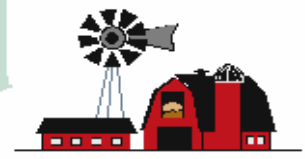




Ties to the Land



October/November/December 2006

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

Changes to the *Ties to the Land* Newsletter...

Due to limitations in budgets as well as rising paper and printing costs, the *Ties to the Land* newsletter will now be made available 4 times a year instead of 6 times a year.

We will email the newsletter as a PDF instead of sending a copy in the mail if there are enough people interested in receiving it in that format.

If you are interested in receiving the newsletter through email, please send your requests to rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

On behalf of the agencies that provide you this newsletter, we appreciate your understanding...

Farm Service Agency
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
Kenosha County Land and
Water Conservation
Racine County Land
Conservation Division
Kenosha/Racine County UW
Cooperative Extension

CHANGING MILCX START MONTH

Dairy operations are reminded that they can change the start-month an unlimited number of times as long as the change is made:

- On or before day 14 of the month prior to the new MILCX production start-month (unless that day falls on a weekend, then the date falls to the previous business day);
- Before payment is sought;
- Before the original selected MILCX production start-month has passed.

Example: If a dairy operation's current start-month for FY 2007 is October, and the dairy operation would like to change the start-month. The dairy operations would have to select a new start-month by September 14, 2006.

If the dairy operation never changes the selected start-month, the start-month will remain the same throughout the MILCX contract's duration. Please contact your local FSA office if you are anticipating making changes to your current start-month selection for FY 2007.

MAL AND LDP PROGRAM CHANGES

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) has announced changes to the marketing assistance loan (MAL) and loan deficiency payment (LDP) program. The amended policies and procedures affect the 2006 and subsequent crop years.

CCC made the changes in the Code of Federal Regulations, through a final rule issued June 6, 2006.

The following are some of the regulatory changes to the MAL and LDP program:

- Beneficial interest provisions – In the past, loan program regulations did not state that a producer loses beneficial interest in a loan eligible commodity when the commodity is delivered to a dairy, feedlot, ethanol plant, feed mill, wool pool or other end-use facility. The regulations were amended to state that beneficial interest is lost when a loan eligible for commodity is delivered to one of the previously mentioned facilities. An LDP will be based on the date of delivery to such a facility.

CCC will limit its use of lien searches for MALs greater than \$25,000 and file financing statements only for farm-stored MAL disbursements of \$25,000 or more. In the past, CCC conducted lien searches on all loans regardless of the loan amount. CCC may, however, conduct lien searches and file financing statements for loan disbursements of \$25,000 or less when there is reason to believe that CCC's interests will not be protected.

- Use of form CCC-633 EZ – In an effort to simplify the LDP request process, CCC recently issued a new LDP form, CCC-633 EZ. The CCC-633 EZ is a two-part form consisting of an agreement, which is page 1 of the CCC-633 EZ, and a request for benefits, which is either pages 2, 3 or 4, depending on the commodity.

The 2002 Farm Bill provides for MALs and LDPs for the 2002-2007 crops of wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, soybeans, other oilseeds (including sunflower seed, canola, safflower, flaxseed, rapeseed, mustard seed, crambe and sesame seed), rice, upland cotton, peanuts, honey, wool, mohair, dry peas, lentils and small chickpeas.

MALs provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but who agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP.

FALL DEADLINE FOR 2007 NAP CROPS

The application closing date to sign up for 2007 Non-Insured Assistance Program coverage for perennial crop deadlines on fruit and other crops such as apples, pears, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, grapes, cherries, wild rice honey, maple sap, asparagus and other perennial fruits is **November 20, 2006**. Please be reminded that NAP coverage is only available for crops where coverage is not available under the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIC). These deadlines also apply to persons who already have a policy and want to renew their coverage for 2007.

2006 COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION

Don't forget to vote in the 2006 FSA County Committee Election to be held from November 3 to December 4. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters in the townships of Burlington, Dover, Rochester, Norway and Waterford, by November 3. Ballots must be returned to FSA county offices by December 4, 2006.

