



U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

April 2021

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 25 Issue 4

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News and Views

by Frank Wardynski, MSUE

Crazy times continue. A year ago, covid had shut down market channels and depressed commodity prices. Grain prices had been historically low for several years and BOOM they jump through the roof. Current board corn and soybean prices could make it tough on the livestock industry. Cash feeder cattle prices took a hit, but feeder cattle futures prices look really good for the fall. I have been encouraging beef producers to use some market price protection. The Livestock Risk Protection through USDA-RMA offers that opportunity for any size producer. Contracts ending in October have less than 600lb steers with an ending expected value of \$175/cwt. I have used the LRP program the last two years and has paid to do so with the cattle market drops during the last two summers. Call me if you want help understanding how to use the program.

As I indicated, grain prices are good right now. The UP had a great growing season with high yields last summer/fall. Is there anyway to cash in on some of that? Oconto Falls cash corn price is over \$5/bushel. Of course, you must get it there. So, make sure to figure the trucking and test it before making the decision. Test weight, foreign matter, and moisture content can add up the dock quickly.

Is anyone worried about drought? Almost the entire UP is listed as abnormally dry. Not surprising considering the low level of precipitation this winter. It is hard to believe we are short on soil moisture as I fight the mud feeding cows, but I guess it is not as bad as many years have been. Plan for the worst, hope for the best. Do you have a plan for drought? Things like summer planting sorghum sudangrass can give a boost to forage production for the summer. Summer grazing practices are so critical surviving a summer drought. Once that grass gets overgrazed during drought, it never recovers. The ground dries out more, soil temps rise, roots are depleted and it is done for the summer. Get a drought plan in place and if you need it, great.

Bull Breeding Soundness Exams set for the western UP

Renee Coyer will be conducting breeding soundness exams for bulls in the western UP on May 8. For an appointment contact Frank Wardynski at 906-281-0918 or wardynsk@msu.edu. We will have a few host farms set up that producers can bring bulls to for testing.

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Midwestern Hemp Database: 2021 Applications Open And Introducing The MHD Cultivar Check Program

Are you curious about variety performance in industrial hemp across the region? Would you find value in a publicly accessible variety evaluation tool? What about receiving significantly discounted cannabinoid testing in exchange for data sharing via university and private partnerships? If the answer to any of those questions is yes, read on!

The [Midwestern Hemp Database](#) is a collaboration between land grant institutions and private laboratories in the Midwest. The goal of this project is to provide regional insight into agronomic performance and cannabinoid development of industrial hemp varieties. In short, participation in this program provides an exciting opportunity to receive significantly **discounted cannabinoid profiling at \$35 per sample**. This project is made possible through an extremely generous partnership with several private laboratories Rock River Laboratory, Inc., Pride Analytics and Consulting (Wisconsin) and ACT laboratories (Illinois). In 2020, over 130 hemp growers participated in this project and results from the 2020 growing season are available at go.illinois.edu/MHDRReport! Links to variety trial reports from partnering universities may also be found in the 2020 report. In order to determine your eligibility please read the attached project overview. To participate in this project, please fill out the [online survey here](#). Prospective participants will be alerted of their inclusion into the program soon after submitting applications. The **application period closes on July 16th, 2021**.

Are you an experienced hemp grower with a track record of success? Interested in conducting on-farm trials where seed and testing costs would be covered by a collaborative multi-state university research program? If so, keep reading for an exciting opportunity!

Building off the work done in 2020, the **MHD Cultivar Check Program** seeks to collect, analyze, and share data on cultivar performance and laboratory analysis of chosen “Good Potential” cultivars (go.illinois.edu/HempReport). 20 Midwestern (IL, IN, MI, and WI) hemp producers will be chosen to grow a selected subset (4-5) “Good Potential” CBD and CBG dominant cultivars during the 2021 growing season for research purposes. Growers may be expected to sign Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs) for selected cultivars based on agreements with seed providers. For on-farm trials **our team will supply seed, shipping materials, and cover costs of cannabinoid testing**. Growers will submit management and performance data via the SeedLinked platform, as well as flower samples for cannabinoid analysis by partnering laboratories. **Specific project details can be found in the attached document**. To be considered for participation in the “MHD Cultivar Check Program,” [apply here](#) by April 16th to allow for timely dissemination of materials. Qualified growers will be selected on first come, first serve basis and will receive invaluable, firsthand experience growing cultivars which have shown promise in the region.

