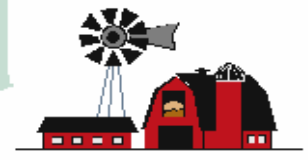




Ties to the Land



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

March, 2008

Table of Contents

Farm Service Agency

Welcome Milwaukee County.....	1
Committee Election Results.....	1
Minority Advisor Appointed.....	2
2005 – 2007 Crop Disaster Program.....	2
Livestock Compensation Program.....	2
Dairy Program Coming.....	2
2007 Farm Bill Update.....	2
Report Farm and Personal Changes.....	2
Conservation Compliance.....	3
Commodity Loans.....	3
2008 Expiring CRP Contracts.....	3
Continuous CRP and CREP.....	3
Foreign Landowner Certification.....	3
Electronic Information Available.....	3

Kenosha County Land Conservation

Nutrient Management Planning	4
------------------------------	---

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Continuous CRP	5
----------------	---

Racine County Land Conservation

Racine County Tree Pick-Up	6
Land and Water Funds	6
Grassed Waterway Cost-Share Funding	6
Seno Center Workshop Dates	6

Kenosha/Racine UW Cooperative Extension

Conference Topics Survey Help Requested	7
---	---

WELCOME MILWAUKEE COUNTY

Milwaukee County has been combined with the counties of Racine and Kenosha for administrative purposes. This action was enacted by our State Office to better align the producers so that they are administrated from the nearest Farm Service Agency office. Before the actual combination was accomplished the producers in Milwaukee County were given the opportunity to select another county or stay as is and from this point on perform their Farm Service Agency (FSA) business at the Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee County FSA Office located in Union Grove.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Every year producers in our counties elect a committee member from their peers to help deliver federal farm programs in their rotating LAA area.

Our County Committee here in Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee County is composed of five members, who are elected by fellow farmers to serve farmers.

The members of the committee elected in December 2007 for the 2008/2009/2010 years were:

- ◇ **Keith Heineck** a cash grain farmer from the Franksville area in Racine County
- ◇ **Myron Daniels** a dairy/cash grain farmer from the township of Brighton in Kenosha County
- ◇ **Joseph Mainus** a cash grain farmer from Franklin township in Milwaukee County

The remaining members of the Racine/Kenosha/Milwaukee County FSA Committee are: **Mike Weinkauff** a cash grain/beef farmer from Rochester in Racine County and **Marvin Drissel** a cash grain farmer from Paris Township in Kenosha County who is filling the unexpired term of Lori Edquist who has resigned to work part time in the FSA Office.



FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE MINORITY ADVISORS

USDA firmly believes county committees should represent the interests of all agricultural producers of a county or area. Thus, in addition each committee may have a COC Advisor. The advisor's responsibilities are to serve as a representative of under-served communities in the county and ensure that their interests are fairly represented.

After consideration of the County Committee structure at this time it was decided to request that outgoing County Committee member **Carol Lois** serve as the Minority Advisor. This decision was made at this time because women are now underserved on the County Committee.

Carol is in dairy/crop production with her husband Leonard and son Mike.

2005-2007 CROP DISASTER PROGRAM

As of the writing of this article no sign up deadline has been announced for the Disaster Program or Livestock Compensation Program.

Letters have been sent to those who could possibly earn a payment, but forms need to be completed before the end of the signup period which again is not announced at this time.

Check your records if you were made a disaster payment through your Crop Insurance Company in 2005, 2006 or 2007 and you haven't heard from this office please contact this office to check our records.

LIVESTOCK COMPENSATION PROGRAM

The Livestock Compensation Program is a program to help defray the costs of pasture lost and feed purchased during the drought of 2005. The program has been revised to include credits for any purchased feed which was necessitated because of the drought. *This program has been revised and now includes cattle that are in feedlots as well as those in pasture or both.*

Information that will be required is proof that the purchase of feed was out of the ordinary. This would be proved by providing evidence from the prior year and next year showing that the costs incurred were from the drought. Also required is the count of animals during the period being requested.

Please contact Linda at 262-878-3353 x100 for more information.

DAIRY PROGRAM COMING...