It is important that producers sign their ballots; without a valid signature the vote doesn't count.

County committee elections give farmers and ranchers an important opportunity to ensure that their FSA county committees represent them.

Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help make decisions necessary to administer federal farm programs offered in their communities. County committees make decisions on agricultural issues, such as commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, disaster payments and employing county executive directors.

If you participate or cooperate in programs administered by FSA and live in the local administrative area conducting an election, you are eligible to vote.

Eligible voters, who have not received a ballot by November 15, should contact their administering FSA county office. Eligible voters must participate or cooperate in FSA programs.

Newly elected county committee members take office January 1, 2007.

HAYING AND GRAZING CRP ACREAGE

Under the current farm bill, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage can be hayed or grazed under certain, very restrictive, circumstances.

If you are a participant in the CRP you must have written approval from FSA before haying or grazing. It is the responsibility of the participant to submit a request for managed haying and grazing. Without exception, the request must come from the CRP participant. Failure to obtain appropriate authorization to hay or graze CRP acreage can result in severe payment reductions or contract termination.

Haying can begin no earlier than July 16 and must be completed by September 15. Haying is limited to one cutting per year. Grazing plans will specify the stocking rate for the acreage to be grazed and require that the cover not be grazed down to below 3 inches for cool season stands and 6 inches for warm season stands. Grazing also cannot begin before July 16 and livestock must be removed from grazed acreage no later than September 30. (Note: depending on the stocking rate, livestock may have to be removed prior to September 30 to assure the acreage is not grazed below the minimum height.)



LATE FILED CROP REPORTS STILL BEING ACCEPTED

Although the July 17 crop reporting deadline has passed, producers may still late file crop reports at the local FSA offices for a fee. You may also revise a 2006 crop report without penalty. If you are a farmer or landowner who participates in FSA's commodity programs such as the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, and the Noninsured Assistance Program, you are required to certify your crop acreages. Acreages are used to calculate the amount of financial assistance you as a producer or landowner can receive through various disaster programs.

Even if you are not participating in a current FSA program, you are still encouraged to certify your acres with the local FSA office. The report will maintain an official history of crop production for your land and may help establish eligibility in the event you want to participate in future programs.

If you would like more information about crop reporting or wish to set up an appointment to report acres, you should contact Evelyn at the Racine-Kenosha County FSA Office.

COMMODITY LOANS MATURING

Reminder that 2005 commodity loans for farm stored corn and soybeans will be maturing soon. Take a second to view the condition of the grain during this weather pattern of humid air and fluctuating temperatures.

Do not forget, grain under Commodity Credit Corporation loan cannot be removed without prior authorization or repayment. Unauthorized disposition is a violation and is subject to monetary and administrative penalties.

Your loans are subject to spot checks. Determined shortages must be repaid with principal plus interest, and additional monetary penalties plus loss of future loan eligibility may apply. Producers planning to sell or move CCC loan grain need to contact Linda at the Racine Kenosha County FSA Office.

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED LOANS

The Farm Service Agency is dedicated to promoting greater involvement in farming and ranching by women and minorities. Each year, we reserve a portion of our farm loan funds especially for socially disadvantaged applicants.

A Socially Disadvantaged (SDA) farmer is a member of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to individual

qualities. For purposes of the SDA Loan Program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asians and Pacific Islanders. SDA loans are available for farm ownership and operating loans.

SDA farm ownership loans may be used to purchase or enlarge a farm, purchase easements, erect or improve buildings, and pay closing costs. SDA operating loan funds may be used to purchase livestock, equipment, feed, seed, fuel, fertilizer, chemicals, crop insurance, food, clothing, and medical care. SDA farmers must meet the same loan eligibility requirements as traditional applicants.

ATTENTION YOUTH OF RACINE AND KENOSHA COUNTY!

Did you know that the Farm Service Agency makes loans to individuals between the ages of 10 and 20 years old? The loans are made available to help rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects of modest size in connection with their participation in 4-H, FFA or similar organizations.

