

# Extension Ag Newsletter

## Langlade Potato Research Field Day

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### Upcoming Events:

- August 20 – Learn about becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer
- August 22 – Field Day at the Langlade Ag Research Station
- August 28 – UW Agronomy & Soils Field Day
- September 10 – Dairy Promotion Committee Meeting

Call the office for more details.

We welcome the public again to the Langlade Agricultural Research Station Field Day on Thursday, August 22 at 1 p.m. The experimental station is operated by UW-Extension with funding and support from the Wisconsin potato industry. It is located at the Langlade County Airport (corners of Hwy 64 and Hwy 52 just east of Antigo).

UW faculty and local Extension staff have been working on several innovative research projects. We continue to study the use of light oils to discourage aphid feeding, a main vector of a troublesome virus disease in potato (PVY). In addition to using these oils, this year's management trial includes treatments evaluating new insecticides. Reducing the impact of this virus is of great importance

to the local seed potato industry.

We are also evaluating many new products across three trials that address other industry concerns. Products that we hope may improve vine killing or reduce the severity of common scab. New potato varieties will be appearing in the Wisconsin Potato Variety & Advanced Selection Evaluation Trial and the Fresh Market Trial.

Other topics on the tour include a discussion on insect management by Dr. Russ Groves, current season disease update from Dr. Amanda Gevens, and a weed and herbicide update from Dr. Jed Colquhoun.

Following the tour and program we will meet at the City Park shelter in Antigo.



## Dairy Situation and Outlook, July 20, 2013



The high for the Class III price thus far this year was in May at \$18.52. The June Class III price was \$18.02. Weaker cheese prices for the first half of the month will result in a further decline in the July Class III price. Higher nonfat dry milk prices supported by exports will increase the Class IV price from \$18.85 in June to near \$19.05 in July. Nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder exports were 23% higher in May than a year ago and 7% higher year-to-date. Cheese prices have been affected by the spring flush in milk production resulting in more cheese production and growing cheese stocks. Compared to May a year ago the production of American cheese was 5.9% higher and total cheese production 3.9% higher. May 31<sup>st</sup> stocks of American cheese were 10 higher than a year ago and total cheese stocks 8% higher. Total cheese stocks were a record for any given month. Cheese exports being supported by the CWT program were 5% higher than a year ago through May. Butter prices have also been lower due to a high level of stocks, up 24% from a year ago.

Cheese and butter sales have picked up as buyers anticipate higher prices later this summer. Recent hot and humid weather has put stress on milk cows in parts of the country lowering milk yields as well as butterfat tests. As milk production declines seasonally this summer and cheese and butter plants prepare for the seasonal strong sales for the Thanksgiving through Christmas period we can expect cheese and butter prices to increase. Overall milk production for the major exporters of EU, New Zealand, Australia and Argentina is expected to be rather flat for the rest of the year. As a result, prices of cheese, butter, nonfat dry milk, dry whey and whey proteins will continue to be supported by higher exports through at least the remainder of the year. This year through May exports set a new dollar value record each month. May exports on a total solids basis was equivalent to 16.9% of U.S. milk production and this was a record. But, the picture for fluid (beverage) milk products is not as bright. Fluid milk products continue to not do well. Compared to a year ago May fluid sales were 1.2% lower and year-to-date 2.1% lower.

While domestic sales and exports will be key factors as to where milk prices go for the rest of the year, the level of milk production is also a key factor. USDA's release of June milk production showed an increase of 1.6% over a year ago for the 23 reporting states and an estimated increase of 1.5% for the U.S. This marks the third straight month of higher milk production than a year ago. However a year ago increases in milk production due to a wide spread drought began to decline in May with June production up just 1% and production actually below the previous year August through October. So we can expect increases in milk production for the remainder of the year to be at least 1.5% to 2%.

The USDA report showed just two of the twenty three states with lower June milk production than a year ago—California -0.8% and Missouri -4.2%. Three states had no change in milk production—Arizona, Idaho and Utah leaving 18 states with increases. There were relatively high increases in the Northeast with Michigan up 3.7%, New York 3.9%, Ohio 3.4% and Pennsylvania 2.4%. Upper Midwest states also had relatively high increases with Iowa up 4.5%, Minnesota 1.9% and Wisconsin 1.8%.

August and September weather in key dairy states is an important factor in milk production per cow and the component composition of the milk which impacts dairy product yields. However, many of the modern dairy facilities enable dairy producers to minimize the effect of very hot and humid weather on the stress of cows. Later this fall dairy producers will be evaluating the harvesting reports of this year's crops and projected cost of feed this winter and making decisions as to whether to reduce cow numbers, exit dairy entirely or to expand herd size. If increases in milk production stay below 2% for the remainder of the year, a Class III price reaching \$19 by September or October is still possible. However, current Class III futures are not quite that optimistic. Class III futures are in the \$18's August through November with October at \$18.95. With anticipation of a continuation of increased levels of nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder exports Class IV nonfat dry milk futures are in the \$19's through November with a peak in September at \$20.

Looking farther into 2014, if crop harvests turn out good and feed prices are lower this winter along with some recovery in world milk production we can anticipate milk prices being a little lower than this year. But, as of now the range of possible milk prices is fairly wide.

By Bob Cropp,  
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## Farmers urged to check forages for presence of ergot

Madison, Wis. – Farmers with animals in pasture should check for their grass forages for the presence of ergot which can be toxic to cattle, sheep, swine and horses.