There is a new program coming that will involve any producer who milked cows in the years 2003 to 2007. The program will compare your production of milk from the years 2005, 2006 or 2007 to your average production from 2003 & 2004. If the production falls under the guidelines, payments could be possible. This is a program that has a nationwide limitation and all applications will be put together nationwide and the money earned prorated.



Forms are not available at this time, but it could be worth the time and effort for former and/or present dairypersons to contact your dairies or go through your records and compile the pounds produced in the years 2003 to 2007 along with the numbers of animals. More information will be mailed to known Dairies when the final forms are available.

2007 FARM BILL UPDATE

As of the publication of this newsletter, the Farm Bill has **not been passed** but is in negotiations between the House and Senate.

Thus, the details and determinations of future programs are still unknown. We hope that by the time you read this we will have a Farm Bill.

Without knowing what the new Farm Bill will bring, we still do not know if the 2007 Landowner Statements will roll forward for 2008. If you want to play it safe and guarantee yourself an advance payment, if these leases are accepted, you can stop by the office and pick some forms up for your use.

REPORT FARM AND PERSONAL CHANGES TO FSA

If there are changes in the land you own or operate, changes in your address, your bank account (for direct deposit), or any changes in the structure of your operation, it is very important that you report these **changes to the FSA office immediately.**

Special emphasis needs to be placed on the requirement to report to your local FSA office any changes as a result of the creation of trusts, LLCs, partnerships or other entities. The change of land ownership or contract shares from an individual to one of the above mentioned entities, could impact your eligibility and other contract requirements. Contact your FSA office for additional details.



CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE

CAN I PLANT CORN?

Times are changing along with prices and ethanol is gaining in popularity. This may affect your decision on how much corn to plant this year.

Please remember that all participants in USDA programs are required to have a conservation system in place on all the highly erodible land (HEL) that they operate. Several areas where problems can arise when complying with a conservation system are; renting new cropland, purchasing new land, breaking out additional cropland, draining or tiling new land, not following a crop rotation, and changing, or removing existing conservation practices.

It is very important that you contact the FSA and/or NRCS office before doing any of the above or modifying - tiling, draining, dredging, filling, or leveling, any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval can result in penalties.

COMMODITY LOANS AND LDP'S

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 2007 was January 31, 2008.

The deadline to put 2007 crop corn or soybeans under a 9-month loan is May 31, 2008.

Because of the present prices there are no Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) available.

CRP CONTRACTS EXPIRING IN 2008 BE AWARE

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants with 2008 expiring contracts need to remember that these contracts **don't expire until September 30, 2008**. This means that all provisions of conservation and maintenance requirements of the CRP contract must be complied with through September 30th. If you are unsure of your contract requirements, please contact your local FSA office for additional details.

CONTINUOUS CRP AND CREP AVAILABLE

Environmentally desirable land devoted to certain conservation practices may be enrolled in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) at any time under continuous sign up provisions. Offers are automatically

accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements.

To be eligible, cropland must have been planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity 4 of the 6 crop years between 1996 and 2001, and is physically and legally capable of being planted to an agricultural commodity. Also, certain marginal pastureland is eligible for enrollment as a riparian buffer.

Eligible conservation practices for the CRP continuous signup include riparian buffers, wildlife habitat buffers, wetland buffers, filter strips, wetland restoration, grass waterways, shelterbelts, living snow fences, contour grass strips, and shallow water areas for wildlife.

For additional information or to set up an appointment to determine if your land is eligible, contact your local FSA county office.

FOREIGN LANDOWNER NOTIFICATION

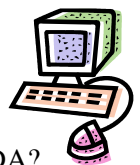
The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. FSA administers this program. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in these counties are required to report 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.

E-SIGN ON

Are you too busy on the farm to come to the office? Are you confused about how much money you are receiving from USDA? Do you need USDA financial documentation to file your 2007 income taxes? The USDA Customer Statement brings you unprecedented **free** access to your business activities with USDA 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

You can access the secure, confidential report online, any place, and any time. You are also able to print the report. Remember this report is **FREE** of charge, and is a very convenient form of keeping track of your finances. If you are interested in acquiring a Customer Statement please visit the website listed below, or contact the FSA office.

