



Ties to the Land



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Your Resource Partners in Kenosha and Racine Counties:

Racine County Land Conservation Division
University of Wisconsin Extension

Farm Service Agency Office

Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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KENOSHA COUNTY TREE PICK-UP

The Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation Dept. would like to thank everyone who ordered trees this year. Please look for a receipt that will be sent to your home indicating which day you can pick up your trees. We anticipate pick-up to be the last two weeks of April. If you have any questions about the program, call our office at (262) 857-1895

Tips for Managing Nuisance Geese

Once geese have become established on your pond or open grassy area, it may be difficult to get any long-term relief. A good management program tends to be an on-going maintenance activity rather than a quick fix. Some suggestions for managing the geese on your property may include:

Don't feed the Geese. Hand feeders are usually well-intentioned but feeding the geese encourages them to flock to your property in unnatural numbers. Did you know that bread is awful for geese! They fill up on the wrong nutrients and don't consume the proper food they need to grow flying feathers, making it more difficult for the geese to migrate when they are supposed to!

Limit favored habitat. Geese are grazers. They love the tender new growth of well-manicured grass. Decrease the size of your lawn areas and you will decrease the numbers of nuisance geese flocking to your property. Plant tall, lush prairie grass, large shrubs or place large rocks along shorelines. Geese do not feel secure when they cannot see over those kinds of barriers because grasses, shrubs, or large rocks can potentially hide predators and limit their view of the surroundings. If possible turn off your pond aerator during the winter: allowing water to freeze in which makes it difficult for geese to stay on the pond and forces them to find alternative areas.

Harassment in a good way. Canada geese seek areas where they can graze and nest in peace. If someone or something (like a trained dog) bothers them enough, they usually find another area where they will not be disturbed. Control of the dog is vital, the dog must not be allowed to catch, injure or kill any wild waterfowl.

Block their access. Fencing. Either temporary plastic fencing or more permanent fencing installed around the perimeter of your pond can be effective in containing geese. Vegetation barriers. Dense shrubbery can also act as a fence. Ensure that the shrubs are thick and dense at ground level as well as at the top. Visual barriers. Temporary fences made of 1 or 2 strands of string tied with streamers have occasionally provided temporary relief from migratory geese.

Use an Integrated Approach. There is no easy, quick-fix way to get rid of unwanted geese. The use of several of the above control methods, used at once, has proven to be the best way to control and often eliminate a nuisance goose problem while respecting their natural wildlife heritage.



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University of Wisconsin-Extension
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Article Submitted by: Rose Skora
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RULES THAT APPLY TO EMPLOYMENT ON FARMS

The laws that govern the employment of workers on farms in Wisconsin can be complex and confusing. Additionally, the challenge alone in trying to determine which agency to call in relation to employing workers can result in major headaches. Even more difficult can be trying to determine whether laws relating to workers are state or federal laws. This article will attempt to provide important rules and regulations for employing workers on farms in Wisconsin.

RECORD KEEPING

The following information must be kept on each employee for at least 3 years:

- Name and address,
- Date of birth,
- Dates when employment began and ended
- Time work began and ended each day,
- Total hours worked daily and weekly,
- Time meal period began and ended each day
- Rate of pay for each pay period,
- Wages paid for each pay period,
- Amount and reason for each deduction
- Output of employee, if paid on other than a time basis.

If an employee is being paid other than hourly or salary, and instead on an “output” basis, this could include things like

- An employee on a dairy farm receiving a percentage of the milk check **or**
- A vegetable farm worker who gets paid for each bushel of vegetables they pick.

WAGES

- Agricultural workers (18 and over) must be paid the agricultural minimum wage of \$5.15/hour.
- Agricultural workers (17 and younger) must be paid the agricultural minimum wage of \$4.25/hour. Agriculture is exempt from paying overtime (in most cases).

Examples of when agriculture is NOT exempt from paying overtime include if

- A farmer is selling more than 20% of agricultural products at a farmers market, roadside stand, on-farm store etc that were not grown or raised by the farmer or
- A farmer is spending more than 30 days doing work off the farm (e.g. doing custom harvest applications for 6 months of the year).

For further information on regulations related to wages, contact the Equal Rights Division of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us>) in Madison at 608-266-6860 or Milwaukee 414-227-4384.