If you have any questions or are interested in participating in this program, please contact Phillip Alberti at palberti@illinois.edu or 217-300-7392.

Bay de Noc Gardening Conference Video Series

Gardening enthusiasts will have the opportunity to view three video presentations sponsored by the Bay de Noc Gardening Conference. The 2021 annual in-person conference has been canceled due to the pandemic. We are tentatively planning to host an in-person conference on Saturday, April 23, 2022.

The Bay de Noc Gardening Conference Planning Committee invites anyone interested in gardening to see the three video presentations this spring. The first presentation will be on small fruits.

Beginning in March, Jim Isleib, MSU Extension Upper Peninsula Crop Production Educator, from Munising will discuss the topic growing small fruits. Small fruits can be fun and rewarding, picked fresh for delicious and beautiful display on the table, or processed into jams, jellies, pies, smoothies, etc. Learn some basics about growing the small fruits ‘most likely to succeed’ in the U.P. – raspberries, strawberries and hardy blueberries. He will also touch on trickier and less common small fruits.

The April subject is invaders in the garden. It will cover invasive insects, and how some non-native garden plantings may boost other pesky critters. Elise Desjarlais, Coordinator for the Lake to Lake Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area, will focus on some alternative planting options and what types of beneficial wildlife they attract.

Our May topic is planting a future for birds with Joe Kaplan, Director of Common Coast Research & Conservation. Participants will learn how to enhance habitat in their yards for birds through the use of native landscaping, the control of invasive species, and proper nest box design for attracting cavity nesting species. In addition, the importance of “stop-over” habitat and the rich dynamic of bird migration in our region will be explored.

There is no charge to see the videos. These videos qualify for half hour each of Michigan Extension Master Gardener educational credit. They have been organized and coordinated by Michigan Extension Master Gardeners. Links to the programs may be found on **Facebook** at either [Bay de Noc Gardening Conference](#) at [Delta County Master Gardener Association](#).

Prune those apple trees!

Most U.P. farms have some fruit trees, mostly for family use. There are a few small commercial orchards here and there. The old, farmstead orchards are often not utilized to their best capacity. Annual pruning is needed for good quality fruit production. If left untended for several years, a 'renovation' pruning may be needed on large, overgrown trees.

Although my extension work focuses on farm crop production, I have a long-time interest and hobby in fruit trees. I have done many apple tree renovation pruning demonstrations in the central and eastern U.P. over the years. The current MSU Extension COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face programs have prevented me from conducting any 'live' pruning programs in 2020 and 2021. However, I prepared two videos for use by non-commercial fruit growers. They are very basic and meant to encourage you to get out there and start pruning!

- Home fruit tree maintenance pruning, 33 minutes <https://youtu.be/9sber4XBEY0>
- Old, neglected apple tree renovation pruning, 23 minutes <https://youtu.be/6cedR8ZTK0M>

I can also send you a handout used at my fruit tree pruning renovations that discusses basic fertilization, pest control, sanitation and weed control, variety selection, and training and pruning new fruit trees. Contact me at isleibj@msu.edu or 906-250-9609.

Currently, the conservation district forester for Marquette and Alger Counties is conducting 'live' pruning demos. Other conservation districts in the U.P. may be offering similar workshops. Matt Watkeys, Marquette and Alger conservation district forester is holding apple pruning workshops at two locations on Saturday, April 10. He does a great job.

FRUIT TREE PRUNING WORKSHOPS

Alger and Marquette County Conservation District Forester, Matt Watkeys, and district staff will show you how to:

- Prune and shape your young trees
- Rejuvenate your old trees
- Fertilize and spray to minimize disease
- Select the right trees and tools
- Manage your orchard

WHEN: Saturday, April 10, 2021

WHERE: Two Locations and times!

Alger County, 9:30-11:30 AM -- E9870 Negilski Rd., Munising

Marquette County, 1:00-3:00 PM -- 4840 CR PPG, Ishpeming

(Turn south off CR 581 onto CR PPG (first left after Stoneville Rd.), left at first fork, right at second fork)

Pre-registration is encouraged, and space is limited! Please call the Alger Conservation District at 906-387-2222 to register.