<http://customerstatement.usda.gov/>





Nutrient Management Planning

Preserving and enhancing the quality of Wisconsin's water resources is a high priority of the citizens of Wisconsin and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. DATCP's rule (ATCP 50) includes the provisions of the NRCS 590 Nutrient Management standard which contains significant requirements for the protection of surface and groundwater. Under these current rules, all farmers who mechanically apply manure or commercial fertilizer to cropland (not just livestock operators) must have a nutrient management plan. Nutrients include nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium from manure, legumes, organic byproducts, and commercial fertilizer. Nutrient applications follow soil test recommendations minus credits from nutrient sources.

Nutrient management planning enforcement took effect throughout Wisconsin on January 1, 2008. Nutrient management planning enforcement is limited by the availability of cost-share funds and governmental regulation at the state and local levels. Cost-sharing amounts offer a flat-rate payment of \$7 per acre per year for a four year period (\$28/acre total), as available. The lump sum is given up front. This amount will sufficiently cover the work involved and more, not to mention that operating under a NMP plan may save you considerable money on your fertilizer bill. Soil testing typically costs about 50 cents an acre and is only needed once every four years. The approximate cost to hire a planner to help write a NMP is \$10 an acre. Once a NMP is in place, by law, a farmer needs to update it annually. The update can take the form of an annual checklist submitted to DATCP and the County Land Conservation Department as a way to certify that the NMP complies with Wisconsin's NRCS 590 standard. It is important to note that all landowners who accept cost-share must agree to comply after the 4 year contract period and continue the practice as long as the land is farmed without any additional cost-sharing.

A qualified nutrient management planner must prepare or approve each nutrient management plan. Persons holding one of the following are presumptively qualified nutrient management planners:

1. Certified as crop consultant by the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC)

2. Certified as crop advisor (CCA) by the American Society of Agronomy, Wisconsin Certified Crop Advisor Board

3. Certified as a professional agronomist (CPAg) by the American Society of Agronomy

4. Certified as a soil scientist by the Soil Science Society of America

- 5 Farmers are also presumed to be qualified to prepare their own NMPs if the farmer has completed a DATCP approved training course and the instructor approves the first annual plan within the preceding four years.

(This qualification may not apply in the case of local livestock siting ordinances.)

Farmers can use their computers and a Microsoft Windows based software program called Snap-Plus. This flexible program was designed for the preparation of nutrient management plans in accordance with the 590 standard. Snap-Plus will calculate crop nutrient recommendations for all fields consistent with UW recommendations. It will also, using a RUSLE2-based soil loss assessment, allow producers to determine whether fields which receive fertilizer or manure applications meet the tolerable soil loss requirements.

In addition, the software program will calculate a rotational Phosphorus Index value for all fields as required for using the P Index for phosphorus management. Lastly it will compute a rotational P balance for using soil test P as the criteria for phosphorus management. This program may be downloaded at no cost at: <http://www.snapplus.net>.

For more information contact your local Land Conservation Department, NRCS, or your Local Cooperative. The Checklist and other handy NMP documents can easily accessed online by visiting <http://datcp.state.wi.us/arm/agriculture/land-water/conservation/nutrient-mngmt/planning.jsp>.



Managing nutrient applications to maximize profitability and minimize water degradation is a smart move and a nutrient management plan is a great way to do it.



Jerry Hebard, District Conservationist
phone: (262) 878-1243 ext. 108
e-mail: jerry.hebard@wi.usda.gov

Control Erosion and Keep in Compliance

Continuous CRP – a Soil Saving Bargain for Corn-Soybean Growers

Farmers making their planting plans should not overlook an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. High grain prices are encouraging Wisconsin farmers to plant more corn and soybeans. However, the down-side is the risk of more soil erosion plus the risk of getting out of compliance for USDA programs. A good solution for these two problems is the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Continuous CRP is a great option for farmers who may be increasing their cash grain acres, on land coming out of sod, or for any field needing some erosion control.

The Continuous CRP is similar to the general CRP in that it offers annual rental payments and cost-sharing, but is designed for the small sensitive areas needing erosion control. Practices like grassed waterways and buffers that have huge erosion control benefits but are small in acreage can be cost-shared through continuous CRP.

Farmers should enroll now, before the current Farm Bill expires. With the new Farm Bill being debated in Congress, no one can be sure what changes we may see. The program is open now for any eligible acreage, with no guarantee that it will remain open.