Worker's Compensation

Worker's compensation is a mandatory state law that provides workers and his/her dependents with financial and medical benefits in the case of an on-the-job injury or death.

In the case of agriculture, worker's compensation is required when employing 6 or more employees (at one or more locations) on the same day for 20 days (does not need to be consecutive) during the year from January to December. The employer must have insurance within 10 days after the 20th day of employment.

EXCEPTION: some relatives are not counted as employees. The Worker's Compensation Division at 608-266-1340 can be contacted for questions.

This article touched on just a few aspects of the laws related to employment on farms. Other laws not addressed here include Child Labor Laws and laws related to the Hiring of Migrant Labor.



**Racine County Land Conservation
14200 Washington Ave.
Sturtevant, WI 53177
262-886-8479**

Articles Submitted by: Chad Sampson

**Rental Rate Increase for Conservation
starts in 2006**

If you have been thinking about entering your land into a conservation program, now may be the time to apply. The Racine/Kenosha soil rental rates have **increased 29%** for eligible cropland. The increase will take effect on **all NEW contracts starting in 2006**.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), continuous CRP, and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) use the new rates. The previous soil rental rates ranged from \$48 to \$101 per acre. The new rates range from **\$62 to \$130** per acre.

Contact the NRCS in Union Grove at 878-1243 ext #3, or the Racine County Land Conservation office at 262-886-8479 for more program information.



**Racine County Tree Pick-up
at the County Fairgrounds in
Union Grove**

If you ordered trees this year, a receipt will be sent to your home indicating which day in April you can pick up your trees. The anticipated days for tree pick-up are April 19th and 20th. If you have any questions about the program, please call 262-886-8479.

**Conservation Reserve Program
Participation in Racine County**

- 18 contracts covering 197.6 acres.
- \$116.48/acre is the average soil rental rate.
- \$315/acre is the average signing bonus (state and federal combined).
- 110% of the implementation cost is reimbursed for most conservation practices.

**Conservation Reserve Enhancement
Program (CREP)**

What is it?

CREP is an opportunity for Wisconsin landowners to voluntarily enroll agricultural lands into conservation practices, such as riparian buffers, filter strips, wetland restorations, waterways, and establishment of native grasslands. There is no waiting period; enrollment and eligibility are made on a first come, first serve basis.

How does CREP benefit me?

Annual Payments – The USDA makes payments annually for up to 15 years, based on soil types. The annual rental rates range from \$62 to \$130 per acre, depending on the soil type. The USDA also provides an additional annual federal incentive payment from 35% to 60%, of the annual rental rate, depending on the practice to be installed, and an annual maintenance payment of between \$5 and \$10 per acre per year depending again on the practices installed.

Up-front payments – In addition to these annual payments, the federal government also pays \$140 - \$150 per acre as an up-front, one-time signing incentive payment for filter strips, riparian buffers and grassed waterways.

The State of Wisconsin offers an additional incentive as an up-front, one-time payment of 1.5 times the annual rental rate for 15-year agreements, and 12 times the annual rental rate for perpetual conservation easements. The state payments are made up-front after the agreement or easement is signed by the landowner.

Practice Payments – The federal government also pays 50% of the cost of installing the eligible practices. In addition, practices eligible for a Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) are also eligible for an additional 40% federal incentive call a practice incentive payment (PIP). Wetland restorations will receive an additional incentive of 25% of the cost to restore the land's hydrology. In addition, the state pays 20% of the cost of installing eligible practices.

Is my land eligible?

If your land falls within the designated towns on the county CREP map and you have a crop history (you must have planted a commodity crop in 4 out of the 6 years from 1996 – 2001), then you are eligible. In riparian project areas, eligible lands are within 150 feet of an eligible stream or water body.

How do I sign-up?

Contact your county FSA, NRCS or Land Conservation office for more information.



Racine Kenosha FSA Office
1012 Vine Street
Union Grove WI 53182 1330
262-878-3353

Articles submitted by: *Kimberly M. Iczkowski*

SIGN UP ONLINE FOR 2006 DIRECT AND COUNTER CYCLICAL PROGRAM

If you would like to save a trip into the FSA office, then the new Electronic Direct & Counter Cyclical Program or eDCP, may be the program for you. By using your USDA E-Auth ID, you can conduct FSA business from your home 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please stop in the office for further information or help, or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/egov/edcp.default.htm

DCP Program Information

DCP contracts have to be signed annually. The deadline to sign 2006 contracts is June 1.