To be eligible for a youth loan, you must be a citizen of the US, between the ages of 10 and 20, live in a town of less than 10,000 people, and be unable to obtain a loan from other sources. Applicants must be capable of planning, managing, and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor.

Some common projects that the Farm Service Agency has funded include livestock and crop production, lawn and garden services, repair shops, and roadside stands.

Applicants must sign a promissory note and be responsible for repaying the loan. In some cases, a cosigner may be required. Loan collateral normally consists of crops produced for sale, livestock, equipment, and other items purchased with loan funds. The repayment schedule will be worked out on an individual basis. Payments will be tailored to the type of project for which the loan was made.

If you are interested in finding out more about this program, call Dennis Moore at 608-754-6617 or Kim at 262-878-3353.

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS ON CRP ACRES

It is up to the local FSA County Committee whether snowmobile trails are allowed to cross acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. If this affects any of your CRP acreage, contact your local FSA office to request this particular use prior to allowing a trail on your CRP land.



Articles submitted by: *Chad Sampson*
Conservation Technician

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

(This article is excerpted from information developed by the Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the emerald ash borer multistate Web Site.)

It has been five years since the emerald ash borer was first detected in southeast Michigan. Since its discovery, EAB has killed more than 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, and cost municipalities, property owners, nursery operators, and the forest products industry tens-of-millions of dollars. In June EAB was found in Kane County, Illinois, approximately 40 miles southeast of Beloit, Wisconsin. A second Illinois infestation was identified in Wilmette, just north of Chicago, in northern Cook County.

While some feel it is just a matter of time before EAB is discovered in Wisconsin, others feel the insect is already present but hasn't been detected. Regardless of when and where EAB is eventually found in Wisconsin, nearly all believe its appearance in the State is inevitable.

Although the future of ash trees seems dire, a concerted effort is being orchestrated by state and federal officials. Research is underway to investigate chemical and biological control methods, plant resistance, pest detection and containment. Eradication efforts have taken place to prevent small infestations from becoming large ones. Quarantines are in place to prevent infested firewood, logs or nursery trees from being transported and starting new infestations.



Preventative measures include:

Do not transport firewood, logs or nursery stock. Quarantines and restrictions are already in place on the movement of nursery stock and wood products.

What should you be doing?

- Begin making public officials and the community aware of the impending EAB threat to local ash trees. As the situation evolves and new information becomes available, be sure to keep these audiences informed.
- Learn identification characteristics of ash trees and emerald ash borer, and be vigilant about inspecting trees and reporting concerns. Nearly 20 percent of Wisconsin's urban, non-forest tree population is ash. This percentage is much higher in communities where ash has been a popular replacement for elm.
- Conduct and review a tree inventory on your property. Determine the extent of the ash population and begin projecting the impact of an EAB infestation on your land.
- Develop an EAB tree management response plan. How many trees would be lost? What is the cost of removal? How will the infested wood be handled? What species will be replanted?
- Report possible EAB sightings in Wisconsin to the toll-free EAB hotline, 1-800-462-2803, operated by WI-Dept of Agriculture.
- Three or more of the following symptoms should be observed before calling the hotline:
 1. Dying ash trees with sprouts on the trunk or at the base of the tree
 2. D-shaped exit holes in the bark
 3. Winding, S-shaped tunnels underneath the bark
 4. Bullet shaped, iridescent green beetles from June to August
 5. Increased woodpecker activity on ash trees.