Note: these are outdoor workshops and will be held rain or shine. Please dress appropriately!

Register for Backyard Fruit 101 webinar series to learn how to grow your own fruit

Rebecca Krans, Michigan State University Extension

Do you have visions of fresh strawberries, apples or blueberries? Are you thinking of incorporating some fruit within your landscape or garden area? Would you like to learn what it takes to successfully grow fruit in your yard? If so, now is the time to register for a new Michigan State University Extension webinar series, [Backyard Fruit 101: An Introduction to Growing Your Own Fruit](#). Classes will be offered Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. EST beginning April 20 through May 25, 2021.

Join me and my consumer horticulture colleagues David Lowenstein and Nathaniel Walton as we present topics for newer backyard fruit growers and gardeners who are thinking about growing fruit for personal use. We will cover what is required to get started, selecting a site, preparing soil, selecting cultivars and fruit, pruning practices, integrated pest management and various other maintenance activities important to successful fruit production.

Additional Extension resources will be available for download. This webinar qualifies for 6 hours of Extension Master Gardener educational credits. For project description, choose: Food Gardening - General.

Cost is \$30 if you register by the early bird date of April 15. After this, the cost is \$40.

If you are not available during the live class sessions, you will be provided a recording. Before the first class, you will be provided with a Zoom link. Be sure you have high speed internet for a positive class experience.

Cultivating student leadership through farm to school in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

By Lindsay Mensch, Former North Farm Intern

A collaboration between community partners and MSU will build from existing farm to school partnerships and develop high school student leadership.

Schools purchasing more local foods and advancing student leadership and career training are at the core of a new grant awarded to a team at the [MSU Department of Community Sustainability](#) (CSUS) and the [MSU Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center](#) (UPREC).

The project, "Locally-Integrated Food Teams in the Upper Peninsula (LIFT-UP): Using Land-Based Learning to Establish Farm-to-School Markets in Rural Michigan," is funded by a two-year, \$60,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This collaboration between community partners and MSU will build from existing farm to school partnerships and expand food system networks in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The MSU project team includes Aaron McKim, Philip Warsaw, Buddy McKendree, Abbey Palmer, and James DeDecker.

Purchasing more local foods to serve in school classrooms and cafeterias is one major goal of the project. As one of the three core components of [farm to school](#), local food procurement can support farmers in the community and expand the variety of healthy food choices for students.

"Access to local foods or local food as an option to supplement other sources of food may be very appealing," says project co-director Abbey Palmer. "But challenges come along with change, and this project aims to put students in charge of envisioning their ideal school lunch experience."

Starting in June 2021, this first stage of the project will involve high school students, teachers, and other partners in the U.P. who will be organized into Locally-Integrated Food Teams, or LIFTs. Additional partners involved in the LIFTs will include the [MARESA health educator](#), the [U.P. Food Exchange](#), farmers, and resource professionals like [on-farm produce safety technicians](#).

The LIFTs will assess their school's current farm to school practices to illuminate challenges to local food purchasing. For example, the teams may find that the school's kitchen equipment may not be adequate for processing fresh fruits and vegetables.

Centering student leadership is a unique and integral component of the LIFT-UP project. After analyzing the results of the farm to school assessment, students will develop and pitch strategies to increase local food purchasing and consumption within their schools. LIFTs will select one or more of the proposed implementation plans to receive funding.

"An important piece of the puzzle is what we're hoping occurs within the students; not only learning about local food production or how to create change, but also this hope that students will see themselves as leaders within the community," says project co-director Aaron McKim. "There's an agriculture, food, and natural resources piece. There's also a career piece and a leadership piece that I think are really exciting for students."

In May 2022, following the implementation of the student-directed strategies, students and teachers involved in the LIFTs will participate in trainings related to leadership, food systems, and career opportunities throughout the food system. The day of training will feature workshops and a career and education fair to help students will connect with local food system businesses and educational institutions.

Offering high school students these opportunities to lead efforts that can impact their lives will help them build leadership skills, engage with their peers in more meaningful ways, and develop an interest in agriculture, food, and natural resources related careers.