By signing a DCP contract, you are agreeing to the following:

- Comply with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions on your land
- Control noxious weeds and otherwise maintain contract acres according to sound agricultural practices
- Not to plant perennial fruits and vegetables or harvest annual FAVs
- File an acreage report for all cropland on the participating farm by July 15, 2006
- Notify the county office staff when there is a transfer or change of interest of a producer.

REMEMBER: The deadline to sign up for the DCP is June 1st, so stop into this office or go online to avoid a \$100.00 per farm late-filing penalty.



NAP APPLICATION CLOSING DATE FOR SPRING CROPS

The application closing date to sign up for the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on most spring seeded crops is March 15, 2006.

NAP covers losses due to damaging weather conditions. The program covers losses in excess of a 50% loss of normal yields or the farms yield calculated using actual production history. NAP begins 30 days after your application is filed and a \$100 administrative fee per crop has been paid. Administrative fees are not refundable. NAP fees can not exceed \$300 per county.

As a reminder, NAP coverage is only available for crops where insurance coverage is not available under Federal Crop Insurance policies provided by private insurance agents throughout the state. Vegetable crops such as pumpkins, sweet corn and cabbage can be covered under the NAP program.

Producers interested in obtaining NAP on their 2006 spring seeded non-insurable crop acreage, should visit their local USDA Service Center before March 15, 2006 to complete an application for their 2006 acres.

If you currently have NAP coverage or are interested in coverage, you need to keep accurate records of your production, report acreage of the crops to FSA annually, and promptly notify FSA when ever losses occur. A report of the actual yield is key in maintaining a yield that reflects their capability.

This deadline date also applies to persons who have a policy that expires on March 15th and want to renew their coverage for 2006.

CROP INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

One of the conditions for producers to receive a payment under the 2001/2002 and 2003/2004 Crop Disaster Programs (CDP) was the agreement to purchase federal crop insurance or Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for the ***next two available crop years***. This crop insurance linkage requirement applies only to those closely related crops for which you received a disaster payment and were **not** insured under a federal crop insurance policy or a NAP policy.

IMPORTANT! Failure to obtain the needed crop insurance or NAP coverage for the required years will result in repayment of 100% of the payment issued under the Crop Disaster Program, plus applicable interest from the date of disbursement.

The Federal Crop Insurance 2006 application deadline for spring seeded crops is March 15, 2006. Specialty Crops have various dates please contact your agent.

REMINDER: Please contact your local FSA office regarding NAP and your crop insurance agent on crops coverable under Federal Crop Insurance policies prior to the final availability dates.

LDPs AND 9-MONTH LOANS

FSA wants to remind you that the deadline to apply for loans and loan deficiency payments (LDP) for unshorn pelts, wool and mohair produced in calendar year 2005 is January 31, 2006. The deadline to put 2005 crop wheat, small grains, many minor oilseeds, and honey under a 9-month loan or apply for a LDP is March 31, 2006. And, the last day to request a 9-month loan or LDP on your 2005 corn or soybean crops is May 31, 2006. Many crops currently have LDPs available because the county posted prices on these crops are below the county loan rates. Producers may also obtain a marketing assistance loan on commodity crops which provides short term operating funds at a comparably low interest rate.

Repayment is usually made at the loan rate plus interest. However, if daily prices drop below the loan rate for the commodity crop any time throughout the 9-month loan period, the repayments may be made at the lower posted county price **without** interest, which is considered a market gain. All producers are eligible to apply to put their stored crops under loan or request a LDP.

FARM DIVISION OPTIONS

For FSA purposes, when cropland is sold, DCP contract acres can be divided between farms in a manner agreed to by the farm owner, the purchaser or transferee, and mortgage holder if applicable. This division option is referred to as Landowner Designation. The owner of the farm and purchaser or transferee must file a written memorandum of understanding designating contract acres before the farm division is approved by the FSA county Committee and before subsequent transfer of ownership. Other program requirement must also be met, so contact the FSA office before land changes hand to check out the various options available to you when dividing land.



REPORT BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES



All Farm Service Agency payments are electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, **you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank.** Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.

