalfa quality, relative to flowering stage, varies greatly. To help with this dilemma, agronomists at the University of Wisconsin - Madison developed the Predictive Equations for Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ)

method which predicts alfalfa's Relative Feed Value (RFV) at the time of cutting.

The PEAQ method measures standing alfalfa's forage quality before it is harvested by measuring alfalfa height using a wooden PEAQ measuring stick and an equation to determine alfalfa's RFV. The RFV values are calculated based on the alfalfa plant's maturity stage.

Dodge and Fond du Lac Forage Council members will be evaluating forage conditions by collecting biweekly PEAQ readings on Mondays and Thursdays starting May 14th through May 31th. These PEAQ readings will be reported and available on the Dodge and Fond du Lac County UW-Extension websites. In addition, a few Fond du Lac sites may be evaluated using the scissor cut method. These results will be posted with the PEAQ readings, as well.

However, any farmers growing alfalfa are encouraged to

report their PEAQ readings by noon on Mondays and Thursdays by calling the Dodge County UW- Extension office at 920-386-3790 or the Fond du Lac UW-Extension office at 920-929-3171. The more readings reported will allow for a more precise review of the forage conditions and alfalfa development in both counties.

Those reporting their PEAQ readings are asked to provide a general location of the field (closest town), the relative feed value, alfalfa height, alfalfa stage of development, and age of alfalfa stand. The complete procedure for *Estimating Alfalfa RFV in the Field Using PEAQ* can be found online on the UW-Extension Team Forage Website at:

<https://fyi.uwex.edu/forage/estimation-of-alfalfa-ndf-using-peaq-with-a-simplified-staging-scale/>.


The Dodge County Forage Council has PEAQ sticks available to purchase for \$5 at the Dodge County UW Extension office.

Producers can access current Dodge County PEAQ readings at the Dodge County UW-Extension website at

<http://dodge.uwex.edu/agriculture/forage-council/>, Or

Fond du Lac readings at the Fond du Lac UW-Extension site <https://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag/alfalfa/>. Please connect with us

on Facebook or call 920-386-3790 or 920-929-3171.

The Dodge and Fond du Lac County Forage Councils and UW-Extension are dedicated to the production of higher quality forage through education and application. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Loretta at 920-929-3171 (Fond du Lac County) or 920-386-3790 (Dodge County). 


What Bugs You? - Integrating Pest Management into the Home Landscape



Are you bugged by weeds, insects, and diseases in your home gardens and lawn? Then on June 7th at 6:00 p.m., plan to attend this 90 minute program, at the Fond du Lac Public Library, on integrating pest

management (IPM) into your home garden. Dr. Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing developed this *What Bugs you?* program to help you improve your ability to correctly identify and manage weed, insect, and disease pests in home landscape systems.

Come, learn, and discover how to protect pollinators and beneficial insects by using an integrated approach to pest management in your home gardens and lawn. All pests are

not equal. Proper identification is key to successful pest management. During this program, you will learn some common weeds, garden disease signs and symptoms, and typical features to help identify common, beneficial, and pest insects in your yard and garden. Hear about garden integrated pest management (IPM), and how easily you can use IPM principles to safely manage pests and protect the environment and beneficial insects. 





Estimating Alfalfa RFV in the Field Using PEAQ

Step 1: Choose a representative 2-square-foot area in the field.

Step 2: Determine the most mature stem in the 2-square-foot sampling area using the criteria shown in the table at right.

Step 3: Measure the length of the tallest stem in the 2-square-foot area. Measure it from the soil surface (next to plant crown) to the tip of the stem (NOT to the tip of the highest leaf blade). Straighten the stem for an accurate measure of its length. The tallest stem may not be the most mature stem.

Step 4: Based on the most mature stem and length of the tallest stem, use the chart at the right to determine estimated RFV content of the standing alfalfa forage.

Step 5: Repeat steps 1 to 4 in four or five representative areas across the field. Sample more times for fields larger than 30 acres.

NOTE: This procedure estimates alfalfa RFV content of the standing crop. It does not account for changes in quality due to wilting, harvesting, and storage. These factors may further lower RFV content by 10 to 25 units, assuming good wilting and harvesting conditions. This procedure is most accurate for good stands of pure alfalfa with healthy growth.