Continuous CRP was developed to protect areas of fields that are susceptible to soil erosion and to provide a sediment filter around water sources near crop fields. Farmers with eligible land may agree to protect the areas for 10 to 15 years by installing grass waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, field windbreaks, contour grass strips and shallow water areas for wildlife.

As an incentive to participate in Continuous CRP, landowners receive annual rental payments for land

taken out of production and for maintenance of the conservation practices. Rental rates vary by soil type, but the majority of soils in our area bring \$98 per acre. With most practices, landowners receive up to 50 percent cost share for installation and an additional 40 percent of installation costs as an incentive payment. And with some practices, landowners receive one-time up front signing incentive payments of \$100 per acre.

It is easy to enroll in this program. In continuous CRP, if your land is eligible, you're in.

Stay Safe, Stay in Conservation Compliance

In order to remain eligible for USDA programs, farmers still need to use conservation systems on highly erodible fields. Farmers also need to control "ephemeral" or gully erosion in order to maintain program eligibility, including Disaster Assistance and Farm Loans. Ephemeral erosion refers to the channels and gullies, from a few inches up to several feet wide that form in tilled fields after rains.

All acreage enrolled in CRP requires maintenance, for example mowing weeds, brush control or invasive species management. In addition, some contracts will include required management at the mid-point of the contract, which may involve disking or herbicides and re-seeding.

Sign Up at USDA Service Centers

Landowners interested in the program should contact the USDA Service Center to see if they have land that is eligible. Landowners have no obligation to participate until the final contracts are signed.

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program provides an excellent opportunity for farmers to take care of the troublesome areas, and also lock in some income from those small areas for 10 to 15 years. Conservation practices installed on erodible and sensitive areas can cut soil erosion, keep sediment out of the water, and help keep farmers in compliance for USDA program benefits.

Helping People Help the Land
An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



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

Articles Submitted by: Jonathan Grove

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

Spring is just around the corner and it's almost time for you to plant those trees you have been waiting for all winter. 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 day for tree pick-up is April 23rd. If you have any questions about the program, please call 262-886-8479.



Land and Water Resource Funds Available

Are you considering any conservation practices for your rural property or farmland this year? Do not hesitate to apply for **your** cost-share funding today. The Racine County Land Conservation Division may cover 70% of the cost of your project. Our office has over \$75,000 in grant monies to distribute to Racine County landowners with eligible conservation projects in 2008. Some of these projects may include: Stream Bank and Shoreline Protection, Riparian Buffers, Well Decommissioning, Nutrient Management, Wetland Restoration, Barnyard Runoff Control System, Grade Stabilization Structures, Filter Strips, and Manure Storage Systems. Contact our office to apply for the LWRM Program at 262-886-8479.



Wetland Restoration

Grade Stabilization

Grassed Waterway Cost-Share Funding
Watch for Wash-outs this Spring

Do you have any wash-outs that appeared in your farmland or rural property from winter snow melt runoff? Both the snow melt runoff and occasional heavy winter rains make it clear, where grassed waterways should be installed.

Plan ahead, a waterway can be shaped and seeded before planting this spring if you act now. Contact our office at 262-886-8479, and we can find the best program for your current situation.

Depending on program eligibility, you can receive up to 110% cost-sharing for the installation of your waterway. There may be no need for grading your waterway, you may just need to seed the drainage way to grass and collect "Land out of Production Payments" for the next 10 years.

Do you rent cropland with wash-outs? In some cases, the owner may not be aware of the conditions of the fields. Although land management is ultimately the responsibility of the landowner, a farm renter may have more of an understanding of what can be done to correct erosion and drainage of the cropland. It is important to discuss these program opportunities with the landowner and your conservation office.