McKim says, "Local food being the context to develop knowledge, leadership skills, and career ambitions among high school students is an exciting foundation for this project and a valuable template we hope an expanding cohort of educators will utilize."

MSU UPREC is seeking a temporary Production Assistant (Labor Aide/Off-Campus) to support research in small grains, forage, hemp, vegetables and beef cattle this summer. Start and end dates are flexible. Housing may be available, pending MSU approval. Details and application at the link below.

<https://careers.msu.edu/en-us/job/506088/labor-aideoffcampus>

33rd MCA/MSU Bull Evaluation Delivers Proven Performance for Producers

Bulls graduating from the 33rd Annual MCA-MSU Bull Evaluation Program were sold Saturday, March 20th in Crystal, Michigan. The sale averaged a program record-setting \$4,103.13 on 64 lots.

An impressive SimAngus bull Lot #78 topped the sale and brought \$6,750. This SimAngus bull sired by BCA Cool 7000 was consigned by Stough Simmental Farm of Marshall, Michigan and was purchased by Louella Byelich of Harrisville, MI. When we study this bull's data, working from the ground up his balance, including carcass traits, secured him in the top 25% for the All-Purpose Index and Terminal Index. Aside from balance he ranked in the top 25% of the breed for calving ease, and the top 20% for weaning weight. With a test average daily gain of 4.24 lb/day there is no doubt his progeny will be in high demand.

Lot #35 and #93 tied for a close second in the 2021 sale. Lot #35 was an Angus bull consigned by Dawson Farms LLC of Hanover, MI. This bull was sired by Stevenson Big League 70749 and ranked in the top 5% of his breed for weaning weight and yearling weight with a test average daily gain of 4.06 lb/day. He sold to Bruce Oesterle of Mason, MI for \$6,500. Also selling for \$6,500 was Lot # 93, a SimAngus bull sired by Bieber Spartacus A193, consigned by Plank Simmental Farm of Crystal, MI. An outstanding growth bull that ranked in the top 1% of the breed for weaning and yearling weight, the top 2% for Terminal Index, and had a test average daily gain of 4.78 lb/day placing him in the top 4 of all bulls evaluated this year for ADG. He was purchased by Norman Voyles of Martinsville, IN.

Breed results were as follows: 36 Angus bulls averaged \$4,183.33; 27 Simmental and SimAngus bulls averaged \$4,037.04; and 1 Red Angus bull sold for \$3,000.

The MCA-MSU Bull Evaluation Program is the regions premier central bull appraisal and testing facility, setting the industry standard for evaluated bulls. The program's motto is "We do more, so you know more" because all test procedures follow the Guidelines for Uniform Beef Improvement Programs published by the Beef Improvement Federation. Additionally, only bulls meeting a minimum average daily gain requirement and passing stringent evaluations for reproductive potential, disposition and structural soundness are marketed through the sale.

Each year, bulls are intensely selected and nominated by breeders across the Great Lakes region. Breeders interested in consigning to the 2021-2022 MCA-MSU Bull Evaluation should contact the Michigan Cattlemen's Association at 517-347-8117 or visit the program's website www.MIBulls.com for details. The next evaluation will begin in October, with nominations opening July 2021 and accepted until September 1, 2021.

Classifieds

FOR SALE: 2nd and 3rd crop alfalfa, small square bales. Marenger Potato Farm, Flat Rock. (906)384-6587.

FOR SALE: Alfalfa Balage, 2nd and 3rd crop alfalfa. \$60/bale. (906) 630-4945.

FOR SALE: Koyker 565 Loader with 7 ft bucket. Also has skid steer adapter. Fits JD 3000-5000 series tractors. \$2500. Call Tolfree Farms (908) 884-2351 or email countryj@jamadots.com.

FOR SALE: Hay, large square bales 3x3x7.75 Timothy grass, 4,000 to sell. Former dairy farm doing all big square bales hay. Call Dave Bell in the EUP 906-440-6455 or email Bellsdairy@yahoo.com. Also a realtor in the UP so contact me for real estate here. Dave@smith-company.com

Beautiful property in the Upper Michigan, 130 acres In Perkins for sale or pasture for rent for livestock for the 2021 season. Beautiful river running through it. Great for hunting, building or developing, or simple grazing livestock. Land is divided into 9 paddocks with high tensile electric fence and 5 stock watering ponds. Call (906) 359-4825.