Also, be aware that actual deposits of FSA benefits/payments could take from 2-3 days to be deposited into your bank accounts although it shows up in Financial Inquiries as being posted. This delay is due to the processing time required by our processing center in Kansas City, Missouri.

ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME

The adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation states that an individual or entity shall not be eligible to receive certain benefits if the individual or entity's AGI exceeds \$2.5 million and less than 75 percent of the gross income is derived from farming, ranching or forestry operations. AGI is required for DCP, conservation programs, LDPs, marketing loan gains and other programs as applicable. AGI takes into account income from the three years immediately preceding the year for which benefits are requested. Each individual must complete form CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification. For an entity, both the entity and the individuals in the entity must complete the form. Failure to complete the form will result in payment ineligibility. This certification is subject to spot check so accuracy is critical.

WISCONSIN LEADS THE NATION IN BEGINNING FARMER LOANS

Wisconsin FSA continues to lead the nation in financial assistance to producers.

The Farm Loan Programs of the USDA Farm Service Agency obligated over \$191 million in loans to Wisconsin producers through our direct and guaranteed loan programs during fiscal year 2005. This was made possible by FSA farm loan teams located in USDA Service Centers and FSA's extensive use of agricultural banks throughout the state. The majority of FSA loan programs are primarily used by beginning farmers in their early years of start up and growth, and producers looking to expand or modernize their operations. Over 47 % of Fiscal Year 2005 loans were to beginning farmers.

We have special financing to assist beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program, FSA can provide

financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. A beginning farmer is an individual or entity who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years.
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm.
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA.
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30% of the county's average size.
- Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements.
- Finally, Farm Ownership type loans are restricted to applicants who have participated in the business operation of a farm for at least 3 years.

If interested in FSA's beginning farmer loan program, give your county FSA a call.

FOREIGN LANDOWNER NOTIFICATION

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. FSA administers this program for USDA. **Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing.** Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements. It is the foreign person's responsibility to report the land transactions.

FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM

Background

Under the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act, USDA may make loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program is administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Eligible borrower is any person who is eligible under all FSA rules for participation in Federal Farm Programs. In addition they must have satisfactory credit history and ability to repay debt; be a producer of

agriculture commodities; show a need for increased storage provide proof of Federal Crop Insurance.

Loans are made only for the **purchase and installation of eligible storage facility** permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities.

Ineligible structures would be those for commercial storage, portable handling or drying equipment and permanent weigh scales.

Applicant responsibilities are that delivery and site preparation cannot begin until after the loan is approved by the local County Committee. Applicants are given 4 months to complete construction and submit cost documentation.

The **term of a loan** would be maximum of 7 years. No extensions will be granted.

Security for the loan is by a promissory note and security agreement. For loans that the approving County Committee determine further security is required, or loans exceeding \$50,000. or the aggregate balance exceeds \$50,000. a lien on the real estate on which the facility is located will be required.

The maximum loan shall be 85 percent of the cost of the applicant's needed storage or handling equipment not to exceed \$100,000. The down payment is the difference between the net cost of the facility and the amount of the loan.

Interest on the loan will be the interest at the rate equivalent to the rate of interest charged on securities of comparable maturity on the date the loan is approved. The interest rate will remain in effect for the term of the loan.

Other requirements may apply. For more information on this program contact Linda at extension 100.

Dates to Remember:

March 15 – Final date to purchase NAP and Crop Insurance on 2006 Spring Seeded Crops

March 31 – Final date to request commodity loan on small grains ie: wheat, oats, barley