For information on tree identification, visit:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/treedid/>

For Emerald Ash Borer identification resources, complete with color photos, visit:

www.emeraldashborer.info/files/e-2938.pdf

For Native Borers and EAB look alikes, visit:

www.emeraldashborer.info/files/e-2939.pdf

and www.emeraldashborer.info/files/E2944.pdf

For additional information:

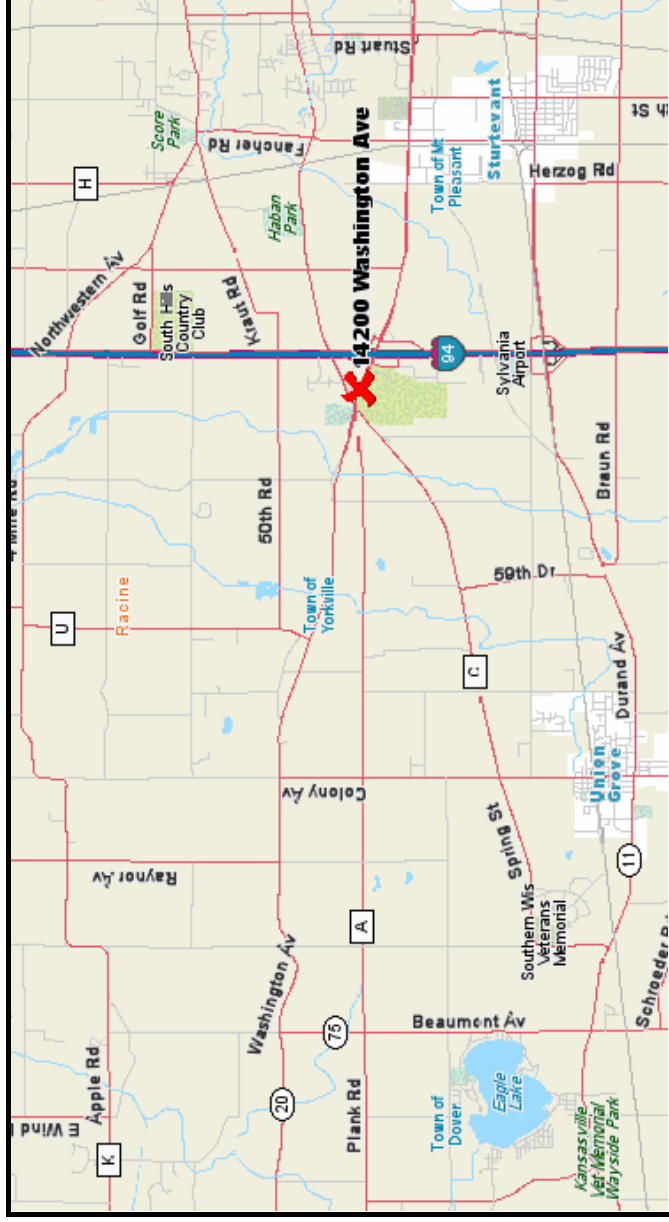
- contact a DNR service center
- visit www.emeraldashborer.info
- visit www.entomology.wisc.edu/emeraldashborer

Wetlands and/or Ponds Workshop, Saturday October 21st, 2006

Workshop Map and Driving Directions

Location: Ives Grove Building Auditorium

14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant WI 53177



The Ives Grove Building is located 1/2 mile west of I94 on Hwy 20. Take Hwy 20 to Greenmonte Road and go north to the Ives Grove Building. Park in the Visitor's Parking Lot.

Directions to the Beck Property will be provided at the workshop.

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 Rose Skora in advance to make special arrangements at 262-857-1945.

Wetlands and/or Ponds Workshop



**Saturday,
October 21, 2006
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Ives Grove Building
Sturtevant, WI**

Wetlands versus ponds... Which is better for your rural property? This workshop will provide information on both wetlands and ponds to help you decide what will work for you. You will also have the chance to visit a property that has both a pond and wetlands on it.

Wetlands and/or Ponds Workshop

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
Wetlands and/or Ponds
P O Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104

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

**Registration Deadline:
Monday, October 16th, 2006**

We occasionally receive request for mailing lists. Please check:
____ Yes, you may release my name.
____ No, do not release my name

Signature: _____

Wetlands and/or Ponds Workshop

Saturday, October 21st, 2006

8:30 - 9:00: **Registration**

9:00: **Welcome and Introductions**

9:15 - 10:15: **Wetlands vs. Ponds: The Discussion**

Our speakers will provide practical information about ponds and wetlands, things you need to consider before deciding on putting a wetland or pond on your property and specific advice about how to go through the steps of developing a wetland or pond on your property.