FARM FOR SALE: Upper Peninsula Farm with over 1,100 acres, water access, maple syrup production, and much more!
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Henry DeGroot (906) 238-4251
hjdegroot@alphacomm.net

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Allis-Chalmers C. New paint, runs good. **Hay Hauler.** Hauls up to 10—4x6 round bales, use spear on back, don't have to unhook. Call Terry (906)644-2777.

FOR SALE: 30 Angus Cows bred to Red and Black Angus bulls. Calving late April through May. Jon and Donna Ahlberg, Iron River. Call (906) 265-9333 or email jahlberg@fast-air.net.

FOR SALE: Reh-Morr Farm, Eben Jct. MI, N5057 Benson Rd. Rock River Twp. Alger Co.

Acreage includes field, maple forest, loamy, sand soil, high ground, conifer wind breaks. Zoned agriculture. Blackberries, raspberries, cherry trees (sour), asparagus, rhubarb, currants.
High tunnel hoop houses. 3-30 X 72, 1-20 X 27
Barn with lean-to. 30 X 55
Sauna-outdoor, wood heat.
Garage new-30 X 40 2 story, lower level 2 car garage, large workshop, upper level partially finished and storage.
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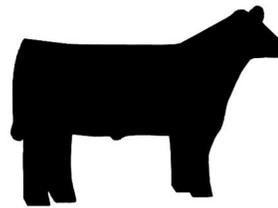
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Market Report

Choice Steers	\$105-\$115 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$90-\$105 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$71-\$75 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$180-\$220 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$50-\$62 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$60-\$165 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$200-\$450 per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$800-\$1400/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1000-\$1625/head

Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$13.14	\$262.75	\$200-382
Soymeal	\$26.20	\$524.00	\$466-580
Oats	\$13.49	\$269.75	\$239-340
Barley	\$12.16	\$243.25	\$200-314
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

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Online Chronic Pain PATH (Personal Action Toward Health)

This program is FREE & held on Zoom!

WEDNESDAYS: 1-3PM
April 21—June 2

To REGISTER, click:
<http://bit.ly/CPATHvet>
Zoom links will follow after registering

For more info, contact:
Kai Gritter
Extension Educator
gritterm@msu.edu
989-525-5777

**this workshop is live and participants are expected to participate by using device audio and video features*



Chronic Pain PATH is a self-management workshop supporting individuals who face daily challenges of living with chronic pain.

Topics include:

- How to manage medications, prevent misuse, and communicate with health professionals
- Ways to talk to family and friends about your pain
- Dealing with frustration and understanding emotions
- The Moving Easy Program
- Developing healthy eating and lots more!

This workshop is held live in a group format. Please plan to attend all sessions. There will be a FREE GIFT for all who complete the series!!



Funding supported by a State Opioid Response grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Service.

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National Diabetes Prevention Program

This program meets weekly and monthly for one year.

- Topics covered include:
- Nutrition/Physical Activity
 - Eating Out
 - Stress and Depression
 - Self-defeating Cues
 - Holidays

Information Session:
Tuesday, March 30th
Time: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

First class begins: Tuesday,
April 13th
Time: 11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Location : Zoom Meeting

To Register:
<https://bit.ly/2JZmnqw>

Cost: FREE (Supported financially by Michigan State University Extension)

Coaches: Naomi Hyso, Jim Harrington
Email: hysonaom@msu.edu



This course is designed for people who are at-risk for developing type 2 diabetes. The focus is on establishing lifestyle changes that promote healthy eating, physical activity and goal setting that lead to a 5-7% weight loss and decreased risk for type 2 diabetes.

To be eligible:

- Be at least 18 years old and
- Be overweight (Body Mass Index ≥ 25 ; ≥ 23 if Asian)
- Not be pregnant
- Have no previous diagnosis of type 1 or type 2 diabetes
- Have a blood test result in the prediabetes range within the past year or have a previous clinical diagnosis of gestational diabetes.

We look forward to meeting you, providing valuable tools, and supporting you through this journey

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Photo credit: Pixabay-Walk Path Walking Foot and Tacos Mexican Eat.