“Recent reports of ergot are not unexpected with the cool, wet spring we had,” said Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin-Extension forage agronomist.

Ergot is a fungal disease that affects wild and cultivated grasses, as well as small grain crops such as wheat, oats, barley and especially rye. It produces a toxin that reduces blood flow in humans, cattle, sheep, swine and horses.

“The effect of ergot is cumulative,” Undersander said. “Poisoning may develop slowly if lesser quantities are eaten regularly.” In animals such as cattle the first symptom of the alkaloid is lameness, two to four weeks after exposure, as a result of the reduced blood flow to extremities. The reduced blood flow will eventually lead to complete blockage of blood vessels with terminal necrosis of the extremities such as hooves and ears.

If ergot occurs in small grains, modern cleaning equipment may assist in removing sclerotia from grain. However, if sclerotia are broken or are the same size as the grain itself, removal might be difficult and costly. Often, attempted removal of sclerotia from grain will still result in levels above marketable thresholds. Tolerances for ergot sclerotia in harvested grain

can be as low as 0.05% by weight.

The fungus only appears in seed head and is present this year due to late pasture and hayfield harvesting because of wet conditions. Infected grass crops should be harvested to remove fungus infected seedheads and destroyed, not fed to animals or grazed. All infected hay should be destroyed and should not be used for animal bedding.

Undersander provided these tips for managing ergot:

- Rotate crops with at least one year between small grain crops.
- Use crops that are not susceptible to ergot (e.g., soybeans, alfalfa, corn) in years when small grains are not grown.
- Plant seed that is free of ergot sclerotia. Ergot-resistant varieties are not available, but avoid longer-flowering varieties as they tend to be more susceptible to infection.
- Keep weed grasses under control.
- Mow areas adjacent to small grain fields to prevent grasses from flowering and development of ergot in these areas.
- In fields where ergot becomes a problem, consider clean, deep plowing that will bury ergot sclerotia to at least three to four inches, thus preventing sclerotia from germinating. Pastures and hayfield infected should be mowed and harvested to removed seedheads with ergot and then the forage destroyed – do not feed or use for bedding.



Production of honeydew (red arrow) and sclerotia (white arrows) are typical of ergot.

*“Ergot produces a toxin that reduces blood flow in humans, cattle, sheep, swine and horses.”*

## Continue to Monitor Tomatoes & Potatoes for Late Blight

Langlade County is now considered to be at high risk for late blight due to ideal local weather conditions and presence of the pathogen in close proximity. Commercial farmers and home gardeners are urged to be on a 5-7 day preventative spray schedule.

Symptoms of late blight can appear on the leaves, stems, tubers, and/or fruit. Lesions on leaves are gray-green to brown with a pale green border and may appear wet or oily looking. Under moist and humid conditions, a white fuzz containing spores may form on the

bottom of an infected leaf or on the stem lesion. There is no cure for infected plants. Plants with late blight should be destroyed. Do not save tomato or potatoes as seed for next season as this could spread the disease again next year.

If you suspect late blight on your plants, please bring a sample into the UW-Extension office at 837 Clermont St. for diagnosis free of charge.

Contact Steph Plaster at (715) 627-6236 with any further questions or concerns.



## Weekly Hay Market Demand and Price Report

By Ken Barnett, UW-Extension

Compared to the previous week, small square bale prices were up 19%. Large square bale prices were up 2%. Large round bale prices were steady. Sales activity was very light to moderate.

For *Wisconsin*, hay prices were \$3.75 higher on moderate trading at a quality-tested hay auction in Fennimore. Cooler-than-normal weather continued to dominate much of the state, slowing growth of summer crops and pastures. Early-week showers and isolated storms delivered variable amounts of rain to portions of the state, though some of the storms on August 6 were severe. The unseasonably cool weather in recent weeks, coupled with below-average precipitation throughout July, has left late-planted crops in need of additional heat and rain to support development and ensure full maturation before a season-ending freeze.

The second cutting of alfalfa was 86 percent harvested compared to the 5-year average of 92 percent. The third cutting was 14 percent harvested compared to the 5-year average of 28 percent. As with other crops, hay stands were in need of moisture and warm weather to promote regrowth. Pastures conditions declined and were rated at 3% very poor; 13% poor; 39% fair; 38% good; and 7% excellent.

Straw prices in the Midwest averaged \$3.35 per small square bale (range of \$2.00 to \$5.00); \$40.64 per large square bale (range of \$29.06 to \$54.38); and \$53.50 per large round bale (range of \$33.00 to \$70.00). Compared to the previous week, straw prices for small square bales were 1% lower. For large square bales, prices were 7% lower. For large round bales, prices were 7% higher.

### Hay Summary

Hay Grade	Bale type	Price (\$/ton)
		Average
Prime (> 151 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	207.50
	Large Square	253.67
	Large Round	223.64
Grade 1 (125 to 150 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	157.50
	Large Square	162.50
	Large Round	150.00
Grade 2 (103 to 124 RFV/RFQ)	Small Square	
	Large Square	116.25
	Large Round	102.50

## About University of Wisconsin - Extension...

### Who we are

With an office in each Wisconsin county, Cooperative Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. We deliver our expertise to the public, addressing a wide range of needs to people, plants and animals, in

both urban and rural areas of the states.

### What we do

We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.

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