10:15 - 10:35: **Panel Discussion**

10:35 - 10:45: **Description of the Beck Property**

10:45—11:00: **Break/Drive to Beck Property**

11:00 - Noon: **The Beck Property: How One Family Added Wetlands and Ponds to Their Property**

Learn from the Beck family about what made them decide to add wetlands and ponds to their property, as well as receive some practical advice on what to do and not to do when starting this process. You'll also get the chance to view the pond and wetlands on the property and ask questions of the property owners and speakers.

Disclaimers/FYIs:

- Please dress appropriately for the day. We will spend time outdoors.
- Program will run rain or shine.

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

Kenosha County PO Box 550 Bristol, WI 53104 262-857-1945	Racine County 14200 Washington Avenue Sturtevant, WI 53177 262-886-8460
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Article Submitted by: Rose Skora
rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

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. The following information 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

Examples of Output:

1. Employee on a dairy farm is paid a percentage of the milk check
2. Employee on a vegetable farm is paid per bushel of cucumbers picked

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)
- **NOTE:** The minimum wage in Wisconsin went up in 2006. This did NOT affect agricultural minimum wage rates.

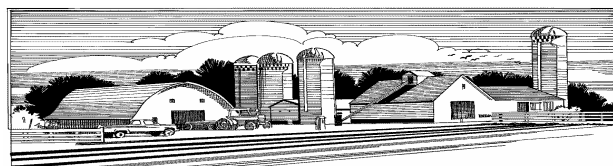
EXAMPLES OF WHEN AGRICULTURE IS NOT EXEMPT FROM PAYING OVERTIME:

1. 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
2. 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)

In both of the above cases, the agricultural enterprises are now considered commercial operations and employers are required to pay overtime to employees.

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>).

Madison office: 608-266-6860
Milwaukee office: 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.

Contact the Worker's Compensation Division at 608-266-1340 for questions or to determine if your family members count as employees in relation to paying worker's compensation insurance.

DIRECTORY OF AGENCIES

Racine/Kenosha Farm Service Agency (FSA) 
1012 Vine Street, Union Grove, WI 53182 1330
Phone: 262-878-3353, Ext 2 Fax: 262-878-3283

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
1012 Vine Street, Union Grove, WI 53182 1330
Phone: 262-878-1243, Ext 3 Fax: 262-878-3283

Racine County Land Conservation Division
14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177
Phone: 262-886-8479, Fax: 262-886-8488

Kenosha County Land & Water Conservation
19600 75th St, PO Box 520, Bristol, WI 53104
Phone: 262-857-1895, Fax: 262-857-6508

Kenosha County UW-Extension
19600 75th St, PO Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104
Phone: 262-857-1945, Fax: 262-857-1998



Racine County UW-Extension
14200 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant, WI 53177
Phone: 262-886-8460, Fax: 262-886-8489

HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSINGS

Columbus Day
Monday, October 9 – FSA and NRCS office closed

Veterans' Day
Friday, November 10 – FSA and NRCS office closed

Thanksgiving
Thursday, November 23 – all offices closed
Friday, November 24 – FSA/NRCS offices open
Kenosha and Racine County offices closed

Christmas
December 22 and 25 - Kenosha County offices closed
December 25 and 26 - Racine County offices closed
December 25 - FSA and NRCS office closed

New Year's
December 29 and January 1 - Kenosha County offices closed
January 1 and 2 - Racine County offices closed
January 1 - FSA and NRCS office closed

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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

Your Resource Partners:
Farm Service Agency
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Racine County Land Conservation
Kenosha County Land and Water Conservation
UW-Cooperative Extension

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TIES TO THE LAND NEWSLETTER
Kenosha/Racine Farm Service Agency
US Department of Agriculture
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Union Grove, WI 53182 1330