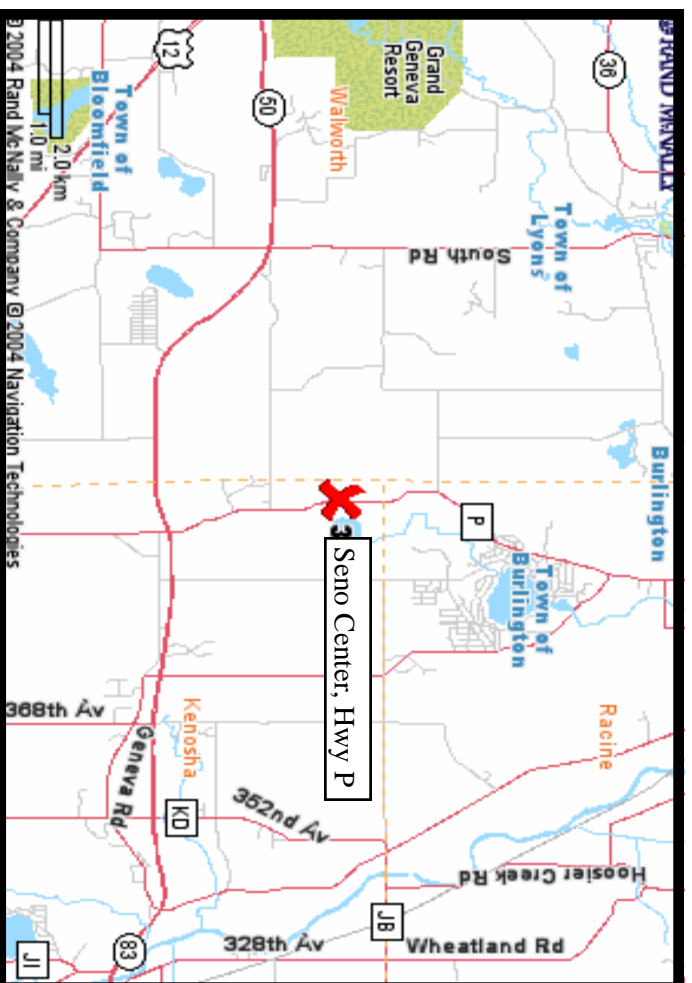
June 1 – Final date to sign up for DCP.



Managing Weeds in Your Backyard Workshop, Saturday, April 29th, 2006

Workshop Map and Driving Directions

Location: Seno Center, 3606 Dyer Lake Road (Hwy P), Burlington, WI



The Seno Center is located 5 miles south of Burlington and 7 miles north and east of Lake Geneva on **County Hwy P**. It is 1.5 miles north of State Hwy 50 and 15 miles west of Kenosha.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Rose Skora, Kenosha County UW-Extension **262-857-1945** or rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

Kendra Johncock, Seno Center, **262-743-1694**

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX and ADA. To ensure equal access, please make requests for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible prior to the scheduled program, service or activity. For handicap accessibility, contact Kendra at the Seno Center in advance to make special arrangements at 262-743-1694.

UW
Extension Cooperative Extension

Managing Weeds in Your Backyard Workshop



Saturday, April 29th, 2006

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
The Seno Center,
Burlington, WI

Learn about the common & noxious weed invaders found in Southeast Wisconsin, including identification & control methods.

Managing Weeds in Your Backyard

Registration Form

Registration fee:
\$5/person

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone #: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Send registration information to:

Kenosha County UW-Extension
Managing Weeds on Rural Property
P O Box 550 Bristol, WI 53104

Make checks payable to: ***UW-Extension***

Registration Deadline:
Monday, April 24th 2006

Managing Weeds in Your Backyard Workshop Agenda

Saturday, April 29th, 2006

8:30 - 9:00: Registration

9:00: Welcome and Introductions

9:15 - 11am: The Terrible 10: Most Wanted Weeds

Join our "weed experts" as they conduct both classroom and hands-on activities. Discussions will include a list of *The Terrible 10* weeds, how to identify weeds, health implications of the weeds, and control options. Included in our Terrible 10 will be weeds such as Wild Parsnip (can cause severe skin discoloration, burns or blisters), Garlic Mustard (a serious invader, especially in forested areas), Purple Loosestrife (competes with and crowds out native plants: one plant can produce over 2 Million seeds!), Leafy Spurge (has a milky white sap that can cause dermatitis and is toxic to cattle), etc.

11:00 - 11:15: Break

11:15 - Noon: Controlling Weeds - Safely

This session will include a general discussion about chemical control options as well as information about rules related to the use and application of chemicals.

Disclaimers/FYIs:

- Please dress appropriately for the day. We will spend time outdoors.

Sponsored by:

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Farm Service Agency
Racine County Land Conservation Division
Kenosha & Racine Counties UW-Extension
The Seno Center
Kenosha/Racine Land Trust
Kenosha County Land and Water Conservation Division

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Ties to the Land Newsletter

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
Racine County Land Conservation
Kenosha County Land and Water Conservation
UW-Cooperative Extension

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