Height of Tallest Stem (from soil surface to stem tip)	Stage of Most Mature Stem		
	LATE VEGETATIVE	BUD STAGE	FLOWER STAGE
	Vegetative (>12") No buds visible	1 or more nodes with visible buds. No flowers visible	1 or more nodes with open flower(s)
-inches-	-----Relative Feed Value-----		
16	237	225	210
17	230	218	204
18	224	212	198
19	217	207	193
20	211	201	188
21	205	196	183
22	200	190	178
23	195	185	174
24	190	181	170
25	185	176	166
26	180	172	162
27	175	168	158
28	171	164	154
29	167	160	151
30	163	156	147
31	159	152	144
32	155	149	140
33	152	145	137
34	148	142	134
35	145	139	131
36	142	136	128
37	138	133	126
38	135	130	123
39	132	127	121
40	129	124	118
41	127	122	115
42	124	119	113

The PEAQ system for estimating alfalfa quality in the field was developed by agronomists at the University of Wisconsin - Madison

For Fond du Lac County PEAQ readings, please visit <https://fyi.uwex.edu/fdlag/alfalfa/>

Low Margin Price Margin Herd Health Do's & Don'ts



Image Source: S. Mills-Lloyd

Each time the dairy industry experiences low milk prices, managers start looking for ways to save money. This is smart and something that all good businesses do. If less money is coming in, how do we cut down on how much money goes out

without hurting the business in the long run? These decisions can be pretty challenging when it comes to herd health expenses since the consequences of a bad decision in this area might not be seen right away. Here are a few do's and don'ts to consider as we all turn our attention again to reducing unnecessary expenses on the dairy.

Do

Review your treatment protocols to make sure they align with efficacy standards. This includes screening the daily treatment sheets to make sure protocols are being followed. Altering drug doses and/or treatment frequencies rarely lead to improved treatment outcomes, but significantly add to treatment expenses, not to mention the additional risk of having a drug residue.

Don't

Decrease the dose or duration of therapy from the agreed upon protocols without your veterinarian's approval of the change. Subtherapeutic use of medication reduces efficacy leading to increased treatment failure, poor animal performance, and increased risk of mortality.

Do

Eliminate steps in your vaccine protocol that lack sound disease prevention data. Have your herd health team review the current program. For disease threats faced by the dairy, does using the product make sense? Are those responsible for administering vaccines clear on what to do? Giving too many vaccines is a waste of money and may increase the risk of complications.

Don't

Eliminate vaccination steps that lead to lowered herd protection from known disease threats unless you can absorb the cost of a disease outbreak. Reducing vaccines to save money could potentially end up costing you a lot more should the disease present itself.

Do

Critically evaluate replacement animal inputs to ensure they are contributing to heifer performance. Track heifer performance regularly to make sure your replacement program is working and maximizing your investment in those inputs.

Don't

Make cuts in your heifer raising program that end up delaying their entry into the milking herd or decrease their performance as adults. Adding unnecessary time to first calving will increase your heifer raising costs significantly and you may also reduce their future milking potential. 🐄

Source: Robert Lynch, DVM, Cornell Pro Dairy

June 15th Deadline for Cover Crop Incentive Program

Do you farm land in Dodge County? Cover crops are an easy fit following wheat, corn silage, vegetables, or prevent-plant acres. The Farmers for Healthy Soil-Healthy Water (HSHW) received a grant that allows them to offer an incentive program for planting cover crops. This funding comes from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade, and Consumer Protection



(DATCP) with some funding also coming from the Lake Sinissippi Improvement District and the Beaver Dam Lake Improvement Association. Acres with a successfully established cover crop will receive \$20.00 per acre. Participating farmers, must match 1:1 (pay for, plant, and successfully establish) 1 acre for every acre of covers getting an incentive payment. Only acres in Dodge County will be eligible to receive payment from HSHW. If you farm land in Dodge County those Dodge County acres are eligible.

Please see the form enclosed with last month's newsletter or visit <https://www.dodgecountyfarmers.com/agenda>. 🌱

May 2018

- 26 Sa Fond du Lac County Jr Dairy State Fair-Round Up**
10:00 am | Fond du Lac County Fairgrounds
- 30 W Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) Certification-All Ages**
7:00 pm | UW-Extension

June 2018

- 7 Th What Bugs You?**
6:00 pm | Fond du Lac Public Library, Fond du Lac
- 17 Su Ripon FFA Alumni Breakfast on the Farm**
8:30 am to 12:30 pm | Mark Roeder Family Farm, N6641 County Road PP, Ripon
- 20 W Dodge County Forage Council Twilight Meeting**
6:30 pm Farm Tours, 7:00 pm Meeting | Michel's Family Farm, N11805 Butternut Road, Lomira
- 24 Su Envision Fond du Lac County Agri-Business Council Breakfast on the Farm**
8:00 am to 12:00 noon | Wiese Dairy, N7661 County M, Rosendale

July 2018

- 9 M Managing Winter Wheat Profitably**
10:00 am to 2:00 pm | Arlington Research Station
- 10 Tu Fond du Lac County Farmer Soil Healthy Group Meeting**
12 noon | Rolling Meadows Restaurant, FdL



Save the dates for
these upcoming
agricultural meetings!