Seno Center Workshops

Saturday, June 14th; 9:00am-3:30pm
Woodlot Management

Saturday, July 12th; 9:00am- 3:30pm
Financial and Estate Planning

Saturday, August 9th; 9:00am - 3:30pm
Recreation, Aesthetics and Specialty Forest Products

Saturday, September 13th; 9:00am - 3:30pm
Wildlife Habitat Management

Saturday, October 18th; 9:00am to 5:00pm
Chain Saw Safety, Game of Logging II

Registration for seminars is \$20. For more information or to register contact Kendra Johncock, 262-743-1694, kendra@elknet.net. More information also available at www.senocenter.org



**Cooperative Extension
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Kenosha & Racine Counties**

Kenosha County
PO Box 550
Bristol, WI 53104
262-857-1945

Racine County
14200 Washington Avenue
Sturtevant, WI 53177
262-886-8460

Article Submitted by: Rose Skora
rose.skora@ces.uwex.edu

**HELP REQUESTED REGARDING TOPICS
FOR CONFERENCE**

Kenosha, Racine and Walworth Counties need your help! UW Extension, Land Conservation, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency along with the Seno Center and River Bend Nature Center will offer a day-long workshop in fall 2008 on small farm & rural landowner topics. As we develop the program, we're looking for feedback on what topics people would be interested in attending. The following link will take you to the survey, which should only take about 5 minutes to complete.
<http://www.zoomerang.com/recipient/survey.zgi?p=WE B227ACMJHQR>

If you don't have access to the internet, but would still like to give us feed back, please fill out the following survey and send it to:

Kenosha County UW Extension
ATTN: Rural Landowner Conference
PO Box 550, Bristol, WI 53104

1. Please circle any of the following topics on **Living in Rural Areas** that you'd be interested in attending.

Workshop A: Identifying Edible Wild Mushrooms
Workshop B: Renting Your Land to Farmers
Workshop C: Where Does Your Water Go? A focus on water drainage issues
Workshop D: Natural Landscaping near the Water
Workshop E: Land Preservation Tools: An overview
Workshop F: Invasive Plants

2. Please list any other topics related to **living in rural areas** that you'd be interested in learning about:

3. Please circle any of the following topics on **Developing a Farm Business** that you'd be interested in attending.

Workshop A: Operating a Successful Farm Business: The perspective from a local farmer
Workshop B: Developing a Value Added Farm Business

Workshop C: Starting a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)

Workshop D: Organic Certification 101

Workshop E: Developing an Agri-tourism Business

Workshop F: All About Canning: What you Need to Know before Starting a Value Added Canning Business

4. Please list any other topics related to **Developing a farm business** that you'd be interested in learning about:

5. Please circle any of the following topics on **Farming/Animals** that you'd be interested in attending.

Workshop A: Poultry Production 101

Workshop B: Beekeeping 101

Workshop C: Sheep and Goat Production 101

Workshop D: Raising Exotic Animals

6. Please list any other topics related to **farming/animals** that you'd be interested in learning about:

7. Please circle any of the following topics on **Farming/Plants** that you'd be interested in attending.

Workshop A: Fruit Production 101

Workshop B: Growing Flowers for Sale

Workshop C: Maple Syrup Production

Workshop D: Starting a Nursery Business

Workshop E: Starting a Christmas tree Business

Workshop F: Vegetable Production Options

Workshop G: Heirloom Vegetables

Workshop H: Carbon Credits: An overview

8. Please list any other topics related to **farming/plants** that you'd be interested in learning about:

9. Please circle any of the following topics on **Horses** that you'd be interested in attending.

Workshop A: Manure Management Options

Workshop B: Pasture Management: establishing pastures, weed control and poisonous plants

Workshop C: Keeping Your Horses Healthy: Common diseases and health concerns for horses

Workshop D: Foaling: What you need to Know

10. Please list any other topics related to **horses** that you'd be interested in learning about:

11. Please list any other topics you'd be interested in learning about that were not listed above:

Thank you for your time.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, April 23rd: *Anticipated Distribution Day for Racine County Tree Program* (contact Racine County Land Conservation for confirmation at 262-886-8479)

Monday, May 26th: *Memorial Day:* All Offices Closed

Monday June 23rd – Friday, June 27th and Monday, June 30th: *Youth Tractor Safety Certification Class*, Burlington High School (contact Racine or Kenosha UW Extension office for more information – 262-857-1945 or 262-886-8460)

Friday, July 4th: *Independence Day:* All Offices Closed

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (Voice and TDD).

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

**PRESORT STD
AUTO
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM ZIP CODE 53182
PERMIT NO. 00049**

TIES TO THE LAND NEWSLETTER
Kenosha/Racine Farm Service Agency
US Department of Agriculture
1012 Vine Street
Union Grove, WI 53182 1330